
SOME ANXIETIES



The cold spell cannot leave anyone indifferent: a person from our region died from this excessively cold weather. More than once I have thought of these people who have no protection from such freezing cold... And I blessed the Lord for all those who welcome our transient brothers and sisters, and especially for RADO which constitutes a helpful stopover for many of them.

FRIENDS AWAITED

On the occasion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity it is good to recall the presence at my ordination of our Orthodox, Anglican, and Evangelical brothers and sisters. I greeted them and thanked them in a special way. The Anglican bishop of Fredericton, the Right Reverend George Lemmon, honoured us with his presence, as did other ministers of Christian churches. I expressed the following wish: "On the eve of the great week of prayer for the unity of the Church, may our life and ministry proclaim God's everlasting love. Nothing will ever separate us from the love of God." In profound mutual respect, may our lives and our prayers be deeply united to those of Christ Jesus.

A RESTIGOUCHE THAT IS ALIVE

Despite the freezing cold, I had a warm welcome from the people of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Kedgwick, and Saint-Martin. I was agreeably surprised to have them outline for me the history of their region. Pride in their past and in fearlessness was rightly admired. I too am proud to see them fully committed to the welfare of their respective communities. Several among them, in the name of their baptism, take on more and more important tasks in their parishes. To Monsignor Fernand Boucher and Father Gabriel Friolet, the only two priests in charge of over 6,000 parishioners throughout the Restigouche (four parishes), To the Filles de Marie de l'Assomption [Daughters of Mary of the Assumption] who have taken on important responsibilities in the parishes, to the religious Hospitalers of St. Joseph [Hotel-Dieu Sisters] who work in Saint-Quentin, I send my greetings and thanks. I have promised to return to these parishes for confirmations as well as for... ordinations to the priesthood, someday.

FINE COLLABORATION

While pursuing my exploration of the diocese of Edmundston I discovered most devoted collaborators at the Diocesan Centre. Considering the needs to be filled, they are not numerous but are ever available. Coordinator of pastoral affairs is Fr. Bernard Cantin; these last three years he has devoted himself to the implementation of the principal recommendations of the Diocesan Synod (1987-1990). At the chancery, Sister Berthe Lavoie was tirelessly, especially in marriage cases; she is assisted by Mrs. Jacqueline Clavet and Mrs. Bernadette Martin. The one in charge of economic affairs is Mrs. Irma Morin; she sees to the proper use of our resources. Fr. Michel Vallée and Mrs. Manon Ruest-Bourgoin work full-time in youth ministry. The liturgy office is under the care of Sister Gemma Côté and Father William Rice; Sister Constance Gervais and Mr. Gilles Morin are with the Office of Religious Education. Sister Geraldine Brotherton, F.M.A., is with the Spirituality Centre, and Mrs. Nancy Ward is receptionist-secretary at the diocesan offices. Many challenges await them on a daily basis. Another time I shall tell you about those who are with the École de la Foi [School of Faith, French Sector], as well as other persons.

SOUTHERN VICTORIA

Throughout this second week I shall continue to meet the people. I want to mention the visit I made to the Msgr. Mélanon Residence and the Hotel-Dieu Hospital in Saint-Quentin; I also want to note my visit to the Sisters of Notre-Dame-du-Sacré-Coeur in Grand Falls and the Religious Hospitalers of St. Joseph [Hotel Dieu Sisters] in Saint-Basile. I had the pleasure, in the company of its vice rector Normand Carrier, of visiting the Saint Louis-Maillet Centre, of meeting many professors and students, and of inspecting the set-up of the School of Forestry. Over the weekend I shall be visiting St. Georges Parish in Grand Falls, and I shall visit my Maliseet and Perth friends. It will be for me an opportunity of getting to better know these good people.

Have a good week!

+ François Thibodeau

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Bishop of Edmundston

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