



Sacred Heart Cathedral
Manger Scene, 2019

Diocesan NEWS



News and Views of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Kamloops



Diocesan News

A publication of the Roman Catholic Church in the Diocese of Kamloops

The Diocesan News is an associate member of Canadian Catholic News (CCN).

MANAGEMENT BOARD

Most Reverend Joseph P. Nguyen, Bishop of Kamloops – Publisher; Linda Filek – Editor.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Diocesan News seeks to increase the unity of the people of the diocese by providing current information about matters of Church teaching and policy, in addition to diocesan and parish news. News will be as up-to-date as possible, given the publication schedule, and generally will reflect relevant Church issues affecting this diocese. Diocesan and parish news will inform the people of the diocese about the activities of individuals or groups within the Church. The purpose of publishing this news is to celebrate activities that foster the life of the spirit within the diocese.

As publisher of The Diocesan News, the bishop is responsible for its content. Any material submitted for publication is subject to revision following editorial review for suitability, style and accuracy. The decision to publish unsolicited material depends on its relevance to the overall mission of The Diocesan News and availability of space. In all cases, contributors are urged to be concise and to strive for the highest standards of accuracy and fairness.

GUIDE TO WRITTEN LENGTH

Most news can be told effectively in 300 words or less. Letters to the Editor should be as brief as possible.

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The Diocesan News

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CLERGY ORDINATION DATES

Apr 27, 2011	Rev. Praveen Jaison Tellis, OCD
Apr 28, 1966	Rev. Msgr. Jerry F. Desmond
May 11, 2012	Rev. Paul Simms
May 12, 2006	Rev. Andrew L'Heureux
May 22, 2009	Rev. Clinton Pendleton
May 22, 2010	Rev. Swann Kim
May 27, 1967	Rev. Donal O'Reilly
May 30, 1992	Most Rev. Joseph Phuong Nguyen (Priestly Ordination)
May 31, 1986	Rev. Fred Weisbeck
Jun 1, 1991	Rev. Peter Hoan Nguyen
Jun 6, 1992	Rev. Dale Normandeau
Jun 14, 2004	Deacon Paul Murphy
Jun 29, 1998	Rev. Anthony Ackerman
Jul 16, 2006	Rev. Peter Altamirano, OMI
Aug 8, 1981	Rev. Udoka Christopher Nwosu
Aug 15, 1998	Rev. Vincent Asomugha
Aug 19, 2001	Rev. Raphael Boansi
Aug 25, 2016	Most Rev. Joseph Phuong Nguyen (Episcopal Ordination & Installation)
Aug 27, 1994	Rev. Vernantius Ononiwu
Nov 1, 2001	Rev. Derrick Cameron
Dec 13, 2003	Rev. Vijay Duming Martin, OCD
Dec 20, 2003	Rev. Emmanuel Onumadu
Dec 26, 1982	Rev. Thomas Arackal, IMS
Dec 27, 2007	Rev. Ajin George

CLERGY BIRTHDATES

Jan 4	Rev. Swann Kim
Feb 8	Rev. Anthony Ackerman
Mar 2	Rev. Andrew L'Heureux
Mar 16	Rev. Donal O'Reilly
Mar 25	Most Rev. Joseph Phuong Nguyen
Mar 29	Rev. Fred Weisbeck
Apr 21	Deacon Paul Murphy
Apr 25	Rev. Derrick Cameron
Apr 27	Rev. Vernantius Ononiwu
May 5	Rev. Udoka Chirstopher Nwosu
Jun 12	Rev. Peter Hoan Nguyen
Jul 13	Rev. Thomas Arackal
Jul 21	Rev. Ajin George
Jul 23	Rev. Msgr. Jerry F. Desmond
Jul 23	Rev. Clinton Pendleton
Aug 7	Rev. Vincent Asomugha
Aug 29	Rev. Dale Normandeau
Aug 31	Rev. Peter Altamirano, OMI
Oct 1	Rev. Raphael Boansi
Oct 20	Rev. Vijay Duming Martin, OCD
Nov 6	Rev. Praveen Jaison Tellis, OCD
Dec 1	Rev. Emmanuel Onumadu



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DAILY MASS

8 a.m.

SUNDAY MASS

11 a.m.

Rosary 10:30 a.m.

Words from our secondary patron, St. John Vianney

'Humility is to the various virtues what the chain is to the Rosary: take away the chain and the beads are scattered; remove Humility and all virtues vanish.'

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"Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts."

Mother Teresa



The Good Shepherd



The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light ~ Isaiah 9:2

Merry Christmas





Sacred Heart – Lumby, BC

This year began with a tree fall (on January 1). A neighbour's gigantic tree broke under the weight of snow and fell on the rectory roof. Fr Swann thought it was an earthquake. The parish had to replace the shingles of the roof. Then, in August, another huge tree from the neighbour broke at a high wind in the afternoon. It was right after a funeral, and many guests saw it fall and miss the rectory by a few inches. These incidents gave a lesson to Fr Swann. He pruned two big trees on the parish property. It took a week to finish with the help of parishioners who hauled the branches away. It was a dangerous job, but the Lord gave protection! There will be no hazard of

broken trees this winter!

In October, our ladies of CWL (and with some handsome gentlemen) gathered at the parish centre to create amazing apple pies for a parish fundraiser. Everyone had to wear masks and gloves to prevent any infection during the pandemic. For the first batch over 130 have almost gone, the ladies had to make another batch because people love their pies. If you visit Lumby, please check out our pies! Medium size (still very generous size) at only \$10. Large ones are \$15 (a better deal)!

