



Heart to Heart

April 25, 2025 (#577)

THE DEATH OF POPE FRANCIS on Monday morning, April 21st, took us by surprise. Throughout the Diocese prayers have been offered, Masses have been celebrated, and memorial cards have been printed and will be distributed this weekend. Pope Francis dedicated this Jubilee Year to Hope. “THE” Pilgrim of Hope, who called us Pilgrims of Hope, has had his Hope fulfilled! We remember him in our prayers these days, and we pray for the Cardinals who have already gathered in Rome for the Pope’s funeral tomorrow and for the Conclave which will begin in the coming days, at which they will choose a successor. May the Holy Spirit be their guide and inspiration!

THE DIOCESAN OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS has organized the annual celebration of *Catholic Education Week*, which begins on Sunday, May 4, 2025. The theme for the week is *Pilgrims of Hope*. The Catholic Education Week biblical quote is, “*We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us.*” Students from Catholic schools in the Diocese have contributed to the celebration and our Diocesan website presentation. Check it out for more information and for daily updates. Don’t miss it!

JOURNEY OF ENCOUNTER, Pilgrims of Hope Embracing Synodality! A remarkable gathering will take place from June 15-18 at St. Jerome’s University, Waterloo. The synodal-style event is being coordinated by Concerned Lay Catholics. The Steering Committee, made up of Catholic leaders from various parts of the Church, is guiding the planning with special advisors who were in Rome for the Synod on Synodality. It promises to be an interesting, informative, and inspirational event! For more information and to register click [here](#).

LECTURES IN CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE, sponsored by St. Jerome’s University, presents **Fr. Gregory Boyle**, for the May 15th event. His presentation is titled: “*Cherished Belonging – The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times*”. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Jesuit Priest and founder of Homeboy Industries, Father Boyle served as Pastor of Dolores Mission Church in Boyle Heights from 1986 to 1992. He witnessed the impact of gang violence on his community and decided to implement a radical approach to address it – to treat gang members as human beings. Fr. Boyle was recently named one of the recipients of the 2024 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States. Inspirational!

DR. MARK MCGOWAN will be the recipient of the *Chancellor John R. and Kay Sweeney Award for Catholic Leadership* on October 4, 2025, at the annual St. Jerome’s Dinner. Dr. McGowan is Professor of History and Celtic Studies and Principal Emeritus at St. Michael’s College at the University of Toronto. His dedication to Catholic higher education, as a teacher and a scholar, has focused on the study of the Catholic Church in Canada and the Irish Famine. We offer our congratulations to Dr. McGowan. Well-merited indeed!

“On behalf of the clergy and people of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, I extend our heartfelt condolences to you, your priests and deacons, and all the faithful of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton. We grieve with you in this time of mourning, giving thanks for Pope Francis’ faithful witness and praying for the comfort of the Holy Spirit to sustain you all. May his legacy inspire us to deepen our shared commitment to the Gospel and the unity of Christ’s Holy Catholic Church.” Excerpt of a letter of sympathy from Bishop Susan Bell, Bishop of Niagara. Thank you Bishop Bell, and thanks to all who have sent messages of sympathy!

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, +*Douglas*, OMI