



ARCHEVÊCHÉ
ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
ARCHIDIOCÈSE DE SAINT-BONIFACE ARCHDIOCESE

BUREAU DE L'ARCHEVÈQUE
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

*Homélie de Son Excellence Monseigneur Albert LeGatt
Homily of Most Reverend Archbishop Albert LeGatt*

Cathédrale de Saint-Boniface / Saint Boniface Cathedral

Messe chrismale - le Mardi saint 19 avril 2011 à 19h30

Chrism Mass - Holy Tuesday, April 11, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.



Chères sœurs et chers frères dans le Christ,
Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we gather tonight for this Chrism Mass, let us recognize this celebration for what it really is. Each year, in every diocese, the Chrism Mass is the primary, pre-eminent celebration that defines and builds it up as the Body of Christ in that place of the world. As the Bishop celebrates the Chrism Mass, surrounded by the priests of the diocese and by the religious and laity of that diocese, the truth of the Church is revealed and brought even more into being.

Oui, nous voici tous rassemblés ce soir pour la Messe chrismale – l'évêque, les prêtres, les religieuses et religieux, les laïcs, tous les membres de cette Église de Saint-Boniface, tous membres du Corps du Christ, tous des *alter-Christus*, des autres Christs.

Oui, il y a des distinctions, mais ce sont des distinctions de service, des différentes manières de servir. Et ainsi, nous allons recevoir, moi comme archevêque, vous comme fidèles de cet archidiocèse, le renouvellement des promesses de service sacerdotal des prêtres parmi nous. Nous entendrons de nouveau leur désir et leur engagement d'être serviteur de la Parole, serviteurs de l'Eucharistie, serviteurs de la communion qu'est l'Église.

Ils se vouent de nouveau à être *alter-Christus-caput-Christi*, sacrements, signes et instruments du Christ, la Tête de son Corps, l'Église. Et, ils vouent de faire ceci en humilité, en simplicité pour le bien de tous et de toutes. Prions pour tous nos prêtres.

Yes, please pray for all the priests of the archdiocese as we all receive their Renewal of priestly promises. By their humble service, plain and simple and open, full of wisdom, kindness and compassion, may Christ indeed anoint his Church of Saint Boniface with many blessings.

And then at this celebration of Chrism Mass, we will proceed to bless the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of the Catechumens (those preparing to be baptized), followed by the consecration of Sacred Chrism. These oils will be used for the sacramental life of our Church, for baptism, confirmation, for the anointing of the sick, for ordination to the priesthood. As from a fount, Christ continues to pour out his love and life, drawing his disciples, we his followers, ever closer to Him and ever closer to the ways of the Kingdom of God his Father.

Yes, we know this celebration well, especially if we have come to celebrate it several times over the years. It's a familiar ritual and even the person attending it for the first time can quickly seize its meaning and so its beauty.

But as with any ritual, any liturgical ritual, to really let it have all the power it is meant to have, the power of sanctifying the People of God, revealing to this People their true identity in Christ and bringing about evermore this identity in mind, soul and spirit, in word and in action, we need to meditate upon its full meaning. And so, I invite you to listen carefully to the words, the prayers we proclaim this evening.

Oui, écoutons aux mots prononcés ce soir, des mots qui expriment notre identité, notre être comme Église, Peuple de Dieu, Corps du Christ, Temple de l'Esprit. Un rituel, pour ne pas devenir lettre morte, plate et mourante, doit sans cesse être approfondi par la réflexion et

la prière, afin de nous faire entrer plus pleinement dans le mystère célébré, le mystère du Christ.

Mais une prière rituelle, une action rituelle, notre liturgie, trouve aussi son sens dans le contexte, la réalité, l'actualité qui entoure les gens qui la célèbrent, et cela individuellement et collectivement.

Or, quel est le contexte actuel de l'Église locale de Saint-Boniface alors que nous célébrons cette Messe chrismale en avril 2011 (un avril où à vrai dire il devrait faire un petit peu plus chaud et sec). Comme vous le savez bien, nous sommes dans un temps de renouvellement de vision, de planification pastorale. Plusieurs de vous avez visionné le DVD où je souligne les grandes lignes de ces efforts. Plusieurs d'entre vous se sont déjà engagés à faire suite par vos rencontres et partages, au niveau de votre paroisse et en région pastorale. Prions pour que tous ces efforts soient menés par l'Esprit et bénis en abondance par Dieu, que ces efforts soient une source de bénédiction, de joie, de croissance, de communion pour les laïcs et pour les prêtres.

As a celebration is not a disembodied reality, but always finds its meaning as well also within the context, within the actual reality which people are living, so the fact of being celebrated at a time where we are, as a diocese, renewing our vision and our pastoral life at all levels, makes this Chrism Mass 2011 a particular celebration. As we pray for the spiritual and pastoral renewal of our Archdiocese, we ask that God will abundantly bless us.

In our first reading tonight from the prophet Isaiah, we heard the prophecy that the people of Israel would come to be called "*priests of the Lord, ministers of God*". Then in the second reading, drawn from the Book of Revelation, we were told that through the love of Christ and through his blood that frees us from our sins, we are made in Christ a Kingdom and priests serving God the Father, a people fashioned according to the values of the Reign of God, so as to give Him the offering of our glory and praise.

