

NEW VISION

The Church of Saint Boniface

Vol. 3 #3 – December 2012

The Beauty of Love

The 2nd Diocesan Celebration of Wedding Anniversaries was held on November 4 at Saint Boniface Cathedral

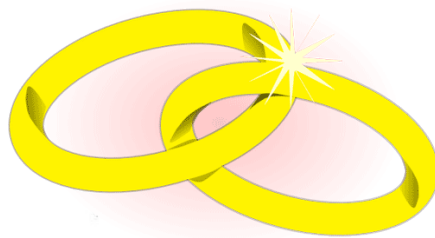
"Through the doubts, the turns of the road, and ever stronger... we will still love each other." It might well be the hundredth time I hear these words of the song by Vincent Vallières, they still have the same effect: tears well up.

"When the house is paid for and nothing is left but to love each other... we will still love each other." This song about the love of a lifetime resonates in the Cathedral. I tell myself that these 44 couples, celebrating 25 or more years of marriage, are among the fortunate ones who were able to live this ideal of staying with the same person all their lives. These couples that held on are about to reaffirm their commitment to each other by repeating the wedding vows they first exchanged many decades ago.

After the ceremony, wedding pictures of the couples are shown on a giant screen. Each one captures a moment in time... but one thing is constant: the

couples all have a cheerful, happy look, full of hope.

In organizing this 2nd diocesan celebration of wedding anniversaries, I came to know a little the participants. I learned that between their wedding day and



this day of celebration, they lived love in different ways. Some described outstanding moments in their relationship and unexpected turns of events over the years. Love always evolves with time but these couples are the proof that 'still loving each other' is possible, even if living the ideal life is not always easy.

A couple celebrated 70 years of marriage! Looking at them, I remembered this reflection I read: *"Is there anything more*

beautiful in life than a young couple clasping hands... in the path of marriage?" And the answer *"Yes, there is a more beautiful thing. It is the spectacle of an old man and an old woman finishing their journey together on that path. Their hands are gnarled, but still clasped... Yes, there is a more beautiful thing than young love. Old love."* Author unknown.

Adapted, by permission, from the article published in *La Liberté*.

***Sophie Freynet-Agossa,
Coordinator
Marriage, Family and
Respect for Life Services***

 ***Merry
Christmas***

Message from our Archbishop



Photo by Robert Campeau

Dear friends,

Christmas comes to our parishes with many elements: the crib, the beautiful hymns, the children's pageant, the Christmas Eve Mass gathering so many people, and, not to be forgotten, the hampers and many other such efforts to give support to the poor, the homeless, the downtrodden at this time of the year.

This latter element of Christmas, the care for the poor and suffering, speaks volumes of the real mystery of Christmas. We celebrate Christ embracing all of our humanity, especially its need for salvation,

hope, healing, reconciliation, unity and peace. Our efforts to share this grace of Christ's presence and love through very concrete practical aid to our brothers and sisters in need are entirely in keeping with the logic of the Incarnation. He came to us so that we might choose to be with all others; He came to be one of us so that we might be one in friendship and justice with all.

This Christmas, and in the New Year, may all the aspects of our life as a parish community (our liturgical celebrations and our

prayer, the teaching and sharing with one another of our faith, the efforts of mutual charity and care) lead to greater practical support and justice for those in need. The greatest power of evangelization, of inviting others to know and accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, will always reside in a community that reflects His love, in the truth of His compassion.

† **Archbishop Albert**

The Manitoba Members of D & P Unite!

A workshop for Anglophone parish representatives of Development and Peace (D&P) in the Archdioceses of Saint Boniface and Winnipeg was held at Micah House on Saturday, November 10th.

The daylong event of group sessions and discussions centred on the current context of D&P's work with its partners in the Global South and the challenges it now faces in receiving and distributing funding from the Canadian Government via CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). A new model for project proposal submissions includes a new rigid application process to compete and qualify for Canadian foreign aid dollars. Participants raised concerns and questioned the sincerity of the

current government's commitment to international development.

This comes on the heels of a February 2012 announcement by CIDA that it was rejecting D&P's \$50 million proposal and granting only \$14.5 million for the next 5 years, for ongoing work in 33 of the poorest countries in the world, a 65% decrease in funding from the Canadian Government. Like D&P's 13,000 members across the country, Manitoba members expressed their frustration, disappointment and concerns.

During presentations about D&P's current situation, members learned that other religious-based development agencies such as KAIROS and the Mennonite Central Committee

were also hit by drastic funding cuts.

Two young adults, Janelle de Rocquigny and Barbara Gajda, participated in D&P's youth exposure trip to Rio, Brazil, this past summer. They shared reflections from their experience and brought back a simple and straightforward message on behalf of D&P partners around the globe: 'If you really want to help us, get your mining companies out of our countries.'

The current campaign presented at the workshop centres around education and awareness of international foreign aid, new membership solicitations and the promotion of the 'Share Year Round' program. For more info visit D&P's website at www.devop.org

ARISE is ALIVE!

The first season of ARISE has drawn to a close.
Here are some testimonies from parishes across our diocese.



...It has been powerful to pray the Scriptures in our Small Christian Community Groups and to bring silence and stillness in our life to better "encounter Christ". ARISE helped us learn and share our faith among our Christian brothers and sisters and strengthen the bonds of trust and friendship within our group...

St. Emile, Winnipeg

...It is so beautiful to be able to talk about God to each other. When I hear our male and female voices raised strongly in prayer or singing the songs, my soul rejoices that **it's happening here...**

Saint Alphonse

...Participants have reported a change in how they view others, realizing that even though not outwardly apparent, we all have struggles. Friendships have been made. The

insights of others have helped individuals grow in their faith...

Christ Our Saviour, Steinbach

...Through the sharing with the members of our group, I have evolved from *knowing about* Christ to *knowing Christ* which is something I felt was missing up until now. I now recognize that my life experiences and my Christ experiences are not separate but are intertwined...

St. Timothy, Winnipeg

...We felt comfortable with each other and started to feel a sense of community. This helped us share life experiences and our faith journey with each other...

St. Alphonsus, Winnipeg

Wedding Anniversaries

During the Mass presided by Archbishop LeGatt, about forty couples renewed their wedding vows.



Note to the interested: If you celebrate an important wedding anniversary soon, keep in mind that this celebration will be repeated each fall.

Photos: Robert Campeau

Help with the dishes?

As you may or may not know, our Church is always in need of volunteers to help in one way or another.

You may have noticed it seems to be the same people reading, singing, greeting you at the doors, collecting 'the offering', altar serving and distributing the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus.

There are also volunteers you don't see: the people who decorate for all the special feasts, those who open the church and set up for Mass and

those people who patiently wait after Mass until parishioners are finished chatting to lock the church. We have volunteers who wash and care for the linens used at Mass, who tend to the plants in and around the building or teach our children's liturgy and catechism.

Now think about this. If I invited you to my home for lunch after Mass on Sunday for 52 weeks, do you not think after a few weeks you would offer to bring a salad or bread to share? Don't you think you would

offer to help set the table or help wash the dishes after we have eaten?

I know, I as your host, would not ask you to do any of the above, but I think you would probably offer. God is inviting you to His house and table. Do you not think it is time you offered to help out in some way?

God has given each of us talents. You just have to come forward and share what has been given to you.

Beryle Sellner, St. Alphonsus

Moving Forward Together — A Campaign for Healing and Reconciliation

In response to the legacy of Indian Residential Schools, *Moving Forward Together* is a campaign to raise \$25 million towards a brighter future for Aboriginal people. Fifty Catholic entities from across Canada, including the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface, are partnering with key Aboriginal leaders and associations to strengthen and sustain personal and community healing and educational programs. These programs are run by effective front-line organizations respected in their communities for providing lasting positive outcomes.

The special collection for the *Moving Forward Campaign* in our archdiocese was held on June 3, 2012. The amount raised was \$22, 198.88.

Thank you very much for your generosity and your commitment to healing and reconciliation for the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

Each diocese could target which program(s) its collection would support. The Archdiocese of Saint Boniface has requested that all of its collection be directed to the *Returning to Spirit*

(<http://www.returningtospirit.org/>)

program. This program was originally initiated in the Northwest Territories under Bishop Denis Croteau and over the years has known much success right across Canada in bringing together First Nations people (including former residents of Indian

Residential Schools) and non-aboriginal people (including former staff of Indian Residential Schools, as well as other Church personnel).

Helping both to be freed of a sense of being victims, prisoners of past hurts and prejudices, it has brought many people to experience a reconciliation which allows them to go on to new possibilities of cooperation and trust. This program has been offered several times in our province and of note in Hollow Water (Hole River), which is one of our First Nations Parishes. It has made a difference in the fabric of life in that community.

Thank you again for your support.

† Albert LeGat
Archbishop of Saint Boniface

Secular Franciscan Order

Did you know that for over thirty years the diocese of Saint Boniface has had a group of English speaking Secular Franciscans, the Immaculate Conception Fraternity? This group is established at Mary Mother of the Church Parish in South Winnipeg but membership in the Fraternity is open to all in the diocese.

As part of a worldwide association of Fraternities, the members are lay people who seek to pattern their lives according to the example of St. Francis of Assisi. Interested women and men participate in a formation process before making a commitment

to live according to the Rule, which enjoins its members to continuously go from Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel.

Members strive to simplify their needs so that they may better see the world through the eyes of the poor and marginalized. Members are encouraged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, in communion with the Universal Church. They seek to become channels of peace and joy wherever they find themselves: in families, workplaces and the broader community. Drawing membership from all walks of life, the Fraternities

are committed to fellowship and community in Christ.

This small Fraternity meets monthly on Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00 at Mary Mother of the Church. From time to time, there are also days of reflection, local pilgrimages, community building and service to the poor.

If the lives of St. Francis or St. Clare interest you or appeal to you, come check out our small group. For more information, please contact **Bernadette McCann** at 204 474 0320.

Briefly...

- The Editor wishes to gratefully thank Father Robert Campeau for his generous contribution of photos over the years, since the beginning of NEW VISION.
- Thank you for your feedback, as requested in the last issue. Yes, we will continue to publish the good news from across the diocese. Yes, all past issues are available online (see the URL at the bottom of the page).

Read **NEW VISION** on line at www.archsaintboniface.ca
Select the icon on the left menu