



FROM THE VINEYARD

Newsletter No. 40; October 5, 2018

I SPENT MOST OF LAST WEEK AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE CCCB (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops). This annual gathering of Canadian Bishops, held in Cornwall, is an important time for us to discuss issues of common pastoral concern. Prominent agenda items included Indigenous issues, responding to clergy sexual abuse and this fall's Synod in Rome on Youth and Vocations. It's also an opportune time to touch base with confreres near and far. (And there may have been a couple of games of Euchre along with that.) I was delighted to speak with my predecessor, Bishop William McGrattan, doing very well in the Diocese of Calgary: he also has the task of serving as treasurer of the CCCB.

YESTERDAY, THE CCCB RELEASED ITS UPDATED GUIDELINES ON CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE. The revision of these guidelines, first published in 1992, has been in process for some three years. "Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse," contains learnings from the past thirty years of dealing with this issue and represents the standard by which individual dioceses will review and update their own guidelines and procedures. It is a timely and welcome resource which will be of great value to us here in Peterborough in our ongoing efforts to ensure the protection of minors and any vulnerable people.

THE SONS OF MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY held their annual meeting and retreat at Sacred Heart Parish in Trout Creek this week. Thirty-six priests from this order (who hail from Nigeria) serve in various Canadian dioceses, including four here in Peterborough. Father Emmanuel Okpataku was the very congenial host for his brother priests, and he was aided by many kind and hospitable parishioners. I was happy to be with them yesterday to celebrate the closing Mass and join in the festivities afterwards. There was a great and wonderful spirit of rejoicing, not to mention some lively music!

THE BLESSING OF THE ICON OF OUR LORD AND SAINT PETER took place at the Cathedral this past Sunday. I was happy to see a good crowd of worshippers at the 10:30 Mass as we celebrated this rite. And I am very happy already to have distributed two smaller versions of the icon, since it has the status of our official Diocesan gift. The icon bears the beautiful words of St. Peter, which also grace our coat of arms, "Lord, you have the words of eternal life."

Fresh off the Canadian Bishops' meeting, the ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO (ACBO) met for two days in Toronto this week. These twice-yearly get-togethers allow us to address issues of a more regional nature. It was a good couple of days. Alas, there was just one measly Euchre game!

CONGRATULATIONS TO FATHER ANTHONY EZEONWUEME who became a Canadian citizen in a ceremony in Mississauga earlier this week. Father Anthony is from Nigeria and has served in the Diocese of Peterborough for several years: first at St. Therese Parish in Courtice and currently at St. John the Evangelist Parish (and its missions) in Kirkfield. I expect he will be toasted and boasted by his parishioners, and rightfully so!

Pax et Bonum, † Daniel