



1 March 2021

Dear Parishioners and Fathers,

**Year of St. Joseph.** As I mentioned at the end of last month's letter, I am declaring in our Archdiocese a Year of St. Joseph. This will begin on Friday 19 March, the feast of St. Joseph, and will end on 19 March 2022. There are a number of elements to this year of St. Joseph, which coincides somewhat with the universal Year of St. Joseph promulgated by Pope Francis on 8 December 2020.

- *Prayer Card.* We will distribute to all our churches copies of a prayer card with an image of St. Joseph on the front, and on the back the prayer to St. Joseph in French and English, as found in the Holy Father's reflection on the Year of St. Joseph.
- *Consecration of Jesus through St. Joseph.* There are in circulation now more than one book of prayers and reflections that have been written especially for the universal Year of St. Joseph. I have chosen to promote one book in particular, *Consecration to Jesus Through Saint Joseph: An Integrated Look at the Holy Family*, by Dr. Gregory Bottaro and Jennifer Settle. We have copies of this book for sale at the Chancery Office for \$7 apiece. It is written to be used over 44 days, ending in one's consecrating their life to Jesus through St. Joseph. Parishioners are free, of course, to make use of other similar books of reflection and prayer.
- *Family Prayer.* In the spirit of family prayer, I am encouraging again the family prayer booklet that we published a few years ago, *Prayer in Our Home*. These are still available in your parish church. If not, please notify us at the Chancery Office.
- *Pilgrimage.* We have three churches in our archdiocese dedicated to St. Joseph: in Spirit River, Grande Prairie and John D'Or Prairie (in the Little Red River Cree Nation). I encourage all families or individuals to make a pilgrimage to these churches. Because churches are usually locked, you'll need to register the date and approximate time of your visit to any of these churches on our website ... more details about this later. At any of these churches, you can pick up a "pilgrimage passport". Take only one passport, and travel to the three churches. In your passport is found a series of reflections and prayers focused on the sorrows and joys of St. Joseph, written by Fr. Januarius Sarnelli, C.Ss.R. (1702-1744). You are asked over the year to visit each of the three churches, pray the devotions of Fr. Sarnelli, and get your passport stamped at that church. When you have visited all three churches, come to the Chancery Office and present your passport to receive an olive-wood crucifix made by Christians in the Holy Land, as a memento of your pilgrimage.

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- *Patris Corde*. The Holy Father has written a fine reflection on St. Joseph to inaugurate the Year of St. Joseph. I encourage all of us to read this letter. The English version can be found on the internet at [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap\\_20201208\\_patris-corde.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html)
- *Year of Amoris Laetitia*. The Holy Father is also promoting a reflection on family life based on the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (2016) which followed from the Synod on the Family in 2014-2015. Details of these reflections can be found on the Internet at <http://www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/en/amoris-laetitia.html> I strongly encourage families to take advantage of these reflections and activities.

**Father Feroz Fernandes, SFX.** Father Feroz came to our archdiocese three years ago, for a period of one year. He was assigned to Holy Family Parish in Grimshaw (covering also Whitelaw and Duncan's First Nation) and the one year stretched into three. His community, the Society of Missionaries of St. Francis Xavier, has assigned him to a new position in communications in Manila, Philippines. Father will leave Canada before the end of April. In the meantime, a priest of the Sons of Mary, Mother of Mercy, will come to replace him. We will miss Father Feroz; he endeared himself to his parishioners and the clergy of our diocese.

**Chrism Mass.** Last year, because of the pandemic, we cancelled our Chrism Mass. While we are still dealing with COVID, we must have a Chrism Mass this year, although it cannot be as we always celebrate it --- as an event for the whole archdiocese. I will be gathering only with the deans and other members of the Council of Priests at the cathedral in McLennan on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Each dean will then bring the Holy Oils to the priests in his deanery.

**Seminarian Paul Edo-Aranmude.** In early January, Paul Edo-Aranmude arrived in our diocese from Nigeria, as a seminarian for our archdiocese. Paul has already completed his philosophy and theology studies at a seminary in Nigeria, but he will spend about two years in further study at St. Joseph Seminary in Edmonton, as a means to become acclimatized to our culture and the Church in Canada. I welcome Paul among us, and look forward to getting to know him better in the coming years.

**COVID.** The pandemic is still active in our Province as elsewhere. As I write this letter, I am unsure what impact this will have on the Holy Week and Easter Triduum services this year. As information becomes more available, Msgr. Charles Lavoie and I will make this known across the archdiocese.

As we continue our Lenten journey, I pray for God's blessings on all our communities and homes.



Most Rev, Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan