

Message from our Archbishop

Jesus in our midst – in our brothers and sisters

Dear friends,

Christmas is a feast of light, whether it is light joyfully filling a Church on Christmas Eve, bright lights on a Christmas tree or the soft light of candles on a table set for a Christmas meal together.

At Christmas, all these lights point to the true Light of our lives, Jesus Christ, born among us, born as one of us in our common humanity. The Son of God shares in everything it means to be human: happiness, pain, hope, doubt, courage, fear, joy, suffering, love when it is so easy to give, and love when it is

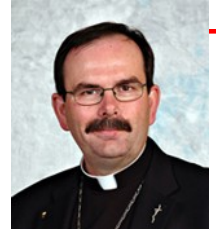
so hard, so crucifying to give. Without any sin, He shares and shows us all what it means to truly be a human being. In all that He lived, He loved without measure, without end and without boundaries between people.

Risen from the dead, Prince of Life and Prince of Peace amongst us today, He fills us with the Spirit and calls us to strive to love in the same way, without measure, without end, without boundaries between people. And He calls us to do that, as He did, with a special attention to the poor, the suffering, the wounded, the vulnerable

and the outcast.

As a Church, the Body of Christ, we must all of us try to break down divisions, to heal hurts, to ask forgiveness when we have wronged and to protect and enhance the dignity of each person. And as we strive to do this, to the best of our abilities, learning from the past and seeking a better future, we will indeed find Christ in our brothers and sisters. May the Light of His peace come to us all.

Archbishop Albert



"Who Do You Say that I Am?"

On Saturday, November 26th, 35 youth gathered at St. Patrick's church in Manitou for a faith-filled Advent retreat. This year's theme reflects our purpose on earth: to know, love and serve God. Three talks were intertwined with prayer, mass, songs, sharing, food and activities. In the evening, the community joined the youth for Mark Mallett, a Catholic singer-songwriter, for a Jesus Encounter, complete with music and adoration.

The talk on knowing God encouraged the youth to spend time daily with Jesus, entering into a relationship with Him. At Mass, Father Ryszard Machura encouraged participants to be the fifth Gospel, reflecting Christ and shining to their family and friends.

In the talk on loving God, youth learned that Jesus did not **ask** them but **commanded** them to love their neighbours as a way to truly love God.

Mark's talk on serving God illustrated how to follow the law of love while serving the Lord and conforming to Jesus. He stressed how important it is to pray to the Holy Spirit and how one could get guidance in life by remembering that God's "Word is a lamp unto our feet".

"I enjoyed most how everyone got together, learning and growing in faith, all trying to lead better lives. It showed me that I am not alone in my struggles and joys."

Jacinta Sanders, Manitou

"...In this day in age, it's so easy to swim with society's current. As a first year university student exposed to many different points of view and cultures, it was good to hear the importance of following our Catholic faith..."

Louise Bérard, Treherne

"...a refreshing break from my every day, busy life, as well as a learning experience."

Eric Boulet, Rathwell

Without a doubt, this day was an excellent way to prepare for Jesus' coming.

Missionary Send Off

"Be witnesses of hope and through that, be builders of hope" was Archbishop LeGatt's key message for missionaries at the second Missionary Commissioning. In all, fifteen individuals or groups are going to seven different countries on five continents.

The Liturgy of the Word and homily focused on bringing hope to all nations. The Archbishop's reflection was a poignant reminder that evangelization is at the heart of the Church: "Share hope.

That is one of the greatest lights our world can have. Christ calls us to hope, Christ calls us to share and find hope in each other as brothers and sisters."

Two students gave inspiring testimonies of their experiences. Brittany Boxall spoke of how people of the Dominican Republic had touched her heart as she worked with them in building a school. Alexis Thibodeau of St Paul's High School spoke of his two weeks in El Salvador: "Before going, I took many things for granted. I had a vague knowledge that I was gifted. After my experience, this was imprinted into my memory and I will never forget it. People say a picture is worth a thousand words but I would say experiencing the real thing is worth a thousand pictures".

A procession with flags and candles representing each continent celebrated those going on mission projects. The symbols were placed in a semi-circle in front of the altar, around the Mission candle.

Bishop LeGatt blessed each group, as well as their family and friends supporting them from home with prayer: "May you be a witness of hope, a builder of peace, a sign of God's love gathering us all together."

