

DIOCESE OF ST. CATHARINES

DIOCESAN UPDATE

September 11, 2020



BISHOP'S PUBLIC EVENTS

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| Sunday, September 13 | Mass, Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Catharines |
| Monday, September 14 | Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) Education Commission Virtual Meeting |
| Monday, September 14 | Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) Virtual Meeting |
| Tuesday, September 15 | Cathedral Appeal Meeting, Catholic Centre, St. Catharines |
| Tuesday, September 15 | Hotel Dieu Shaver Board Virtual Meeting |
| Wednesday, September 16 | Diocesan Council of Priests Meeting, Catholic Centre, St. Catharines |
| Thursday, September 17 | Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) Executive Committee Virtual Meeting |

FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK

- After a long recess we are ready to resume the Diocesan Update. I hope that everyone had an enjoyable summer despite the restrictions placed upon us as a result of COVID-19.
- We were all shocked and deeply troubled by the recent break-in and theft of the tabernacle in our Cathedral. Although we have been able to retrieve the tabernacle, the Blessed Sacrament was not found. This is the greatest tragedy because the Blessed Sacrament has been desecrated! I do not believe that the motivation for this crime was the occult. It would seem that the thieves were interested in money and considered the tabernacle as some kind of safe. How are we to respond?

The most important thing that we can do is to pray. I ask that you offer this simply prayer of reparation with me on a daily basis for a period of one month. Please ask your parishioners to also recite this prayer and make it available to them. We will begin on Monday, September 14, which is the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, and conclude on Monday, October 12, which is Thanksgiving Day.

O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary I beg the conversion of poor sinners. Amen.

Très Sainte Trinité, Père, Fils et Saint-Esprit, je Vous adore profondément, et je Vous offre le très précieux Corps, Sang, Âme et Divinité de Jésus-Christ, présent dans tous les Tabernacles de la terre, en réparation des outrages, sacrilèges et indifférences par lesquels Il est Lui-même offensé. Par les mérites infinis de Son très Saint Cœur et du Cœur Immaculé de Marie, je Vous demande la conversion des pauvres pécheurs . Amen.

I also ask that during that month you celebrate one of your daily Masses each week in honour of The Most Holy Eucharist. It should be offered in reparation for the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament at the Cathedral.

I believe that this act of desecration also affords us the opportunity to focus on the sublime gift of the Holy Eucharist. During this month, in your preaching, I ask that you make the effort to reinforce what the Church teaches about the Mass and the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. This is of vital importance as statistics tell us that the number of Catholics who believe in this fundamental teaching of our faith is decreasing. We should also focus on greater reverence for the Blessed Sacrament.

With this in mind, I have been deeply troubled by what I have seen and heard regarding people dropping the host when receiving Holy Communion while wearing masks. I ask that you please ask the person presenting himself or herself for Communion to please remove their mask before you give them the Host. They should never be walking with the Blessed Sacrament while trying to remove their mask and consume the Host. We must be vigilant!

I ask that this vigilance also be extended to the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. Please ensure that the tabernacle is secure and that the key is placed in a safe place in the sacristy or rectory. The Code of Canon Law states, "The tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is habitually reserved is to be immovable, made of solid and non-transparent material, and so locked as to give the greatest security against danger of profanation" (Can. 937, para. 3). A security system for the Church, especially for the area around the tabernacle, is recommended if possible.

I continue to be deeply disturbed by this theft, especially with regard to the Blessed Sacrament. As you may know, the tabernacle was found dumped in shallow water not far from the Cathedral. Two pieces of the ciborium, that was in the tabernacle, were also found in the water. My only consolation is that the Hosts within that ciborium dissolved in the water. That is my hope and prayer.

I think that we should also pray for those who committed this act. If done out of ignorance or addiction, may God be merciful.

- I have included a Pastoral Letter regarding the break-in at the Cathedral.
I ask that it be read at all Masses this weekend.
- I wish to welcome Father Slawomir Oblak, O.M.I. to the Diocese of St. Catharines. Fr. Oblak has been appointed pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in St. Catharines.
- I am pleased to inform you that Margaret Jong, Vice-Chancellor, has been appointed to the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario's Professional Conduct Committee. I am grateful to Margaret for taking on this added responsibility.
- Please keep in your prayers Father Lawrence Martis as well as Marypillai Santhampillai, sister-in-law of Father Manuel Soosaipillai, who are both very ill and in hospital at this time.

