

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GROUARD-MCLENNAN

#### IN THIS ISSUE

THE RETURN OF

POPE FRANCIS' PENITENTIAL PILGRIMAGE TO CANADA

SEPTEMBER 2022

SEMINARIAN REFLECTS ON SUMMER IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

GIROUXVILLE PILGRIMAGE

NEW SERIES: FROM THE ARCHIVES

...AND MUCH MORE

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### News Bulletin - pg 4

A brief round-up of news in our Archdiocese and the Church around the world

### From the Archbishop - pg 6

His Grace addresses recent questions from the Ask the Archbishop series

### Bringing back the momentum - pg 8

After two summers without camp, Camp St. Martin returns with one of its best years yet

### Community - pg 13, 20

Snapshots from our church communities

### A summer at St. Joe's - pg 14

Redemptorist seminarian Noel Oco reflects on his two months in Grande Prairie

### Francis & the God of closeness - pg 16

Our editor reflects on his experiences volunteering with the papal visit

### From the Archives - pg 23

Our new series takes a look at historic photos and items from our archives

#### Vocations - pg 25

Information related to vocations in the archdiocese

### Gospel Reflection - pg 26

Fr. Michael Dias offers his monthly reflection on the Gospel

#### Liturgical Notes - pg 28

A look at some of the liturgical feasts and saints the Church celebrates each month

### Birthdays and Anniversaries - pg 30

Our priests and staff celebrating anniversaries this month

















## **THANK YOU FOR SUBSCRIBING TO NORTHERN LIGHT!**



New subscriptions are always welcome! See page 31 to learn more.



## NEWS BULLETIN



## New archdiocesan website officially launched

The Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan's brand-new website went live this **August**, and can be viewed at the same link as our previous website – **www.archgm.ca**.

The website offers a brand-new look that we hope is much easier to navigate and much more user and mobile friendly. All of the main content from our previous website can be found there but now in a re-designed and restructured format.

There are also several **new features** we offer uniquely through this website. These include an **interactive map** of all the churches in the archdiocese, a **detailed history** including all of our missions and bishops, details on our various **councils and committees**, and much more.

You can send feedback on the new website to comdirector.agm@outlook.com or contact Kyle at 780-532-9766.

#### CCCB & Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops release synthesis reports

Both the **CCCB** and the **Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops** have released their full synthesis reports based off of the **Synod on Synodality listening sessions** held across the country earlier this year.

Both reports can be found at **archgm.ca** under the **Latest News** section. They are available to read in both English and French. These reports have been submitted to the Holy See in preparations for the actual **Synod on Synodality**, set to begin in **Rome** in **2023**.





The national report offers a detailed overview of the needs and concerns uniquely affecting the Church in each region of the country - in **western Canada**, **Ontario**, **Quebec** and the **Atlantic provinces**.

"We have not now come to the end of anything. Missionary discipleship does not end," the western bishops' report reads, which included 18 Roman Catholic dioceses and four Ukrainian Catholic eparchies of northern and western Canada. "Neither have we just begun; the church has experienced synodality for two millennia. We walk by faith and not by sight, with sister and brother disciples at our side. Let us rejoice in the Spirit's presence with us."

## NEWS BULLETIN

## Archdiocese hosts Mass for Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage



On Wednesday, **July 27th**, the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan hosted and celebrated Mass at the **Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage shrine**, as part of the annual pilgrimage there. The Mass, taking place one day after **Pope Francis's historic visit** to the site, was celebrated by **Archbishop Gerard Pettipas**, alongside **Fr. Bill Bernard, Fr. Bernard Akum** and local pastor **Fr. Les Kwiatkowski**.

**Cree hymns** were provided by **Grouard** parishioner **Manny Chalifoux**, and responses such as the Kyrie, the Our Father, and

the Sanctus were **sung in Cree** by **Fox Lake** parishioner **Leslie Joe Laboucan**. We have shared both **photos** and a **short video retrospective** of the service on our **YouTube, Facebook** and website - **archgm.ca**.

## Seminarians installed as lectors at camp's closing Mass

At the **closing Mass** for **Camp St. Martin 2022** on **Aug. 21st**, His Grace **Archbishop Gerard Pettipas** installed two of our seminarians as lectors - **Thomas Wollis** and **Paul Edo-Aramunde**.

**Congratulations to our seminarians on another step forward in their vocations!** Both Thomas and Paul return to St. Joseph Seminary in Edmonton this fall, with Paul expected to do an internship at a parish in the archdiocese early in the new year.

May we continue to pray for their discernment and for more vocations to the priesthood in the archdiocese.





### Priests hold annual retreat at Providence Renewal Centre

Many priests and one seminarian took part in the archdiocese's **annual priests retreat**, this year from **Aug. 29th-Sept. 2nd** at **Province Renewal Centre** in **Edmonton**.

Twenty-two priests from all ends of the archdiocese came out. The retreat was led by **Bishop Emeritus Albert Thévenot, M. Afr. of the Diocese of Prince Albert, Sask.,** who gave talks on the gifts the Holy Spirit offers to those in ministry. The group also had a number of daily devotions as part of the retreat, including Mass, praying the rosary and the Divine Office, and open sharing sessions.

Let's pray our priests had a great week of spiritual renewal and comradery!

### FROM THE ARCHBISHOP

## THIS PAST MONTH IN...

### **ASK THE ARCHBISHOP**

In recent editions of Ask the Archbishop, His Grace addressed some questions of a more catechetical nature. He took on three questions sent into us: on the differences between adult and infant baptism, on the purposes of spiritual direction and on the role of the permanent diaconate.

You can view the full videos and complete responses at archgm.ca/from-the-archbishop

#### "If we can be baptized 'unaware' of God's grace being bestowed on us as infants, why can we not be baptized as adults before RCIA, essentially 'unaware' as an infant is as we begin our faith journey?"

This is an interesting question. I feel this questioner is making some assumptions about baptism and the age of consent, which I should address.

Let me say first that the model for baptism is the baptism of adults. In the very early Church, those who were baptized were adults; there is no mention in Acts of the Apostles or other New Testament writings about the baptism of infants. The profession of faith is always essential for the reception of this sacrament, and all others as well. It is normally assumed that those being baptized are aware of the profession they are making, and that they are committing themselves to live their lives in the light of the teaching and moral commands of Jesus Christ. The practice of infant baptism was a later development in the Church, once faithful and committed Christians began to marry one another, have children, and commit themselves to a life in Christ, they wanted to share the blessings of salvation with their children. It is a natural instinct of all parents to want to give the greatest of what is theirs, to their children. As Christian families were being formed, these parents naturally wanted to pass on the faith to their offspring, and to raise these children to celebrate and cherish the life of grace found in the sacraments of the Church.

Now, there still needed to be a profession of faith. Since the infant is "unaware", to use the word chosen by my questioner, the Church looked for someone who *is* aware to profess the faith. Very naturally, it fell to the parents and sponsors (or "Godparents") to profess their faith, since it is in that faith that the child was to be baptized. So, while the infant is unaware, the parents and Godparents are aware. Their faith, and the faith of others present at the baptism, supplies for what is needed to celebrate this sacrament.

To take part in this series, send your questions to **comdirector.agm@outlook.com** or contact Kyle at **780-532-9766**.



