



Heart to Heart

December 13, 2013 (#143)

PLEASE PRAY FOR FR. ROBERT WALZ, who died on December 10th. Father Walz retired as Pastor of St. Mary's in Elora in June 2011 and had been residing in Fergus. His Funeral Mass will be celebrated tomorrow morning at 11:00 a.m. at St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Kitchener. We pray for the repose of his soul and the consolation of our faith for his family and friends. May fruits of his priestly ministry accompany him as he goes home to the Father.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE MARIAN FEAST at the Oblate General House in Rome (last Sunday) was a moving and memorable experience for me. The young Oblates at the Oblate International Scholasticate (Seminary) joined the General House community for prayer, Mass and a festive meal filled with song and celebration. The event marked the beginning of the Oblate Triennium – a three year preparation time for the 200th Anniversary of the Congregation (January 25, 2016). One of the Oblate Scholastics is a young man from Milton. Paul Patrick is preparing to take his final vows as an Oblate in 2014. He met the Oblates at the parish in Mississauga! The world is small.

BEFORE HE WENT TO THE CONCLAVE, where he was elected Pope, Cardinal Jorge Maria Bergoglio stayed in Room 203 at the Domus Paulus VI on Via della Scrofa, in Rome. (Remember the picture of the new Pope paying his bill at the front desk?) It is the very room I was given on my arrival here last week. I will surely mention it to him when we meet later today!

OUR VARIOUS MEETINGS WITH VATICAN OFFICIALS CONCLUDE TODAY. These have been two interesting and informative weeks. Highlights included a meeting with Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect for the Congregation of Bishops. Not only did we discuss official “business” but it was also the occasion for a fraternal renewal of friendship. We had a long and helpful visit with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments where discussion focused on the publication of the 4-volume Lectionary. On Sunday morning, I will celebrate a Mass at St. Peter's Basilica (at the Tomb of St. Peter), praying especially for the Priests and the people of the Diocese of Hamilton – in profound gratitude for the call to serve you!

COPIES OF THE RECENT APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION by Pope Francis, called *EVANGELII GAUDIUM* (The Joy of the Gospel) will be available for Priests, Deacons and Diocesan personnel once they have been published by the Conference. The document is written to summarize the insights of last year's Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization. It is filled with ideas and suggestions of attitudes and actions which promote the new evangelization in our time. It is a long read – and an exciting one. One can almost hear Pope Francis talking to us, sharing the wisdom of his years of ministry and leadership. It is well worth the read!

THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES OF THE DIOCESE OF HAMILTON hold their annual Christmas party tonight. It is an opportunity to thank the personnel for the excellent service they provide to people at a most sensitive time in their lives. Some of our cemeteries have won civic awards because of their beauty. This happens because the entire staff creates a winning environment, from the way people are cared for in their time of need, to the way the cemetery grounds and mausolea are cared for all year long! Enjoy the party – it is well-deserved!

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, + *Douglas*, OMI