



Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert

Vocations Commission

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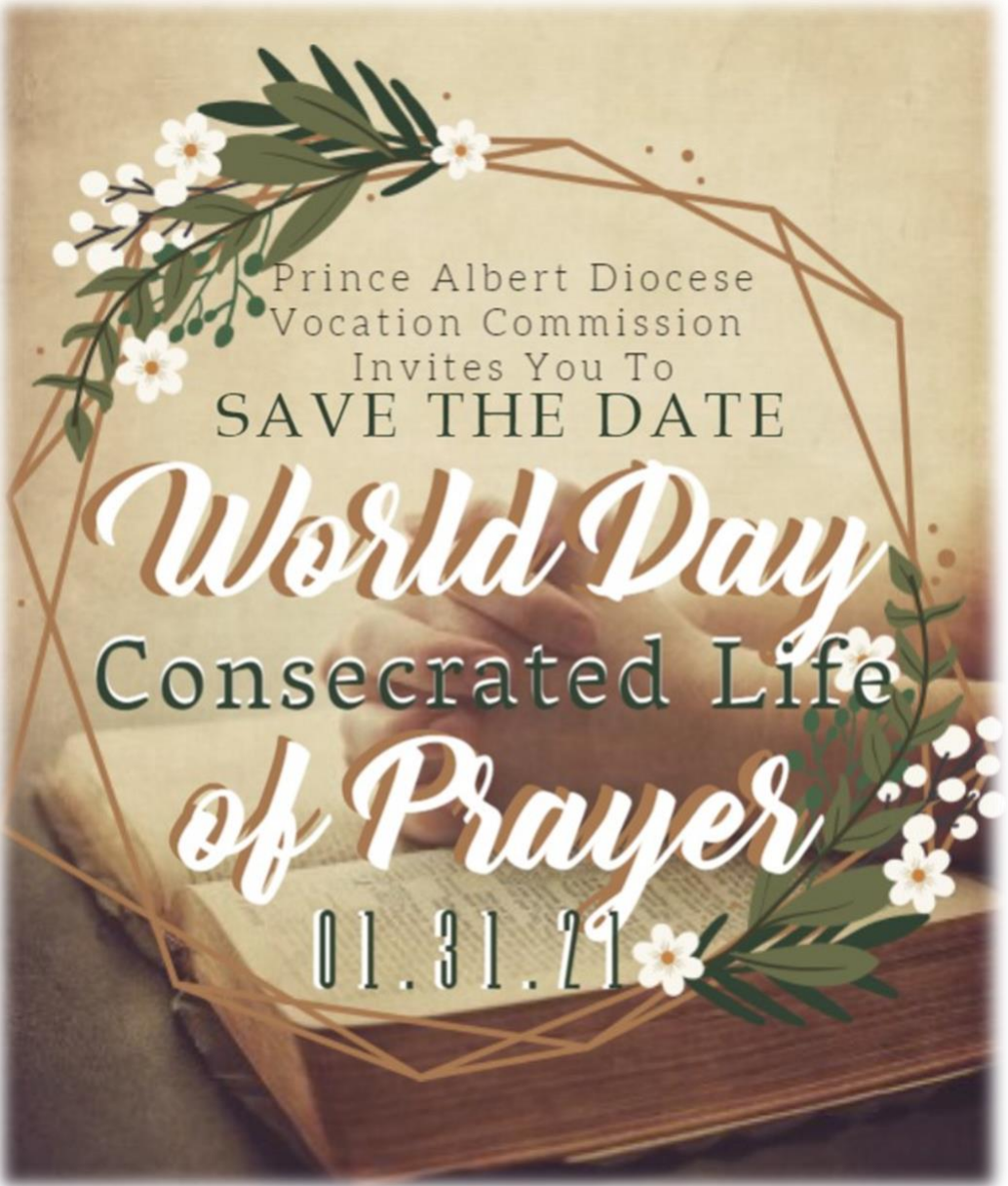
November 2020



Save the Date:

**World Youth Day
in Lisbon
August 2023**

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for WYD in Portugal is “Mary rose and left in haste,” from the Gospel of Luke’s description of how Mary went quickly to her cousin Elizabeth, upon hearing from the angel that Elizabeth was expecting a baby.





Seminarian Tai Le

Informed Faith Expressed by Pastoral Work

Peace and Hope of Christ Jesus to all the faithful from every corner of our diocese. As you might know, I am in my second internship year now at Wakaw and nearby areas. This year has become delightful and somehow attracts me to keep reflecting more on the journey which I am following—a journey and discernment toward the priesthood. The idea of internship—or the so-called pastoral year—is that a seminarian, after several years of learning and discerning in Seminary formation, will leave Seminary formation and thus spend his time of discernment and learning in a parish in which he is appointed. He is, as a result, called profoundly to pay special attention to doing pastoral work. In other words, he is to experience how what he has learned is to be lived in a parish.