You can view the latest videos in this series at **archgm.ca/ask-thearchbishop** or search "*Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan*" on YouTube. Therefore, within infant baptism is also a commitment by the parents, that they will raise their child in the faith and impart this awareness in them. But as soon as the child can speak for him or herself, they are to stand up and do so, as we expect of those who are fully aware. Bear in mind that in Church law, the age of majority is eighteen years; the age of minority is up to 18, and the age of reason is seven. So, once a child is seven years old, if there are no extenuating circumstances, that child is expected to be prepared for baptism not like an infant but like an adult, to the extent that this is possible. So at seven years of age and beyond, such children are to be prepared themselves to receive the sacraments, alongside the adults who are preparing to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. These children are to be prepared in a year-long catechumenate, or the RCIA or OCIA as we call it, adapted to younger people. Where this is done, the young often outnumber the adults in being baptized and received into the Church.

With this in mind, I want to remind our questioner that the "norm", if you will, is not infant baptism but adult baptism. The adults must be fully aware of what they are undertaking, and to make that commitment in all boldness.

### "Could the archbishop explain spiritual direction, training and education, who could or should receive it, how it benefits the individual and the Church as a whole?"

Well let me begin by offering a very broad understanding of spiritual direction. The term "spiritual" clarifies that all of this revolves around the spiritual life. The direction one is going in is towards a spiritual end. This is not counseling in simply emotional, financial, or work-related matters. "Spiritual direction" is a spiritual kind of counseling. It is a relationship between a director and a "directee", in which the director is helping the directee to better understand the spiritual life, and more particularly, how the Holy Spirit may be guiding the directee to follow Jesus Christ and be his disciple.

So, "spiritual direction" is first of all about a relationship, and it's a relationship ultimately fostered and guided by the working of the Holy Spirit. That relationship must be trusting, respectful, and professional. Trusting, because the directee will be sharing very personal stories and feelings. Respectful, because the directee must feel total freedom in sharing their life with the director. There can be no shame or ridicule in what is shared. Professional, because the relationship between director and directee must be discrete and honorable in all things. Between director and directee, there should be no bonds of affection such as good friends might share. In many ways, it will resemble the relationship between a medical doctor and his patient.

So who can be a spiritual director? Well, to guide another, a director must be a person of prayer. They must have a keen awareness of the spiritual life, of the ways in which the Holy Spirit works. There is a spiritual wisdom that a directee would be looking for. Good spiritual directors would normally be receiving spiritual direction themselves as well. Thus, there are programs that a potential spiritual director would take to prepare them for this ministry.

So why seek spiritual direction? Well, if one wants to live a life of faith, to listen for God's call, they obviously need to understand what God's will is for them. An obvious occasion for this is when someone is about to make a life-altering decision. Should I become a priest – is that God's call for me? Should I enter the convent? Should I get married? And further, should I get married to this particular person? Should I make a career change? Is God really calling me to be a teacher, a nurse, a lay missionary? Are such thoughts my own imagination, or are they really promptings by God? Again, the director is not going to have the answer for the directee, but is going to help the directee make his or her decision, based on what is felt to be God's will.

#### "Do permanent deacons get moved to other parishes like priests do?"

Since 1965, the permanent diaconate has grown and flourished in some dioceses. It is no longer seen as only for priestly candidates. A man can be ordained as a deacon, which he will be for the rest of his life. He need not be celibate; he can be married and have a family. The question sent in to me on this topic asked whether a permenant deacon can be moved from parish to parish in the same way a priest can. Theoretically, yes. But when we have married clergy, more consideration has to be given to the fact that this man is married and may still have children at home; thus their needs must be considered in making assignments.

The permanent deacon will also have another ministry of service in a parish, the diocese or in society at large. In our archdiocese, we have two permanent deacons. Deacon Reg Bouchard in Faller, is of retirement age, but still



Deacon Reg Bouchard, in Falher, is of retirement age, but still does what he is able to for the elderly and others in his parish, and among Indigenous peoples. Deacon Gerald Logan assists in St. Joseph Parish in Grande Prairie. He is also the director of the Archdiocesan Office of Life and Family. The ministry of many deacons is matched to their skills and personal gifts.

FROM THE ARCHBISHOP

In our archdiocese, the training, or better said "formation" for permanent deacons has usually taken place in Edmonton. This is a two-year program at Providence Renewal Centre, which includes the wives of the candidates in a portion of the sessions. If anyone in our archdiocese is pondering such a vocation in his own life, I encourage them to speak to me or to our vocations director, Father Michael Uso-Ereyi **(archgmvocations@gmail.com)**.



#### Bringing back the momentum After two summers without camp, Camp St. Martin returns with one of its best years yet

For high schooler Julia Gawlak, Camp St. Martin has been a life-changing experience - one that's given her new friends, new experiences and a renewed faith.

When describing the way camp has affected her over her week at the campgrounds, Julia struggled to hold back tears. Whether it was watching the sunset every evening, making new friends, or growing closer to God, she says camp has been an amazing experience she won't forget.

"The memories I've made are amazing. I'm going to miss this place," she said. "I had such a beautiful encounter with God at this camp. I really came to close to Him and I'm not going to leave this place the same."



Julia Gawlak, camper for Camp St. Martin's "lead week" with high school students.



Long-time camper and first-time counsellor Joseph Ibach serves at Mass during Camp St. Martin

This August marked the return of Camp St. Martin after a twoyear absence due to pandemic restrictions. The Catholic summer camp, which began in 2013, provides three weeks of of fun, fellowship and spiritual growth for young people across the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. Taking place at Camp Artaban near Peace River and Grimshaw, it has separate camps for elementary, junior high and high school students, as well as a closing family camp weekend.

Camp St. Martin gave long-time camper Joseph Ibach his first experiences of adoration, daily Mass, and other activities like canoeing. He first came to camp as a fourth-grader in 2016, and has since attended every year it has been offered. So with two years away, Joseph and his sister Anastasia were anxious to get back to camp and reconnect with the friendships and faith they've fostered there.

"That first year was my first time being away from home, so I was a little home sick," Joseph recalled. "But it was a really welcoming first time. Even though you go to Catholic school, sometimes you feel you're the only Catholic there. But going to camp you get to meet people that are just like you and share your faith – so it was life changing. I made friendships I'll never forget."

What typically brought Joseph back to camp every summer was the chance to enjoy the great outdoors and to reconnect with friends who share his faith. But over time it has become the quiet and intimate moments of adoration that have now become the most impactful part of his camp experience.

"Adoration was my favourite part of camp this year," he said. "Most years, I wouldn't have picked that. But this year in adoration – there was something different about it. I think a lot of that is just as you grow older, you're more mature and see and feel things differently. And now, being in God's presence in adoration, you really feel in God's presence. You can feel His power."

### FEATURE STORY

Adoration as a highlight of camp was a sentiment shared by many other campers, such as Theresa Wollis. As a camper and counsellor this summer, Theresa was particularly moved by adoration, but her favourite part of Camp St. Martin above all was the chance to be in the presence of other young Catholics who also place God at the centre of their lives.

"It is amazing to see the joy here that everyone has about God here," Theresa said. "You can't find it all the time at your own schools, so it's nice that I can come here every summer and know that I'm not alone."

With just under 100 registrations for this summer, including the highest number of registrations ever received for their junior high week, 2022 proved to be a greatly successful year for Camp St. Martin.



Camper and counsellor Theresa Wollis

But with close to three years since Camp St. Martin last opened its doors, 2022 also brought many unique challenges. Alongside many new faces joining the camp's leadership and administrative team, they also had to deal with the loss of one of the camp's main draws.