- Please continue to keep in your prayers all those suffering from the effects of natural disasters, especially those victims of the recent explosion that occurred in Beirut, Lebanon on August 6, 2020.
- I wish to remind you that Mass intention requests that cannot be fulfilled in a reasonable amount of time should be sent to the Chancery. Canon law states, “no one may accept more offerings for Masses to be celebrated himself than he can discharge in a year” (Canon 953). The Mass intentions with stipends that are received are used to assist our retired priests and missionary priests. It is also important to remember that when celebrating Masses with multiple intentions the celebrant is the only one allowed to keep one stipend. The custom in our diocese is that the remainder of the stipends are sent to the Chancery to assist in the education of our seminarians.
- As a new academic year begins I thank you for your commitment to Catholic education and encourage you to continue to be actively involved in your parish schools where possible. I realize that due to COVID-19, school visits will be very different. There are school protocols in place that should be followed. Copies will be made available to you in the near future. I also wish to take this opportunity to welcome the new Director of Education for the Niagara Catholic District School Board, Mr. Camillo Cipriano.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- Refugee Ministry News
We are sorry to say goodbye to Sonia Marisol Aviles, our Refugee Ministry Coordinator, who will be leaving the position at the end of September for health and family considerations. We are grateful to Sonia who has done tremendous work with this ministry, providing support to sponsors and newcomers as well as creating a comprehensive database. Sydney Shadbolt has been hired to take over the role. She has experience with refugee assistance through Romero House in Toronto, and is also familiar with the application process for work visas and other documentation which will be a great help for international clergy ministering in our Diocese.
- The Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization released the new Directory for Catechesis on June 25, 2020. Specifically, the Directory for Catechesis emphasizes the relationship between evangelization and catechesis. The CCCB Office for Evangelization and Catechesis will offer a four-part series to introduce the new Directory for Catechesis. Beginning in October 2020, the series will be held once a week for 1.5 hours via webinar. Please consult the attached flyer for specific topics, registration and times. The series is designed for those in your dioceses/eparchies who have responsibility for evangelization and catechesis. Space is limited to 100. For more information contact Mrs. Marg Shea-Lawrence at m.shea-lawrence@cccb.ca. An order form for the Directory for Catechesis is also attached to this Update.
- The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) have appointed Dr. Anne Jamieson as the New Executive Director of the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) effective September 1, 2020. The ACBO has also appointed Mr. Brian Beal as the new General Secretary for the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario effective September 1, 2020.

- École secondaire catholique Jean-Vanier in Welland has been renamed École secondaire catholique Saint-Jean-de-Brébeuf.
- **Special Collections:** **Sunday, September 13, 2020**, Church in the Holy Land (rescheduled from Good Friday from the Holy See)
Sunday, September 27, 2020, Needs of the Church in Canada

Pope Francis Prayer Intention for the month of September

We pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner. (Apostleship of Prayer)

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Congratulations for ordination anniversaries for the month of September

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| Fr. Randy Gallant | Sept. 1 | Fr. Denis Grecco | Sept. 10 |
| Fr. Patrick Gilmurray, C.P.P.S. | Sept. 1 | Fr. David Spengler | Sept. 14 |
| Fr. Andrew Goodwin | Sept. 1 | Deacon George Newman | Sept. 26 |
| Fr. Stanley Pietlock | Sept. 7 | Fr. Peter Rowe | Sept. 29 |

Birthday greetings for the month of September

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| Fr. Gregory Schmidt | Sept. 7 | Deacon Brian Jeynes | Sept. 16 |
| Fr. James Mulligan, C.S.C. | Sept. 10 | Bishop James Wingle | Sept. 23 |
| Fr. Peter Rowe | Sept. 10 | Deacon Michael Anthony | Sept. 27 |
| Fr. Andrew Morasse, C.S.C. | Sept. 11 | | |