



# JOURNEY

A Communicator for the  
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kingston

April 2020

[www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca](http://www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca)

## **The Gift of Caring for our sick**

Deacon Robert Wojcik

On the 22nd of January, Friar David Collins was acknowledged by the staff and volunteers of the Pastoral Care Department at Kingston General Hospital for his 15 years of compassionate and cheerful service. Dr. Neil Elford spoke highly of Friar David's many and highly appreciated contributions to the patients and staff at Kingston General Hospital during a presentation.

Patients, staff, visitors and volunteers are truly blessed to have Friar David showing the Light of Christ to all whom he encounters.



*Dr. Neil Elford, Friar David Collins, and the Pastoral Care Department staff and volunteers of Kingston General Hospital.  
Photo by Margaret-Anne Wojcik*

*Due to Covid-19, the Journey was not printed. An online version with available on our website that included a limited number of articles.*

## My Journey to the Permanent Diaconate

Deacon Peter Kelly

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My personal life and my faith have taught me that Christ is present to us every second of our existence. In my case, He led me to the diaconate. I was blessed to be born into a loving, Catholic family in Montreal; however, following the death of an ailing sister and, later, that of my father when I was ten years old, our family life was thrown into turmoil. Obscurity and confusion reigned in my young man's soul. Yet, Christ's mercy and faithfulness were unrelenting! For years, I struggled to discern my vocation to marriage or the priesthood. Ultimately, I went on retreat at a Cistercian Abbey in Rougemont, Quebec. My prayer was ardent as I asked the Lord to give me direction. While on retreat, I noticed that there were married couples at the monastery, and I learned that the men were preparing for vocations to the diaconate. Straightaway, the dilemma of my vocation was resolved as I aspired to follow Christ through marriage and eventually to become his servant in the diaconate. I married my wife, Christian, and, in time, God gave us a son, Séamus, now seventeen. While in Quebec, I made two different applications to diaconate programs, but circumstances intervened, and they were not completed. Then, about six years ago, when we moved from Quebec to Perth, I contacted Deacon Bill Gervais and began my diaconal formation in earnest with the Archdiocese of Kingston.

My diaconal training covered a period of four years; Christian and I met with other couples at the hospitable Providence Spirituality Centre. Morning and evening prayer were a constant, as well as the invitation to read every day a page or two of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Christian and I came to a deep appreciation of God's presence through the mystical poetry of the psalms and the succinct and edifying teachings of the Church. Three other couples, who have become dear friends, remained with us throughout those formational years (Allan and Bernice Hogan, Nick and Jocelyn Whalen, and Paul and Nimi Bowman). Allan, Nick, Paul, and I were ordained to the Permanent Diaconate on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 2018. It is said that we are ontologically changed through ordination, and I believe that this is true. Christ has invited each of us to follow him in the service of his Church, forever transforming our very essence. A spiritual bond unites Deacons Allan, Nick, Paul, and me as we each have answered a call from Christ to follow him as his servant. I have been blessed to continue this work, having been named to St. John the Baptist Parish in Perth, where I have been inspired by the parishioners' and our pastor's many acts of goodness.

As a young man, I was fortunate to have attended a talk given by Mother Teresa. At the end of her talk, I realized that I had witnessed goodness and holiness itself through her person. I realize that I witness this very same goodness at St. John the Baptist Parish. It is a pleasure to serve as a deacon here. I particularly love delivering homilies; it is a privilege to comment on Christ's words. Christian helps me a great deal with her fine editing skills. Serving at the foot of the altar continues to be the mystical highlight of my day. And Christian and I have been moved by the privilege of praying with the sick and dying and their families.

Lately, I have been kept from active ministry due to a diagnosis of cancer. This challenge has nonetheless graced me, and it has brought me more in touch with God's call to constant prayer. I am moved at how supportive my parish community has been, and I am bolstered by the care and love of Christian and Séamus. During this time of sickness, I feel as if I am on a prolonged retreat of a different sort. I perceive more certainly how, in today's Church, God calls me and all of us to focus on Christ, the Victor of all suffering and death, to join Mary and John at the foot of the cross, and to place all of our trust in Him who gives us eternal salvation.

## From the Justice and Peace Commission

Valerie Kelly, Coordinator

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This year marks the 15th anniversary of collaborative ministries between the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kingston and the Anglican Diocese of Ontario, expressed through the Justice and Peace Commission. Established by the Archdiocese of Kingston in 1987, the Commission's inaugural meeting was held on November 17, 1987. In 2005, the Archbishop at the time, The Most Reverend Anthony G. Meagher, extended an invitation to the Anglican Bishop, The Right Reverend George Bruce, to have the Anglican Diocese join the Commission. Since then, the Episcopal leadership has changed in both denominations and Commission members have come and gone, yet core ministries supported by the Commission continue. As we endeavour to build on our shared ministries and develop partnerships in the community, the Commission has defined a theme that recognizes our collaboration: Reconciliation in the Works. Throughout the year 2020, this theme will be reflected in our prayers – namely, by regularly offering the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation. This will be the focal point that leads us through various justice and peace initiatives throughout the year.

