



FROM THE VINEYARD

Newsletter No. 3; October 20, 2017

LAST FRIDAY EVENING, I WAS AT ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PARISH IN KIRKFIELD to celebrate a Mass of Reparation. This was necessary because of the break-in and desecration that took place there a week earlier. Though it wasn't a happy occasion, it was a rite that brought consolation to the parishioners after such a vile attack. It was also a time to focus upon the reverence we have for the Blessed Sacrament and the importance we give to our sacred places. Father Anthony Ezeonwueme had things well organized and was supported by a strong contingent of parishioners who attended, despite the short notice. Thanks also to the priests and deacons who joined us in solidarity and prayer that evening.

FATHER CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS AND HIS PARISHIONERS welcomed me at St. Alphonsus Parish in Wooler, St. Jerome Parish in Warkworth and Holy Angels Parish in Brighton this past weekend. It was my first time visiting that most southeastern corner of our Diocese! Many of our priests care for several faith communities, as does Father Reynolds, and it keeps them bouncing around on a Sunday. I was grateful for the hospitality of all three communities who generously plied me with food and drink after the Masses. Because of a cold, my voice was doing a gradual disappearing act but I managed to squeak through the final Mass.

I ENJOYED MEETING CHIEF PHYLLIS WILLIAMS of Curve Lake First Nation last Friday. A number of students from Curve Lake attend St. Paul Catholic Elementary School in Lakefield, so I happily joined with Michael Nasello, Director of Education, and PVNCCDSB staff in a very congenial and informative ninety-minute meeting. I look forward to meeting with other First Nations leaders in our community in the coming weeks and months.

THE ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO (ACBO) meets twice a year and we convened for our Fall Session in Ottawa this past week. It's always a busy couple of days with a crowded agenda. Catholic Education takes up much of the discussion especially as we continue to roll out in our province the new Religious Education program, *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ*. Educators and clergy alike have been impressed with this new program which now covers grades one to four with grades five to eight to be published in the coming years. Another priority we discussed was conscience rights for physicians and health care providers in our new Canadian reality of Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide - a further campaign is being planned.

AFTER OUR ONTARIO BISHOPS' MEETING, we attended the Archbishop's Charity Dinner along with about 700 clergy, religious and lay people in Ottawa. Archbishop Prendergast directs the proceeds of each year's dinner to various charities. And I was blessed to be at table with one of them, the Board members of House of Hope and Healing, a faith-based counselling service that helps a tremendous number of people.

I APPRECIATED THE SHOUT-OUT FROM BISHOP CROSBY OF HAMILTON last week in his Friday Newsletter *Heart to Heart*. I have already admitted to him that *From the Vineyard* is a blatant rip-off of *Heart to Heart*, in both concept and style. No matter – I always said a good idea is worth stealing!

Pax et Bonum, †Daniel