To the question “Why are we created?” the old catechism in all simplicity replied: “To know God, to love God, to serve God”. That’s who we are as Church, the Body of Christ, that’s who we are becoming as Church, listening to the voice of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

And so in this Chrism Mass of 2011, let us pray in a special way that throughout our meetings, our discussions, our planning as we put flesh to our hopes, our dreams, our desires and our intentions we may indeed be about this, above all. How can we better come to know Christ and know one another, how can we better come to love Christ and love one another, how can we better serve Christ and serve one another. As lay people, religious, priest and I as bishop, may we find our oneness in this common effort and prayer.

Mais ayant dit tout ceci, si je m’arrête ici, je manque tout un autre élément du contexte de notre célébration, de la réalité contemporaine qui nous entoure à ce temps au Manitoba, au Canada. Et de quelle réalité est-ce que je parle? Eh bien, du fait que nous sommes en campagne électorale.

À ce mot élection, vous pouvez bien vous demander : « Qu'est-ce qu'il va nous dire maintenant, de quel côté va-t-il se pencher? » Non, je ne suis pas ici pour vous dire pour qui voter, pas du tout. Au plus, je vous encourage à visiter le site-Web de la Conférence des évêques catholiques du Canada pour lire un message de la CECC, qui nous dresse une liste de valeurs à considérer lorsque nous faisons notre choix électoral. Ce sont des valeurs, tel le respect de la vie à tout moment de son existence, la construction d'une société plus juste, le soutien du mariage et de la famille, l'effort pour la justice et la paix, la protection de l'environnement.

The Chrism Mass 2011 is being celebrated in the context of an election campaign and I do invite you to visit the Website of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to read a message setting out the spectrum of key values that should guide Catholics across our land in making their electoral choice, values such as the respect for life at all stages of its existence, building a more just society, supporting marriage and the family, efforts for justice and peace worldwide, protecting and enhancing our environment.

So, no, I won't tell you how to vote, each person is called to make an informed and responsible choice. However, in its own way, the fact that we celebrate this Chrism Mass in the midst of an electoral campaign where Catholics along with all other Canadians are asking themselves what kind of Canada they want, does point to an essential part of what it means to be a Catholic Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ.

From the reading by the prophet Isaiah, we did hear God's dream for humanity in the words of the Servant of the Lord: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and release to the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.*" Then, in the Gospel as Jesus takes up these words as the truth about himself, he states emphatically to the people in the synagogue of Nazareth and to people of all times: "*Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*".

As a Church, if our best planning and our most energetic and successful efforts, ultimately are about ourselves then we have missed the boat completely. We have heard this statement before: "It is not so much that the Church has a mission, but rather the mission has a Church." As we work at renewing our parishes, at renewing our youth ministry, our adult faith education, as we work at offering interesting sessions for spiritual growth, at offering lively and reverence-filled celebrations of the Eucharist, let us always remember why we are doing this. It is to allow the Lord to shape us so that we bring, as Church, the realities of justice, aid in suffering, solidarity, compassion, reconciliation and peace to all people and all places.

Ce soir, l'intégrité de cette célébration de la Messe chrismale, l'intégrité de notre rassemblement, l'intégrité de ce renouvellement de promesses sacerdotales, l'intégrité de cette bénédiction des huiles et de notre vie sacramentelle, l'intégrité de chacune de nos eucharisties, comme l'a bien dit le Pape Jean-Paul II dans son texte intitulé « *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* », dépend de notre engagement à servir nos frères et sœurs, tous nos frères et sœurs et surtout ceux qui souffrent et sont dans le besoin, qu'ils soient proche de nous où à l'autre bout du monde.

Frères et sœurs, en procédant avec notre célébration, tenons à l’Esprit ces mots que nous disons à chaque eucharistie, alors que nous nous préparons à s’engager dans la prière eucharistique. Le prêtre dit : « *Prions ensemble au moment d’offrir le sacrifice de toute l’Église* », et nous répondons : « *Pour la gloire de Dieu et le salut du monde* ». Oui, voilà pourquoi nous sommes baptisés, pourquoi nous sommes Église – pour la gloire de Dieu et le salut du monde.

Friends, remember that in all we do and say, in all we undertake for the spiritual and pastoral renewal of our wonderful archdiocese, in all we live in our marriages and families, at work and in society, remember that we are to be before anything, a servant Church. Keep in mind the words we repeat each time within the mass as we are about to enter into the great Eucharistic prayer. The priest says: “*Pray friends that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father*”, and together we respond: “*May the Lord accept the sacrifice of your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and for the good of all his Church*”. For our good, for the good of the Church, for the good of all men, women and children and all this for the praise and glory of God’s name, that’s what we pray for and live for.

May we be the face, the heart and the hands of Christ to the world and may the Spirit lead us in this again and again, more and more. Let that be our prayer and our hope. AMEN.

+Albert LeGatt
Archevêque de Saint-Boniface
Archbishop of Saint Boniface