Fr Swann continues posting his daily homilies on YouTube. Now there are close to 200 homilies. Thank you very

much to all who are listening to them! Also, every Mass at the parish is on YouTube live stream and available for re-runs later time.

Now, it is getting cold, and it means Christmas is not too far away. With the great success last year, our parish with the help of CWL will prepare parish Christmas cards. Great quality at a great price. 10 high-quality cards at only \$25! The images are all from the parish church!

Since the beginning of the COVID19 pandemic, none of our parishioners have fallen victims to the virus. Thanks be to God! And thanks to all parishioners and visitors who have been generously cooperating with preventative measures!



OLPH SCHOOL



Welcome Back to School Video 2020 - COVID Reopening Tour

OLPH School wanted to ensure all our students and families had the opportunity to see what our school looked like before we reopened our doors due to the pandemic. The hope was to re-engage with our students after a 7 month absence and to reduce any anxious feelings any families may have about the return to school. It was extremely well received by our community! The link to our YouTube video is here: <https://youtu.be/cHIWIZsN5ao>



dOLPHin Mask Fundraiser

Masks are now the expectation while you are out and about. Why do it in style with an official Dolphin Mask! \$10.00 gives you a sense of school pride and 100% of the proceeds to towards the Royal Inland Hospital Foundation. Pick up yours at the main office today!



Hot "Hot" Lunch

Thanks to our new Chef, Chef Ross, we are sneaking in lots of healthy veggies and preparing fresh homemade lunches for our hungry students and staff! It's gaining lots of popularity and we are seeing a large increase in the amount of orders we are receiving! Family Dinners are our next venture and we have over 30 orders for our first Thursday offering!



Virtual Living Rosary

COVID-19 won't stop our tradition of hosting a living rosary during the month of October. Keeping to our cohort classes we hosted a virtual Zoom living rosary lead by our Grade 7's and each of the Hail Mary decades were hosted by our classroom students.



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The Bishop's Message



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the seasons of Advent and Christmas, we reflect on the incarnation that God became human to share his love and peace in the world. The Incarnation is a manifestation of God's interest in us and Christmas is about what God in Jesus Christ is doing in the world and for the world.

While the Covid19 pandemic has brought many challenges and restrictions, Christmas is a wonderful and prayerful occasion for us to get together in worship, therefore this year our diocese will celebrate Christmas from early afternoon on December 24th. Every community in our diocese

will celebrate additional Christmas masses on these two days, December 24th and 25th to accommodate as many people as we can.

We need to get back to the true meaning and real celebration of Christmas.

Like Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and the Magi, we are called to find and embrace Christ on our journey, which requires courage, perseverance, wisdom, prayer and humility.

As we all know, the one person who did not journey to the Nativity was King Herod. He stayed comfortably in the security of his palace, causing havoc on the male children of Bethlehem, a real tragedy against God's love.

I hope and pray that in coping with the Covid19 pandemic, all faithful of our diocese will journey together to the Nativity and also follow Christ out of the manger into the world and into our community. In order to do this, we need to see things with our eyes of faith and see our life experiences as occasions that can draw us closer to God. Sometimes it is clear to us how this happens, and at other moments we wonder how God could possibly use the particular circumstance of our life for His purpose. In the life of the Church and through the Saints, we have learned that God often uses challenges

and difficulties like these moments to reveal Himself to us.

At Christmas, God not only reveals himself but also enters our lives so that we may enter divine life. In spite of the many challenges caused by the circumstances of the world, with God's grace under the leadership of our clergy, we have accomplished much spiritually and pastorally for our parishes, and for that we give thanks.

As we journey together as a diocesan family to the Nativity, may we allow the Emmanuel "God is with us" to renew our thoughts and attitudes. May we experience the real joy and what is truly the good news of Christmas. This is my prayerful best wishes for you and your family.

With thanksgiving prayer,

+ Joseph Phuong Nguyen

✠ Joseph Phuong Nguyen
BISHOP OF KAMLOOPS



Sacrament of Confirmation - Sacred Heart Cathedral



"God of mercy and compassion, who led St. Marguerite d'Youville to embrace the way of the Cross and to devote her ardent love to assist the needy of her day, make us bold like her, we pray, so that we may imitate your own compassion, and have the strength to persevere until the day you call us to share the joy of your saints."

Congratulations!

From left to right: Onosholemah Marigold Obaze, Hana Choi, Bishop Joseph Phuong Nguyen, Sarah Hellend, Father Derrick Cameron, and Gail Huppie McDonnell - October 16, 2020



Salmon Arm Life Chain was held on Oct 4th. For 1 hour, 89 people lined the main street in town, (7 of which were Knights). Our council 7107 chaplain, Father Dale Normandeau was also there. In 2nd photo 7107 Grand Knight Craig Haliburton with wife Patricia and family hold up their placards prior to heading out with the group.
Photos by Ken Nowicki.



In Salmon Arm, The Pro-Life group put up their Flag & banner display again this year, to bring awareness to the public. 10,000 flags represent 1000,000 abortions performed in Canada last year. Led by Edwin & Hildegard Krieg with St Josephs Parishioners, Knights of Columbus, CWL and other church members helping out! This labour-intensive display was up for 1 day, but hopefully it was seen by many!
Photos by Ken Nowicki

St. Ann's Academy Childcare Activities



The Pumpkin Prayer

- 1. Choose a Pumpkin:** "Lord, fill me with your wisdom and guidance."
- 2. Scoop out the Insides:** "Lord, take out all of my fussies and frownies and fill me with your love."
- 3. Carve the Eyes:** "Lord, open my eyes to see all the beautiful things you have made."
- 4. Carve the Nose:** "Lord, help me to be a sweet, sweet fragrance for you."
- 5. Carve the Mouth:** "Lord, help me to always speak your words of loving kindness."
- 6. Place a light inside:** "Lord, help me to be a light to others for you have filled me with your light."

