



FROM THE VINEYARD

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GAUDETE ET EXULTATE (“Rejoice and Be Glad!”) is a new apostolic letter issued by Pope Francis this week, on the subject of holiness. Specifically, he writes about the call to holiness in today’s world. He coins the wonderful expression “the middle class of holiness,” to describe ordinary people who live quietly in our midst while reflecting the presence of God. It’s an interesting read.

THE CONFIRMATION CIRCUIT has been keeping me busy this week, and I so much appreciate that it allows me to visit many parishes. Among other places, I celebrated Mass for the first time at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Newcastle and St. Aloysius Parish in Fenelon Falls. I also enjoyed being back at St. Therese Parish in Courtice and St. Joseph Parish in Douro. The young people all seem enthusiastic and well-prepared. I am grateful to the parish and school staffs and the many volunteers who have worked so hard to ensure that the students are ready to receive this Sacrament.

SACRED HEART COLLEGE is delighted with the response to their certificate program in Theology of the Body. Sister Helena Burns, an internationally renowned speaker on this subject, has been directing this course on Saturdays running from March to May. There has been an excellent turnout for these sessions - both in-classroom students and on-line participants. And the on-line folk hail from around the world! It is great to see Sacred Heart fulfilling its mandate and Catholic mission, helping to promote this theology on human sexuality, derived from presentations given by St. John Paul II.

THE PLASTER DUST IS FLYING in various parts of our Diocese. Our Diocesan Property and Building Committee met this week to consider requests for various building and improvement projects taking place in our churches, halls and rectories. Candidly, some pastors love this kind of work and some are not so keen on it: and so, I must acknowledge the good work of lay people on parish committees and our Diocesan Committee who bring a level of expertise in guiding such projects through from inception to completion.

OUR DIOCESAN FINANCE COUNCIL also convened this week, as we do on about a quarterly basis. Those meetings have been helpful to me, especially in my early going as bishop, to get a handle on the many moving parts in the temporal affairs of the diocese. I am grateful to staff and Council members alike who work so hard to ensure our fiscal wellbeing. I should also mention that there is a four-year consolidated Review of our Diocesan Finances in the current edition of *The Catholic Herald*. Please pick up a copy at your parish or check out the latest edition online.

I HAD MY SNOW TIRES REMOVED THIS WEEK, just in time for the predicted ice storm! Notwithstanding the ominous forecasts, I am looking forward to celebrating Confirmation back at St. Therese Parish in Courtice and at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Lakefield. Here’s praying the weather won’t be as bad as they say.

Pax et Bonum, †Daniel