The paintball course near Camp Artaban – once a primary selling feature – had closed down over the two summers of pandemic-related restrictions. So instead a unique initiative was introduced to take its place – "giant games". These included a giant foosball set donated by the Knights of Columbus (where the campers themselves became the foosball figurines), giant "life-sized" playing cards, giant bean bag toss, and an assortment of other games made of 3-foot-tall items.

The other major challenge for this year's camp was reigniting awareness, interest and momentum in the face of two summers without it. To tackle this the Camp St. Martin team made several trips across schools and churches in the region to spread the word in the months leading up to camp.

"Summer camps move by a continuous momentum," said program director Ryan Beaupre. "For most people the thinking is, 'I came last year so I'll come this year. I was a camper last year so I'll be a counsellor this year.' So this year we had to do a lot of work to notify everybody that we are bringing camp back and to adjust their summer plans accordingly. Because of the two-year gap, our elementary camp was all new faces this year."



Some of the new faces on the camp leadership team this year were seminarians Thomas Wollis and Paul Edo-Aramunde, and McLennan pastor Fr. Eucharius Ndzefemiti, SDV, who was appointed by Archbishop Pettipas as this year's camp director. While many priests come only for a select number of days to celebrate Mass, Fr. Eucharius took part in the full three weeks of summer camp and in all of its activities.

He said it has made his summer both greatly exciting and greatly exhausting. But it has all been worthwhile for the priest, as it has given him a new way to encounter Christ.

"One of the things I've loved in being at the camp is seeing how the kids learn to make friends, learn how to pray, and to just see their excitement was amazing," Fr. Eucharius said. "It's special for me because, while I am also a parish priest, here I have found another way of encountering Jesus Christ. Encountering Him in these kids, with their different temperaments, different characters, and seeing how first the youngest ones come here very home sick, and then they come to love this place and to love God more and more."

Fr. Eucharius Ndzefemiti, SDV, this year's camp director.

### FEATURE STORY

That mixture of excitement and exhaustion was shared by the counsellors as well. This year's camp was a bit different for Joseph Ibach, as he participated not only as a camper in the lead week for high school students, he also was a firsttime counsellor for the Grade 4-6 students. While this meant a whole new world of camp responsibilities, Joseph says the energy of the Grade 4-6 campers helped keep his own energies high.

"Normally when you tell someone you're working 16 hours a day at camp, people think it must be really draining. But with the kids - they have so much energy and they're just feeding it back to you," said Joseph. "The Grade 4-6 kids gave me all the energy I needed for that week."



Rudy Jerome Mallanao takes some questions from the elementary grade campers.



Ryan Beaupre

Now looking back on a successful three weeks of camp, Beaupre is grateful that this summer wasn't just a matter of getting Camp St. Martin back to where it was before the pandemic. Thanks to an especially strong team of counsellors and campers, 2022 turned out being one of their best years yet.

"It really was a step forward," he said. "The community came together. Without a second thought, they were all willing to donate, to volunteer, to step up and give their testimony about how much this camp meant to them. It's like that two-year break never happened."

Ryan Beaupre has attended Camp St. Martin since its first summer in 2013. Back then he was a camper, and over the years he has been a counsellor, administrative assistant and is this year's program director. More than the activities, whether giant games or canoeing, fire making or water kickball, often the most special part of camp is the friendships made between campers and counsellors.

"The impact camp has had on students in their faith life, in their friendships – there's nothing like it," said Ryan. "Seeing, and this happened a few times this year, a camper going to a counsellor they trust and saying, 'Hey, I'm going through this in my life. I could use someone to talk to,' and, within policy, having those important, intimate conversations with each other.

"As well, part of our formation program is testimonies we give in the evenings before our desert time of silent reflection. Each counsellor talks about their walk with God in their life, and every counsellor says that camp changed their life: 'Camp gave me a home when I didn't have a home. Camp gave me friends when I didn't have any friends. Camp introduced me to God when I still didn't know him. Camp let me encounter Christ when I didn't know him.' Those testimonies are very beautiful and you can tell they're impactful for the campers."



Lead week campers prepare for the dance as part of their activities at Camp St. Martin.

### Thank you for helping us make 2022 one of Camp St. Martin's best years yet!









































### COMMUNITY

### Christ Children's Club offers a growing youth ministry











**Sr. Rose Kong's 'Christ Children's Club'** has become a growing and active youth ministry at **Our Lady of Good Counsel Church** in **High Level**. Each week the club's activities include lessons in prayer, catechesis, Bible-related arts and crafts, choir practice, faith action songs and various indoor and outdoor games.

"My main purpose to have this Christ Children's Club is to make a way for both parents and children to be closer to Jesus, to know God better, to love God, to serve God and make these little ones feel that they belong to the Church," Kong said.

Thank you Sister Rose for your vibrant ministry and service to God and His Church!



### FEATURE STORY

#### A summer at St. Joe's Noel Oco reflects on his two months in Grande Prairie



Noel Oco takes a bike ride in Muskopeepie Park, with the church steeple of St. Joseph's not far in the distance.

Before stepping out of the aircraft, I reminded myself that I promised to follow Jesus anywhere and believed God was already at work in Grande Prairie long before I was born.

The following two months went by quickly as I learned a lot from following along and listening to the five priests I lived with while serving at St. Joseph's parish.

I witnessed the undying dedication, compassion, and faith of the Redemptorist priests whom I shared supper with each day after our evening prayer together.



Noel meeting with parishioners at St. Joseph's Church.

Redemptorist seminarian **Noel Oco** spent this summer working with the parish community of **St. Joseph's Church** in **Grande Prairie**, as part of his formation with the religious order. He shares here his personal reflection of his experiences working with the priests and faithful of the parish, and how these experiences have affected him in his call to the priesthood.

Noel was born in Manila in the Philippines and immigrated with his family to Canada in 1996. His family has lived in British Columbia ever since. Noel has been discerning the priesthood for many years, having joined the Redemptorists religious order in 2018. He is currently undergoing formation at the Redemptorists' seminary in Texas.

I arrived in Grande Prairie on June 01, 2022. I didn't know what to expect. It was unknown territory, an unexplored region. Initially, I felt a mixture of anxious anticipation and a dose of excitement, all mixed into one emotion as the airplane landed at the airport.



Noel also got to know much of the staff at St. Joseph's Church. He is pictured here with operations manager Jon Moffatt.

I've seen the fulfilling and sometimes exhausting moments of a priest's daily life: presiding over daily Mass, attending funerals, administering baptisms, preparing couples for weddings, hearing confessions, conducting meetings, visiting people, helping with the Vacation Bible School, and many other activities too many to mention – sometimes most of these events happening within a single day!

### FEATURE STORY

One of the many fond memories was how much I enjoyed my daily walk from the house to the church along Muskoseepi Park, where I met and chatted with friendly strangers along the trail. As long as the weather was good, even with some light rain, I went for a walk every day. I also played tennis at least once a week and went on a biking trip several times, including playing squash for the first time with Fr. Remi.

Contrary to what many people had told me, Grande Prairie is not a small town. It is a small city that is growing. Living in Grande Prairie gave me two unique experiences. The first unique experience was adjusting to the very late sunset. I would need to bring a sleep eye mask the next time I visit to completely shut the lights out so I can sleep early or invest in a heavy dark curtain to completely cover the window of my room.

A second unique experience was seeing the stunning bright yellow canola flower fields for the first time on our journey to Peace River under a clear blue sky.



Noel spent much of his spare time at Muskoseepi Park, located just in the "backyard" of St. Joseph's Parish.



