



**FORECASTS OF A MAJOR SNOW STORM CAUSED THE CANCELLATION** of the Culture of Life Conference sponsored by our Family Ministry Office which was to have taken place today. The annual conference draws together young people and teacher advisors from the various school boards who belong to Culture of Life Clubs in their schools. Because of the dire weather forecasts it was deemed prudent to cancel yesterday so that meal preparation and other essential services could be advised in advance.

**FR. NIAZ TOMA AND THE TWO CHALDEAN COMMUNITIES IN OUR DIOCESE** rejoice in the recent election of His Beatitude Louis Raphael I Sako as Patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldeans at a Synod of Chaldean Bishops on January 28<sup>th</sup> in Rome. He has served as Bishop of Kirkuk since September 27, 2003. We rejoice with our Chaldean brothers and sisters and pray for God's blessing on the ministry of the Patriarch.

**THE PROGRAM FOR FIRST YEAR PERMANENT DIACONATE CANDIDATES** takes place this weekend. Deacon Peter Gittens will provide the first session on Fundamental Theology. Father Jeff Bergsma, Pastor at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Hamilton will celebrate the Eucharist for the group, assisted by Deacon Rob Thomas. There is much energy and enthusiasm among the candidates and their wives for the program.

**FEBRUARY 11 IS THE 21<sup>ST</sup> WORLD DAY OF THE SICK.** It is the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, commemorating the appearance in 1858 of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Bernadette Soubirous. Lourdes, France, is a place of pilgrimage for the sick and those who minister to them. We pray for the sick – for healing, for courage, for serenity – in a special way on this day. The message of Pope Benedict XVI, entitled “Go and do likewise (Lk. 10:37)” can be found at the Vatican website at [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/message/sick/index\\_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/message/sick/index_en.htm)

**IGNATIUS JESUIT CENTRE, LOYOLA HOUSE** is sponsoring a Lenten Retreat for the Year of Faith, March 15-17. The retreat will offer time for Eucharistic Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, personal spiritual direction, and daily Mass. There will be conferences to help first-time retreatants to pray, and offering them spiritual themes for prayer. The discounted cost of \$200 for overnight guests and \$120 for commuters is set as a Year of Faith incentive. If you can, do it!

**PARISHIONERS IN ROCKWOOD AND OUSTIC** rejoice at the recent news that the Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario has approved the construction of a new Catholic elementary school in Rockwood to open as early as September 2015. The long-anticipated project will accommodate 250 students including full-day junior and senior kindergarten.

**WELCOME TO MARCEL AND LINDA DION** who have taken up residence on Hawarden Avenue in Brantford, formerly occupied by the Congregation of the Resurrection. They hope to establish a ministry in the Southern Ontario area, providing retreats and spiritual direction. We pray that the Lord will bless all they do!

**ASH WEDNESDAY MARKS THE BEGINNING OF LENT 2013.** A letter has been sent to the Parishes for publication in the bulletin. May the season of Lent be a time to be evermore persistent in prayer, self-possessed in fasting, and generous in almsgiving.

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, + *Douglas*, OMI