



This Month in the Diocese

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“You are Extraordinary”

On All Saints Day, Sr. Maria Rosa Gomez, OSA, offered her Solemn Profession of Vows at Mass officiated by Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick at Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

Read more of Sr. Rosa’s journey on Page 3.



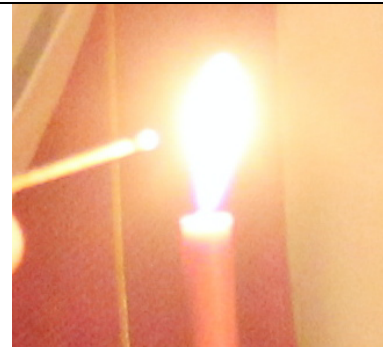
5 Questions

on Medical Assistance in Dying – why We Can and Must Do *Much* Better:
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Remembrance Reflection

Fr Patrick O’Neill shares the importance of Nov. 11 from his experience as a military chaplain: **See Page 4**



From Darkness to Light

A beatification, World Day of the Poor, and the anticipation of a new year guide us through November: **See Page 4**



Five questions on Medical Assistance in Dying and why We Can and Must Do *Much* Better:

The federal government on Oct. 5 re-tabled Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code. On Oct. 14, a joint ecumenical and interfaith document was released explaining why the proposed bill is dangerous and in need of more robust consultation with Canadians. On Oct. 20, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops released an additional statement calling on individuals to make their views known to elected officials.

1. What is Bill C-7?

The federal government tabled Bill C-7: An Act to amend the Criminal Code on February 24, 2020. The bill proposed changes to the 2016 law on medically-assisted death to include individuals whose natural death is not reasonably foreseeable, and safeguards in these instances. A September 2019 decision in the Superior Court of Quebec – *Truchon vs Procureur* – declared that the requirement of a person to have natural death “reasonably foreseeable” to be eligible for medically-assisted death was contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Bill C-7 was re-introduced by the federal government on Oct. 5, 2020.

2. Why is this of concern?

In an open letter to Canadians, religious leaders fear the expansion of MAiD to include death that is not ‘reasonably foreseeable’ will pose grave danger to our vulnerable populations, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons with mental illness. “Offering euthanasia or assisted suicide to those living with a disability or chronic illness, but who are not dying, suggests that living with a disability or illness is a fate worse than death. This will create certain pressures to accept such lethal procedures, putting the lives of these Canadians at greater risk in what is now a new regime that sees certain lives can be ended.”

3. What is the solution?

Palliative care is designed to meet the physical needs and sacred dignity of individuals confronting illness and death. Universal access to palliative care services for all Canadians “is a much more effective response,” and is “a viable and life affirming alternative, which does not discriminate against any group and which gives expression to the ethics of caring and inclusion, hallmarks of Canadian values,” the open letter states.

4. What can we do?

As individuals, we are called upon to make our views known to those responsible for making a decision on Bill C-7. Connect with your local Members of Parliament and the Prime Minister’s Office to ask questions and urge greater consultation on this important legislation. Also, provide support to existing palliative care services, and connect with provincial MLAs and ministers to insist on their support for palliative care, which should be an essential and equitable service for all of us.

5. How do I learn more?

The open letter and ecumenical/interfaith report are on our blog:

<https://www.antigonishdiocese.com/religious-leaders-in-canada-oppose-bill-c-7/>

The CCCB statement and related information can be found here:

<https://www.cccb.ca/fait-moral-issues/suffering-and-end-of-life/>



by Jennifer Hatt, Communications Officer

“You have made me for Yourself, O Lord, and my heart is restless until it rests in You.” Saint Augustine

Sr Maria Rosa Gomez, OSA makes her Solemn Profession of Vows on Feast of All Saints, Nov. 1, 2020 at Our Lady of Grace Monastery

It is a journey of hills and valleys with a clear path in sight. Growing up in the Philippines as the ninth of 10 children, Maria Rosa Gomez felt her calling to religious life, even though she had never met a nun. She longed to be a missionary, to introduce everyone to Jesus as she had come to know and love him in her family's faith. She was a college graduate when she spotted a Dominican Sister in her habit walking down the street. "I was so excited, I chased after her!" They spoke, and in time Sr. Rosa's calling to be an active Sister was realized. As a Dominican Sister, she served in several locations in the Philippines and the United States. For 18 years she was a school principal. "I enjoyed teaching and I love children," she said. She also loved sharing her faith in a weekly radio show, evident even today when she arrives for our chat with a script that she shares with a voice succinct yet warm, brimming with excitement but carefully contained to let each word sink in, connect, invite. "I celebrated my silver jubilee," she continued, "yet my heart was still restless." Through prayer and guidance from her order and bishop, she discerned a very specific calling: cloistered life in Monastery, Nova Scotia. She arrived at Our Lady of Grace on Nov. 17, 2017: "I saw the steeple of the chapel as we drove up and I thought 'I am here! I am really here!' I had only seen pictures on the internet." She was granted three years to choose whether this new life in a new order was her true calling and on November 1, 2020, she said, "Here am I," and professed her vows to the Augustinian Contemplative Nuns.

