



FROM THE VINEYARD

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PLACES OF WORSHIP IN OUR PROVINCE may begin to open now with 30% capacity. This long-awaited good news about easing of the pandemic restrictions means that we may resume our public celebrations of the Mass and other liturgies. (The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario was among those who lobbied the government for places of worship to be included in Phase 2 of the Reopening.) I issued a letter this week about the Re-opening plans and a video which can be found on our YouTube channel. In short: churches open for prayer, Confessions and Eucharistic Adoration this Sunday; resumption of Daily Mass beginning Tuesday, June 16; and a return to the celebration of Sunday Mass on the weekend of June 20/21. There is much to be done as we deal with cleaning, traffic control, volunteer coordination and some adapted procedures for Mass. I pray that our joy at the relaunch of parish life and worship will help all of us to be patient and cooperative with the various precautions and practices that we will observe. More information on that will come next week.

RESPECT FOR THE OTHER IS A MUST. This theme is at the heart of a statement of the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops in response to the recent tragic events in Minneapolis with the death of George Floyd at the hands of police. I expect that we have all been gripped by the news reports coming from the United States in recent weeks and disturbed by the various images that we have seen. Certainly, it has been a reminder that racism and discrimination remain, as the statement says, “an appalling reality for a civilized society. The Bishops and Catholic faithful of Canada join Pope Francis in lamenting all who have lost their lives and suffered because of exclusion, racism and violence which are antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

I WAS HAPPY TO INVITE FATHER BALONWU OKPE of St Mary Parish in Lindsay to be the homilist for the televised Mass on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ – or Corpus Christi as it is better known. I welcome you to tune in to that Mass on Your TV in Peterborough & Lindsay or to access through the You Tube link on our website. This great feast celebrates the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, and Father Okpe more than does justice to that great theme in his homily! (As the public celebration of the Mass resumes in our Diocese, I will have more to say about that televised Mass in the near future.)

ST. FRANCIS PARISH ASSISI PARISH IN NEWCASTLE, has been missing Father Ace Podelino, who remains in the Philippines, hindered by the current uncertainty around air travel. I am grateful that Father John Perdue has agreed to administer St. Francis of Assisi Parish in the coming weeks. Parachuting in right at the time of the Re-opening is no small task, but I know he will be well-supported by staff and a cadre of excellent volunteers!

Fraternally, † Daniel