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." ~ Matthew 5:16



Choose Life 2020

How many days could Lovers of Life stand outside spreading their message to Kamloops before anyone noticed? Day One passersby gave 18 participants the thumbs up or down, called out support or opposition. Day 40 was graced with 35 faithful attendees who both stood outdoors for life and inside Sacred Heart Cathedral for the live-streamed Candlelight Prayer Vigil.

Forty days, September 23 to November 1, 2020, members of the Catholic community and other Christians stood near Royal Inland Hospital along Nicola St. Through prayer and peaceful activism, Choose Life seeks God's favour to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life. As a peaceful and educational presence, we stand witness to send a powerful message about the tragic realities of abortion, euthanasia and assisted suicide.

The most common question asked from passersby: "What if a woman is raped or a victim of incest?" Our response: "Our hearts go out to those who find themselves in such a difficult situation. Trying to destroy the life of the unborn as a way to wipe out a transgression can lead to more heart break. Many people in our society are living with the pain of abortion. Healing the trauma by giving life, possibly allowing someone else to parent through adoption, are hopeful and life-affirming options. The events in our life that make us strong can be the most difficult despite our first reaction destroy the evidence, to run from the scene of the accident, to keep the secret!"

Themes covered during this vigil were: Abortion Awareness, Poverty Awareness, Human Trafficking Awareness, and Euthanasia Awareness. Please have a look at the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Choose-Life-Kamloops-1776616792609982>) for more details of the four themes that were presented throughout the forty days.



"All Life Matters!" says the sign borrowed from Sacred Heart Church of Williams Lake. We are reminded that life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. Therefore, everyone deserves to be valued throughout their life, no matter their circumstance.

Help at all stages:

- Pregnancy or Post Abortion? **1-800-712-HELP** or www.optionline.org
- Healing from Abortion or Pregnancy Loss? **1-250-267-5081** call, text or visit www.rachelsvineyardkamloops.org
- Pornography or unhealthy sexual behaviours www.reclaimsexualhealth.com
- Human Trafficking: Joy Smith Foundation www.joysmithfoundation.com
- Poverty: Homeless, Addiction, Mental Health <https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/what-we-learned-about-poverty-bc>
- Compassionate Community Care: End of life issues **1-855-675-8749** or www.compassionatecommunitycare.org





Mrs. VanBakel's Grade 1/2 class earned stamps for every lap they completed around the field for the Terry Fox Run.



Mrs. Cameron's Grade 5/6 class took a selfie break while walking the Riverwalk Trail for the Terry Fox Run.



Mr Weston's Grade 6/7 class pose on some antique machinery on the Riverwalk Trail while participating in the Terry Fox Run.

'Carmelite Corner'

October 29, 2020



Mother Ann's News:

We are grateful to all who generously donated oats, flour, sugar jars and lids. We are well stocked up for baking and making jams. This has been a different fall. The bright yellow and red leaves on the trees are covered with snow and the vegetables are late in ripening, including the tomatoes. Friends have been generous in bringing tomatoes, so we will make as much spiced tomato jam as possible. God willing, we can make more next year.

The new construction of the garage/workshop is really coming along. Thanks be to God for the support and generosity of our community and benefactors. This much needed building will provide us with the space we need for our woodworking and other projects, as well as shelter for vehicles and equipment.

We wish Bishop Joseph, the clergy and all the faithful of our diocese a most blessed Christmas. We pray especially for those who live in isolation due to the Covid or whatever reason. May God grant us hope, strength of spirit and goodwill, so that we will experience the peace that the angels promised as they proclaimed *"Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace to people of good will."*

Invitation - Take a Road Trip:

During these times when gathering in numbers is limited, consider a drive to the Monastery over the Christmas Holidays. The Monastery is so beautifully decorated in traditional Christmas style with an amazing nativity scene, greenery, and colourful lights. Find the perfect gift for family and friends as you browse the lovely items, jams, and jellies for sale. Step inside the welcoming chapel for prayer and a peaceful visit with Jesus. Check out their Christmas Mass times and join the Sisters as they celebrate the birth of our Saviour. It is such a blessing to attend Mass in this extra special spiritual setting. The Sisters love having company - come and see!

Christmas Mass times: Christmas Eve Mass is 10:00 p.m. Christmas morning is as usual at 7:30 a.m.

Guild News:

Another 'new year' is fast approaching, and our annual newsletter and membership renewal information will be arriving in your mailbox or 'inbox' soon! Remember to provide us with updated contact information if you have moved or are not receiving correspondence from us. Thank you for support.

Active membership is \$25.00 for the year, and honorary memberships are \$75.00. We accept payment by E-transfer for memberships and/or donations. Email: carmelofstjosephsguild@gmail.com

We ask our members to pray for the Guild, that we may provide the Sisters with the support they need to continue their life of prayer for all. Pray also for vocations that many may hear and follow the call to begin a religious life - sisters, priests, deacons, etc.

Wishing everyone a Blessed and Peaceful Christmas - filled with Love and Joy as you celebrate the birth of our saviour Jesus Christ. Merry Christmas!

Mass is celebrated every day at the monastery at 7:30 a.m., you are welcome to attend.