Two other nuns at Monastery are hoping to wait until pandemic restrictions ease before taking their vows. Sr. Rosa, however, could not wait as her three-year window was nearly done. Her family and friends in Toronto, the United States and the Philippines were unable to attend due to the pandemic, but she took comfort in celebrating the day with them via livestream and with her 'new' family of Sisters and faith community in person. "You are extraordinary," Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick said in his homily. "Your life calls for a special grace from God that enables you to live the Christian life more intensely and by doing so, you help others to live more faithfully."

Be safe!

If feeling unwell or in vulnerable health, please join us in worship and prayer from home:



Mass For Shut-Ins

11:30 am Sundays on CTV.
Also on our YouTube channel and MyParish app



www.antigonishdiocese.com



An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Dearest Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot, at this moment, receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.



"A powerful reminder of the fragility of human life"

A Reflection on Remembrance Day
By Fr. Patrick O'Neill:

November 11th is the day we remember the sacrifices made by Canadians in armed conflicts throughout the history of our nation. Many men and women from the early 1900's to present day have served in the Canadian Armed Forces and during war have paid the Ultimate Sacrifice. Our country has endured WWI, WW2, Korean War and Afghanistan. Our soldiers have also served abroad in many peace keeping missions and have endured conflicts in places like Bosnia.

Because of the service and bravery of our military past and present we have secured our freedom to live the lives we have now in our great country of Canada. On Remembrance Day we remember soldiers who paid the Ultimate Sacrifice, those who came home our Veterans and those currently serving in the Canadian Forces today.

I have the honour to be a member of the Canadian Forces serving as an Army Chaplain in addition to being the parish priest at Our Lady of Fatima. I am currently serving my 12th year in the Armed Forces. I proudly wear my uniform knowing that those who have served before me have kept us safe and allow our country to prosper in freedom.

Personally I am moved by the passion and dedication of the soldiers I work with daily. The first time I had to notify the next of kin of the death of their son and fiancé in Afghanistan was a powerful reminder of the fragility of human life. When I stood on the tarmac at CFB Trenton to greet the remains of Sgt Jimmy MacNeil back from Afghanistan on his journey back home to Glace Bay I was moved to tears. I could not stop. As we journeyed from CFB Trenton on the "Highway of Heroes" to Toronto we traveled under 50 overpasses. People were everywhere on every overpass and along the highway. Upon arrival at the Sydney airport another "Highway of Heroes" was done for the first time from Sydney Airport to the funeral home in Glace Bay. People want to remember those who serve and especially those who pay the Ultimate Sacrifice like Jimmy, your father, your uncle, your grandparent, your great-grandfather, your brother or sister, your friend, your son or daughter.

When you see a Veteran or a current serving member of the Canadian Forces please thank them for their service. On November 11th we remember and are thankful for all we have as a result of the bravery and sacrifice of our Veterans.

Items of Note:



Nov. 14-15:

World Day of the Poor

A special collection will be taken in our parishes to support pandemic relief:

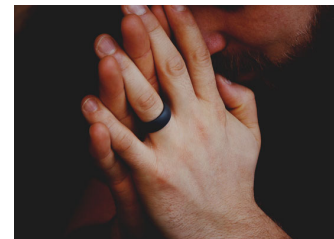
www.devp.org



Blessed Michael McGivney,

founder of the Knights of Columbus, was beatified on Oct. 31. Celebrate this historic milestone in video and prayer:

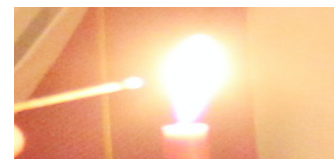
<https://www.fathermcgivney.org/>



Daily Prayers Calendar

includes a monthly list of both clergy and communities in our diocese. Search 'Daily Prayers' on our website:

www.antigonishdiocese.com



Nov. 29: Welcome, Advent!

Watch for our December newsletter early to celebrate!