



Heart to Heart

March 4, 2016 (#234)

“24 HOURS FOR THE LORD: IMMERSSED IN GOD’S MERCY!” Pope Francis begins “24 hours for the Lord” with a penitential celebration in St. Peter’s Basilica this afternoon. The world-wide initiative, promoted by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, is in its third year. In the Diocese of Hamilton, the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King and one Parish in each Deanery has increased the availability of Confessors beginning today and through tomorrow. Please check the [Diocesan website](#) for precise times and locations. During this Holy Year of Mercy, make the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation a priority. “24 hours for the Lord” is a perfect opportunity!

FATHER JOSEPH GATTO, RECTOR OF CHRIST THE KING SEMINARY IN BUFFALO, NY, was the guest speaker at a special Convocation for Priests for the Diocese of Hamilton earlier this week. His presentations, on *The Art of the Confessor*, were compelling and challenging. He is a gifted speaker and Priests were grateful for the opportunity to reflect on the importance of the Sacrament and on the importance of MERCY, especially during this Holy Year. Our three Missionaries of Mercy, Father Ted Hughes, Father Michael King, and Father Bill Trusz, spoke of their experience of the commissioning by Pope Francis and on the graces available during this special year!

THE SPECIAL JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE released its report to the government on physician-assisted dying at the end of February. The recommendations from the committee go far beyond what the Supreme Court mandated for the new law, which has many people and organizations alarmed. Responses to the recommendations from the CCCB and many other organizations, as well as a video released by Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, can be found on our [Diocesan website](#). We must be as informed and engaged as possible in the development and outcome of this new legislation.

THE ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED ON MAY 29th THIS YEAR! All those married for 25, 40, 50, and 60 years or more are encouraged to register for the Mass. The Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King can accommodate about 450 couples and there is always a “full house”. It is a wonderful way to celebrate your marriage – and to give thanks to God for the blessing of married life! For more information call the Family Ministry Office at the Chancery.

FATHER WOJCIECH KUZMA AND I ARE VISITING THE SEMINARIES during the coming weeks. We will receive the evaluations of our seminarians and recommendations for their advancement. Currently the Diocese of Hamilton has 31 men who are studying for the Priesthood. Please pray in thanksgiving for the openness of our seminarians to discern God’s call, for the staff of the seminaries whose ministry is so important to us and for Father Kuzma and me during these days of visitation.

CONFIRMATIONS CONTINUE TOMORROW. Father Kevin Cull welcomes me to Holy Cross Parish in Georgetown. On Sunday, Father Marijan Mihokovic welcomes me to Holy Cross Croatian Parish in Hamilton. Thank you to the Pastors, Lay Pastoral Assistants, teachers, and catechists who do so much to ensure that the young people are always well prepared.

THE ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO (ACBO) meets next week in Toronto. Chaired by Cardinal Thomas Collins, the Bishops meet in the Spring and in the Fall each year to discuss mutual pastoral and administrative concerns. On Monday evening we meet with several Members of Provincial Parliament. Please pray for God’s blessing on our gathering.

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, + *Douglas*, OMI