



Diocese of Thunder Bay

Newsletter

Catholic Pastoral Centre | 1222 Reaume Street | P.O. Box 10400 | Thunder Bay, ON. P7B 6T8. | www.dotb.ca

Winter 2018



The 100th anniversary of the final apparition of Our Lady of Fatima was celebrated on October 13, 2017.

Parishioners and guests gathered to celebrate this historic event at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Vermilion Bay. The celebration began with the blessing of their new sign and a memorial plaque on the church property. The 'Sorrowful Mysteries' of the rosary were recited, followed by Mass and a reception (see p. 3 for more photos).

A Year for the Youth

With the Christmas and New Year's celebrations behind us and with our new year of 2018 begun, we look to our normal life responsibilities and routines as we make it through the winter months. Sometimes the darker winter months can be a bit depressing if you are not an outdoors winter person, but spending time with family and friends is always a solution for those lonely moments.

Pope Francis sees 2018 as a special year for him because it is the year when he will gather with young people and some of their families, and with many bishops from around the world, to examine the Church's call to minister to our young people and to help them discern their vocation in life. The Holy Father sees this as a special challenge for the Church to open its heart and mind to listen to the young people of our day, to hear their wants and needs, and to discover how the Church can respond to their spiritual needs in an effective and loving way. He also sees this year as a challenge for the young people of our Church to examine how they use their gifts and talents for the good of the church community.

Cardinal Parolin, the Secretary of State of the Vatican, said an important, innovative aspect is "the Church's new relationship with young people, expressed in a paradigm of responsibility, which excludes any type of paternalism. The Church and the Pope are asking young people... what contribution they can make to the Gospel and its proclamation, today!" This will be explored and discussed at the next Synod for Bishops and young people in October of this year in Rome. The Synod will examine the many thousands of replies that young people have put forward through a questionnaire given to them by the Pope this past year dealing with their faith life and their connection to the Church.

In addition to this development, we have begun to prepare ourselves to celebrate the greatest feast of our Church year: the celebration of Easter, or the Resurrection of the Lord. Our Lenten journey begins on February 14th and gives us forty days for preparation to deepen our spiritual life and to strengthen our connection to the Lord through our

prayer, fasting and outreach to the poor. How appropriate that Lent begins on Valentine's Day, the great day of love, for our Lenten journey is also a journey of love and a journey to the greatest act of love from Jesus.

Lent can be a challenge for us as we examine our prayer life, our sacrificing and our outreach to the poor and lonely. It is important because each year it reminds us of our need to look sincerely into our life and our actions to see if we need to correct or modify our behaviour, if we have gone astray from our Christian values and roots. It is a time for reconciliation and renewal, especially in family relationships.

A vital message during the Lenten season is conversion. We seek a conversion of our hearts, forgiveness of our sins, and a more generous and loving relationship with God and with one another. This is achieved through our prayer, attending Mass more often, the reception of Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Penance or confession, and generosity to those in need. We are to be grateful for all the good things that we have in our lives and we are to be concerned about our brothers and sisters, locally and in the world, who are in need. Development and Peace gives us insights into these needs and seeks our generosity again this year.

If we make our Lenten time an opportunity for this conversion, this Lenten journey will prepare our body and our soul for a proper celebration of Easter.

As the bishop, I wish blessings upon all of you and your families as we enter into this special time. I also wish to take the time to thank you for your generosity in our annual Diocesan Ministry Campaign. Your gift assists me, as the bishop, along with my priests, deacons and all who are in ministry, to serve the needs of our church, our diocesan family, in northwestern Ontario.

May your Easter be filled with the joy, grace and life won for us by the Risen Lord!

THE MOST REV. FRED J COLLI
BISHOP OF THUNDER BAY



Our Lady of Fatima

(cont'd from cover)



On September 14, 2017, Grand Knight Ted Mitchell of Knights of Columbus Council #5144 presented an AED to Fr. Al Campeau for use at St. Joseph's Church in Dryden in the unfortunate event of a medical emergency. The council was able to raise the \$2400 needed to purchase the AED through regular council activities. The Knights offered well-attended AED familiarization sessions in October and November. In the past year there have been a number of medical emergencies in which the use of an AED could have been helpful. AEDs are by far more influential on the survival rate of cardiac arrest patients than CPR.



