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## A MEETING-PLACE OF LOVE



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Make sure that you don't miss our diocesan gathering! Our second Diocesan Eucharistic Congress will take place on May 30 and 31, and June 1, to prepare for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000. Pastoral workers from the Southern Victoria Deanery have been diligently preparing this congress to be held at St. Ann Parish, Maliseet. The theme of the Congress is *The Eucharist, Heart of Our Mission*. On Friday, May 30 at 7:00 P.M., I shall preside the opening Mass, and Bishop Gérard Dionne will deliver the homily as well as a conference on Saturday morning at 10:00 o'clock. For the 40 hours or so that the Congress will last, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed in the church at the Tobique Reserve (St. Ann's); all the deaneries and a number of parishes, organisations, and groups have been contacted to ensure a continuous presence before the Blessed Sacrament, for prayer and adoration. On Sunday, June 1, I shall celebrate with you a solemn mass of thanksgiving at the bingo hall which is situated at the Reserve entrance.

### A WONDERFUL SHARING

Our Maliseet brothers and sisters are happy to host this diocesan congress. They will offer us a warm welcome and will share with us about their spirituality, their culture, and their traditions. We shall be given ample opportunity to observe some of their activities. Following Mass on Friday evening, and again following the Penitential Service on Saturday evening, there will be a social hour, and storytelling by Judy McAloon. On both Saturday and Sunday, we shall have the opportunity to join the Maliseet people in the native Sunrise Service (6:00 A.M.); morning prayer will be said at 9:30. We shall be able to learn about native spirituality at two "talking circles" on the subject; these activities will take place at 2:00 o'clock on Saturday afternoon and at 10:00 o'clock, Sunday morning. A pot-luck supper will be served to all present, following the 4:00 P.M. mass, on Sunday.

### A PRICELESS TREASURE

The 1997 Eucharistic Congress gives us the opportunity to better understand before all else the wonderful mission we were all given at Baptism, the mission of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus to every nation, to our brothers and sisters here and abroad, to work like Jesus at transforming the world according to the mind of God, and to collaborate with Jesus in his mission of peace, justice, and unity. At the heart of this mission, at the heart of our lives as disciples of Jesus, there is this priceless treasure which is the Eucharist. Jesus gave us the sacrament of his Body given up and of his Blood poured out for all humankind. He made himself our Bread of Life, he decided to be with us until the end of time, to unite us to one another as he himself is united to his Father and as he wants us to be united together. This mission isn't only for priests and bishops but for every baptised person; we are called to live out this mandate on a day-to-day basis, whether in the workplace or at home, or in our social, economic, cultural, and political activities. The Eucharist is the fount and the summit of the Christian life. [Cf. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, No. 10. In: Austin Flannery, O.P., Gen. Ed., *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. Study Edition. Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1987, p. 6] It is the source from which flow countless benefits which motivate to have but one heart and one soul, among us. [Acts 5:32]

### USEFUL HELP

Among the services offered by the diocese this past year, I want to introduce the Centre de spiritualité, [The Centre for Spirituality] the pastoral formation service, and the École de la Foi. The first two are directed by Sister Géraldine Brotherton, F.M.A., and the École de la Foi is headed by Sister Jacqueline Poirier, F.M.A. The Centre de spiritualité

offers the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, [In French] exercises tailored to the needs of people living in the world, that are considered to be stimulating and to have a promising future. The Centre also offers time and resources for spiritual and vocational discernment. We are lucky to have such a service; it can help us better understand our spiritual heritage and better discern the will of God. The pastoral formation service<sup>1</sup> is already two years old, and its mission is to train pastoral agents; it also accepts those who would like to become pastoral aids. The École de la Foi has now completed its twelfth year of existence, and one of the year's highlights was the biblical weekend [Offered in French] on the Book of Revelation. This weekend capped a one-year study of the writings of Saint John. We are justly proud of these formation and spiritual renewal services.

### **THE SERENITY CENTRE**

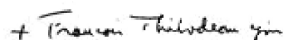
Founded in 1989 by Father Aurèle Godbout, C.J.M., the Serenity Centre is reaching far and wide in helping people free themselves from stressful situations that bring about anxiety, fears, and depression. It encourages people to reclaim joy and peace of mind. « It is by looking at things from a spiritual viewpoint that we can discover serenity and true freedom, » asserts Father Godbout. « *We want to stress the need to take good care of oneself so as to become a better 'gift' to others. We give what we are.* » Over 1200 members and anonymous benefactors contribute to making the Centre known to others. So far, over 3500 have been reached by the Serenity Centre, through its retreats, conferences, and seminars offered in the different deaneries.

### **HAPPY HOMECOMINGS**

It this time I also want to tender my best wishes to the convention of the New Brunswick Federation of Labour, and the New Brunswick Daughters of Isabella; I shall be attending both festivities. As we face the future, it behooves us to work at bringing about fellowship and unity.

### **DIOCESAN SERVICES**

Please note that the diocesan services will close on Friday, May 30, and resume on Monday, August 18. Have a good week and a nice summer!



+ François Thibodeau  
Bishop of Edmundston

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