



# FROM THE VINEYARD

Newsletter No. 274; December 6, 2024

**PRINCIPALS FROM THE PVNC CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD** held an Advent retreat today. I was privileged to celebrate Mass for the group after a keynote presentation from Karen Shannon of the Archdiocese of Kingston. It was a good day of spiritual reflection and sharing – and I was only sorry I couldn't stay longer.

**OUR ADVENT CLERGY GATHERING** was a great success, thanks to the combined efforts of the many people who helped organize it. Mass at the Cathedral at noon on Thursday was followed by a lunch at Bishop Doyle Hall, with some fifty priests and deacons present. The meal was delicious, and the mood was convivial as always. Sincere thanks to the Cathedral and Diocesan Pastoral Center staff who coordinated, decorated and generally managed the event!

**A SNOWSTORM OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS** hit Muskoka and other northern regions of our diocese last weekend. While many areas were affected, it seems that Gravenhurst and Bracebridge were directly in the path of the storm. I am assured by Father Placid Obijii at St. Paul's and Father Roy Villas at St. Joseph's that they managed to survive the blizzard, the lengthy power outage and the disruption of the Sunday Masses. The "digging out" process has been ongoing, with more snow falling throughout this week. Here is praying that they have some relief and soon!

**THE CHURCH IS PREPARING TO CELEBRATE A JUBILEE YEAR** in 2025, focused on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope." Pope Francis will formally open the Jubilee at a Mass on Christmas eve at St. Peter's Basilica. On Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, bishops around the world will celebrate the start of the Jubilee Year in their Cathedrals. I look forward to celebrating this great liturgy at the 10:30 a.m. Mass that day. The Opening rites will begin (weather permitting) in the parking lot of Bishop Doyle Hall and then we will pilgrimage from there across the street to continue the celebration of the Mass at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains. All are welcome to attend this Mass! And be sure to check out the [Jubilee Events page](#) on our Diocesan website.

**ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS** will be presented at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains this Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. This service of readings and traditional Advent hymns is a wonderful way to embrace the spirit of this season of waiting and expectation. The choir of Our Lady of the Wayside and Chesterton Academy will feature works by Palestrina, Mendelssohn and more. There is no admission fee but a free will offering is certainly welcome.

**ON THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE** (December 12) the Church in Canada celebrates the **National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples**. This annual event, first marked in 2002, invites us to recognize the painful legacy of residential schools and to walk with Indigenous peoples in spirit of repentance, solidarity and hope. Information can be found on the Canadian Bishops' [website](#).

*Fraternally,*

† Daniel