St. Joseph's Church on a hot summer day.

Ultimately, the many inspiring people I met at Grande Prairie brought me closer to God and deepened my understanding of the Good News. My initial emotions of anxiety and excitement turned into gratitude for having the opportunity to meet many amazing people. There were many moments and encounters that only the grace of God could make possible.

After boarding the airplane during my departure, I thought about how grateful I was to have met so many faithful followers of Jesus in Grande Prairie, which deepened my faith. I want to acknowledge all the people I met at Grande Prairie. God bless you all always. Thank you for your faithfulness. Let's keep each other in prayer until we meet again.

wirtten by Noel Oco, 2022



Noel Oco with St. Joseph's pastor Fr. Remi Hebert and Archbishop Gerard Pettipas. Both Pettipas and Hebert are priests of the Redemptorists order.

### FROM THE EDITOR

### Pope Francis and the God of closeness A reflection from the editor

There seems something providential in the way the Holy Father's penitential pilgrimage to Canada uniquely encapsulated many themes so prominent to his papacy. Whether it's the dangers of uprootedness and loss of identity he discussed in 'Fratelli Tutti', the care for creation he stressed in 'Laudato Si', or the importance of honouring one's elders in 'Amoris Laetitia', within his addresses was a

synthesis of nearly every concern Pope Francis has focused on so intently in his pontificate. Sadly, it seems to me much of that was lost in an aftermath of media barrage and noise pollution so common to our times, such as the alleged audacity of the Pope accepting a gift from a Catholic Indigenous chief, or why the Holy Father did not denounce a document the Church had already officially rescinded 700 years earlier. But when one can push aside the endless voices of gossip, commentary and controversy and look at the historic visit through the lens of the events themselves and the words the Pope did speak, I think there is a much more important picture painted than scandal-of-the-week headlines. It is one that reveals that the workings of the Holy Spirit were not absent from the Pope's time in Canada, with messages vitally important to all of us.

The immediate historical context of the Pope's pilgrimage was of course to address the harms, abuses and the loss of identity that many Indigenous peoples experienced through Indian Residential Schools. That is a story of greater complexity than is often presented, as the Pope himself noted, but it is one that reveals a key challenge to the Church's missionary work. There are right and wrong ways of doing just about anything, and that includes even something as divinely ordained as Christ's call to baptize all nations. So it is a vital question - what is the right and proper way to bring the Gospel to places and peoples who have never heard it? It's a concern that goes back to the very first disciples, as seen in the dispute in the Acts of the Apostles about whether or not gentiles must be circumcised to become Christians, or in the second century theologian Tertullian's concerning question about the incorporation of Greek philosophy into the Church's tradition: 'What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?' These are just two obvious examples among many of this central challenge in the history of the Church, which we are clearly still enveloped in unto today.



Pope Francis wearing the headdress gifted to him by Chief Willie Littlechild of Maskwacis.



The newly restored Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples

Before I go further I should take a step back and begin to tell my own experiences as part of the visit. Most countries get typically 18 months to prepare for a papal visit. But this visit was prepared in only four months, and so all hands on deck were needed. Therefore, early in the summer I was contacted by my former colleagues in Edmonton to volunteer with the papal visit's national communications team and give them whatever help I could. It was one more in a long list of tasks I had on my plate, but considering a papal visit to one's own country is a once-in-a-generation experience, it was difficult to pass up. It was also a chance to be a representative for the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, and many of my own exclusive photos from the visit are included here and have been shared on our social media accounts since the visit.

My first task was a kind of "lead-up" to the official papal events. On the Sunday the Pope arrived, I joined some of Edmonton's communications team to host a media tour of the Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, Canada's national Indigenous Catholic Church within Edmonton's inner city. It was held immediately following the first Sunday Mass the church had celebrated since it temporarily closed for repairs last year. Pope Francis himself would be visiting the church the following evening.

I had experienced the heavily-enculturated Sunday Mass at Sacred Heart a few times before, with its incorporation of Indigenous language, Indigenous music and Indigenous practices both before and during the liturgy.



Kyle Greenham, editor

So what was most fascinating to me was the chance to see a lot of national and international media waiting at the back of the church foyer as Sunday morning Mass proceeded, giving them a glimpse of a side to this story of Catholic-Indigenous relations that rarely sees mainstream headlines.

Here was a Catholic service, now going for many decades, reflecting both 2,000 years of ritual and liturgy formed by Mother Church, and a successful interweaving with the traditions and cultures of the peoples she serves. It was a service that could only have come to fruition if there had already been many generations of strong, healthy and trusting relationships between Catholic clergy and Indigenous peoples. It showed there was still a remnant of the legacy of western Canada's first missionaries - like Albert Lacombe who translated the New Testament into Cree and intimately lived amongst the peoples he served; the "authentic evangelizers" as Pope Francis would call them during his homily in Lac Ste. Anne. That legacy may have been disrupted by the residential school system, by rushed-out headlines about mass graves and by the intense reactions of vandalized and burned down churches, but that legacy was not destroyed. Sacred Heart Church is proof that the legacy of those missionaries continues, even if it remains within the discreet and humble walls of a church on Sunday and we do not see it in media headlines.

The word 'Catholic' means universal. And as the universal religion, Catholicism uniquely has the ability to integrate itself within any culture. If Christ came to redeem all mankind and all of creation, it is a redemption that extends to all peoples. This reflects the very words Pope Francis would say at Sacred Heart Church 24 hours later, discussing the "Prayer in the Four Directions" which is included in Sacred Heart's liturgy.

"The indigenous peoples attribute a powerful cosmic significance to the cardinal points, seen not only as geographical reference points but also as dimensions that embrace all reality and indicate the way to heal it, as embodied by the so-called 'medicine wheel'," he said. "This church appropriates that symbolism of the cardinal points and gives it a Christological meaning. Jesus, through the four extremities of his cross, has embraced the four cardinal points and has brought together the most distant peoples; Jesus has brought healing and peace to all things."

The following day, Monday July 25th, was without a doubt my busiest. I arrived at the Edmonton Conference Centre bright and early at 5 am, followed by a bus at 6am to Maskwacis, which was to be the first major destination point of Francis' penitential pilgrimage. Thousands were gathered from across Canada for the moment in which the Pope would fulfill the Call to Action stated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - to make an apology on Canadian soil for abuses suffered in Church-run Indian Residential Schools.



First Nations groups from across Canada took part in the papal event held at the powwow circle in Maskwacis.

<image>

Indigenous practices and culture were incorporated into many of the papal events.

"Although Christian charity was not absent, and there were many outstanding instances of devotion and care for children, the overall effects of the policies linked to the residential schools were catastrophic. What our Christian faith tells us is that this was a disastrous error, incompatible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is painful to think of how the firm soil of values, language and culture that made up the authentic identity of your peoples was eroded, and that you have continued to pay the price of this," Francis spoke at Maskwacis.

"When the European colonists first arrived here, there was a great opportunity to bring about a fruitful encounter between cultures, traditions and forms of spirituality. Yet, for the most part that did not happen. Again, I think back on the stories you told: how the policies of assimilation ended up systematically marginalizing the Indigenous Peoples; how also through the system of residential schools your languages and cultures were denigrated and suppressed; how children suffered physical, verbal, psychological and spiritual abuse..." This was not a concern unique to Francis' address at Maskwacis. In fact, in his most recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, he formed a similar critique on the dangers of systems that erode diverse cultures. In the 2020 encyclical Francis applied this concern to the present day, when certain international forces use ideologies like globalization and consumerism to disrupt local cultures and local ways of living. It is worth noting this, as it reflects that much of the problems people point out within the Indian Residential School system are not just relics of a less-progressive past, but are still continuing today in a much more sophisticated and globalized form.