“How is it attractive for you in a rural area?”—in the middle of nowhere as some would say—is the question you might wonder. This question initially was also in my mind before I arrived at the parish. Nevertheless, the Lord always has His way. During this time, I have constantly asked myself, “What would and should I do in a new environment, especially during the pandemic?”

With God’s help, I have been blessed by the people around me here in my pastoral zones. I have learned so much from working with, interacting with, and encountering those with whom I am entrusted to practice my ministry. I would love to share with you all the wonderful things I have experienced during my internship year. However, in spite of the length of this letter, there is one thing that I want to share with you and invite you to keep pondering as you pray to God. That is, our faith in the Lord is an informed faith by the Word and thus needs to be expressed by doing pastoral work.

The whole mystery of one’s faith is visible in what one participates in every mass. When we come to worship God in church, at first, we listen to the Word of God and then are called to bring His Word to others. At the time of our baptism, we were given faith in God by the prayer of the Church through Her ministers. That faith remains passive as *virtue fidei*—the virtue of faith—until it is fully unpacked as *actus fidei*—the act of faith—in which “the act of faith is perfected and formed by charity.”¹ That is why we are all called to put that virtue of faith into practice, first of all, by opening ourselves to God and then by advocating for justice by our action in helping the poor and the vulnerable. These aspects of faith are exactly what I am experiencing in my internship—to see how my faith is lived out by its fruits in helping others. I, therefore, invite each of you in this difficult time especially to reflect on how we put our faith into its *actus fidei*’s mode.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Each of us is called to be a servant to others because God says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Jer 1:5). Despite our different callings, we all are called eventually to fulfill our baptismal functions—to be priests to offer prayers and sacrifices to God through the High Priest Jesus Christ, to be prophets to speak the Word to others, and to be kings to lead others to God. Let us go now and profess our Lord to the world!

Yours in Christ, Tai Le

¹ Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica*, Second part of the second part, Questions 4, Articles 1,3.

A graphic for a poster contest. The background is a gradient from dark red at the top to orange at the bottom. On the right side, there is a white cross with a black silhouette of a city skyline inside it. The text is in green and white. The text reads: "Coming in January" in large green letters, "Prince Albert Diocese Vocations Commission" in smaller white letters, "POSTER CONTEST" in large green letters, "Look for it in the winter edition of the newsletter." in white, and "Open to children and youth aged 4 - 18." in white.

Coming in January
Prince Albert Diocese Vocations Commission
POSTER CONTEST
Look for it in the winter edition of the newsletter.
Open to children and youth aged 4 - 18.

On August 10, 2020 five men were ordained Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Prince Albert – below they share some of their first experiences in ministry as Deacons.



Deacon Paul Joy

I was ordained on August 10, 2020 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Since that time, I have met with my parish priest at St. Joseph parish (Father Alberto) who explained to me the ministries I would be involved in at the parish. I immediately started assisting the 2020 Confirmation Sacramental Preparation team. I attended practice meetings as well as three separate Confirmation Masses where a total of 60 young people were confirmed. Due to Covid 19 it has been difficult given my occupation as and R.C.M.P. officer and an instructor at Saskatchewan Polytechnic School being involved in parish duties, however I have been assisting Father Alberto at Mass on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am with other members of the St. Joseph's Knights of Columbus. Outside of the parish I have joined other members of the D.P.C. executive in several ZOOM meetings and met with the other members of the committee to review applications and determine Sacred Heart Medal recipients. I pray the Rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours daily. Lastly, I attended the funeral Mass for my fellow Deacon, Brian McLane – I pray he is with our Lord, Jesus Christ.



Deacon Harry Lafond

Everything is not normal and so we respond accordingly. First, with mask in hand, Father Akah took Germaine and I on a grand introductory tour of his four parishes. When we finally arrived at Our Lady of Guadalupe, my appreciation for Father's stamina had moved up a couple of notches. Of course, he expected me to preach at each of the stops. It was a very uplifting start; the people have generous hearts and welcoming smiles. I attended four funerals in Muskeg Lake. The one hundred-year-old gentleman gifted me with a time to pray with him and share some stories, then I was invited to help put him to rest one week later. In October, our little parish group got together every Thursday to learn about Mary's many stories and to pray the rosary. We finished the last Thursday with a covid friendly supper with Father. We ate a delicious chicken supper and visited as all good neighbours should. The inspirational moment for us was when a 9-year-old boy volunteered to lead a decade, wow!