The Carmelite Nuns of Armstrong are deeply concerned about the problems and the difficulties of the people of God in the surrounding area and around the world. Everyone is invited to phone, write, email or visit the Monastery to request prayers for special intentions.

Website www.carmelspall.org Phone: 1-250-546-8801
Mail to **Carmel of St. Joseph Monastery,**
4815 Salmon River Road, Armstrong, B.C. V0E 1B4

Submitted by T M Sinclair, Guild President (Carmel of St. Joseph's Guild c/o 4815 Salmon River Road Armstrong, B.C. V0E 1B4)

Bracelets For Blankets

Helping the homeless in Vernon.

St. James Catholic Girl's League is off to a great start this year. Due to Covid restrictions, only Grade 6 and 7 girls are able to be a part of it this year. However, we have 18 wonderful girls eager to get together each month to enjoy each other's friendship. Our theme this year is based on Matthew 25: 35-40 - I was hungry and you fed me, naked and you clothed me. The Catholic Girl's league has been beading beautiful gemstone bracelets and selling them for \$25.00. With the sale of each bracelet, a blanket is purchased for the homeless in Vernon. They have reached their goal of \$2,500, selling 100 bracelets. Thank you to everyone who purchased one of these bracelets.

Respectfully submitted by
Anne Kelly - St. James Catholic Girls League



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From left to right; Steve Planeta, Marc Tremblay, Sandi Wilcox (FFC Coordinator), and Crystal Wadlegger

Faith Formation for Children

This amazing group of catechists from St James Parish, Clearwater, and St. George's Parish, Barriere, have been busy preparing and are so excited about beginning the Faith Formation for Children Classes.

If you live in the North Thompson area and would like more information about the classes please contact Sandi Wilcox at sandiwilcox1@gmail.com.



Feast of our Lady of Mt. Carmel - Fr. Jaison Tellis, Fr. Vijay Martin and Bishop Joseph Nguyen.



Christmas and the Contrast Between Darkness and Light

Rev. Dale Normandeau, Pastor at St. Joseph's, Salmon Arm / Parochial Administrator - Our Lady of Fatima, Sicamous and Our Lady of the Lake, Blind Bay

I am putting my essay series on Mary aside today and presenting this Christmas reflection instead.

Christians have been celebrating the Solemnity of Christmas since at least the fourth century. Today, in every part of the world where Christians are found, Christmas is observed. This observance in the Northern hemisphere, however, is assisted by a seasonal reality lacking in the South this time of year: the overwhelming presence of natural darkness.

This darkness is the result of two factors: the earth's rotation and its orbit around the sun. The day is a measurement of time based on one complete rotation of the earth on its axis. The earth also has an axial tilt that oscillates between 22.1 and 24.5 degrees. It maintains this tilt while orbiting around the sun. The earth completes an orbit around the sun every 365 and one quarter days, making it necessary to add an extra day to the calendar, February 29th, once every four years. The earth's rotation along with its axial tilt while orbiting the sun is what gives the world and its hemispheres its distinct seasons along with fluctuating amounts of darkness and daylight throughout the year.

For 90% of Canadians who live within a few hundred kilometres of the Canadian/US border, Christmas is synonymous with the Winter season, along with its diminished daylight and long nights. For those who live in the extreme

Canadian north, the lack of daylight is even more profound. Some there may not even see a sunrise for a couple of months! For most Canadians, however, the sun will set before 4:30pm and not rise until after 8:00am during the Christmas season. Here in the south-central region of British Columbia, we experience 8 1/2 fewer hours of daylight between the Winter (December 21st) and Summer (June 20th) Solstices.

While it is not my intention to belabour the environmental realities that serve as a backdrop to the celebration of Christmas in our part of the world, one should not treat them as insignificant either. The fact is, if Christmas were observed in July rather than December, it would be observed quite differently.

"Christ is the light of the world..."

While the central mystery that is celebrated, Christ's birth, would remain unchanged, the natural abundance of daylight would somewhat hamper our appreciation of the meaning of the Solemnity in a very tangible way.

Does the lack of daylight necessarily play an intrinsic part in any of the

Church's celebrations? In a word, Yes! Recall the Church's liturgical celebration of the Easter Vigil on the Saturday evening before Easter Sunday. The liturgical instructions regulating the Easter Vigil call for this liturgy to not begin until dark, and to conclude before dawn. The presence of darkness is especially needed during the carrying of the Easter Candle into the Church in the opening procession, for it adds to the mystery being liturgically celebrated during that evening service. The light of the Easter Candle rivets the attention of the entire congregation because the contrasting darkness in the Church makes that candlelight more powerfully bright in its illumination. That Easter Candle's light becomes the source light for the candles held by the members of the congregation, so that the entire Church is eventually illuminated exclusively by candlelight, emanating from both the Easter Candle and by the individual candles held by the assembly members. The *Exsultet*, or ancient Easter Proclamation, is then chanted, while the entire Church remains inundated with candlelight.

