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Notes from Bishop Dunn's Letter to Priests and Deacons August 26, 2016

To my Brother Priests and Deacons,

I am looking forward to the BBQ next week when we will have a chance to relax together. It will take place at the Parish Hall in Louisdale on Tuesday, August 30, beginning at 4 pm. All priests and deacons are invited to attend.

Seminarian

Jordan MacKinnon will be returning to St. Pater's Seminary in London, Ontario in September. Jordan is mid-way through his theology program. Please pray for him as he discerns his call.

Diocesan Communications update

In the past year, since the position of Communication Officer was created, there have been systems and tools established to help facilitate the flow of information. We have also identified parish engagement as a priority in our activities for the coming Year. The Communications Office looks forward to connecting and supporting the great energy and information contained within and generated by our faith communities. Our Communications Officer Jennifer Hatt is planning to attend Deanery meetings to provide an update on our communications initiatives and discuss the potential for deanery workshops on communications to be held during the month of October. I encourage all the deans to make contact with Jennifer and be part of our communication process moving forward.

Youth Ministry: A Message from Nolan Conrad

Are you involved in Youth Ministry? Are you interested in Youth Ministry? You are invited on October 1st to come to our first Think Tank for Youth Ministry, hosted by the Diocese of Antigonish Youth Office based on the new Youth Ministry Document *You Give Them Something To Eat* from the CCCB. Anne Walsh, one of the authors of the document, will facilitate the day. You will have opportunities to talk with people from all across our diocese, check out materials and programs for your parish. You will have an opportunity to consider a direction and plan for youth ministry in your parish. This opportunity will take place on October 1st at St. Joseph's Parish, Port Hawkesbury from 10am to 4pm, concluding with Mass. More info on how to sign up and to obtain required reading materials will be sent out in the near future.

CWL National Convention in Halifax

The 96th Annual National Convention of the Catholic Women's (CWL) League took place from August 14-17 in Halifax. The theme this year: One Heart, One Voice, One Mission, Palliative and Hospice Care, focused on the ministry of care and compassion. Nearly 800 women from every

province and territory were in attendance, 300 of whom were from Nova Scotia. While activities, Masses and business meetings filled their days, the conference provided the women an opportunity to pray, learn, and laugh together as they celebrated the ministry they provide in their home dioceses. Our diocese had a significant number of women present as well as some of the priests who are spiritual advisors. Please continue to be grateful for these women of faith in our diocese.

Revitalization of Development and Peace

This is to inform you that the Antigonish Diocesan Council of Development and Peace is planning a revitalization program to renew active support of Development and Peace in our diocese, effective this upcoming September. I support and promote the work and mission of Development and Peace, and approve of this project to revitalize our Diocese's participation in the campaigns of Development and Peace.

The Diocesan Council will be recruiting and training Parish Representative to act as leaders in each parish to promote and encourage parish participation in the campaigns and activities of Development and Peace. These Parish Representatives will receive formation training twice each year, beginning with Fall Education and Action workshops that have already been scheduled for this upcoming fall:

1. October 22nd: Sydney, Glace Bay, New Waterford, Northside/Victoria
2. October 29th: Inverness, Richmond
3. November 5th: Antigonish, Guysborough, Pictou

The Diocesan Council will lay the groundwork of this goal by visiting parishes in August and September to meet with Parish Priests (and other parish leaders) to discuss this revitalization project. I encourage you to receive Diocesan Council members who request a meeting about this matter, and to put the topic of Development and Peace revitalization on the agendas of your first Deanery meetings in the fall. I wish the Diocesan Council of Antigonish God's blessing in their work, and encourage you to welcome and assist them generously.

2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has recently confirmed that the theme for the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is "Reconciliation. The Love of Christ compels us" (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:14-20). The material has a particular focus on the 500th commemoration of the Reformation, with the intent of focusing not on our painful divisions that originated in that period, but on our common commitment to Christ today.

The Pontifical Council has also provided the following web links, which will eventually have all the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity material listed online: In English, at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_weeks-prayer.htm.

In French, at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_weeks-prayer_fr.htm

As in past years, in addition to the international resources listed above, there will also be locally adapted material prepared here in Canada for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. **I am asking that, in light of this important anniversary, every parish consider holding an ecumenical prayer service to acknowledge the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2017.**

Mass for Sexual Abuse Victims and for Other Issues that Affect our World

In my last letter I asked that each parish have a mass on **Wednesday, September 14, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**. In light of some feedback, I would like to ensure this Mass is celebrated, but with a larger perspective. We need to remember all those who have suffered sexual abuse, but also

all those in our world who suffer from other horrific experiences, e.g., civil war, oppression, unemployment, natural disasters, etc. I invite all parishioners to pray on this Feast day so that we can experience true conversion in this Year of Mercy. I hope that as a Diocese, we may manifest our unity of heart and mind as we pray for healing and peace in our world. May the example of the Lord's suffering bring healing and new life to all of us.

Catechetical Sunday, September 25, 2016

For the past several years, the Emmaus Centre has been providing parish resources to bring awareness to the vocation of catechist and Catechetical Sunday. On September 25, 2016, Pope Francis will celebrate with catechists around the world the Jubilee of Catechists. The National Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has prepared many excellent resources which can be used on Catechetical Sunday or any time throughout the year by clergy, coordinators and parents to emphasize the special role of the catechist. These resources can be used for individual reflection or in a larger group setting. You may wish to use the liturgical suggestions for a special blessing of catechists either on Catechetical Sunday, September 25, 2016 or at another time when catechists are gathered together. Please see the link below:

<http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/office-for-evangelization-and-catechesis/4482-jubilee-for-catechists>

Of special interest for French parishes, are the French resources developed by the Office de catéchèse du Québec. Please see the link: http://www.catechetes.qc.ca/dim_kt/index.html

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Pope Francis has proclaimed September 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. This event will launch the Season Of Creation, Sept 1-Oct 4, as part of the Year of Mercy. On Sept 1, we are invited to remember the Earth in a special way during our prayer. Pope Francis states: "The annual World Day of prayer for the Care of Creation offers to individual believers and to the community a precious opportunity to renew our personal participation in this vocation as custodians of creation, raising to God our thanks for the marvellous works that He has entrusted to our care, invoking his help for the protection of creation and his mercy for the sins committed against the world in which we live." To hear Pope Francis' message, find prayers for the Earth written by Pope Francis or learn what we can do to begin to heal the planet, go to: catholicclimatemovement.global/world-day-of-prayer/.

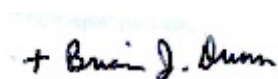
New Ritual for Sacrament of Confirmation

The CCCB has published the new Ritual for the Sacrament of Confirmation and is available at the Emmaus Center at a cost of \$55. This new Ritual provides a new translation for all the prayers for the celebration of Confirmation and will be the official ritual as we celebrate Confirmation this year.

Closing

Last week I celebrated the 25th anniversary of Sr. Josephine Lucila, OSA at Our Lady of Grace Monastery. Mother Gloria mentioned that they have two postulants at the Monastery preparing for vows. Please keep these sisters in your prayers. Looking forward to seeing you at the BBQ.

Sincerely in Christ,



† Brian Joseph Dunn
Bishop of Antigonish