



FROM THE VINEYARD

Newsletter No. 10; December 8, 2017

TODAY IS THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, one of the great Marian Feasts in the Church's calendar. Priests and Deacons of the Diocese will be in the festive mood today as we gather for our pre-Christmas celebration, beginning with Mass at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains. Afterwards we will retire for a luncheon at Bishop Doyle Hall which promises to be convivial and entertaining. Who knows? I may even get the chance to play Kris Kringle and hand out a present or two! Please pray for the clergy of our Diocese who will be working hard and ministering diligently in the coming weeks.

I ENJOYED MY VISIT TO ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI PARISH IN PETERBOROUGH last Sunday when we began the Advent season in joy and expectation. I had managed to be there a few times in recent months, but somehow never for the celebration of Sunday Mass. This was an overdue visit, and I was glad finally to see for myself the large community that gathers there and to experience some of the vitality of St. Alphonsus. Father Jerry Tavares manages to keep all the plates spinning, with the help of his good team and many volunteers.

I WAS HAPPY TO CELEBRATE MASS ON TUESDAY FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PVNC CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD. Congratulations to Michelle Griepsma on being acclaimed to another term as Board Chair. Afterwards, trustees, senior administration and priests gathered for a lovely dinner and the Board's Clergy Appreciation Evening. And I can tell you that it was much appreciated by the clergy in attendance.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN A ROW, the parishes of St. Therese in Courtice, St. Joseph in Bowmanville and St. Francis of Assisi in Newcastle have combined to hold an **ADVENT RETREAT**. This year, St. Therese Parish hosted and happily received parishioners from all along "The Lakeshore." They were treated to excellent talks by Father Pavel Ratajczak, OMI. St. Therese has been under the good care of the Oblates (OMI's) since 2016, and Father Tomasz Koscincki and Father Paul Patrick were happy to welcome their confrere as Retreat Leader. I appreciated being with them and celebrating the closing Mass on Wednesday night. And I won't deny it – one of the most interesting things for me was to see the "Living Nativity" on their property, populated with actual livestock! It's a long-standing tradition there and worth checking out.

PETERBOROUGH IS ONE OF SIX DIOCESES now formally partnered with **THE ARCHDIOCESE OF KEEWATIN-LE PAS**. The Catholic Church in Canada is seeking new ways to support northern, remote dioceses and this partnership arrangement will be one of the main ways to achieve that. I spent some time last Friday on a teleconference with the other bishops of our little club. It was interesting to hear Archbishop Murray Chatlain describe the hurdles he faces ministering in a large, remote territory with few resources; and likewise, the challenges of his priests and people. We will look to engage parishes, pastoral councils and lay organizations in this ongoing partnership with our brothers and sisters in the north of our country.

Pax et Bonum, † Daniel