



Heart to Heart

April 24, 2020 (#399)

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has invited the Canadian Bishops to Consecrate their individual Dioceses to Mary, Mother of the Church, on Friday, May 1, 2020. In solidarity with a number of Episcopal Conferences around the world, the Consecration seeks the maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary during the Coronavirus pandemic. Pastors, too, are invited to Consecrate the Parishes and Missions entrusted to their care on the same occasion. Families, groups and other faith communities are also invited to pray the prayer of Consecration. The Diocesan Liturgy Office will provide the necessary prayer resources early next week. Our Lady, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

SOME OF THE HOSPITALLER BROTHERS OF ST. JOHN OF GOD (Good Shepherd Brothers) have tested positive for the Coronavirus. They are currently in isolation and managing the symptoms at home. The services they provide for the most vulnerable in our society put them at risk, as it does for many front line workers. Please pray for their restoration to full health so they may continue their many good works! And pray as well for all health care providers and first responders, whose service is so important at this time!

THE EASTER LETTER, sent to 55,000 Parishioners throughout the Diocese, has been received with open and generous hearts. In addition to Easter greetings, the letter encouraged Parishioners to remember the financial needs of their Parishes and provided envelopes to make it easier for them to do so. The response has been remarkable and the first wave of responses has already been forwarded to the Parishes. Thank you to those who are concerned about the ongoing well-being of their Parish!

THE STRUGGLING PARISHES FUND has been rolled out earlier this week from our Diocesan Finance Office. The one million dollar fund, created by donations of a percentage of financial reserves held by some Parishes, and by a contribution from the Diocese, will assist Parishes who are finding it difficult to meet expenses during this time when offices are closed and liturgical services are unavailable for Parishioners. Thank you to our Finance Office for the initiative and to the Pastors and Finance Councils who responded so quickly and generously!

THE CANADA EMERGENCY WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM of the Federal Government is receiving applications for assistance beginning next Monday. Many of our Parishes and our Chancery plan to participate in the program which has been established to help charities whose financial support has decreased significantly since the emergency measures were applied. It will be an important relief!

THE CANADIAN CATHOLIC BIOETHICS INSTITUTE has published many relevant and informative resources about COVID-19 matters. Check out their website at www.ccbi-utoronto.ca to find articles that will help you to be well informed about ethical concerns during a time of pandemic, some of which were being raised as early as 2010! We are blessed to have such a wonderful Institute to help us reflect on life and death issues during this time of crisis!

COGECO CABLE 14 has informed us that the Sunday Mass televised from the Cathedral Basilica had over 10,000 viewers last Sunday! That number does not include viewers on Rogers Cable and CHCH TV! The many efforts of Pastors to reach out to Parishioners and provide prayer opportunities is being supported by a variety of technical supports. We are grateful for all of these important initiatives!

Our Lady, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

Ex corde, *+Douglas*, OMI