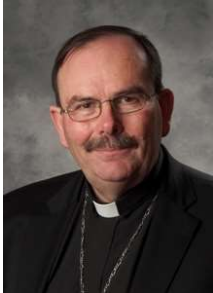


Deacons of Manitoba Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 11 March 2024

Words from the Archbishops



Dear Deacons of Manitoba,

You are receiving this message while being bathed in the light of the Cross and in the light of the Resurrection. We may well readily link the image of light to the Resurrection, but to the Cross??

When we say to someone, “God has indeed given you a cross to bear” or we ask ourselves how we are to understand and respond to our own suffering of any kind, the questions are many. What is the cause or perhaps even who is at fault? How do we respond? With despair? Slipping into despondency? Becoming ever more fearful or angry?

Or do we turn towards the face of Jesus on the Cross, towards the light shining from that face. Despite the outward signs of rejection and defeat, of betrayal and a death filled with such great suffering at every level of his humanity, it is light that shines out from Jesus, the light of divine love. It is the light of a love shared between the Father and the Son in the power of the Spirit. It is the light of the Father’s unconditional, all merciful, love for each of us, his beloved children.

It is a light stronger than the innumerable realities of darkness and death in our world today. It is the power of a divine love transforming our human life including its suffering and its many crosses. Jesus did not just bear and suffer, nor did he love despite the suffering, somehow oblivious to the depth of the crosses we bear. He transformed all human crosses by the perfect gift of his complete confidence in the Father’s love and by the total gift of his unending love to save us and show us the way to the glory of the Resurrection, presently and ultimately.

I invite you to meditate upon all this as you celebrate Holy Week and then, the 50 days of Easter. I especially invite you to look around for signs, even very small, of life stronger than death, of love transforming the darkness of the cross’ suffering in our lives and in our world. Look for signs of the glory and joy that the light of the Resurrection brings.

Wherever love shines out giving ultimate healing and solace, ultimate meaning to life, ultimate hope in each other and for the future, let us sing out our Easter praise to God. In the manner of stopping to notice a crocus popping out through the snow, let us all be attentive to each word and action of kindness, mercy, service, respect, reconciliation around us. Let our joyful alleluia be filled with light. Let our lives reflect that light of love that shines out from the face of Jesus on the Cross.

+Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface

Words from Fr. Dominic



Happy Easter Deacons and those in the diaconate formation!

Deacon Michael Cordova asked me to write an Easter message addressed to you. This I do most willingly. Since the resurrection event, Easter has been celebrated by the Christian community as the basis of our hope for everlasting life. The resurrection of Jesus brings the followers of Jesus great happiness and excitement. It is the ultimate Good News. We believe that since Jesus rose from the dead, that we too will rise again, after a brief encounter with death.

“Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God’s throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation!” These words which we are all familiar with, from the ancient Exsultet, heard at the Easter Vigil, call upon the heavenly and angelic beings to join all creation in the triumphant hymn of praise to the risen Lord Jesus. The Exultet is one of the most cherished and beautiful examples of solo repertoire which has survived the 2,000-year history of Christian music. The words of the Exsultet cause our hearts to rejoice in the joyful knowledge that indeed Jesus is risen from the tomb. God has robbed the grave; the stone is rolled away and Christ is alive in the kingdom of our hearts.

What other religion can boast of this assurance? Only Jesus rose from the dead and lives, no more to die. He alone holds “the keys of death and the nether world.” Rev. 1:18. Jesus is more than just a great man, an historical figure, a profound leader. Jesus is most certainly God. Therefore, Jesus can say: “before Abraham came to be, I AM:” John 8:58

Our one goal during the next fifty days of the Easter season should be, to become better acquainted with this Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. The evangelist John insists that we not cling to the tomb but go forth to experience the resurrection power spoken by St. Paul to the Philippians when he wrote “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death.” 3:10. Such faith requires that we go forth, that we move on to the task at hand in evangelization and spreading the Good News in the world. This message is that “He lives.” Jesus is no longer among the dead. He does not belong to the past. He is risen to new life and beckons the disciples to Galilee and to the entire world. The message for us is that we pass from death to our old life and are reborn in the new, not only ritually but in reality.

This is what makes our faith as Christians so different than others. Our God is not a dead idol, not in a tomb or shrine. He lives among us and in us. Because He lives, we know that we too can live after we pass through the gates of death. “Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing choirs of angels!”

A happy and most blessed Easter to all. Jesus is risen!!! Alleluia!!!

Father Dominic Yuen
St. Anthony of Padua Parish
West Kildonan

Words from Deacon James

Happy Easter!

May the joy of the resurrection of our Lord be a beginning of a life that find joy, peace, and a way to fulfil our baptismal call in a renewed energy of love found only in knowing we are loved, loved unconditionally.

Deacon Jimmy Frater



Words from Carol



At the last Deacon Executive meeting I was asked to look after writing community news, send cards to people that we knew were unwell or celebrating a significant event in their lives, and to update the deacon information, i.e. addresses, phone numbers, etc. for the community. This latter effort is still a work in progress.

Deacon Rene Gauthier of the Winnipeg Archdiocese and Deacon Lawrence Wakaruk of the St. Boniface Diocese had been admitted to personal care homes earlier this year. I sent St. Therese Mass cards to them, care of their respective daughters. Sadly, since that time, Deacon Lawrence passed away. I have sent a mass card on behalf of the Deacon Community to his daughter; we extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Lawrence's family.

Our community was saddened to learn of the passing of Deacon Wayne Johnson on February 2, 2024. Deacon Wayne ministered at Holy Redeemer Parish in St. Boniface Archdiocese. I sent a mass card to Judy on behalf of the community. We offer our condolences and prayers to Judy and extended family, as well as their parish family. Those who attended the retreat in September will recall that Wayne and Judy were celebrating their 51st anniversary on the opening day of our retreat.

I was recently privileged and honoured to attend Part 1 of Returning to Spirit, The Roots of Reconciliation Workshop at St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish. For those of you who have taken this workshop, you will know that it is a tremendously intensive and worthwhile experience. For those of you who have not participated in it, I encourage you to do so.

I have updated our Deacon Community 'Book of Life', based on that of The Catholic Women's League of Canada Book of Life.

Remember, dear Deacons and Wives, that if you have a special event, information etc., please send it to me so that I can share it with everyone. Thank you. A blessed Easter to all.

Carol MacKenzie

Rest in peace, dear friends.



Deacon Wayne



Deacon Lawrence



Year 2 Permanent Diaconate Candidates, their wives, and the Tridiocesan Permanent Diaconate Formation Team, participated in a three-day retreat in March 2024. Archbishop LeGatt, from the Archdiocese of St. Boniface, led talks centred on “Breaking Open the Word of God to Ourselves” which helped deepen the appreciation and practice of listening to the Holy Spirit and each other. Everyone was grateful for the opportunity to journey together, build community, and continue the discernment of how the Lord is calling each one of the participants to serve Him.

Please include the Candidates, their families, and the Formation Team in your prayers as this group progresses thru the remaining two years of the program.

Blessings+

Deacons Gilles Lorteau and Michael Thibert
Co-Directors of the Tridiocesan Diaconate Formation Program

Suggestions or comments:

Please do let us know how to do better with the newsletter through email: fraterjim218@gmail.com or michaelmartincordova@yahoo.com