
A MOMENTOUS EVENT FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CHURCH (2)



JOYFUL ANNIVERSARIES

It is easy to understand, given this context of love, why each priest is urged, during the retreat, to revive “the gift of God” given through the laying on of hands. In such a context of thanksgiving, it is quite understandable that we shall take the opportunity to mark several anniversaries. Thus on April 26 we shall mark the 50th anniversary or ordination of Monsignor Eymard Desjardins and Father Alfred Ouellet, the 40th anniversary of Fathers Almer Levasseur and Bertrand Ouellet, and the 25th anniversary of ordination of Father William Rice. On behalf of the Edmundston diocesan Church and in my own name, I extend to them my deepest gratitude: may the Lord repay them one hundredfold their involvement in the cause of the Gospel and of the Church.

BANNER MONTHS

While ordinations to the priesthood usually took place in May and June, it is wonderful to note that of 49 priests incardinated in our diocese or working here, 35 are celebrating an ordination anniversary. My gratitude, prayer and friendship go out to them all: Bishop Gérard Dionne (54 years on May 1), Fathers Rino Albert (56 years, May 5), Sylvio Thériault (54 years, May 6), Étienne Dubé (58 years, May 7), Msgr. Urbain Lang (64 years, May 8) – and I and Fr. Claude Côté C.J.M., shall be celebrating on that day 37 years of priestly ordination. We also have Fathers Eymard Duguay, C.J.M. (44 years, May 15), Jean-Marie Martin (39 years, May 19), Jacques Thériault (23 years, May 20), and Ivan Thériault (2 years), on the same date; Pierre Thibodeau (20 years, May 23), Yvon Ouellet (38 years, May 24), Curtis Sappier (6 years, May 25), Benoît Bossé (49 years, May 30) and, the same date, Fr. Lucien Lévesque (45 years); Normand Godbout (44 years, May 31), Rino Thériault (44 years, June 1), Claude Michaud (46 years, June 3), Ronald Bellefleur (47 years, June 4), Guy Lévesque, P.M.É. (32 years, June 6), Msgr. Eymard Desjardins (50 years, June 7) and, on the same date, Fr. Gaëtan Bernier (5 years), Fathers Alfred Ouellet (50 years, June 8), Armand Plourde (42 years, June 11), Laurent Nadeau (48 years, June 12), Frédéric Poitras (30 years, June 15), Almer Levasseur (40 years, June 21) and, on the same date, Fr. Ghislain Rémillard (5 years); Fathers Narcisse Gagnon (61 years, June 22), Bertrand Ouellet (40 years, June 24), Claude Clavet (33 years, June 28), Patrice Picard, P.M.É. (44 years, June 29) and the same date, Fathers Roger Dionne (27 years); and Gaëtan Côté (29 years, June 30).

A THOUSAND THANKS!

To this impressive list I want to add the anniversaries of 14 other priests: Fathers Aurèle Godbout, C.J.M. (46 years, February 25), Georges Fournier (46 years, March 19), Msgr. Fernand Boucher (56 years, April 28), Claude Dumont, P.M.É. (51 years, July 1), and, the same date, Guy Sirois, P.M.É. (43 years), and Bertin Michaud (18 years), Jacques Gauvreau (42 years, July 3), Romain Trépanier, S.M. (21 years, August 15), William Rice (25 years, September 4), Joseph Numbi Phaku Mavambu (17 years, September 22), Gaston Duchesne, S.M. (22 years, November 22), Ernest Dumaresq, C.J.M. (36 years, December 17), Leo Grégoire, I.V.D. (33 years, December 20), and Gérald Montminy, S.M. (34 years, December 21). The Edmundston diocesan Church presbyterium totals 1,830 years of life dedicated to the Lord, to proclaim to the world that *His love is from age to age!*

A WONDERFUL RETREAT

In heart and thought, and through prayer, I shall be present to the entire presbyterium of the Edmundston Church, and I shall beseech the Lord to continue sending us many more holy priests. The liturgy of the week of April 22 is an invitation to thanksgiving, intercession, and admiration: "The Lord is my shepherd!" "My soul thirst for you, O God!" "Forever I shall sing the goodness of the Lord!" My best wishes are extended to all the priests, and I hope to see everyone of them sometime in May or June. "Peace be with you!"

+ François Thibodeau

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Bishop of Edmundston

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