The meaning of this liturgical act is clear: Christ Jesus, whose presence is symbolized by the Easter Candle, conquers sin and death, represented by darkness, through his resurrection. By baptism we are conformed to Christ and his resurrection becomes our own. We are Christ Jesus' brothers and sisters, adopted by

Cont. pg 14

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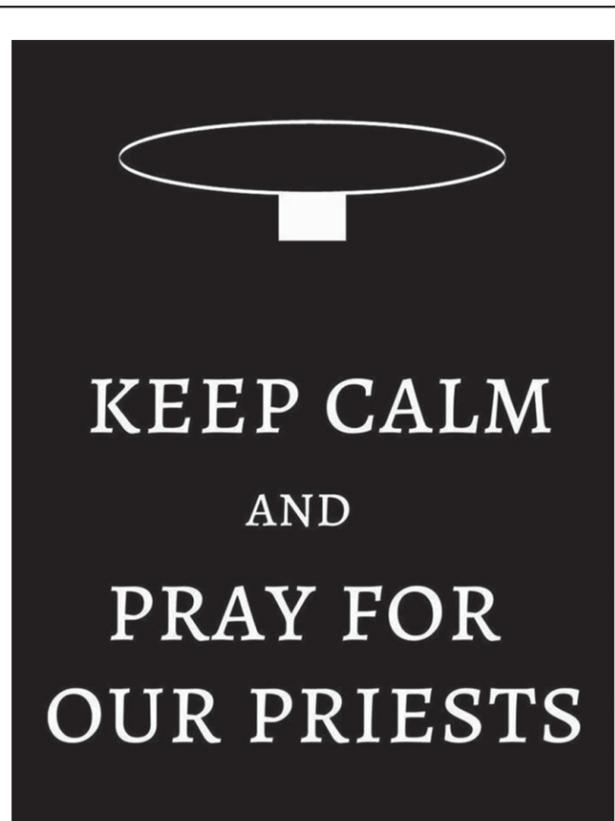
Making Your Defence cont'd

God our common Father, receiving a common inheritance, eternal life. That hope of eternal life is recalled during the scripture readings and celebrated while Catechumens present receive the initiatory sacraments at that same Easter Vigil.

While the darkened Church at the Easter Vigil is the stage upon which the Paschal drama is liturgically played out, Christmas is celebrated with a substantial amount of natural darkness as its backdrop. This is recalled in the nativity narratives found in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. It is through darkness that the Magi made their way to the Christ Child, following a star that is moving through the night sky to Bethlehem, as presented in the Gospel of Matthew. A dark night sky is also juxtaposed with the brilliant glory of the angelic hosts who reminded the shepherds to go to Bethlehem to find the infant Saviour, as stated in the Gospel of Luke. Both star and angelic hosts are powerful harbingers of Jesus Christ, with the darkness providing a necessary contrast: complete darkness making the shining star and angelic hosts even brighter.

Christmas decorations are often dismissed by some as unnecessary trifles, serving the commercialization and sentimentalization of Christmas rather than pointing out the Solemnity's true significance. However, if one explores the deeper meaning behind some Christmas decorations, an intuitive grasp of the feast's importance is revealed. For example, the Christmas tree is a powerful symbol of immortality, because the evergreen tree, unlike a deciduous tree, does not lose its leaves, or in this case needles, in the Winter. Christ was born to give us eternal life, so the evergreen Christmas tree, and Christmas wreaths, remind us of that fact. The Christmas tree's potency as a symbol is enhanced, traditionally, by the placement of candles on its branches, reminding us that Christ is the light of the world, and "the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1.5). Today electric Christmas tree lights serve as a safer substitute, while illustrating the same truth. Whether by means of candlelight or electric light, the illumination added to the Christmas tree is more than garish display: it is a tangible reminder that, as light cuts through the natural darkness prevalent during this season, so Christ, the light of the world, cuts through the darkness of sin and death.

May you and your families have a happy and blessed Christmas, illuminated by the light of Christ.



Serra Club of Kamloops Diocese



Let us pray for our beloved priests. Lord, we ask you to heal them and to strengthen them. Please help us to be helpful to them, and may they know that we love them and that we are praying for them. May they not feel discouraged but renewed in their sacrifice and offerings. Amen.

St. Joseph's Church – Armstrong, BC

Father Tony (Anthony) Ackermann is normally a very busy priest travelling from Armstrong to Enderby for St. Ann's, to St. John's in Falkland and out to the Carmel of St. Joseph Monastery... plus he has added a weekly Wednesday service at Armstrong's prestigious retirement residence, Heaton Place, for 6 Catholic Women's League members residing there!!

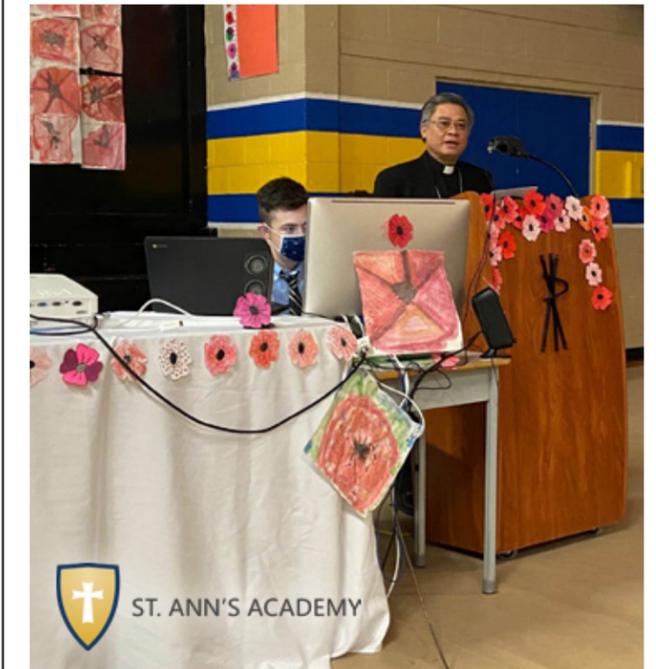
Activities are seriously reduced due to the health restrictions which vary from month to month, sometimes even day to day!

