
BOUNDLESS THANKS



There are so many beautiful things going on in our Church that I do not always have the chance to personally thank each one devoted to the cause of the Gospel for the happiness of those in need and the good of the Church. There are many examples of this. For the period of Lent and Holy Week 1995, how many would we have to thank for their constant devotedness in preparing and facilitating periods of spiritual renewal, sharing meals, especially those of Development and Peace. How numerous are the Thank Yous I have to express to all those who made the Chrism Mass the success that it was, and in the course of which the holy oils were solemnly blessed and Bishop Dionne's twentieth anniversary of episcopacy was beautifully noted. And what about all those celebrations of the Easter Triduum? Grateful thanks to the organists, choirs, sacristans, welcome committees, lectors, priests, celebrants, and confessors. And when we consider the Way of Solidarity which was experienced in Edmundston on Good Friday, my grateful thanks go to the director of youth ministry who coordinated this important activity, as well as to the members of Réact, the Edmundston City Police, those in charge of preparing each of the 14 stations of the cross, the Knights of Columbus, the region's mass media, the pastors and ministers of the other Churches, etc. My gratitude is also expressed to those who have made possible the mission trip to Mexico of eight of our youth, who will be spending the entire month of May there: bonds of solidarity and friendship unite us to our brothers and sisters of the Americas. A thousand Thank Yous to all those who support each pastoral endeavour with their prayers, sacrifices, and friendship. May the Lord grace you with His abundant blessings.

1995 PRIEST RETREAT

At the request of the Priests' Senate I have accepted to preach the retreat that is to take place at the Diocesan Centre from May 8 to 12. I ask for your prayers so that we all may benefit to the utmost from the graces which the Lord desires to bestow on us both as individuals and as community. I wish that during this our jubilee year, this retreat be for each priest the most memorable of his life. For this, three elements seem to be basic: prayer, silence, solidarity. Constant prayer will create an atmosphere of listening to the Word of God. Silence seems indispensable to me: the period of silence that is to last from Monday evening to Friday noon will be most beneficial; these 88 hours will be conducive to meditation, recollection, and adoration. Its success will be the result of the solidarity that will be created between the retreatants themselves as well as with those on the outside.

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed all day long in the bishop's chapel at the Diocesan Centre on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday: those of you who can come spend some time in prayer and adoration are welcome. The retreat will also require that "pastoral emergencies" be reduced to a minimum: I hope that all the retreatants give themselves totally to their retreat.

At dinner on Friday, May 12 it will be a pleasure to note the following ordination anniversaries: Fr. Léon Gagné (50), Fr. Edgar Lavoie (50), Fr. Félix Poitras (40), Fr. Ronald Bellefleur (40), Fr. Guy Lévesque (25).

My different talks will be based on the theme *His Love Is from Age to Age*: my main reference will be to the breviary, the "Liturgy of the Hours." On Tuesday, the reflection will focus on the Father, the one on Wednesday will be on the Son, and the one on Thursday will be on the Holy Spirit - as the Holy Father suggested in his Apostolic Letter preparatory to the Jubilee of the Year 2000, and as the diocesan coat of arms constantly propose.

THE MAREVIÉ

Since last fall a strange ship has been at anchor by the cathedral; last summer she announced the diocese's festivities. As a matter of fact, this boat has become some kind of a mascot of the diocesan festivities. This is how she presents herself:

"The beloved Edmundston Diocese Church is like the ship called MareviÉ who sails out with courage, taking on board everyone she come across.

"Propelled by the irresistible wind of the Spirit, the MareviÉ sails through the Madawaska, Restigouche, and Victoria, sometimes in the direction of the U.S.A. border, and at other times in the direction of Québec or Acadia.

"Fitted on December 16, 1944, it welcomed its first captain on August 15, 1945. 'Sail on, O ship, for happiness awaits me on the other shore!'

With 60,000 on board, it takes quite a ship! 'Let's set sail, the sea is calm!' Wind and tide favour us. Let's not miss the boat. Working together as one crew, closely united with our new captain Bishop François, let us work harder. We are a proud crew: this is our grand project!"

The MareviÉ will be visiting all the deaneries in the course of the year.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

On Saturday, May 6, from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., a day of spiritual renewal organised by the Charismatic Renewal Diocesan Committee, will be held at the Centre Godbout, Edmundston. The theme is *Come follow me*. The invited guest is Fr. David Boudreau, O.F.M. cap.

UNFORGETTABLE ANNIVERSARY

On May 8, 1965 I was ordained to the priesthood in the St-Odilon [Québec] parish church by Archbishop Joseph Plourde. Thirty years have already gone by, and with you I want to thank the Lord for all the graces He has never ceased to bestow on me. I also want to express my gratitude to all of you for your constant support and for the many prayers you offer on my behalf. Continue to ask God that I be a shepherd after His own heart.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

As we are approaching May 14, I wish to all the mothers of the diocese, a fond *Happy Mother's Day!* May this day be beautiful and be filled with happiness and peace. I join with you and yours in prayer and thanksgiving.

Have a good week!

+ François Thibodeau *in*

+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.
Bishop of Edmundston

« From A Bishop's Journal » (066) (03 May 1995)