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Notes from Bishop Dunn's Letter to Priests and Deacons March 22, 2016

Yesterday we had a wonderful celebration of the Blessing of Oils. Our day began at St. Pius X Church with a wonderful meal and a very prayerful preparation for the Blessing of Oils. Thanks to Fr. Jim Oliver for his inspiring presentation at the prayer time and for his efforts in organizing his parishioners to provide a lovely meal. While many priests and parish representatives were not able to attend the Mass due to the weather, the celebration went very well. Thanks to Fr. Andrew Gillies for his organization of the liturgy and thanks to Fr. Patrick O'Neill for all his efforts with his parishioners and ministers who served at the liturgy and who provided a generous reception after the liturgy. This liturgy was certainly a great way to enter into the Holy Week Services. For those who did not receive the oils, you may obtain them at the Cathedral.

Staff at the Diocesan Liturgy Office

After long service to our diocese, **Pat Bray** has chosen to retire from her position in the Liturgy Office. For more than two decades, Pat has been the day to day "face" and presence in the Liturgy Office, offering information, guidance, instruction, formation and ongoing support to pastors, parishes and individuals throughout the diocese. In addition to her service within the diocese, Pat has served the Canadian Church as a member of the Atlantic Liturgy Conference as well as a member of the National Commission for Liturgy and the Sacraments. Over these years, Pat has shown tremendous leadership with the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and has been generous with her talents and time in offering workshops and formation sessions in all parts of our diocese. Passionate about the foundational role of liturgy within our faith, Pat has devoted herself as a student of liturgy and has committed herself to lifelong learning in liturgy. While we will acknowledge Pat's role more suitably later this year, we take this opportunity to thank her for the wonderful gift she has been to our diocese. We offer Pat our heartfelt gratitude and thanks. Pat, you will be greatly missed.

While Pat will be staying on a little while longer, she is welcoming and guiding Margie Gillis, a Sydney native (Holy Redeemer Parish) who has returned to her home roots. She is a St. FX graduate and served with the Sisters of the CND for 18 years and was missioned in various parts of Canada (Truro, Antigonish, Inverness) and in Guatemala. She was actively involved in Diocesan and Parish Ministries: Liturgy and Music, Youth Ministry, Development and Peace as well as Religious Education. She worked in the Dioceses of Antigonish, Halifax, Edmonton, Hamilton, Toronto and the Diocese of Guatemala City, Guatemala. She has a BA, BEd, STB and M.Div. After leaving the CND, she worked for Ontario Catholic Education School Boards for 25 years, teaching theology in secondary schools, working in Chaplaincy Leadership, providing liturgical leadership and faith formation for administrators, staff, and students. Margie is delighted to have this opportunity to serve in this Liturgy Office Position. Please offer her a generous welcome.

Annual National Catholic TV Mission 2016

The Annual National Catholic TV Mission 2016, "Merciful Like the Father," with Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB will be broadcast Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday during Holy Week. Check the Diocesan Website for times of these presentations.

Indigenous Pastoral Leadership Formation Program

The Indigenous Pastoral Leadership Formation Program is being offered this year from June 13 to 17, 2016. This program is a collaborative effort between Kateri Native Ministry of Ottawa and Saint Paul University through the School of Transformative Leadership and Spirituality and the Centre for Religious Education and Catechesis.

For whom? This program is for Indigenous people who are interested in training and education in pastoral ministry. Its goal is to equip Indigenous people to exercise pastoral leadership and ministry in their home communities. Non-Indigenous ministers are also welcome to join us. Those who have taken the program in the past have benefited from this experience.

Program: Throughout the week, participants will explore connections between Native spiritualities and Christian faith through a number of topics in liturgy, religious education and pastoral ministry. In addition to regular programming, this year Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber will be present for a conversation about his experience of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous people. This strengthening of the connections between Indigenous teachings and Christian teachings will continue to promote healing and reconciliation for all who are involved in this program. Consult the website of Kateri Native Ministry for presenters and topics.

National Week for Life and the Family will be May 8-15, 2016

The dates of the National Week are determined primarily by the United Nations 1993 resolution which declared May 15 the International Day of Families. Parishes are invited to check the COLF website for materials on Family Life.

Workshop Sponsored by the Senior Priests Committee

The Senior Priests Committee is sponsoring a workshop for all priests on Wednesday, May 18 from 10 am to 2 pm at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Sydney. This workshop will consider a number of themes, especially related to retirement. Sessions will be presented by specialists in the field: health care/nursing home, finances, housing, legal issues and nutrition. While the focus will be on retirement, the sessions will provide information that could be helpful for all priests. No registration fee. Turkey dinner will be served, so those interested are asked to call Darlene at the Pastoral Centre.