Father Tony is fortunate to have his father living nearby, in Vernon. He visits there every Tuesday. It is likely good for his dad, too, what with restricted visiting rules regarding 'bubbles'.

On December 28th St. Joseph's Catholic Women's League reaches their 80th Anniversary with plans to celebrate in April. Many readers will recall the wonderful day of celebrating their 75th, on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Good Counsel in 2016. Our Bishop Joseph attended along with 3 priests and a Deacon as well as the National President of the League. The charter had been brought to Armstrong, in person, on December 28th, 1940, by the then National President, from Ontario! Can you imagine the challenges of travel back then?

Fundraising is another activity that has changed greatly! Fortunately, a Valentine Italian Dinner for the parish and community was a fun gathering of families and a huge success! Who knew then what the future held?! Two weeks later plans for a garage sale were scuttled with no idea when it could be back on the agenda...hopefully this spring?

Remembrance Day Service



Bishop Joseph at St. Ann's Academy's Remembrance Day Service



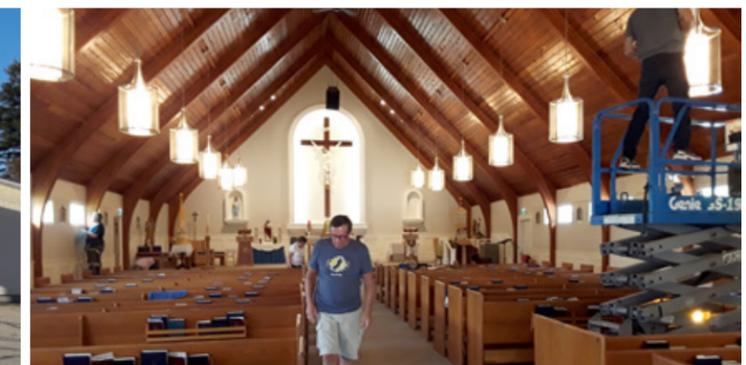
Father Tony's 20th Anniversary of Ordination: Fr. Tony has been with us since 2008. He wears a crown as many Armstrong and Enderby parishioners joined him to celebrate over dinner at the Anchor Inn



Christmas 2019: St. Joseph's interior after renovations



St. Joseph's exterior with rectory and Hall alongside



Full interior of St. Joseph's with Spring cleaning crew busy cleaning light fixtures, windows, and re-aligning polished pews

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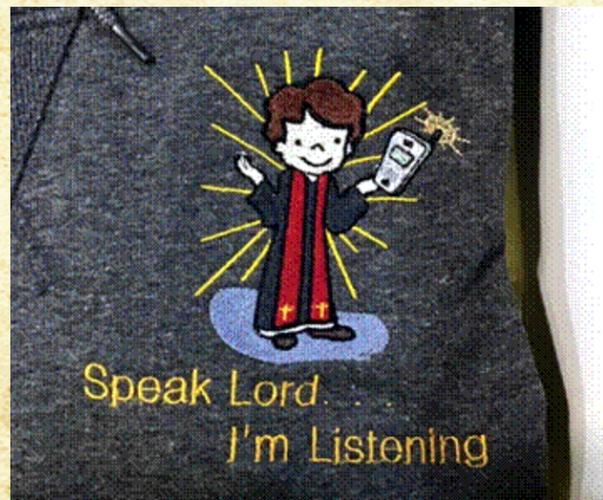


On-Line Connections:

Like many organizations in these times, our Diocesan executive took advantage of technology and met three (3) times via 'zoom' meetings on line. The May and August meetings allowed us to reconnect and discuss next steps for our councils. It is important that our members understand that although we may have to revise what we do and how we meet, etc., we are a vital to the success of the league and our parish communities! During the August meeting Father Paul Simms gave an uplifting spiritual reflection - reminding us that in times of uncertainty we are encouraged to anchor ourselves with the gift of memory and go back to our *Galiilee* experiences – the times we encountered Jesus, to seek Jesus as our rock, our place of refuge and to let Him bless us again.

On September 24th we officially welcomed **Fr Paul Simms** as our new spiritual advisor – **Congratulations!** The installation ceremony included beautiful music and prayers, with Fr Andrew officiating and past Diocesan president, Dorothy Hruby participating. Fr Paul looks forward to his time with us which he expressed, with anticipation, in his quiet humble way.

Sheila Doherty then gave a wonderful summary of **Fr Andrew L'Heureux's five year journey** with the league as our outgoing spiritual advisor. Thanking him for blessing us with his inspirational spiritual talks, his sense of humour and his desire to help the league succeed. With heartfelt goodbye's and virtual hugs, he opened our gift - a hoodie, embroidered with an image of a young boy in priest's robes, holding a phone, and the words *'Speak Lord I'm Listening'*. These words represent our CWL diocesan theme since 2019 and depict Fr Andrew's deep connection with the Lord and his phone! We are confident this will always remind him of his time with us!



Social Distance 'in-person' Diocesan CWL Meeting!

HOWEVER, nothing beats meeting in person – and that's what we did on October 24th! Thanks to the generous women of the Sacred Heart CWL parish in Merritt for hosting us, and while social distancing and other Covid protocols were practiced it was so exciting to 'see' each other. Although we were small in number, only twelve, *like the apostles*; we were a passionate engaged group!

Conventions to AGM's: ALL conventions for 2021 will look different, they will be **Annual General Meetings** (AGM's) due to restrictions on number of people allowed to gather. Diocesan and Provincial executives will be following the National Councils



lead, planning AGM meetings to cover business for 2020 and 2021 in place of conventions. These will be restricted to voting and accredited delegates, keeping the total spots to 50 (unless otherwise indicated by Government rulings).