"Local conflicts and disregard for the common good are exploited by the global economy in order to impose a single cultural model. This culture unifies the world, but divides persons and nations, for as society becomes ever more globalized, it makes us neighbours, but does not make us brothers. We are more alone than ever in an increasingly massified world that promotes individual interests and weakens the communitarian dimension of life," the Holy Father warned in 'Fratelli Tutti'. "There is a growing loss of the sense of history. The one thing it leaves in its wake is the drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism.



Angie Crerar of Grande Prairie and her sister Rita Mercredi stand with the papal chair, shortly after Pope Francis finished speaking at Lac Ste. Anne

"That is how various ideologies operate: they destroy (or deconstruct) all differences so that they can reign unopposed. To do so, however, they need young people who have no use for history, who spurn the spiritual and human riches inherited from past generations, and are ignorant of everything that came before them. These are the new forms of cultural colonization." *(Francis, Fratelli Tutti, Sections 12-14)* 

All of this, whether globally or in the history of Indigenous Canadians, reflects a spiritual crisis of 'uprootedness' – an uprootedness from past traditions, from one's ancestry and community, from God's creation, from the Gospel and from each other. Through his talks in Canada, Francis does not address this without offering a solution and a way forward. It is not one based on government policy or new forms of bureaucracy, rather *it is a solution centered on the personal seeking of forgiveness and reconciliation - a forgiveness and reconciliation that is only possible through the freely given love and sacrifice of the Cross.* 



Thousands of hosts were consecrated at a Mass in preperation for the papal Mass at Edmonton's Commonwealth stadium, July 25th.

"This is the way forward: *to look together to Christ*, to love betrayed and crucified for our sake; to look to Christ, crucified in the many students of the residential schools," Francis spoke. "If we truly want to be reconciled with one another and with ourselves, to be reconciled with the past, with wrongs endured and memories wounded, with traumatic experiences that no human consolation can ever heal, our eyes must be lifted to the crucified Jesus; peace must be attained at the altar of his cross. For it is precisely on the tree of the cross that sorrow is transformed into love, death into life, disappointment into hope, abandonment into fellowship, distance into unity. *Reconciliation is not merely the result of our own efforts; it is a gift that flows from the crucified Lord*, a peace that radiates from the heart of Jesus, a grace that must be sought."

After returning to Edmonton from the long day in Maskwacis, I then went to St Maria Goretti Church near the city's Commonwealth Stadium. There I was to help document the Mass that was to consecrate the thousands of hosts that would be given at the papal Mass the next day.

This preparation for what was to be one of the largest and most momentous Masses ever celebrated in the history of Edmonton, was itself an immensely intimate and humble affair. With a small collection of Edmonton's younger priests, and a handful of seminarians and other young Catholic men and women, the Mass was held in a hall within the parish, with hundreds of bowls of eucharist bread laid out on tables in the centre of the room. Two RCMP officers were at the back of the church to securely bring the hosts, once consecrated and locked away, to Commonwealth. As the young men there chanted the Mass responses and prayers in Latin, the officers were visibly moved, even joining us to kneel at the moment of consecration for the 70,000 hosts. Whether they were Catholic or not I wasn't sure, but I think there was simply an air of sacredness to the occasion that drew their hearts into participating.

On July 26th myself and thousands of others arrived at Lac Ste Anne for the Pope's final public event in Alberta. After blessing the lake, there would be a short Liturgy of the Word with a homily from the Pope. Of the events I attended, this was definitely the most powerful.

The Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage reflects the same fostering of enculturation between Indigenous peoples and the Church that was demonstrated at Sacred Heart, but on a much larger scale. Speaking on a day of special reverence for Indigenous Catholics – the feast of Jesus's grandparents St. Anne & St. Joachim - the Pope drew especially on what it means to cherish the wisdom of our elders and on the meaning of missionary work in its purest sense.

"At the dramatic time of the conquest [of Mexico], Our Lady of Guadalupe transmitted the true faith to the indigenous people, speaking their own language and clothed in their own garments, without violence or imposition. Shortly afterwards, with the arrival of printing, the first grammar books and catechisms were produced in indigenous languages. How much good was done in this regard by those missionaries who, as authentic evangelizers, preserved indigenous languages and cultures in many parts of the world," Francis said during his homily in Lac Ste. Anne.



"In Canada, this 'maternal inculturation' took place through Saint Anne, combining the beauty of indigenous traditions and faith, and fashioning them with the wisdom of a grandmother, who is a mother twice over. In fact, there has never been a time in her history when the faith was not passed on in mother tongues, passed on by mothers and grandmothers.

"Your presence here is a testimony of resilience and a fresh start, of pilgrimage towards healing, of a heart open to God who heals the life of communities. All of us, as Church, now need healing: healing from the temptation of closing in on ourselves, of defending the institution rather than seeking the truth, of preferring worldly power to serving the Gospel. Dear brothers and sisters, with God's help, let us help one another in offering our own contribution to the building up of a Mother Church pleasing to him: capable of embracing each of her sons and daughters; a Church that is open to all and speaks to everyone; a Church that is against no one, and encounters everyone."

Caroline and Victor Wanotch at the Lac Ste. Anne shrine.

Pope Francis came first and foremost to address the Indigenous peoples of Canada, but his words are also applicable to all of us. Our Indigenous brothers and sisters suffered so severely from a sense of lost culture and lost identity in the Indian Residential Schools system. In today's world we are all facing our own crisis of uprootedness. It's seen in an ever-encroaching secularization of society, in small towns and communities with aging populations and uncertain futures, in the loss of religious identity (especially among young people), in digital technologies that often isolate us from real world relationships, and in so many other areas.

Robbed of the things that give us a sense of who we are and where we came from, that gives us roots and an identity, we struggle to be the people of "encounter" that Pope Francis calls us to be. But no matter how atomized and scarred we are by past or present harm, Christ has opened the way to freedom. Through Holy Mother Church, when her members genuinely aspire to live by the Gospel and practice 'authentic evangelization', we discover the richness of beliefs, traditions, and the roots by which we can also re-discover ourselves. This, to me, was the message of Pope Francis' pilgrimage to Canada. Christ came to reconcile all things to Himself. To be His instrument in this way, the Church must be a place of encounter. It must be a place where people can grow and hold onto their roots. Therefore, we need the kind of reconciliation that fosters roots, true identity and preserves the treasures we inherit from those who came before us. It is a reconciliation that can be brought about only through the God who Pope Francis calls the "God of closeness."



Pope Francis prepares to leave the Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage shrine, his final public event in Alberta.

### COMMUNITY

### Assumption Pilgrimage bring faithful of the Peace Country together



The annual pilgrimage in Girouxville was held this year from Sunday, Aug. 14 to Monday, Aug. 15 for the Feast of the Assumption, taking place at the Notre Dame de Lourdes grotto and neighbouring church.

The pilgrimage included Mass, a candlelight procession, healing service, a showing of the film *Bridge of Roses* about Our Lady of the Cape, and much more.

















Uniquely added to this years pilgrimage were new prayer cards for the intercession of **Fr. Clement Desrochers, OMI**, the priest who helped found the pilgrimage, parish grotto and even the Girouxville Museum. Many Catholics of Girouxville and others who knew Desrochers believe the priest is a saint, so the archdiocese helped prepare these cards for his cause.

There are already several **miraculous claims** associated with Fr. Desrochers, and especially with the pilgrimage he helped grow and foster. Along the way to the Girouxville parish hall, the wall is filled with plaques for those who have claimed miraculous healings through the pilgrimage's healing service. Several of these miracles are also recorded in Desrochers' memoir.

Girouxville-born **Therese Chauvin** recalls when she was a school girl, Fr. Desrochers was still the parish priest and he visited her class one day to discuss the Gospel story of the woman who believed she would be healed by touching Jesus's garments. In the Gospel recounting, the woman touched the Lord's garment and, thanks in part to her strong faith, she was healed. The story struck young Therese, who suffered from blemishes on her hands. She took to the Gospel's message that those who believe will be healed, and she reached over to touch the cassock of Fr. Desrochers when he wasn't looking. In the following days, Chauvain's blemishes were healed and to this day have never returned.

Let us pray for the intercession of Fr. Desrochers and the growth of holiness in our archdiocese.











### COMMUNITY

### St. Bernard's honour feast day







On the feast day of the church's patron - St. Bernard of Clairvaux - **St. Bernard's parish** community in **Grouard** brought together Catholics from across the region to celebrate Mass and honour this great saint.

The **Aug. 20th Mass** was presided by **Fr. Bernard Akum,** accompanied by **Fr. Eucharius Ndzefemiti**, and with parishioners from **Grande Prairie, Peace River, Nampa, McLennan, Joussard** and **Grouard** in attendance. After the Mass, drinks and food (including Cameroonian dishes from Fr. Bernard's home country) were shared.

### Little Red River Cree Nation hold annual pilgrimage



The Little Red River Cree Nation Pilgrimage was celebrated earlier this summer, Aug. 4-7th, with the Catholic Indigenous communities of John D'or Prairie, Fox Lake and Garden River. Archbishop Pettipas joined Fr. Andrew Simiiyu, FMH for a great number of baptisms, confirmations and First Communions as part of the pilgrimage.

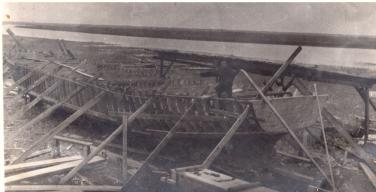
Please pray for those who received these sacraments, and our northern mission churches and the great work being done there!

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

#### A new series: From the Archives

In this first installment, we look at some photos related to the use of boats in the early days of the Grouard mission, then known as Lesser Slave Lake Landing

Our newest series, **From the Archives**, will take a look at historic photos and items from our chancery's archives, detailing the immense and unique role our archdiocese has played in the history of the Peace Country and the development of northwestern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. If there is a certain aspect of archdiocese-related history you would like us to look into, contact our editor at **comdirector.agm@outlook.com** or call **Kyle** at **780-532-9766**. All photos are credited to the Archives of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, unless stated otherwise.



<u>RIGHT:</u> Here Mother Marie-Antoinette, a Mother General of the Sisters of Providence, is being escorted at Shaw's Point onto a barge, a flat bottom boat designed for travelling across rivers. Helping her aboard are OMI priests Fr. Jean-Baptiste Henri Giroux and Fr. Constant Falher, the latter of whom is in his cassock and holding out a pole for the Mother General.

P. Hor

Lesser Slave Lake, 1905: In the photo on the left, a boat is being constructed to transport goods and people across the shores of Lesser Slave Lake, near the mission that later became the hamlet of Grouard.



<u>LEFT:</u> The Sisters of Providence watch as boats transport goods to the shores of Lesser Slave Lake. This was the common way of receiving supplies in the early I900s.

Each of these three photos were taken in 1905, the same year Alberta became a province.



To all students, teachers and staff at Catholic schools within our archdiocese...

## Have a safe and faith-filled school year!

DER

ARCHDIOCESE OF GROUARD-MCLENNAN

#### Called to serve

Our Archdiocese...

**Archbishop:** Most Rev. Gerard Pettipas, CSsR

**Vicar General:** Msgr. Charles Lavoie, PH

**Priests:** 30 priests in 23 parishes, churches and missions

**Religious sisters:** Sr. Mary Jeanne Davidson, SSND Sr. Connie Harkin, SSND

**Permanent Deacons:** Dcn. Gerald Logan Dcn. Reg Bouchard

#### Seminarians:

Paul Edo-Aramunde Thomas Wollis



Our vocations committee consists of the Archbishop. Vicar General, Vocations Director, priests, sisters and lay people of the Archdiocese. JESUS CALLS YOU Do you want to follow?



"I am a priest now for 45 years, and have been greatly blessed in my ministry over these many years. I have served in various capacities, such as pastor, assistant pastor, and in clerical work as the personal secretary to my bishop in the Diocese of Bellary, India. I have also been a pastor working with the tribal community of the Korachas in India for quite a period of time. These had been years of great strain, hardship and challenges in my ministry. After 25 years as a priest in India, I was granted an opportunity to come to Canada to render service to God through service to His people in this Archdiocese of Grouard–McLennan.

I am happy to serve this Archdiocese as long as I am able. I pray, may God continue to Bless me in my work for Him! 'The Lord has done great things for me, Holy is His Name!' (Luke 1:49)"

-Fr. Cyril Joseph Pastor for the Indigenous Parish of Sacred Heart Church in Cadotte Lake

### OCATIONS

### How you can help

- By praying
- Getting involved
- Joining our vocations committee
- Encouraging vocations in your church community and among your family
- Organizing and joining parish youth groups
- Support Catholic Missions in Canada: www.cmic.info



#### For more information:

Contact **Fr. Michael Uso-Ereyi** Archdiocesan Vocation Director **780-532-9766** e-mail: **archgmvocations@gmail.com** 

### Detachment, not indifference

#### A reflection on the Gospel by Fr. Michael Dias

"There was a rich a man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the Angels to be with Abraham. This rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' The man who had been rich said, "Then, father, I beg you to send Lazarus to my father's house - for I have five brothers - that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets, they should listen to them.' He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

#### Luke 16:19-31

The Gospel reading tells of a reversal of fortunes. It tells us that God will upset our notion of how the world should work. Those who have plenty will suffer. Those who suffer will know fullness of life. Jesus demonstrates this point in his parable, and it is a message he returns to over and over again in his teachings. Riches, esteem, and the things of this world must not distract us from serving God and his people.



GOSPEL REFLECTION

This message is not exclusive to the New Testament. The Old Testament figure Amos is the prophet of social justice. Through him, God condemned all kinds of injustice among the people of Israel. In the Book of Amos (Am 6:1a, 4-7), the prophet lashed out at the extravagant and luxurious lifestyle of the people, unmindful of the needs of the poor in their midst. To them, he pronounced God's sentence: "Therefore, now they shall be the first to go into exile, and their wanton revelry shall be done away with."

Fr. Michael Dias

The rich man of the parable was so focused on his own comfort that he did nothing to help the starving Lazarus whom he saw every day. He should have known better, for even the law given in the Old Testament made is clear that caring for those in distress needs to be a priority.