One initiative of the Commission is an information presentation on Human Trafficking. Statistics show that this dehumanizing practice is on the rise, and it is imperative that we shift our focus in order to “spot” trafficking. Victim Services and the Kingston Police will address this at an information session. Date and time to be announced.

The Justice and Peace Commission supports and advocates for the marginalized (PWRDF, D&P); ministers to youth; aims to foster peace (PeaceQuest, prison ministry); and continues to nourish and develop religious education guided by our Christian teachings. We have supported the Social Planning Council's efforts to increase affordable housing, and we look forward to combining energy and enthusiasm with the Kingston Faith and Justice Coalition.

The Commission extends a warm invitation to everyone to participate in our work. For more information, please visit us at either [www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/justice-peace](http://www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/justice-peace) or at [www.ontario.anglican.ca](http://www.ontario.anglican.ca). We also have our own Facebook page that can be accessed at [www.facebook.com/justiceandpeacecommission](http://www.facebook.com/justiceandpeacecommission). We are grateful for the blessings of our collaborative ministries and acknowledge these in Christ's name.

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## Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving

Sister Lucy Kearney, SP  
Office of Family Ministry

Our Lenten journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving prepares us for the great Paschal mystery of the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. Each of us knows in our heart how we have been touched spiritually this Lent. By reflecting on the Lenten Scripture readings, we may have become more attuned to our attitudes and aware of our positive and negative behaviours. Christ's mercy and unconditional love for us as individuals may have touched us at a level not previously experienced. Having our hearts touched through prayer, reflection, fasting, and almsgiving of various forms may have taken on a deeper meaning. I believe this excerpt from Isaiah 58:6-7 exemplifies the need for almsgiving: Lent pleasing to God is “releasing those bound unjustly, setting free the oppressed, sharing bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and homeless, ... and not turning your back on your own”. Every day, we are confronted by worldly oppression, injustices, homelessness, and devastation of many kinds. Almsgiving can take many forms, including financial donations, assisting in shelters, and praying for those searching for underlying causes of injustices and oppression.

Let us reflect on the line “not turning your back on your own”. Reach out to a family member experiencing marital difficulties; to a child searching for meaning in life; to one who is alone and lonely; to someone you know who is gradually accepting the cross of illness or grieving the death of a loved one. Through our Lenten Journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we share in the passion and suffering of Jesus and enter the glory of Easter. The pain of the cross always leads to the glory of the resurrection. Christ triumphs! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## Christ is Alive!

Nadia Gundert  
Youth Office

In Pope Francis's letter to young people, *Christus Vivit*, he dedicates a whole chapter to three great truths that he wishes young people to know. The Holy Father says that these truths are "about what is essential, the one thing we should never keep quiet about". (CV, 111) The first truth is, "God loves you". (CV, 112) At all times, in every moment, we are "infinitely loved". (CV, 112) God's fatherly love for each one of us is unconditional. The second truth is, "Christ, out of love, sacrificed himself completely in order to save you". (CV, 118). Young people are so valued and beloved to our Lord that He laid down His life for us personally. The third truth is, "Christ is alive!". (CV, 124) As we enter the glorious season of Easter, where we celebrate Jesus's resurrection from death, may young people know that, because Jesus lives, they also can live. We will have our challenges and obstacles to overcome, but we can be assured that Christ will always be with us, rooting for us, welcoming us with open arms, wanting the best for us and desiring a personal relationship with us. Pope Francis goes on to say that "In these three truths, we see God the Father and Jesus. Wherever the Father and the Son are, there too is the Holy Spirit. He is the one who quietly opens hearts to receive that message. He keeps alive our hope of salvation, and he will help you grow in joy if you are open to his working." (CV, 130)

I invite you to reflect on these truths and encourage you to share them with your friends, your family, and others. If you already believe and know this saving message of Christ, I encourage you to share with others how it has made a difference in your life. As I said in the last edition of *Journey*, I also invite you to share with me some of your feedback / thoughts by sending me an email at [youth@romancatholic.kingston.on.ca](mailto:youth@romancatholic.kingston.on.ca).

## CWL honors Nancy Richer



*Photo submitted by Margie Norwood*

The Maple Leaf service pin was introduced in 1971 for members who have served the Catholic Women's League in an exceptional or meritorious manner. This prestigious honor is given to active members with a minimum length of service, seven to ten years, and whom have performed specific outstanding service on a one-time or over several years. Congratulations to our Kingston Diocesan President Nancy Richer on receiving the Catholic Women's League Maple Leaf service pin on December 2, 2019.

**98th Kingston Diocesan Convention**  
**The Catholic Women's League of Canada**  
**May 2– 3, 2020**  
**Ambassador Hotel and Conference Centre**