Recognition for Action: St. Joseph's CWL council of Salmon Arm was recognized as the winners of a diocesan letter writing campaign, inspired by our Resolutions Chairperson, Domenica Spina. Members from across the diocese were encouraged to write/email the Prime Minister and other government officials in **protest of Bill C-7**, an act to expand the criteria to qualify for *MaiD (Medical Assistance in Dying)* or Euthanasia. Should this bill pass it would have an alarming effect on the most vulnerable of our society – the elderly, the mentally ill, handicapped and our youth. We encourage everyone, not just CWL members, to contact government officials expressing opposition to this and other laws threatening our beliefs, values and rights – if not us – who?



Affirmation Award: The 'Circle of Love' affirmation award was presented to Dorothy Hruby. Sonya Barrett, the previous recipient, sent a letter expressing her sincere gratitude to Dorothy who introduced her to the CWL and continues to be an inspiration as a member and friend.



Strategic Plan – First Fruits! Lynne Langley, our Diocesan Organization chair, encourages parishes and all members to view the new **Welcome Program** video and the materials mailed to each council. In the manual you will find ideas that each council - regardless of size or current challenges - can adapt to meet their specific needs. This is just the beginning of many other resources coming your way. As marketing team members T Sinclair and K Dahl passionately confirm several promo videos/vignettes are about to be released via a variety of social media outlets. Be ready!!

Events/Activities/Fundraising Things may be different – but we are still active! **Fundraising can be done with Covid protocols and/or by taking orders, arrange pick up times, social distance...*

- Participation in Rosary Rallies, Life Chain, Hike for Life, 40 Days for Life, Season of Creation
- CWL meetings via zoom or other on line programs; in person /social distancing
- Four (4) resolutions being prepared for Diocesan AGM
- Annual report instruction webinars, summer speaker series
- Successful raffles / chocolate sales / anti-pasta sales/ no bake – bake sales
- Bible studies – via zoom and/or social distance meeting places
- Phone trees – stay connected to members without access to computers or just to say 'Hi'
- Newsletters, bulletin inserts, and submit articles to next level – share your good news
- Don't forget to order your 'Pashmina'! Contact Diane Nadeau, cwlpashmina@gmail.com



Wishing all a Very Merry Blessed Christmas!
 And a fantastic New Year! Cheers!

Submitted by T.Mae Sinclair
 Diocesan CWL Communications Chair | tmaesinclair@shaw.ca

Discerning the Call of God

Maribel Castillo is discerning a religious calling. Fr. Andrew asked her to share her testimony.

How did God help me stop my fangirling and realize that He is more important than anything else? It was unexpected, but things struck me in perfect timing. And so, I relented.

What keeps you wanting to go to Mass? How are you living your life? What is your priority in life? Do you do stuff that gives glory to God? Do you give God some of your time? Where do you spend your money? Do any of your expenses shape or form your soul? These questions helped me a lot throughout my journey in finding the Light. God comes first. I realized that a long time ago but failed to act on it.

I was a super fangirl. A fangirl is a girl or a woman who is extremely devoted or overly excited about something specific. It started when I was in elementary school, but it got worse in 2009. It was crazy, I would put them on top of my list before anything else. I remember I would not attend Mass just to go to Korean Pop (KPop) events, and I would lie to my mother about my whereabouts because she doesn't like me going gaga over my idols. When I was able to travel, I would base my itinerary on their schedule. It already seemed like I depended my life on them: my happiness, my time, my savings. I would always use my free time to watch Asian movies or series, update my website for them and update the SNS I was handling.

They say I'm a lucky fangirl because every time I follow my favourite artists, I see them, or I have this so-called "fangirl moment". The happiness of seeing your favourite artist is so overwhelming. There was this one time, during my trip to Taiwan when I strategically chose a particular hotel because it was close to where my favourite actor's film location is. I went all over the hotel to look for him to see if my instincts were right. When I got to the parking lot, he was there, and we both used the same elevator! I mean, every fangirl would wish for that to happen. It was unreal. To be honest, I never prayed for it. If there's one thing I wouldn't do about my fangirling, it's that I would never ask God to help me. The reason is, deep down, I know that there are other things more important than something as shallow as that. That's just for me. I'm not saying it will be the same for others.

Everything changed that one Sunday afternoon in the summer of 2019 when I went to church to attend Mass. I always look forward to hearing the Word of God and be with Him. I believe that the Word of God has different effects in each one of us every day, depending on what circumstances we are experiencing. But that day, I was not expecting anything out of ordinary. I forgot about the fact that we were going to have a new Parish Pastor, and from what I heard, he is young and fit to live in Whistler. They said he hunts, and I thought that was awesome. His name is Fr. Andrew.

Just like any ordinary Sunday, I went into the church and saw familiar faces. I sat with them and said hi. Most of the people are seated on the back pew, silently waiting for the Mass to start at 11:00 am. That's when I heard the Pastor blurt out, "You know, I took a shower this morning." I had a good chuckle; I was surprised to hear that. I thought this Pastor seemed cool and easy to talk to, maybe? I've always been awkward with priests since I was young because I feel like they know all my sins. LOL!

Finally, the Mass started. There was the first reading, responsorial psalm, second reading then the Holy Gospel. I do not remember the whole Gospel that day, but I did my research and found out what it was. I'm not very good at understanding the Bible, honestly. But this time it resonated, especially with the homily.

