
SCHOOL'S IN!



At the beginning of the school year I want to say Hello to the students and the teaching and support staffs as well as to everyone else who in one way or another is responsible for education in our milieu. May this new school year bring you much joy through the knowledge and skills acquired, through friendships formed and solidarity experienced in the course of time, as well as through for life and growth to be developed in the future. During this year which marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the diocese of Edmundston, we can give thanks for the progress made in the field of education, in our milieu. My gratitude to the parents, teachers, religious communities that so devotedly laboured in our midst, and to the students for their determination and perseverance, for their daring and generosity. You all realise how extremely important education is to human life, as well as its ever-growing influence on the development of modern life. The formation of youth - as well as the ongoing formation of adults, to a certain extent - has become both easier and more complex because of the conditions of our time. Our fellow citizens are all the more aware of the primary role the school has in setting aside an ever-active part role for social, economic, and political life. The marvellous progress of scientific and technological research and development and the new means of social communications allow us easy entry into our cultural heritage.

In their Declaration on Christian Education, the Fathers of Vatican Council II wrote: "Due weight being given to the advances in psychological, pedagogical and intellectual sciences, children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities. They should be trained to acquire gradually a more perfect sense of responsibility in the proper development of their own lives by constant effort and in the pursuit of liberty, overcoming obstacles with unwavering courage and perseverance" (N^o. 1). Reiterating my admiration for the work of education accomplished at school and at home, I wish you all a most fruitful school year!

CHARISMATIC CONGRESS

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Charismatic Renewal in the diocese of Edmundston, a diocesan congress will be held September 24 and 25 at the Cité des Jeunes A.-M.-Sormany (Léo Poulin Room), in Edmundston. The Congress theme is *His Love Is from Age to Age*. I invite you to pray that this congress help the participants rediscover the extraordinary work accomplished daily by the Holy Spirit from generation to generation. I have warm memories of the moments lived with the children and their parents, at the time of Confirmation. It seems to me that the Charismatic Renewal is a movement to help us recognise the work of the Spirit in the world of today and respond to it as disciples of Jesus. Thanks to these prayer meetings, one learns more and more how to live according to Jesus. As baptised and confirmed Christians, we are constantly moved by the Spirit: it is He who is the soul of the Church. Mark the above dates on your calendar! For personal and community renewal, the Spirit of Jesus is indispensable!

WORLD ACADIAN CONGRESS

The World Acadian Congress was held from August 12 to 22. The mass media paid much attention to this important Family Reunion. I was privileged to take part in the August 14 Mass presided by Archbishop Donat Chiasson of Moncton, at the [Acadian] National Monument in Rogersville; present also were Bishop Emeritus Gérard Dionne and Bishop André Richard of Bathurst. During the afternoon Archbishop Chiasson, Bishop Richard

and I were supposed to talk on *What the Acadian Church Will Be in the Year 2004*. We decided between ourselves to look at the topic from three aspects: Church history and the transmission of faith; Church as communion and the path of co-responsibility; and the future of the Church and sacramental life. On Saturday, August 20 I accept an invitation to take part in the Thibodeau/Broussard families reunion in Dieppe. Through these family gatherings in this Year of the Family, there is an added touch of reality that help us better understand the heritage that is passed on to us through our respective families; it is a treasure to be discovered, shared, and nourished. It isn't a simple question of folklore but the expression of our very being and future. The family is the basic structure and foundation for the necessary solidarity which ensures a people's future. The 20th of August was a beautiful, sunny day full of wonderful people, a day filled with simplicity and joy. Since the Thibodeaus had come together in Madawaska County in 1984, the suggestion was made to meet in Beauce County [Québec] in 1999. Time will tell.

In ending, I would like to quote a text on Acadia by Claudine Léger-St-Germain, a text which I picked at the Acadian Village in Caraquet, at the 1880 printer's: "Through time and years a countless number of our ancestors has passed through, leaving behind them a land to be opened or, for us, a story to be told. Between the fields and the sea, they devoted themselves by strenuous work and they never stopped before their final breath; they gave their whole lives and hearts without measure. For them, we would like to sing today love of the land and fellowship, the Acadia of tomorrow, today, and yesterday, the land of dreams, of hope, of freedom. Yes, nothing in you has really changed in the course of time and trough the years. Land of the sea and of wheaten fields, Acadia, you forever make one dream!"

Have a good week!

+ François Thibodeau ym

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