Deacon Ron Johnson

Since my ordination in August, I have primarily been serving on the Altar here at St. Agatha's parish in Shellbrook and at first, occasionally, at St. Henry's in Leask. I was also able to visit the parishes of St. Jean de Baptiste in Debden, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Big River, and Sacred Heart on Big River first Nation with Fr. Michael Fahlman. I typically do one Homily per month at St. Agatha's. I have also become involved in the local Ministerial Association. The parish at St. Henry's Parish in Leask had confirmation which I was able to assist with, and there was one funeral Mass at St. Agatha's in Shellbrook at which I assisted. I also had the opportunity to serve at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Saskatoon on Thanksgiving weekend when Father Graham Hill invited me to not only serve, but to preach the Homily. I have also been invited to serve at Our Lady of Czestochowa in Prince Albert and Ste. Therese de L'Enfant in Leoville in recent weeks. Unfortunately, COVID has placed many restrictions on ministry in general and therefore, we are unable to do hospital or care home visits or home visits to shut-in parishioners. There is much opportunity for growth in the role of a Deacon not only in the local Parish, but throughout our Deanery and the diocese, and I look forward to becoming more involved as the scope of Ministry of a Deacon becomes more accepted and understood.



Deacon William "Bill" Thibeault

Since the ordination, until my move to Shellbrook, I was able to serve with Fr. Doug in Meadow Lake. I was also able to provide the homily a couple of times with him, and to lead one Sunday Celebration of the Word one Saturday when Fr. Doug was away. I was also able to assist at three funerals in Meadow Lake. For one burial and one interment of ashes I was able to lead the prayers at the cemetery. However, since moving to Shellbrook, I have not had opportunity to serve, of course, the Covid situation has created challenge in that regard.



**Deacon Richard
Lucas**

“Since my ordination on August 10th, the focus of my ministry has been assisting Fr. Matthew in serving Mass at the Shrine of St. Theresa in Wakaw, St. Isidore parish Bellevue and St. Bernadette parish at One Arrow/Batoche. I have delivered several homilies at all three locations. I was able to participate in the celebrations at the Shrine of the Feast of St Therese October 1. I led two Deacon led Liturgy of the word/Communion services in Wakaw and Batoche. I conducted the cemetery blessing at Wakaw cemetery on All Saints Day. Thank you, Father Matthew Nguyen and Fr. Michael Averyt, for all of your guidance and support in my ministry.

With my father’s cancer diagnosis, much time has been spent on helping my parents move from their home at Wakaw Lake to a house in Saskatoon. My wife and I continue to live near Lloydminster and because we are both employed there, I am not able to be in the Wakaw area full time.

While in Lloydminster my wife Yvonne and I have been praying with a newly formed prayer group ‘The friends of St. Stephen’ since March and have continued into the fall. Since September we have been facilitating a ‘New evangelization’ program for adults entitled ‘the 99 experience.’ I have helped provide household items to residents of Onion Lake First Nation and I look forward to networking with residents of One Arrow First Nation.

I have been designing and facilitating a monthly reflection based on the corporal works of mercy for Lloydminster Catholic School Division. I have enjoyed growing into my vocation, networking with parishioners in all of the communities in my ‘bubbles’ and of course working with Fr Matthew and Seminarian Tai Le as well as getting to know Fr Tru in Paradise Hill.

Congratulations on Your Retirement

Most Rev. Albert Thévenot, M. Afr.

Our Beloved Shepherd



*We thank God
for the deep compassion, dedication
and generosity you have shared
with your flock for over 12 years.*

*May God bless and keep you
safely in His arms as you take up
the next chapter in your life.*

*May the Lord’s blessings be upon you
as you follow in His way.
May you find joy and peace*

*With Love & Gratitude
Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert
Vocation Commission*

Is God calling you?

I invite men who believe they have the qualifications and interest necessary for this service of the Church to begin now to pray for guidance. If they are married, they should pray together with their wives, confident that the Lord, who has strengthened them by the sacrament of marriage, will help them discern whether He is calling them to embrace a second sacramental call.

Together let us place our petitions for the fruitfulness of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Prince Albert in the maternal hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary, asking her to watch over the candidates for this ministry who will proclaim the Word faithfully, serve the liturgy reverently, and care for the needs of the poor joyfully.



Most Rev. Albert Thévenot M. Afr.
Bishop of Prince Albert

The Permanent Diaconate

Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert