



December 2020

www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca

Blessings of Christmas

*May the light of love
shine upon you,
and may your live be
filled with blessings in
this Christmas season.*



*From a stained glass window at St. John the Baptist Church, Perth
Photo by Chuck Stewart*

Thank you to our Volunteers

Our Lady of Guadalupe
12 December 2020

Dear Volunteers of the Archdiocese of Kingston:

My greetings to you in the name of the Lord.

Over these past several months, since the pandemic protocols have become a part of our daily routine, I have witnessed an extraordinary generosity on the part of our volunteers. By way of appreciation, I felt that I needed to acknowledge the volunteer involvement of all those who, during this pandemic, have devoted themselves to helping others in one way or another.

For some of you, life has taken a different path. It requires a daily decision to remain steadfast and not to give up in the face of these exceptional circumstances. The pandemic, has, put you in a vulnerable place of looking after an isolated or fragile person. Your gift of simple presence is heroic. For others, volunteering means donating food to the local food banks, making masks, writing letters of encouragement, sharing information on social media, hosting online meetings, tutoring students or talking to a despairing friend. These many ways of reaching out show me that your faith is alive and is being strengthened, despite the virus. For this, I am truly grateful.

As I travel around the Archdiocese and experience the welcoming atmosphere created by the parish ushers—even in the midst of having to sanitize pews, wear masks and take Mass attendance—I am warmed by your willingness to pitch in, where needed. The pandemic has made volunteering more complicated, as safety measures must be observed and protocols followed. However, you have used your numerous gifts and talents in a way which permits the priests to carry out their duties of caring for souls and administering the Sacraments. In this Advent season, now more than ever, I hope that you do not grow weary and continue to be encouraged and strengthened in your volunteer involvement.

My dear friends, I close by expressing my deep appreciation for your dedication to this essential ministry. Your willingness to volunteer is the backbone of our parishes. Without you, we could not function as an Archdiocese.

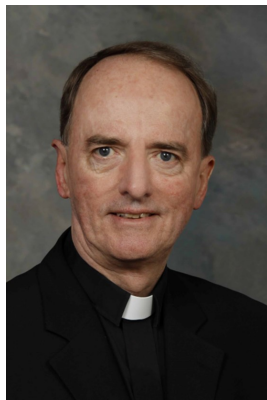
With prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+Michael Mulhall
Archbishop of Kingston

A New Chapter Begins for Father Brian McNally

Susan Lett



In May of this year, Father Brian McNally, the well-loved pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Perth, marked his 50th anniversary of priestly ordination. Since the pandemic derailed the parish's plans to honour him with a special celebration, I thought it would be appropriate to highlight in this issue of Journey Father McNally's years of service and valuable contribution to the Archdiocese of Kingston.

Father McNally's first assignment after ordination in 1970 was as Associate Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Perth, which was close to his family's farm in Newboro. After three years in Perth, he became Associate Pastor at St. Mary's Cathedral in Kingston, where he served for 15 years. In 1988, he was appointed Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Lanark. Five years later, in 1993, he became Pastor of St. Francis de Sales Parish in Smiths Falls, where he served for nine years. In 2002, he was appointed Pastor of St. Peter-in-Chains Parish in Trenton. For the next 10 years, he worked tirelessly, not only for the parishioners in Trenton, but also for all the people

and parishes of the Western Deanery when he was appointed their Dean. He also served the Archdiocese well as a member of the Council of Priests, the College of Consultors, and the Personnel Committee. Father McNally returned to St. John the Baptist Parish in Perth in July 2010, where he faithfully served as Pastor and as Dean of the Northern Deanery for the next 10 years. During his time in Perth, he continued to serve the Archdiocese on the Council of Priests, College of Consultors, and the Personnel Committee, and he worked diligently for the Catholic Women's League of the Archdiocese as its Spiritual Advisor.

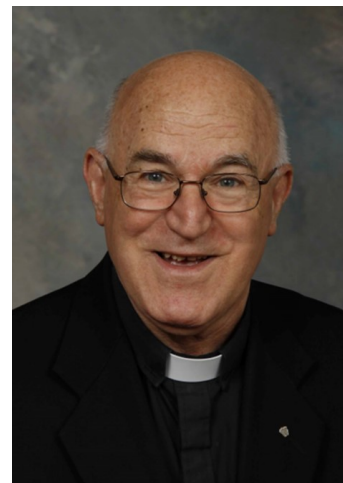
For the last 50 years, Father McNally has been a valued member of the presbyterate in the Archdiocese of Kingston. In October, at the age of 75, he took a well-deserved retirement and began a new chapter in his life. He will be greatly missed, not only by his parishioners, but also by our staff at the Pastoral Centre. He has always been so kind, considerate, and cooperative, and we looked forward to his frequent visits with us. The family farm in Newboro, which has raised generations of the McNally family since 1832, will now be his home. It is not so very far away from Kingston, and we hope that Father McNally will continue bringing his Irish cheer to our office for many years to come.

Father Louis DiRocco—From Italy to Westport

Susan Lett

This Fall marks the conclusion of one chapter and the beginning of another in the interesting life of Father Louis DiRocco. The pastor of St. Edward Parish, Westport, and St. Columbanus Parish, Elgin, retired in November after 20 years of priestly service in the Archdiocese of Kingston.

Father DiRocco was born in Roccamorice, Italy, and grew up in Hamilton, Ontario. After graduating from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto and l'Université Laval in Quebec City, he worked as a high school French teacher for 25 years. His call to the priesthood took him to Rome, where he studied at the Beda College until his ordination in 2000. After ordination, he served as Associate Pastor at St. Peter-in-Chains Parish, Trenton, until 2002, when he was appointed Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, Madoc, and the mission of St. Bernadette, Ormsby; three years later, his pastorate expanded to include the parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus in Marmora. He served in these parishes until 2011, when was appointed Pastor of St. Edward Parish, Westport. In 2012, the parish of St. Columbanus, Elgin, was added to this assignment, and he served in Westport and Elgin until his retirement in November.



Father DiRocco is an accomplished musician, and his wonderful singing voice will be missed in the parishes where he served. He not only led and arranged music for his parish choir, but he also composed several Mass settings. Over the last several years, he has produced three Christmas CDs with his parish choir ensemble, which include several of his own stirring solo performances. As he enters the 'retired priest' chapter of his life and provides assistance to neighbouring pastors, I am sure that he will continue to use his musical talent for the glory of God. Happy Retirement, Father!

From the Youth Office

Nadia Gundert

As we continue to navigate through this time of pandemic, youth ministry is being challenged in many ways. These challenges may seem daunting, but they have provided us with a unique opportunity to think outside the box and try some new ideas for outreach to the youth of the Archdiocese. Over the last few months, the youth office has been sharing many resources through social media and the outreach section of our website: www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/outreach. This page contains information, activities, reflections, and even YouTube videos for youth and their families, as we all live out the liturgical year a little bit differently in 2020. On a personal note, since there have been fewer meetings and events to attend, my husband and I have had the time to participate in some fun activities at home with our kids to celebrate various feast days and liturgical holidays.

Providing opportunities for young people to gather together while remaining physically distanced has been fun! In September, a group of young adults hiked up Rock Dunder together, chatting and getting acquainted while increasing our fitness level and admiring the view from the top! On another outing in October, while the Fall leaves were in their glory, young adults met in Harrowsmith to walk the Cataraqui Trail. We had a beautiful afternoon and were very pleased that Archbishop Mulhall and a number of clergy were able to join us. In November, we launched our first virtual evening event, 'Found Together', which featured husband and wife duo Jesse and Kathleen LeBlanc, who are incredible Catholic musicians and wonderful youth ministers. They facilitated an evening of music, prayer, reflection, and conversation on the importance of community. At the beginning of Advent, Archbishop Mulhall spoke to young adults about preparing spiritually for Christmas. As we head into 2021, we look forward to more opportunities to gather safely in person and virtually. If you would like to become involved in our young adult activities, please email Nadia at youth@romancatholic.kingston.on.ca. You can also follow us on our Facebook page, @youthofficekingston, or check out the youth page of the Archdiocesan website: www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/young-adult.



Another highlight of the Fall months was that I was given the privilege of hosting some listening sessions with young people from across Canada for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. Seven young people from our Archdiocese represented us in these conversations: Cisilia Kocherry (Belleville), Justin Silva (Trenton), Maya Forbes (Smiths Falls), Jett Gazeley (Kingston), Mikaela Dickison (Kingston), William Tran (Belleville), and Nicole Forestell (Stirling). Several local youth ministers and other young adults from our Archdiocese helped facilitate small groups during these virtual calls. A big thank you to all of you for participating! In these conversations, participants were asked to share what it is like to be a young person in 2020. What is their reality? What are their hopes -- their dreams -- their stresses? What is their view of the Church? What is their view of the world in which we live? These were

amazing conversations! It was so refreshing to hear authentic, raw answers to these questions and to get some great feedback to help the Church in Canada engage and relate more effectively with young people. I hope that we will be able to have similar conversations on the local level, since this process provides so many valuable insights.

They also said that they just really appreciated having the opportunity to have discussions with others who shared their faith and were their own age. With this in mind, the youth office plans to host some sessions in the new year with young people and with clergy and parishes to discuss some hot topics in society and the Church. Let's discuss topics that you are curious about; that you have questions about; that you hear being talked about on the news -- issues that affect our lives and often come up in conversation in the media, in school, in workplaces, and around the dinner table. What was so beautiful about these virtual conversations was how respectful these young people were when sharing their opinions, thoughts, and lived experiences. They listened to one another, affirmed one another, and questioned one another in a spirit of fruitful dialogue. In a world bombarded by social media, dialogue is too often negative -- and even toxic -- with many people taking the opportunity to vent in aggressive or even hateful tones. Our hope is that we can bring back conversation as a peaceful and meaningful dialogue about important issues that young people are yearning to discuss and hear the truth about. I am excited to see what the Holy Spirit has in store for us!



As always, please continue to check our website and social media accounts for information and resources. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime! Wishing you all a blessed and joyous Christmas season.



Stained glass window at Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, Wolfe Island.

From the Office of Family Ministry

Sister Lucy Kearney, SP

"Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved."

Response to Responsorial Psalm on the First Sunday of Advent.



For Christians all over the world, the season of Advent and Christmas is a time of waiting, preparing for, and celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace. Advent is a time when we pause to remember Christ's first coming to us; a season when that remembrance directs our minds and hearts to Christ's second coming at the end of time. Through its liturgies, the season of Advent enables us to experience the mystery of salvation. It is a time of hope and expectation; a time to enjoy the presence of God in a special way.

How can we best live Advent and Christmas as a time of hope, expectation, and peace in this year of pandemic? All of us have experienced some degree of anxiety, doubt, loss, and uneasiness in 2020. Some are mourning the loss of loved ones; others are overwhelmed with the stress of unemployment; and all of us are dealing with social anxiety – the fear of contracting the virus from others or, even worse, giving it to children, parents, grandparents, or friends. Who

among us could have imagined when this year began that churches and schools would be closed for months and that, even when our churches did reopen, they would have such limited numbers in attendance? Whatever our personal experience of 2020 may be, it is helpful to keep rooted in our faith, remembering that Jesus came to bring us peace and that we are the witnesses of that peace and hope to all God's people.

Within the Advent/Christmas season is situated the Feast of the Holy Family, which focusses on hope, peace, and loving family relationships. Following are a few personal observations from the last few months that have reminded me of the importance of family life:

- the birth of a baby brought a bright light of love and joy to her parents, grandparents, and siblings that obliterated the anxiety of COVID-19;
- the loneliness of grandparents was alleviated by teenage grandchildren sharing their love through the magic of the Internet;
- the prayers of parents for their adult children serving in missionary countries and unable to get home were returned by those children who are likewise worried about the wellbeing of their parents.

In families everywhere, one of the most positive aspects of this unusual year has been the open and ardent expression of love and concern.

We all look forward to the day when our churches will be fully reopened and we can be together again. In the meantime, we are grateful for livestreamed Sunday and weekday Masses, and for online resources, such as reflection videos and First Friday devotions. For many, this year of isolation has provided more opportunity for prayer and reflection. Parishes are finding new ways to connect with shut-ins and to support foodbanks and local agencies which provide outreach to the homeless.

Yes, the celebration of the Advent and Christmas seasons may be different during this pandemic year, but we can still witness the peace that Jesus brought to the world if we have open minds, compassionate hearts, and a positive outlook.

My Christmas greeting to you is best expressed in the Gospel Acclamation for the Feast of the Holy Family: **"May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts; and the fulness of his message live within you."**

From the Office of Religious Education

Mary-Jo MacKinnon-Simms

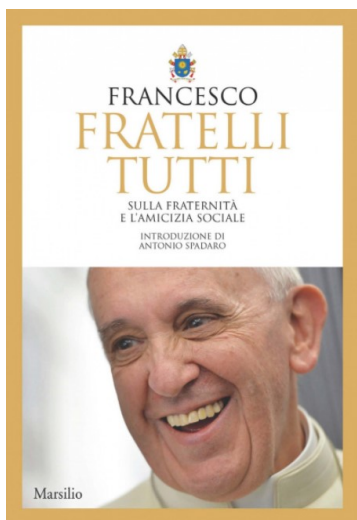
*"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion,
"Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.
Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem."*

Isaiah 52:7-9

During these challenging times in our world, the Office of Religious Education is finding new ways to support our faith and make connections through innovation. The Pastoral Centre library has some excellent resources in book and DVD format. Please call or email Gorett for more information at ore@romancatholic.kingston.on.ca, 613-548-4461 ext 112.

We developed some new initiatives this Fall, including a **Sacramental Preparation Zoom Meeting** on November 17th, for parents preparing their children for **First Communion and First Reconciliation**, and another Zoom Meeting on November 24th, for those preparing for the **Sacrament of Confirmation**. Our goal was to offer resources to assist parents in preparing their children for these sacraments. We are happy to add more sessions in the new year, if there is interest expressed.

During Advent this year, the Archdiocese of Kingston will be hosting a video presentation each week on the Sunday Mass readings. Reflections will be given by the following presenters: **Deacon Mark Mawson, Father Julius Nwagbara, smmm, Sister Rosemary Brosseau, cnd, and Mary Pat Byrne**. The videos will be available on our Archdiocesan website on the Thursday before the next Sunday of Advent. It is our hope that, during these times of uncertainty, these reflections will bring comfort and promise for the Advent season.



In the new year, we will be hosting a **Zoom workshop**, facilitated by **Robert Mundle**, on **Pope Francis's recent encyclical letter, Fratelli Tutti**. The workshop will be held on **January 26th** from **6:30-8:30 p.m.** Watch your bulletin and our webpage for sign-up details.

We will be hosting a **Zoom Workshop for Grandparents**, entitled "**Sharing our Faith**", on **February 22nd** from **6:30-8:30 p.m.** It will be facilitated by **David Dayler**, the author of **Sharing Our Story: How Grandparents Today Pass On The Catholic Faith**. Please watch our website and check your bulletin for details. **Sharing Our Story** can be ordered online from Novalis at <https://en.novalis.ca/products/sharing-our-stories>

As always, I welcome your insight and ideas. Please contact me anytime!

From the Liturgy Office

Mariola Gozdek

"The Son of God became Man to enable Men to become the Sons of God."

From Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

As I write this reflection, the world is experiencing the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Knowing that Christmas will be very different this year, should we sing with Faith Hill: "Where are you Christmas? Why can't I find you? Why have you gone away...?"

Certainly, we may relate to these words, but, as Christians, we know that even a pandemic cannot stop Christmas from coming. For centuries, Christians have celebrated Christmas in good and in bad times, strengthened by the peace and joy that come with this holy season. At Christmas, we celebrate joyfully the mystery of the Incarnation -- that is, God being born in human flesh, true God and true Man, revealing His unconditional love for us. We reflect on this sacred mystery on bended knee, and celebrate it in song, prayer, and expressions of goodwill.

As a Church community, we celebrate the mystery of God becoming one with us, Emmanuel. This year, we will hear again the wonderful story of Christ's birth. The story will not change nor will its message be diminished, even though our world is in disarray. Of course, some of our cherished traditions will have to change. We may not be able to choose our favourite time to attend Christmas Mass; our children will not be taking part in a Christmas Pageant; and we will not be singing Christmas carols together. Many people will choose to stay home and watch Christmas Mass livestreamed from their parish.

Some traditions will not change. Our worship spaces and our homes will be decorated as always, with Nativity scenes and Christmas trees and lights everywhere to remind us of the joy of the season. Whether we participate in Mass in person or online, we will all hear the same good news: "Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord". We will stand in front of the Nativity Scene and reflect prayerfully on the peaceful sight of Mary and Joseph bending over the newborn Baby Jesus, the Son of God, surrounded by sheep, shepherds, and angels, and the words, "*O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord...*" will fill our hearts and minds.

On Christmas Day we will hear these words from the Gospel of John, "*at the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and lived among us and ... to all who receive Him, He gave power to become children of God*". Through our baptism, we share in God's divine nature. We have become daughters and sons of God; sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ. His Word is revealed to us again this Christmas, calling us to reflect on that great mystery so that we can live more fully our Christian faith.

"When the song of the Angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When shepherds are back with their flock,

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost and the lonely one,
To heal the broken soul with love,
To feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,
To feel the earth below the sky above,
To free the prisoner from all chains,
To make the powerful care,
To rebuild the nations with strength of good will,
To see God's children everywhere,
To bring hope to every task you do,
To dance at a baby's new birth,
To make music in an old person's heart,
And sing to the colours of the earth."

Howard Thurman



Call, Formation, and Life as a Deacon

Deacon Bob Wojcik

Our lives are a journey, including a spiritual journey. To make a long story short, I was born in Argentina, arrived in Canada at the age of five, along with my parents and my brother, and grew up in the Polish-Canadian parish of St. Casimir on Roncesvalles Avenue in Toronto. I graduated from Ryerson Polytechnic Institute as a chemical technologist and moved to Kingston in 1980 to work at the Research Centre of Du Pont Canada. Shortly after I arrived, I made some friends who sincerely lived their faith. They were joyful and peaceful, just like Christ. It was truly a blessing for me to meet like-minded people outside of the circle of my family and long-time friends. Margaret-Anne Charboneau and I were married in 1986 and have been blessed with two sons, Andrew and Luke. Helping to raise our boys and working in a challenging workplace taught me many life lessons. I began to experience and appreciate the concept of life-long learning. I believe that God wants us to become who He has called us to be.

About sixteen years ago, while still working at DuPont Canada, something began to stir within me. Someone suggested that I consider the Permanent Diaconate. I thought about it and prayed a great deal. Then one evening, I hesitantly said to my wife, "I'm thinking of looking into the diaconate." Margaret-Anne's response was immediate -- "FINALLY". She knew that, although I was happy with my job at Du Pont, I would likely be more fulfilled by serving God and the Church. She wanted me to make the first step in that direction on my own. As usual, our wives know where we guys are headed long before we realize it ourselves! Together, Margaret-Anne and I attended an Inquiry Day, and I had her complete support when I eventually applied for acceptance into the program.

The next three years were a wonderful whirlwind of once-a-month weekends of prayer, study, liturgy, and fellowship, frequent home study evenings with diaconal candidates and leaders, and many online courses, which included assignments, essays, homiletic study, discussion, and practice. Throughout the five-year formation program, Margaret-Anne shared my journey. Our spouses have to know exactly what their husbands are getting into. Of course, the involvement of wives in their husbands' ministry is varied, but their support must always be genuine. Throughout the process of formation, we experienced a continuous co-discernment as a diaconal couple -- within ourselves and with the guidance of the Diocesan Permanent Diaconate team, which included Archbishop O'Brien, Deacon Bill Gervais as Director of Deacons, and others.

Margaret-Anne and I were assigned by the Archbishop to St. Joseph's Parish in Kingston, where we have served for almost 9 ½ years. I have been privileged to serve with the Pastor, Msgr. Joseph Lynch, and with Frs. Jan Kusiak, Francis Zambon, and James Quirk. The parish staff and parishioners have been most supportive of us. They have taught me a great deal about the reality of serving the People of God. Over the years, many other fine priests and deacons have also been shining examples to me. I serve in the parish as a homilist and deacon at the altar for Sunday, weekday, and school Masses, funerals, and other liturgies. I also serve in the community as a pastoral visitation volunteer at Kingston General Hospital under the kind leadership of Friar David Collins. I very much enjoy bringing the light of Christ to patients, visitors, staff, and other volunteers. I also endeavour, through funeral liturgies, to bring the compassion of Jesus to those grieving the loss of a loved one. With Margaret-Anne's support, my life journey continues, and I have never been happier in my life!

Come and see if you are called to become a Permanent Deacon. The Archdiocese of Kingston is planning to begin a new Inquiry Period in September 2021. If you would like to learn more about the Permanent Diaconate, please view our webpage, www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/permanent-diaconate or telephone Deacon Bill Gervais, the Director of Deacons, at 613-548-4461, ext. 116.



Photos by Sharon Buffett