



Heart to Heart

May 1, 2020 (#400)

“IGNITING HOPE” is the theme for Catholic Education Week in Ontario, May 4 – May 8, 2020. This year’s video message for Catholic Education week is available [online](#). Thanks to Anne Jamieson and Larica Perera for its preparation. This year, I am told that School Boards are preparing to send the message to every home in their system – a first! A Mass will be celebrated at St. Patrick Church in Hamilton at 11 a.m. next Friday morning. It will be live-streamed and accessible for all. We pray for all our teachers and students, trustees and administrators, during these challenging days, that the values imbued in our Catholic schools provide the insights necessary to weather the strain of the shutdown with creativity, gratitude and generosity!

THE CONSECRATION OF THE DIOCESE TO MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH, took place this morning during the 9:30 a.m. daily Mass. Father David Wynen, Rector of the Cathedral, and I knelt at the side altar of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and prayed the Consecratory Prayer prepared by the National Liturgy Office of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is being prayed by all the Bishops across Canada today. The Bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops are consecrating their Dioceses today as well. The consecration is a prayer for protection during this devastating pandemic. Priests are invited to pray the Prayer of Consecration for their Parishes; leaders of Religious Communities might pray it for their communities; and parents might pray it for their families. The prayer is on our Diocesan website ([here](#)). Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

ST. MARY’S CHURCH IN HAMILTON CELEBRATES ITS 160TH ANNIVERSARY TODAY! St. Mary’s was first opened in 1838. In 1854, it became a centre of relief to those who suffered during the cholera plague. In 1856, St. Mary’s became *the first Cathedral for the new Diocese of Hamilton*. In 1859, the Cathedral was destroyed by fire. And in 1860, the newly constructed Cathedral, the current Church, was opened by Bishop J. Farrell. This afternoon, I will pray the Prayer of Consecration for St. Mary’s Parish before the impressive statue of Mary which has been recently refurbished. Father David Avila, Pastor, and Monsignor Edward Sheridan will join me in praying for the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, during this pandemic.

TAKEN FROM THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR – September 21, 1892. *“Hamilton was a city in mourning. The wail of anguish was heard on every hand. Nearly entire families would be cut down inside of 48 hours. It was no uncommon sight to see the coffins of two or three members of one family carried to the cemetery in the same wagon. Business was at a standstill. Services in the churches were suspended, and by official proclamation, all public gatherings in theatres and halls were forbidden. Every afternoon, a long line of wagons and hearses would file out King and York streets to the cemeteries. Only the members of the families the deceased went to the funerals in those terrible days. Old Hamiltonians will never forget those days of sorrow and mourning.”*

WE HAD THE PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY to hold a teleconference with the Chancery Staff on Wednesday afternoon. And yesterday, the Priests of the Diocese participated in one of two teleconferences. We are already six weeks into the pandemic shut down! There is no fixed time for an end to the “great pause”, but planning has begun for “re-opening”. The Executive Committee of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) has established a working group to assist Bishops in guiding the re-opening in their Dioceses. Monsignor Murray Kroetsch, Vicar General and Chancellor for the Diocese of Hamilton, is a member of the working group. We can be reassured that the advice will be helpful and well prepared!

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

Ex corde, +*Douglas*, OMI