At the 2017 annual TEC Encounter, Debbie DeBruyne, Director of our local ("Sleeping Giant") TEC program received a Heritage Award. Each summer leaders and representatives of the international TEC movement gather for a "TEC Encounter" in various centres throughout the U.S. This past summer, the TEC Encounter was held at the Spiritual Life Centre in Wichita, Kansas, July 7-9. There were three recipients of this year's Heritage Award which recognizes those who hold key leadership positions in their local TEC centres, but also serve at the Regional and International levels. In addition to work at the local level, Debbie has served as a Council Member at the international level, served on workshop teams throughout the US, and has been involved at the regional level as well.



Right: (l-r) Billy O'Regan - Executive Director of TEC,
Debbie DeBruyne - Director of Sleeping Giant TEC,
Kevin Fuller - Associate Director of TEC

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Please send news items and stories to chancery@dotb.ca

*Please ensure that all images are sent in JPEG or TIF format

Deadline for submissions: *April 13, 2018*

From October 19-22, 2017, five candidates and team members lived the Men's Cursillo at the Eagles Nest Retreat Centre in Dorion. The word "Cursillo" is a Spanish word that means "short course" in Catholic Christianity. The weekend is a series of short talks, sharing, fellowship and prayer held in a comfortable, relaxed and informal setting. The first Cursillo was held in Majorca, Spain in the early 1940's and has since spread to most countries in the world.



Sleeping Giant TEC Celebrates 40 Years

Special events were held on the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. A full-day leadership workshop was facilitated by Billy O'Regan, Executive Director of the TEC Conference stationed in New Orleans. One of the talks was presented by a young adult who attended our most recent TEC #82. The others were presented via Skype from various TEC centres in the United States. The workshop was followed by Mass at Corpus Christi, a simple "beef on a bun" and potluck supper, and a reunion. The reunion began with a talk by John Ilkka, currently in the Seminary, who attended TEC #76. He shared, among other things, how TEC affected his faith journey. Billy O'Regan also spoke to the crowd of about 45 people who gathered for Reunion, referring to TEC as a pillar of faith in our diocese.

DEBBIE DEBRUYNE
DIRECTOR
SLEEPING GIANT TEC PROGRAM



TEC was started in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1965 and made its way to Thunder Bay in the Fall of 1977.

TEC music has evolved from the "folk" songs of the 70s to current "praise and worship" songs.

We celebrated with both at our 40th anniversary!

Above: Susan Eberhardt, Deacon Dennis McDermott



Billy O'Regan presenting TEC leadership workshop, which focused on newly-revised talks given on Day 1 of TEC.



Some of the participants in the special TEC leadership workshop



Reflections on “medical assistance in dying” or MAID

Since June 2016, 15 months into the newly changed law, over 2,000 Canadians who applied for “medical assistance in dying” have died by procedures that previously were referred to as assisted suicide or euthanasia. Where does it leave those who believe that life as a gift of God is sacred? As Bishop Colli reminded us in his June 2016 letter, “medically assisted death is unacceptable and morally wrong according to the standards of our Catholic teaching”. Are Catholics then expected to suffer through the final stage of their life, waiting for a natural death while others can avail themselves of a medical intervention that will lead to a swift death? Does this moral prohibition create a terrible burden on Catholics? I will suggest that this is not the case. True, there is a price for being a disciple in the form of work and effort required, but there are also vital, tangible benefits.

Let us say that someone close to you is thinking about having their life terminated by a medical practitioner. If you are concerned that this is morally wrong or problematic and you want to be helpful, then at the least, try to make sure that the person has taken these two important steps. The first step is to ask the doctor for a palliative care consultation. The second step is to seek a person who would be an attentive ‘listener’ and guide for the person who is near death.