Retreat for the Year of Mercy

Coinciding with the Year of Mercy with a focus on bringing healing to our people and the whole Diocese, a 3-day Divine Healing Retreat will be held at St. Ninian Place and St. FX Chapel, Antigonish on May 27-29, 2016. Guest retreat master will be Father Joby Kachappilly of the Divine Retreat Center in Toronto ON (www.divinetoronto.org). Father Joby focuses on spreading the Gospel, God's mercy, forgiveness, the Sacraments and healings. Bible is needed. Registration \$60. Early registration (before May 1st) \$45. For more information contact (after 6pm only) Cathy at 902-863-1560, 902-863-3983, 902-968-1574, Rev Charles Cameron 902-863-4373, Sr Agnes Beaton 902-863-6020 or email mcmacdougall@hotmail.com.

Renewal of the Sacrament of Penance

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has finalized an article

on the Sacrament of Penance and has posted it on the website of the Congregation. It will be published in its journal, *Notitiae*: “Rediscovering the *Rite of Penance*” in *Notitiae*, 2015/2. You may have access to this article at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregationsccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_notitiae_index_en.html. This document could assist in the renewal of the Sacrament during this Year of Mercy.

Newman Catholic Land Holding Company

You will recall that this company was established as an arms length corporation separate from the diocese in 2011 to protect any new assets coming into the Diocese. With the move of the Diocesan Office from Sydney Mines, the main asset of the company will be for sale. The company has decided to fold as of March 31, 2016, since its purpose is no longer necessary. Thanks to those who served as the Board of Directors for the past five years: Jack Coffin (Chair), Carol Ripley (Treasurer), Sister Dolores Kennedy, Mike Tobin (Secretary), and Bishop Brian Dunn (with Darlene Stephenson as the recording secretary).

Cape Breton Coalition for Social Justice

The Cape Breton Coalition for Social Justice is sponsoring a presentation and sharing on the theme of “Creating Communities of Belonging”. The guest speaker, Fr. Guilermo Campuzano, CM (Fr.Memo) will be sharing his experiences of finding hope in the midst of poverty and challenges. The day will consist of: 1) a talk by Fr. Memo; 2) One or two Cape Bretoners’ sharing their experiences of overcoming poverty and finding hope; 3) Opportunities for discussion and sharing by participants.

What: Building Hope/Creating Communities of Belonging

When: Sunday April 24, 2016 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Where: Bethel Presbyterian Church Hall
(on the corner of George & Brookland Street, Sydney, N.S.)

For Whom: Persons who work with those who are experiencing challenges of living in poverty; Persons in need of support; Persons living with challenges; Indigenous community members; Youth members of our communities are especially welcome Minorities; All interested in hearing Fr. Memo.

There is no registration, no fee and a light lunch will be served. Everyone is welcome. Come early and enjoy some live entertainment.

Conference on Fr. James Mallon’s book: *Divine Divine Renovation*

There will be a conference on Fr. James Mallon’s book: *Divine Divine Renovation*, bringing your parish from maintenance to mission. The conference will take place on June 13-14, 2016 in Halifax. See the website (www.divinerenovation.net) for more information and learn about the workshops and speakers. This conference might assist us to become catalysts for renewal in our local church.

Annual Report and Financial Report

I am still waiting for annual reports from ten parishes. Please send them to the Chancery Office AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. We need these statistics to complete the Report to Rome. Thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Lay Formation Program: September 2016

The Office of Lay Formation is announcing a Lay Formation Program beginning in September 2016. Participants in the three-year program will be joining the candidates in the Permanent Diaconate

Formation Program and will be taking courses that will renew their faith and assist them to see their call in the world. Each year will consist of ten weekends including one retreat weekend, and each weekend will have human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral elements. Courses over the three years will cover topics relating to theological foundations, Christology, ecclesiology and pastoral considerations. There will also be another course on one additional Saturday per month. The program is open to anyone who actively participates in parish life and is interested in a journey of authentic and deeper discovery of faith. The deadline for applications is June 15, 2016. A brochure with more detailed information will be available shortly.

Atlantic Marian Gathering

The Theme of the Atlantic Marian Gathering in 2016 is “Mary, Mother of Mercy” which will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia May 27- 29, 2016. The keynote speakers are Archbishop Anthony Mancini of Halifax; Father Mark Barron a Marian priest with the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception (at present, at the Marian Seminary as Prefect of students); and Father Patrick O’Neill (pastor at St. Joseph in North Sydney).

Developments in Communications

Our new website has now been launched! Each parish is asked to ensure that the information regarding your parish is up to date. This will ensure that our website will be useful for parishioners. Thanks to Jennifer Hatt and Deacon Art Riley for the work on the updating of the website.

Update on Youth Events

1. The Net Canada Retreat has been scheduled at Sydney Mines Parish for March 28th. The theme for the retreat is “Jesus who?” Cost: \$20 per person, with discounts available for Groups and sibling/family rates. Contact Nolan Conrad for more information.
2. Our diocese has two new pages! Our Facebook and Instagram pages “Diocese of Antigonish Youth” have reached many in the first few days and garnered many followers and likes. Youth articles, quotes and advertising for our future events are posted to these pages.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "† Brian J. Dunn". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the typed name.

† Brian Joseph Dunn
Bishop of Antigonish