Many people who go to confession think only of sins of commission. They confess the sins they have done. That is why they would readily believe that they do not need to go to confession because they were able to avoid doing bad. But being a good Christian does not consist only of avoiding sinful acts. Rather, it *mainly* consists of doing good and helping others. Failing to do so is more serious sin, that is, the sin of omission. In fact, as the Gospel tells us, it is the sin of omission that can bring us down to eternal damnation. At the Last Judgment in Matthew 25, the question is not about the sins we have committed. Instead, the question is about the good things we should have done: did we feed the hungry? Did we give drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked and welcome to strangers? This is also well illustrated in this parable. There was no mention about the rich man being unjust or dishonest, and yet he was condemned to hell because he did not attend to the needs of Lazarus at his gates.

We always hear about the "Silent Majority" in the Church. There are many dissenters and noisy complainers in the Church today. But they are not the majority. The vast majority in the Church are those who hold on to the true faith in silence and peace, not at all affected by the chaos, noise and controversies of the world. But if we look deeper, for many their silence is often not out of simplicity and humility, but is rather motivated by fear and the desire to live in comfortable insulation. They choose to be silent and distant because they do not want to go through the trouble of "getting involved". They do not want to lose the safe and quiet comfort of life. If this is the source of our silence, then it is not a source of holiness. These are actually the sinners of omission – the "do-nothing-folks". What they do not realize is that doing nothing, and keeping silent and inactive in the midst of the attacks against the faith and the sufferings of people, is ultimately more harmful to everybody.

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

The lesson of history should never be forgotten. Hitler and the Nazis were able to push their evil plans against humanity in part because most bishops of Europe kept quiet. The Muslims under Mohammed were very successful in overrunning the ancient Christian civilizations in the first jihad, as well as almost the entirety of Christian Europe in the second jihad because many Christians did not do anything.

The present situation is no different. The evils today of materialism, communism, relativism, sexual perversion, abortion, modernism, freemasonry, and many other evils have spready rapidly and with impunity, in large part because the majority of Catholics choose to keep quiet and remain uninvolved. Like what happened in the past, we are more and more waking up to a society totally lost in the hands of evil. If the majority continues to remain silent and indifferent, very soon we will altogether fall down the cliff of damnation. That is how vicious the sin of omission is. It is often said, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." The famous philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke similarly said, "Nothing is so fatal to religion as indifference."

God created us as His children in freedom. He wants us to be free from any enslavement to sin and worldly things. That is why, in many of his teachings, Jesus insisted on detachment and renunciation: "Renounce your possessions and follow me." The rich young man wanted to attain eternal life, but could not have it because he was not free – he could not renounce his possessions. The rich man in this Gospel reading could not renounce his wealth either. And in his enslavement to material

comfort and pleasure, he was blinded and chose to ignore Lazarus at his gates. He was not free. The lesson here is not that to be holy is to be without riches, for many poor people also think more of material things than of God, but it asks us to consider where our mind is preoccupied – is it with material things or with God? That is why we have to always check ourselves, lest we too be slaves to our possessions like the rich man.



The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, painting by Jan Erasmus Quellinus

Many people take the present life for granted. But we are given the grave warning in this parable that death is final, and it is this life alone that gives us the prescribed time and opportunity to prepare for eternity. If we cannot be trusted with passing things in this life, we cannot also be trusted with eternal things in the life to come. Moreover, this life gives us all the chances and graces we need for conversion and spiritual maturity. When our life in this world is over, all these chances for conversion and reparation are gone.

The parable states, for those condemned to hell, the separation from God and His kingdom is absolute: "Between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours." So let us not waste a single minute in this life. Let us grab every opportunity that comes to do good works and grow in holiness.

In his Letter to Timothy (1Tim 6:11-16), Saint Paul exhorts him to be a good leader of the people entrusted to him: "As for you, man of God; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." In truth, this exhortation applies to every Christian. We cannot be complacent and unmindful of the events surrounding us, for no one knows the day of reckoning. Hence, the Apostle's challenge: "I charge you... to keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

All these ideas draw us also to one great challenge for the Christian today, that we not mistake the detachment and renunciation that Christ calls us to with a general malaise and indifference to the world around us. For this kind of indifference poses both a great spiritual danger and a danger to society. The detachment from worldly things Christ calls us to is not one of indifference to the world and its troubles. Rather, this detachment is what gives us the freedom to seek holiness amidst the world's troubles, to not fear the anxieties and obstacles that may come from "getting involved" or from helping our fellow person, for we are filled with a joy so much greater than all these troubles. Fundamentally, it is a call to still be in the world, but no longer of the world.

# LITURGICAL FEASTS IN THE MONTH OF

OCTOBER



Oct . 1: St. Romanus the Melodist: Recognized universally in the Apostolic churches as the patron saint of church singers, and the patron saint of music in the Orthodox Church, St. Romanus is considered one of the great hymnographers of early Christianity, producing thousands of compositions. Living from 490-556, he was born in Syria from a Jewish family and later was ordained a priest in Constantinople (at the time the capital of the Byzantine Empire and today Istanbul, Turkey). In his priestly ministry he composed many great hymns of considerable theological depth. Many of them are studied not only for their musical quality, but also as great works of religious literature in the early Church.



Oct. 6: St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds of Jesus: Born in the 18th century, Mary Frances was deeply religious from an early age. It is said that by the time she was four years old she already had a devout life of prayer, and would often awake in the middle of the night to pray for several hours. At the age of 7 she sought to receive her First Communion, and her local pastor marvelled at the level of knowledge she already had of the Faith. When she turned 16 she set out to become a member of the Third Order of Franciscans and a consecrated virgin. In later years she began to receive prophetic visions, including a

vision of the French Revolution and Pope Pius VI's death as a prisoner in Valence – a vision she received on the day he became pope. She also miraculously received the five wounds of Christ's Passion, from which her name "of the Five Wounds of Jesus" was given. St. Mary Frances was

canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867.



**Oct. 4: St. Francis of Assisi:** St. Francis began his life as the son of a wealthy merchant, well-liked for his charm, outgoing personality and willingness to help others. As a young man, Francis became disillusioned with taking over his father's business, and sought to become a knight and join the Crusades. Only a few days after leaving Assisi for this goal, he had a dream in which God told him to return home. Though he felt humiliated by doing so, he obeyed and returned home, continuing to work for his father's business. This unexpected and strange dream played on Francis's mind, and he now spent

his days growing in prayer, repentance and conversion. One day he wandered to an ancient and crumbling church in San Damiano, where he heard Christ speak from the church crucifix – "Francis, repair my church." This began an extensive and truly radical missionary life for the Frenchman, spending the rest of his years as a wandering missionary, embracing a life of total poverty and one that was an attempt to fully embody the message of

the Gospel. The unique and powerful moments in Francis' life are too numerous to recount here. His religious order, the Franciscans, has since remained one of the most prominent and influential orders in the Church.



Oct. 16th: St. Margaret Mary Alacoque: This French nun and mystic is honoured especially for her connection to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a devotion privately revealed to her and for which she was instructed to make known to the world. Within her Visitation monastery, Margaret received visions to spread this form of devotion, "the chief features being reception of Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month, Eucharistic adoration every Thursday, and the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart." The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a call to make Jesus' love for mankind more intimately known, and to call believers to both repentance and adoration of Jesus' Sacred Heart and His presence in the Eucharist. Her instructions to spend an hour every Thursday meditating on Jesus' Agony in Gethsemane is a practice that later became widely used, now known as "the Holy Hour". It took many years before Margaret's visions were considered authentic and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus spread. It was first adopted by the Jesuits before becoming the well known and common devotion it is today.

