
AN UNFORGETTABLE UNCLE



Among the testimonies received at the time of Bishop Lacroix's funeral, I would like to share with you a few excerpts from the one delivered by Yvan Jobin at the funeral, on behalf of Bishop Lacroix's nephews and nieces:

We always had the very clear impression that our uncle's greatest regret, during the latter years of his life, was having had to leave you, his brothers and sisters of the Edmundston Diocese, you to whom he was so attached and among whom he has chosen to rest forever. He maintained to the end a social commitment as active as his precarious health allowed, and it is in that way that he who because of his prominent functions had rubbed shoulders with the great of the world, chose to consecrate his final years to the most humble, the most destitute and the most defenceless among us, that is, the mentally handicapped.

With this Uncle, it is as if part of ourselves were disappearing. Still, we know that even if he no longer lives among us, he nevertheless lives in us. We know that he will live even more intensely in us to the extent that we strive to follow, in our own lives, the many lessons he has given us.

LESSONS AND VALUES

Among them, we shall retain his great simplicity. We shall retain that remarkable capacity he had of displaying the same human warmth and the same understanding to everyone he met, without distinction of age, rank, or belief. We shall remember his respect of others, of their differences, and his spirit of tolerance, virtues which our world so urgently needs.

We shall remember his outstanding availability and his concern for others, attitudes of life which represent the surest way of attaining the happiness which we all long for.

We know that one day we shall enter into the autumn of our lives. We know that we shall have to make a choice: either to turn in on ourselves and start the countdown, or to remain actively involved in our milieu in order to contribute to its betterment. Our uncle answered this question without hesitation. And this is doubtless his final message to us: Never to turn one's back on life.

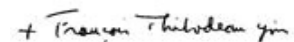
HOLY WEEK

May the example of Bishop Lacroix's life inspire us to live Holy Week in a saintly way. May Palm Sunday find us ready to welcome Jesus in our lives. May the Chrism Mass which is being celebrated this year at Assumption Church in Grand Falls on March 28 (7:30 P.M.), lead us to a better understanding of the signs of God in our lives. May Holy Thursday help us better perceive the Eucharist as "for the salvation of the world." On Good Friday, may we exhibit a true solidarity with those in our own milieus who are suffering. On Holy Saturday, in meditation and prayer, may we be overwhelmed with the Christian hope of the resurrection, and may the feast of Easter confirm us in our witness of faith, which we must carry out in our daily lives wherever we are. During the Easter Triduum I shall be celebrating at the cathedral: on Holy Thursday and the Easter

Vigil at 7:30 P.M., and on Good Friday at 3:00 P.M., after having participated in the way of the cross through the streets of Edmundston. On Easter Sunday, I shall preside the 9:30 A.M. Mass at Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs Church [Edmundston].

VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

I thank God with all my heart for this Lenten season that is coming to an end: it will have been marked by numerous activities that help us better understand the covenant which God never ceases to offer us every day. The diocesan meeting with the clergy and the religious of the diocese was beneficial and wonderful: it would not be surprising that you will shortly get to know more about what goes on in our religious communities and apostolic and secular societies in our diocese, a diocese that owes so much to them who have fashioned our Church. Quite an intercommunity renewal was experienced in the parishes of Edmundston and St.-Joseph: it was of historic proportions, and it will deepen our baptismal covenant: "I committed myself at Baptism." St.-Joseph Parish celebrated its 75th anniversary with simplicity, but also with great fervour. I am convinced that this inter-community renewal between the parishes of Edmundston and that of St.-Joseph was a real success, which has us anticipate a promising future. The Solidarity Suppers organised by Development and Peace attracted hundreds of persons. The provisional episcopal committee and the Diocesan Pastoral Council have met in order to learn more about the diocese's actual situation and to set the next pastoral priorities, the pastoral readjustments, and the fiftieth anniversary of our Diocese. After having honoured the patron of the Religious Hospitalers of St. Joseph with the sisters, it was with pleasure that I also visited the parishes of Ste.-Anne, Saint-Joseph, and Drummond.



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