The goal of palliative care is to make possible the best quality of life for people with incurable conditions by relieving troublesome symptoms and sources of suffering, without aiming either to prolong the life or shorten it. Many family doctors are good in controlling suffering caused by pain, nausea, shortness of breath, constipation and other symptoms, but if problems persist, it is good to know that doctors

and nurses who are specialists in palliative care are masters in this field of pain control. In our city and region, we have excellent palliative care professionals. If requested, the family doctor or home care nurse will arrange for a visit and follow up with a palliative care professional for the patient. Palliative medication that is taken with the intent to control pain, but may unintentionally shorten one’s life is morally permissible and is not considered either assisted suicide or euthanasia.

It can often be the case that a patient whose pain and physical suffering has been brought under control may still feel miserable. He or she may see themselves as a burden on the family or society, feel hopeless and useless, experience anxiety and fear further deterioration or death. Even a Catholic, who fervently believes in life after death, may feel that life has lost its meaning and can despair when death is near. During this time of emotional, existential and spiritual anxiety, the patient may greatly benefit from, what I call here, the second step, that is, from sharing his or her thoughts and feelings with an individual who can really ‘listen’ and guide them through their suffering. A good ‘listener’ will encourage the sick to talk about what concerns them while maintaining confidentiality; will ensure them that they will not be judged for what they disclose; and guide them to understand that they are valued and good, if for no other reason than they are loved unconditionally by God. This valuable aid can be given by a parish priest, a minister, a deacon, a pastoral care person, a spiritual director, a counsellor, a social worker, a trained palliative care volunteer, a wise family member or friend. Through active listening and counseling, the patient may be



helped to recall the blessings received, recognize how he or she has been a blessing to others, and may see their past life in a new and positive light. Then, even their relationship with God will be strengthened. The patient may need help to realize that their remaining life, however short it will be, can have a deep and serious meaning and is precious. Indeed, there may be some important goals that the dying person and only that person can achieve, such as to forgive past injustices and receive forgiveness from others, reconcile sons and daughters who have been estranged, give wise guidance to the spouse and children for their future life, or simply have time to express their love and gratitude.

After these two steps, more can be done, and that is to accompany the person, day by day, as he or she approaches natural death. A person who decides to be such a companion may find this role very challenging, and may find that asking for support of extended family and friends and various organizations is necessary in order to persevere in this role. But what could be seen as a burden can be transformed into a commitment of love and sacrifice of one's time and energies, as long as the companion accepts one's limitations and allows God to work in one's life.

What we propose is not always effective or acceptable to the suffering person. Yet, with proper medical care and the support of a community of love, a person approaching death may come to realize that medical assistance in dying is not the solution to their agonizing feelings, and that the natural, unplanned dying process may actually be a culmination of their life and bring a new dynamism to the whole family. Many great things can happen around the bed of the dying, especially when pain is controlled and the dying person is valued,

validated and affirmed. Some suffering may persist but it can become bearable and have personal meaning if the patient can join his or her suffering with that of Christ and is supported by loved ones.

It must be noted that some people, even with the best possible care and effective comfort measures, will remain determined to obtain medically assisted death if they meet the conditions of the law. We have to recognize that they have a legal right to seek assisted death and we cannot put obstacles in their way. Then, perhaps the only thing one can do is to pray.

The expression "Death with Dignity" has lately been attached to medically induced dying in order to boost the appeal of such acts. Yet, what has a better claim for death with dignity? A quick, medicalized death delivered by an impersonal, technical procedure or a deliberate thoughtful, unhurried affair, a surge of love that is a real culmination of the life well lived? A true death with dignity is possible to achieve when the dying person knows that God, one's family, friends and meaningful individuals love them unconditionally, accept them for what they are, and ultimately support them as they prepare to die a natural death.

Jaro Kotalik, MD

Comments or questions?

Please contact jkotalik@tbaytel.net



Looking Back: Thunder Bay Jesuit Community ~ September 1999



Roy Piovesana

The Thunder Bay Jesuit Community, September 10, 1999. In the above photograph, members of the Thunder Bay Jesuit community stand among the ruins of the Jesuit residence on what was once the Immaculate Conception Mission on the Fort William First Nation Reserve.

Front (l-r): Father William Maurice, S.J., Father Michael Murray, S.J., Father Larry Kroker, S.J.
Back (l-r): Father John (Jack) Lynch, S.J., Mr. Sam Pervais, elder; Rev. Mr. Victor Pelletier (Deacon)

