
APPOINTMENTS



As previously announced, we are now ready to announce the first appointments, after a long period of consultation, reflection, and prayer. These indispensable moments of intense prayer were part of the process of choosing and sending forth the apostles by Jesus. It is no different for us today. It is in total faith in Jesus the Good Shepherd that I appoint the following to the Episcopal Council, to assist me over the next three years. According to Canon Law, the bishop has a number of councils to help him in his pastoral task: presbyteral council or priests' senate, pastoral council, council for economic affairs, college of consultors; but the episcopal council is of major importance since it is composed of the vicar general and the three diocesan department heads. This council meets at least once a month to advise the bishop regarding the good functioning of the Church of Edmundston as a whole; it shall also serve as the nomination committee for the appointment of all who are involved in pastoral ministry or those acting on behalf of the bishop.

VICAR GENERAL

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Father Roger Dionne as Vicar General of the diocese for the next three years, without prejudice to his actual functions. Besides, I also appoint him to a second six-year term as pastor of Assumption Parish, Grand Falls (1994-2000). His energy, pastoral prudence, large synodal and missionary experience, and his presence in Grand Falls are important factors which have drawn not only my attention but also that of many people of the diocese, in the course of the survey and consultation held during February, March, and April. Born December 29, 1948 in St-Léonard, Fr. Dionne was ordained June 29, 1975. He was successively assistant priest at Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs [Edmundston East] (1975-1982), missionary in Peru (1982-1986), assistant priest at Saint-Jacques (1987-1988), president of the diocesan liturgy committee (1987-1988), executive director of the Diocesan Synod (1987-1990), and director for the formation of future priests (1991). He has been pastor of Assumption Parish since August 15, 1988.

CHANCELLOR

I am pleased to announce that Sister Berthe Lavoie has agreed to continue on for another year as chancellor of the Edmundston Diocese. A member of the Sisters of the Enfant-Jésus of Chauffailles, she has been in our diocese these past five years. Besides post-graduate studies in Québec, Montréal, Rome, and Strasbourg [France], she was for twenty years a teacher in both the elementary school and teachers' college levels. She was for 18 years greatly involved in the affairs of her community as provincial counsellor and secretary, general counsellor and secretary, assistant general and treasurer general of her congregation. I confirm her appointment as coordinator of our marriage tribunal and ecclesiastical judge of our diocese.

COORDINATOR OF PASTORAL MINISTRY

As you have certainly heard, Fr. Bernard Cantin, C.J.M., who was completing his term as coordinator of diocesan pastoral ministry, was appointed in April provincial superior of the Eudist Congregation in North America. I appoint Sister Claudette Ruest of the Marist Sisters to succeed him. Our new coordinator is well known in this part of the country. A native of Siegas in the parish of Sainte-Anne, she was successively an elementary and high school teacher for six years, a catechist and counsellor in religious education, and

director of pastoral services in the Hull, Québec, diocese; she was for fifteen years director of sacramental pastoral ministry, in charge of baptismal and marriage pastoral ministry, a missionary for a while in Africa, Mexico, and western Canada. This vast pastoral experience and her boundless energy are great assets in promoting, in close collaboration with the bishop, a lively, fraternal and missionary-minded coordination. The Synod Recommendations will ever be in the forefront of her concerns, along with those recommendations submitted by all.

While pursuing the evangelisation task, we shall have to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our diocese with appropriate festivities, and evangelisation and renewal opportunities. We shall have to pay close attention to families and to our youth, promote a bold and strong vocation programme, and ensure the faith education of the adults of our diocese. Pastoral modifications will oblige us to constantly work at the deanery and parish levels.

DIOCESAN TREASURER

I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Father Napoléon Michaud to the position of diocesan treasurer and this, without prejudice to his actual ministry in Saint-Basile. Along with the council of Economic affairs, the diocesan treasurer [procurator] is responsible for the administration of all the diocesan property. It will also ensure that each parish has its own committee of economic affairs between now and January 1996; this committee is composed of three to nine lay persons, depending on local needs. Father Napoléon will give one day per week to this work. Fr. Michaud's broad pastoral and administrative experience over a period of 37 years' priesthood will be of assistance in the new function he is generously taking on in the service of our diocese. Born in Drummond July 17, 1931, he was ordained a priest June 16, 1957. He was successively assistant priest at Assumption Parish [Grand Falls], St-André, Kedgwick, St-Léonard, then administrator of St-Léonard Parish, pastor of St-Quentin (1973-1979), and St-Georges (1979-1984); he has been pastor of St-Basile since 1984 and diocesan director of the Charismatic Renewal. A person of easy contact, he will be good at establishing beneficial pastoral relations with parish councils of the diocese and the pastors of our religious communities.

FORTHCOMING APPOINTMENTS

In the coming weeks I shall make further appointments, taking into consideration the diocese as a whole, its needs and resources. I would like to do so in all fairness and kindness. All of the 60,000 members of our diocese have a right to quality pastoral service. I must respond to the needs of parishes, but in order to do so I have no more than twenty-five priests available for such ministry. While having reached a certain age our priests should be able to be freed from certain tasks, several among them are harnessed to greater responsibilities. I thank all of the pastoral councils and all who sent me their suggestions and recommendations. By giving six-year terms to those in charge of parishes, it will be easier during the sixth year to evaluate the pastoral situation before renewing one or the other mandate.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR DIOCESE

I will shortly be writing to you regarding activities to be held in the context of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Edmundston Diocese. But at this very moment I am pleased to announce that the organising committee has already set to work, that activities will be held at both deanery and parish levels. The opening of celebrations will take place December 8, 1994 at the Cathedral in Edmundston, and the closing activities will be held December 8, 1995. The diocesan celebrations will be held especially during the Foire Brayonne [Edmundston Fair] 1995, from August 2 to 6, 1995. Father Armand Chouinard, C.J.M., who is well-known in our diocese, has accepted to work with us from September 15, 1994 to August 15, 1995. He will be given the task of liturgical and spiritual animation, elements which are eagerly expected, in our celebrations. [...] Have

a good week!

+ François Thibodeau ym

+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.
Bishop of Edmundston

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