

A Message from our Spiritual Director



Fr. Garry LaBoucane, OMI

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

First of all, I want to thank all of you who made the effort to be here at Lac Ste-Anne and to pray with so many people from a great variety of communities. I also want to express my gratitude to all those who helped to make the pilgrimage happen: those who did the planning, those who prepared the site, those who generously volunteered their time in any way, and those who are making sure that everything is ready as we gather to pray in the shrine at Mass, or in the lake, or on the grounds.

Each year for the last three years, one of the Sacraments has been emphasized. So far, we have focused on Baptism, the Eucharist (Holy Communion), and Reconciliation (Confession). This year, we are remembering the Gifts of the Holy

Spirit as we celebrate and live out our Confirmation. One who lives out her Confirmation is Sister Eva Solomon. She is originally from Ontario and has devoted her life to God and the Church. She is very interested in what Our Lady of Guadeloupe said to St. Juan Diego, and she is offering to share her mission and ideas with us during the pilgrimage. I am sure that you will enjoy meeting her during her presentations or at any time during the pilgrimage.

As you may already know, the Lac Ste-Anne Pilgrimage site has been declared a historic site by the Federal Government of Canada. This year, after the Sunday morning Mass, there will be a short ceremony when the plaque designating this as a historic site is unveiled. After the ceremony, everyone is welcome to join the dignitaries for tea and bannock. Hopefully, everyone will bring lots of bannock to share with everyone else (like those such as me who do not know how to make it).

Father Camille Fiché, OMI and Mr. Greg Bounds were two men who initiated and did most of the ground work in having our site recognized by our federal government as a significantly historical place for all Canadians. I am most grateful to both men for all the time and effort they put into this. Neither one of them wants to be singled out, but they did good work. Thank you, Father Camille and Greg!

Father Camille is in Europe at the moment. The Oblates have offered him a sabbatical in recognition for his many years of working for the Oblate community in administration. When he returns, I am sure that he will have a better idea of where next to use his Gifts of the Spirit. Because he is on sabbatical, he is no longer one of the Trustees. The local Superior of the Oblates in the Brother Anthony Community, Father John Malazdrewich, OMI, is now a Trustee. Welcome, Father John!

I would also like to welcome another new Trustee, His Grace, Richard Smith, Archbishop of Edmonton. Our Holy Father asked Archbishop Collins, who was a Trustee, to move to Toronto and Archbishop Smith to move West. Archbishop Smith was immediately interested in being involved with Lac Ste-Anne. He is presiding at the Sunday morning Mass and is also involved in the ceremony afterwards. So, it is my pleasure to welcome you, Your Grace.

We have another new “baby” Archbishop coming to the waters of Lac Ste-Anne. His Grace, Archbishop Gerard Pettipas, will be joining us for the first time as well. He will be presiding at the 3 pm Mass on Sunday and blessing the lake afterwards. Welcome, Your Grace, all the way from the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan!

Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie, OMI has now matured to the toddler stage of being an archbishop. He was our “baby” archbishop last year, following in a great man’s footsteps, Archbishop Peter Sutton, OMI, and doing a GREAT job! Welcome home, Sylvain!

May we all live out the Gifts of the Holy Spirit no matter who and where we are!

With love and gratitude,

Father Garry LaBoucane, OMI