



Heart to Heart

April 20, 2018 (#323)

“IN 2009, THE NATIONAL CHIEF OF THE ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS, Phil Fontaine, along with other representatives, had a moving encounter with Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican. Chief Fontaine told the media he hoped the expression of regret would ‘close the book’ on the issue of apologies for residential school survivors. Another attendee at the meeting with Pope Benedict, Edward John, Grand Chief of the First Nations Summit in British Columbia, said the Pope acknowledged the suffering of those who are still living with the consequences of their experiences at the schools. In comments to the media, he said, ‘I think in that sense, there was that apology that we were certainly looking for.’” In the current Parliamentary debate it is important to remember that “the Vatican and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops were never involved in running the former schools, and that those ‘Roman Catholic Entities’ named as parties in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement were legally deemed to have fulfilled the requirements of the settlement agreement by a judicial review. Following this review, the former Conservative government released the entities from further obligations – a decision the present Liberal government did not appeal.” ([CCCCB](#)).

THE CLERGY APPOINTMENTS FOR 2018 have been published today. These appointments follow several meetings of the Diocesan Personnel Committee and individual conversations with the Priests concerned. Thank you to the Priests who have graciously accepted changes. Thank you to Priests who are retiring or leaving the Diocese following a time of service. For the most part, the moves are effective June 27th, 2018 at noon.

THE DIOCESAN REFUGEE OFFICE and St. Michael Parish in Waterloo have worked together to sponsor Nur Hasim and his family to Canada. Mr. Hasim was in a Rohingya refugee camp in Southeast Asia 12 years ago. Earlier this month, the [Waterloo Chronicle](#) published an article about him and his efforts to bring his sister, brother-in-law, and their four children to Canada. Clearly, sponsoring refugees is life-saving work. Thanks to the St. Michael Refugee Committee, to all our Parishes who have or who are sponsoring newcomers, and to our Office for Refugees for your dedication!

SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, will be arriving this month to work in farms across Canada (over 40,000). Here in the Diocese, a number of our Priests and lay people do outreach to our Catholic migrant workers in Brant County, Port Elgin, and Waterdown. Please pray for the success of this ministry and for the safety and well-being of the workers!

WE WELCOME GRADE SIX STUDENTS from the French Catholic School Board – *Mon Avenir* to the Cathedral Basilica today for a “Breath of the Spirit” retreat. Organized by Sebastian Lacroix, Counsellor for Diocesan and School Affairs, the program will introduce the young people to the Cathedral and to an appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. It begins their preparation for Confirmation.

PRIOR TO THE CEMETERY MASS at Marymount Catholic Cemetery in Guelph, a beautiful new picture of Jesus walking on the water and calming the storm will be blessed. The death of a loved one can often feel like a chaotic storm in one’s life. Jesus is a calming presence and support at such times. Thanks to Art Smith, Director of the Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton. The Mass begins at 11 a.m. tomorrow (Saturday).

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NIAGARA bids farewell to Bishop Michael Bird and his wife, Susan, at a reception at Christ’s Church Anglican Cathedral in Hamilton tomorrow afternoon. I am pleased to bring greetings from the Diocese and to thank Bishop Bird for his ecumenical spirit, his thoughtful kindness and his personal friendship. May they have a long, healthy and happy retirement!

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, +*Douglas*, OMI