Jordan McQuaid

DPC Fall Meeting

The Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) held its biannual meeting on Saturday, November 26 in the Cathedral Parish Hall. The 35 members present received the report on *The Spiritual and Pastoral Renewal for the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface*. It is a culmination of two major consultations held in January and May of 2011 with the Diocesan Council of Priests, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Pastoral Services Team. The goals of the report will form the basis of renewal in five major areas over the next five years.

Archbishop LeGatt also presented an update on the ongoing consultations with respect to the diocese offering the *RENEW* program. Many will recall their experience with *RENEW* in the early 1980s. If adopted, this new series, *ARISE Together in Christ*, would commence in the Fall of 2012. The council gave its overwhelming support to this opportunity.

Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC) form an integral part of the pastoral and spiritual life of a parish. To assist pastors and parishes to review the place and the role of a PPC, the archdiocese has developed *Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils* to be published in early 2012. A committee is currently working on a workshop to be offered in pastoral regions or parishes, where participants will consider these new guidelines.

The diocese, with the assistance of Denis Levasseur, is currently reviewing the role and the formation of its permanent deacons. Archbishop LeGatt consulted the Council on this question. The results will become part of the final report submitted to Archbishop LeGatt.

Jewish-Catholic Relations

"Receive One Another and Receive from One Another!" - The annual conference of the Western Diocesan/Eparchial Coordinators of Ecumenism, held in Winnipeg, was the occasion for a public event at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue on November 18th. Over 150 participants attended an unforgettable evening! We were welcomed at a Kabbalat Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Alan Green. A buffet followed, with the requisite ritual hand-washing and blessing prayers over the wine and bread, recalling things familiar to our own liturgy.

Fr. Luis Melo started the discussion with an overview of the work of the local Jewish-Catholic Dialogue. Begun in 2005, this group has been instrumental in moving its respective communities from strangers to friends, supporting and speaking-up for one another and working for the common good.

From different perspectives, Archbishop Weisgerber and Rabbi Green exhorted participants to continue to strive towards a relationship that fosters the openness necessary to receive one another and to receive from one another. Presence, prayer, patient listening and respectful conversation heal memories and give us the strength to forge a new history together—as friends and friends of God—faithful to covenants given long ago for fullness of life.

The evening ended with the words of Psalm 133: "How good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity." God's will for Jewish-Catholic relations!

Luis M. Melo, S.M.

Director, Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

A 50th Anniversary

In 2009, following the request of its PPC to "further develop a communal, spiritual and personal spirit in the faithful during the jubilee year", the planning committee for the 50th anniversary of Saints Martyrs Canadiens Parish decided to have one activity each month rather than one celebration and to offer something for everyone, regardless of their financial means or their age. Since we did not want the parish to incur any costs, most of the activities were subsidized by the participants, by the sale of Christmas decorations and wine glasses and by the support of sponsors.

Each member of the committee was in charge of an activity. Committees and groups, young and not so young, all alike were a precious help! We celebrated several masses: for the opening of the jubilee year, another with Archbishop LeGatt followed by a banquet, for our departed in November. The closing Mass of December 11th was followed by a break-fast.

Many activities were special occasions: a family Bingo Bowl, a community fish supper, a picnic with barbecue and games, a Bud, Spud and Steak.

Other various projects were the purchase of a new organ, a supper-for-two for couples with renewal of vows at masses, photo-taking by IPC for a parish album, a coffeehouse with presentation of each Martyr between the songs, a shared retreat with urban French parishes led by Georges Madore.

There was wonderful participation. While praying and having fun in our parish family, we succeeded in really celebrating our anniversary.

Michelle Prieur

Meet... Richard Fréchette



Richard Fréchette is the diocesan financial administrator, the first layperson to hold this post. As such, he is responsible for the finances of the archdiocese and advises the bishop as to financial questions, in consultation with the *Diocesan Financial Committee*, which is

responsible to give recommendations to the bishop. This includes preparing financial reports and budgets, establishing diocesan controls and administrative policies, reviewing the finances and the sharing of advice to parishes and Catholic schools. He works

closely with parishes on important projects of renovations and construction. Richard received the Nathanaël ministry formation and is a Certified Management Accountant (CMA). He is married and father of a son. He is a parishioner at Cathedral.