### LITURGICAL NOTES





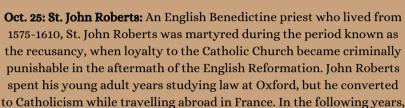
**Oct. 20: St. Paul of the Cross:** This Italian mystic, who founded the Passionists religious order, was a strong Catholic who felt a calling to religious life from an early age. After spending his early 20s as a soldier for the Venetian

Republic, Paul felt a calling from God in his prayers to form a religious community centered around the love of God

revealed in Christ's Passion. With the encouragement of his bishop, he began wearing a black habit and wrote the rule of his new community - the Passionists - of which he was then the only member. He soon received an invitation from a local

cardinal who needed much help in establishing a new hospital in Rome. After some years of theological training alongside the order's pastoral work in the hospital, Paul and his brother John – at this time the only other person to join the Passionist community – were ordained priests by Pope

Benedict XIII. By the time of Paul's death in 1775, his congregation had over 180 fathers and brothers, as well as a contemplative community of Passionist sisters.



he gave up his studies and entered seminary. He was ordained a Benedictine and eventually established a monastery for fellow English monks in Douai, France. He returned to England in 1603, to devote his life to missionary work and to aid victims of a plague outbreak in the country. He was arrested several times before finally being hanged in

1610, under the Recusancy Act's law against Catholic priests ministering in England. The kindness and help he had shown to the poor and plague-affected of London led to a crowd gathering at his hanging who prevented his executioners from disemboweling him. He was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1970.



**Oct. 26: St. Alfred the Great:** An Anglo-Saxon king who reigned through the later half of the 9th century, St. Alfred the Great brought many reforms and oversaw the conversion of the Viking tribes of northern England to Christianity. His reforms as king of England included the beginning of primary education being instructed in English rather than Latin, and in improving the country's legal system and military. Alfred's life began as a promising scholar, creating early English translations of many classic works of the ancient world and, as a godson of Pope Leo IV, he seemed destined for a life as a clergyman and great academic. Instead, as war with the Danes threatened England, he entered the world of politics and military conflict, later becoming king. He remains a beloved figure of English history and the English Church, and is a patron saint of both the arts and literature.



**Oct. 29: St. Narcissus:** St Narcissus was appointed the head of the church in Jerusalem in the late second century, when he was 80 years old. He was the 30th bishop of the Jerusalem church. In 195, he presided with the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine over a council which determined that the feast of Easter will always be celebrated on a Sunday. The early Church

historian Eusebius attributes also an Easter miracle to Narcissus: when a church under his jurisdiction did not have oil for their lamps – needed to celebrate the Easter liturgy - it is said Narcissus instead prayed over the water from a neighbouring well. When the blessed water was poured into the church lamps, it immediately turned into oil. St. Narcissus lived to the age of 117, dying in the year 216.

### BIRTHDAYS AND Anniversaries



#### Birthdays

Archbishop Pettipas celebrates his **72nd birthday** on **September 6th**. Father Bernard Akum SDV will celebration his birthday on **September 8th**. Father Joseph Jacobson will be **82 years young** on **September 11th**. Ryan Beaupré will be one-year shy of a quarter century on the **15th** of **September**. Father Henry Kiggundu FMH celebrates his birthday on the **29th**.

#### Anniversaries

Congratulation Father Raj Koppula, parish priest in Joussard celebrating the **25th anniversary** of his priestly ordination in **September**. May the Lord continue to bless you and your ministry.

Msgr Charles Lavoie PH celebrates the **31st anniversary** of ordination on **September 20th**.

#### Congratulations and blessings to each of you!

#### Historical notes

Bishop Ubald Langlois OMI, **3rd Apostolic Vicar** passed away the **18 September 1953**.

Bishop Henri Routhier OMI takes possession and becomes the **4th Apostolic Vicar of the Vicariate of Grouard** on the same date.

On **September 19, 1932**, Bishop Celestin Joussard OMI returned to the Father's house.

On the **19th of September 1989**, it is Archbishop Henri Routhier OMI who passed from this life into eternity.

On a more festive note, it was on **September 24, 1967** that the Vicariate was elevated to the status of the **Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan** and Archbishop Henri Routhier OMI elevated to the **Metropolitan Archbishop**.

On **September 24th 1996**, the archdiocese celebrated the Installation of Archbishop Henri Goudreault OMI as the **3rd Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan**.

On **September 26, 1890** Bishop Henri Faraud OMI, 1st Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Athabasca-McKenzie returned to the heavenly Father.

#### Holy Men and Women from the Church in Canada

September 2nd	Blessed André Grasset de Saint-Sauveur	
September 4th	Blessed Dina Bélanger	
September 23rd	Blessed Émilie Tavernier-Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence	
September 26th	Saint Jean de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues and Companions	



Feast of the Canadian/North American Martyrs is celebrated on Sept. 26th

Danions Birthdays and anniversaries content prepared by Msgr. Charles Lavoie, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Website: www.archgm.ca Facebook: @ArchGrouardMcLennan Chancery Office: 1-780-532-9766 Contact editor: comdirector.agm@outlook.com

### CONTACT

### How to subscribe to Northern Light

We always welcome new subscriptions! For our second year of Northern Light magazines, our **subscription price** is **\$70**. This will give you a **full year of magazines** and **cover all costs** for printing and mailing the publication to you. This magazine will mail across Canada.

You can **subscribe online** at **archgm.ca/magazine-subscription** or you can **send us a cheque**, addressed to **"Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan - Northern Light"** and send to:

10301 102 St Grande Prairie, AB T8V 2W2

You must include your **full name, mailing address** and **contact information** (phone or e-mail) with your cheque. **Subscription cards** can also be acquired at your local church that will give you a form to fill out these details.

### We want your contributions to this magazine!

To contact the editor for story ideas or to let us know what's happening in your parish and faith community, e-mail **Kyle Greenham** at **comdirector.agm@outlook.com** or reach us by phone at **780-532-9766**.

We also encourage submitted writings, letters to the editor and photos! All submissions for the next issue, whether of photos or written pieces, must be given by the **5th of each month**. Your input will be a great help in growing this magazine!







Follow us on Facebook at **facebook.com/ArchGrouardMcLennan** and on our Instagram at **instagram.com/archgrouardmclennan** 

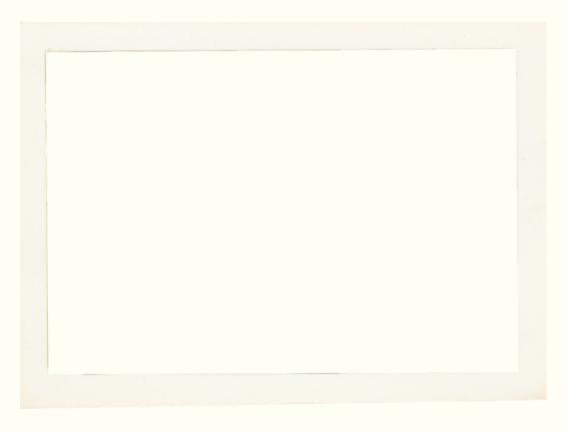


To subscribe to our **monthly e-mail bulletin** *Sowing the Word* go to our website **archgm.ca** or contact **comdirector.agm@outlook.com** 



St. Martin of Tours, patron of our archdiocese, We ask your intercession for our local Church, that we may be brave as you were brave in reaching out to others. Give us the spiritual insight to see that the many gifts that are given to us are not for us alone, but for the good of all.

St. Martin of Tours, pray for us.



To subscribe or gift a subscription to Northern Light visit: **archgm.ca/magazine-subscription**