In his homily, some parts of it struck me so hard, I could not stop contemplating about it the whole day. Fr. Andrew asked this question for reflection, "So how are we living our lives? How did we do this day, actually? For the past, we will simply have to ask forgiveness. We can't change that. But today, how much did we spend on vanities, on things that did not benefit our soul?" Wow. So, I reflected on that as I was sitting on the pew. I realized I did not do anything for my soul. Well, I did pray that day for, like, 5 minutes and that was it. All I did that morning was watch Korean Drama (KDrama), did my quick prayer then went back to watching KDrama until I needed to get ready for Mass.

God must be telling me something. I was sure about it because I felt so bad the whole day. When I got home after work, I prayed. Reflected. My fangirling has taken over my life besides my work. I never focused on God. Never put him as my priority above everything else. I valued him but he was never my priority. I'm living a sinful life. The first commandment is to have no gods before God. In a sense, anything that takes the place of God as the priority and the most important thing in our life can be called an idol. Well, as I look at it, that is how I was. Yes, I'm happy every time I watch KDrama. I follow (subtle version of stalk) my favourite artists. I see them, but after that, what happens next? Nothing. I will just have to wait until I see them again. I've finished the series, then what? Nothing. I will just try to find a new series to watch because I was never satisfied. I would read articles or watch my favourite artists' videos and repeat. It was the same thing over and over. It did make me happy for a while, but I never felt that joy, real joy.



After that Sunday, I started watching KDrama less. Close to no KDrama, actually, because I finished that one KDrama in a month which has only 16 episodes and I was skimming most of the time. Before, I would have completed it in 3 days. The transformation in me pulled me to watch more videos on Formed. It's basically like Netflix but its shows are great for my soul, for my salvation, for our salvation, rather. That's what Fr. Andrew would always say when promoting it.

It took me a while to let go of my merchandise. You know, the stuff you buy because your favourite's name is printed on it? I have those, lots of them. I put them in my luggage in October and decided to give them away and sell the others.

As I kept going to Mass, I felt that hunger for the Eucharist. I want to receive Jesus too. I haven't been to Confession for such a long time. It has been more than 10 years, maybe 15 years. The more Fr. Andrew talks about the Body of Christ, the more I felt that hunger. Well, he did talk about Confession a lot, but it was like 'the more I need, the less I want it.' But in truth, it was because I wasn't ready yet. It made me realize how sinful I've been living my life. I had my reason for not doing the Confession, I felt that I do not deserve God's mercy. In September 2019, my friend asked me why I don't go to Holy Communion, I told her it's because I haven't been to Confession and my father said to me that you couldn't receive the Lord if you haven't done it or say you're in a state of mortal sin. That stuck in my mind.

Then came November. I decided to do the Sacrament of Reconciliation after more than a decade. Honestly, before going into the Confessional, I was shaking, sweating, and nervous. It was frightening, and it was not easy for me. I haven't done it in ages! But I believe that it would give me freedom from my sins. I remember the Confessor said, "Welcome home!" It was beautiful to hear. After I heard the Words of Absolution, I felt light, like I was flying. Burdens lifted from my shoulders that I didn't know I had been carrying. It's hard to explain, but my heart was at peace and I felt this different kind of joy that I haven't felt for a long time. It was amazing.

God's mercy is immeasurable. It's beautiful to know that it is Jesus speaking through his priest. The baggage I've been carrying for the past years disappeared all of a sudden. Some people say that it's not necessary to do the Sacrament of Reconciliation because we can ask forgiveness to God directly. Still, the thing is, we also sinned to our fellow human beings. Also, the Sacred Scripture tells us to "confess our sins to one another" (James 5:16). When we, Catholics, confess our sins to a priest, it's like allowing ourselves to do what Jesus Christ wishes us to do when he said, "I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," (Matthew 9:6). Since then



I made it a point to go to Confession regularly. I still get nervous every time I do it. Sometimes it helps me to think that the Priest has amnesia. You know, like, how Dory the fish has short term memory. That's how I feel, but honestly, they have this thing called Seal of Confession which is the best! And God doesn't make us accountable for our past sins, that's how much He loves us. His forgiveness is infinite.

I believe God sometimes uses other people to send us messages. That encounter with our Lord has changed me. I let him console me, heal me. He made me well. I let God transform me. With God's grace, I was able to stop living in idolatry and fear. Sins are evil and destructive. Let's not allow these sins to damage our souls. Fear, it makes us paralyzed. If we don't leave our comfort zone, we will not grow. We should always remember that Christ's love is greater than our sins.

God alone must be loved absolutely and unconditionally. He must come first. Everything we have is a gift from God. That is why we should be grateful in every way. If we happen to cross our path with the Lord, let us listen to him, let us follow him more closely without leaving our place in the world but with total surrender of our hearts. When I made God my priority, everything changed. I feel more at peace and joyful and I see things differently now. It will be the same for you, if you let Him work on you, if you ask the grace that you need. God is waiting for us.

Let us not depart from the path of righteousness and show people why we need to turn away from our sins. With this I leave you with the same question, "So how are we living our lives? How did we do this day, actually?"

by Maribel Castillo

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Christmas Mass Times 2020

As we recently received new orders from the Provincial Health Authorities restricting the public celebration of Mass and as disappointing this news is, I want to assure you that Holy Mass will continue to be daily celebrated and offered for you and your intentions by the Priests in our Diocese.

The Diocese will be posting Christmas Mass times and links for the streamed Masses on our website, www.rcdk.org.

Mass times are subject to change so please refer to the diocesan website or your parish website regularly for updated information. **Thank you.**

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas!



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