



FROM THE VINEYARD

Newsletter No. 13; January 5, 2018

WE HAD WONDERFUL CELEBRATIONS OF CHRISTMAS AND MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains. The music was glorious, the decorations were luminous and there was a great prayerful spirit among those who gathered for worship. Even the snowfall on Christmas Eve did not deter many people from our Midnight Mass – in fact, it added to the ambience! It gave me great joy to celebrate my first Christmas as Bishop in our mother church. I hope that the celebrations of Christ's birth were equally uplifting in all our parishes and that your Christmas was a blessed one.

THIS IS FR. LUIS LAPINID'S FINAL WEEKEND AS RECTOR OF OUR CATHEDRAL. He has served in this important role for nearly ten years – and has had to put up with three bishops during that time! Like my predecessors, I have been grateful for his devoted and joyful service, combining generous priestly ministry along with the many extra duties involved in managing a Cathedral. The Cathedral community says goodbye to him with some social time after this Sunday's Masses; and then Father Luis is off to some well-deserved months of sabbatical in the Philippines. Also, this weekend, the parishioners of St. Mary's in Lindsay bid farewell to FATHER TOM LYNCH, as he takes up his post as the new Cathedral Rector. I offer my sincere thanks both to Fr. Luis and Fr. Tom for their priestly service and excellent leadership.

I ATTENDED THE CCO "RISE UP" CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA between Christmas and New Year's and, true to its name, it was uplifting. Catholic Christian Outreach is a university student movement dedicated to evangelization. Their missionaries are present on many campuses across our country, and their faith study resources are also well-used by chaplains and campus ministers. I was happy to be there with half a dozen other bishops, many priests and sisters and – most importantly – about 800 university students. It was quite moving to see that many students eager to hear the Word of God, to grow in their faith and to join in praise and worship. Our own Father John Perdue led a contingent of 15 or so students from Trent University and Fleming College. And I was delighted to see Sarah Grills, our Recruitment Officer from Sacred Heart College, fielding questions and giving away pamphlets and pens!

THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY HAS OPENED A NEW "VINNIE'S THRIFT STORE" IN LAKEFIELD. The official opening took place on Wednesday and I had the privilege of cutting the ribbon and offering a blessing. This new location will help the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to extend their reach and enhance their good work with the poor. I was impressed to see that the store (at 144 Queen Street in Lakfield) is spacious, well organized, and has lots of parking. Kudos to all who worked so hard to get it ready especially over the Christmas season.

WE'VE ALREADY REMOVED MANY OF THE INTERIOR CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS from the Diocesan Pastoral Centre; but the outside decorations remain, and I wasn't ready to part with the Christmas tree. Even if the secular world has moved on, the Christmas season continues until this Monday's feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Blessed Epiphany to you all as we gather on Sunday.

Pax et Bonum, † Daniel