
A FIRST IN ATLANTIC CANADA!



At 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, July 26, in St. Ann Parish at Maliseet, I shall have the joy of ordaining to the diaconate Leo Curtis Sappier, son of Mr. & Mrs. Peter Sappier. According to what we know, this will be the first Maliseet ordination in the Maritimes. After having taught at Maliseet, Curtis - born February 3, 1956 - asked to become a priest in 1990. Curtis has just completed five years of theological and pastoral training at St. Paul University in Ottawa, at Holy Spirit Parish in Ontario, and at the cathedral-parish of the Immaculate Conception in Edmundston.

The order to which Curtis will be ordained is known as the "transitory diaconate," in view of the priesthood. This ordination marks the future priest's entire being and way of acting. Following the example of Jesus who came to serve and not to be served, the deacon must give himself to serving his sisters and brothers through dispensing the Word of God, celebrating the sacraments of Baptism and Matrimony, and committing oneself to serving the most needy and suffering. On the day of his ordination to the diaconate, the future priest commits himself to celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom of God, to taking part daily in the Church's great liturgical prayer, and to living in profound communion with the diocesan bishop.

The date picked for the ordination is July 26, feast of St. Ann, Grandmother of Jesus and Mother of Mary; St. Ann, the patron saint of the parish, to whom the Maliseet people have a great veneration. On July 26, therefore, weather permitting, the procession will leave the parish church at 10:30 A.M. and wend its way to the grounds at the rear of the school, where the ordination will take place. Let us pray for Curtis: his ordination is a great gift of the Lord to the Church.

GLORY TO ST. ANN!

One of the traditions which will have left its stamp on our diocese and which we also want to highlight, this jubilee year, is the feast of St. Ann. Last March we mentioned another very important devotion, that to St. Joseph. These next few weeks I invite you to continue showing your great attachment to St. Ann. I strongly recommend that you join in the preparatory novena to the feast of St. Ann taking place at our diocesan shrine [Ste-Anne-de-Madawaska]. This shrine is truly magnificent: all the repair work, cleaning and repainting that took place last winter add to its unique beauty. The stations of the cross - painted all around the church by Yves Daniel Thibodeau, a local artist - are an invitation to recollection and marvel: one is invited to enter deeply into the heart of Christian mystery, into the very heart of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. There are two very striking paintings: those of the Last Supper and of Jesus and the disciples at Emmaus. Let us allow ourselves to be guided by St. Ann to her grandson Jesus... For over three hundred years now, in North America St. Ann continues to help us discover and rediscover the mystery of Jesus and of his mother Mary. Let us earnestly pray to her on behalf of the Edmundston Diocese Church, our priests and future priests, all our families, and especially of those who suffer, the sick, the poor, and of youth. Continue praying for me; I thank you for your kind prayers on my behalf. On July 26 in the evening, it shall be a great grace for me to celebrate with you the magnificent solemnity of St. Ann. Your generous donation will help defray expenses for the Sanctuary's renovations.

A MARVELLOUS DAY

Allow me to come back to the 50th Anniversary festivities - this time those that were held in Grand Falls and Perth-Andover. In the former I was especially impressed by the presence of so many youth: within the Mass itself and at the meal following, they were very visible. Their participation was truly remarkable, and was so much talent was exhibited: I shall long remember their excellent 'performance' in music and song. In the latter place, it was the family dimension that was at the fore: young people recounted to their parents and grandparents the precious heritage of faith, hope, and love which was passed on to them; young people who translated in song and dance their happiness of being part of the Church; young people who were happy to welcome in their hearts the gift of God given to them in the sacrament of Confirmation-the gift of the Holy Spirit. These deanery celebrations weld us strongly together, they tell us what the Church is, from day to day, an intimate union between us and with Christ Jesus. It is good for us to remember this great mystery of the Church. I thank you for all the consideration you show me as bishop of Edmundston. The beautiful gifts you gave me are altogether splendid: a white mitre made by Marie Bear of Perth-Andover, a beautiful quilted hanging bearing the coat of arms of each of the five bishops of Edmundston, made by Laura Reynolds of Plaster Rock, a quilted bedspread from Anderson Road, etc... My poor words cannot express my gratitude adequately enough. Let's keep on celebrating!

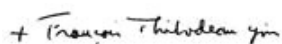
NUMEROUS EXHIBITS

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of our diocese, an exhibit called *Les trésors du patrimoine religieux du diocèse d'Edmundston* [Treasures from the Edmundston Diocese's Religious Patrimony] is taking place at the Madawaska Historical Museum until January 1996; this exhibit is the fruit of collaboration among the priests, religious, and parishes of the diocese, as well as the Upper St. John River Cultural Association, the Madawaska Historical Society, and the Madawaska Historical Museum. Besides, the paintings of Lille, Maine artist Don Cyr are being exhibited at the Daigle Historical House, Upper St. John River Gallery (14 Queen St.); these paintings are collectively titled *The Churches along the Two Shores*. In the basement of the Baker Lake church, there is an impressive exhibit of religious objects; this is truly worth seeing. And do not miss visiting the museum at Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs Church: a number of things might surprise you, as they recount that area's religious history. As you can see, the celebration of a fiftieth anniversary gives one the opportunity to highlight all of the precious heritage handed down to us by our forebears. "Glory and praise to those who preceded us: We are proud, and this is our story!"

A SEMINARY IN EDMUNDSTON!

Thanks to the collaboration of Notre-Dame-du-Sacré-Coeur Parish and of a number of generous people, the Edmundston Diocesan Seminary will shortly become a reality. Thanks to the skills of Bert Desjardins and Laurien Bossé, the rectory has undergone important transformations: seven relatively spacious rooms, a dining room for twelve, and a meeting room capable of seating twenty will soon be ready. Everything will be simple but nice, a place of prayer and meeting, a place for preparing adequately for the priesthood, a place that is full of promise for our entire diocesan Church. A few people have already made generous donations, for which we are grateful. Let us pray the Lord to send workers to his harvest.

Have a good week!



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

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