



Thoughtful Seeds:

Shared by Wilma Vanderzwaag



A father saw that his 11-year-old son was crying silently. He asked his son what was the matter? The young boy told his father that his rich classmates mocked him, called him the son of a gardener. They said that we live off the money you earn from watering and feeding plants for their parents. The father paused for a moment, then said, "Come with me son, let's plant some flowers. It might cheer you up."

He held his hand and walked him to the garden, then he took out some flower seeds and said, "Let's carry out an experiment. We will plant two flowers separately. I will care for one, and you will

care for the other. I will water mine with clean water from the lake and you will water yours with dirty water from the pond. We shall see the outcome. It took a few days to finally germinate the seeds. They cared for them respectively and watched them grow.

Some time later, the father brought the son to the garden and said to him. "Look at the two flowers and tell me your observation." The boy responded, "My flower looks better and healthier than yours. How is that possible when your water is cleaner?" The father smiled and said, "that's because dirty water doesn't stop a plant from growing, rather it serves as organic fertilizer to help it flourish. You see son, there are some people who will put you down in life, mock you and your dreams, some may even throw "dirt" on you. Always remember that there's nothing wrong with you, it's their ego they have to satisfy. So don't let harsh words from people affect you, instead, let it encourage you into being a better person. And in doing so, you will be like the flower and will flourish even in the midst of 'dirt' like negativity and harsh words."

Just Stay There

From: The Inner Voice of Love

Shared by Pat Waters



A seed only flourishes by staying in the ground in which it is sown. When you keep digging the seed up to check whether it is growing, it will never bear fruit. Think about yourself as a little seed planted in rich soil. All you have to do is stay there and trust that the soil contains everything you need to grow. This growth takes place even when you do not feel it. Be quiet, acknowledge your powerlessness, and have faith that one day you will know how much you have received.

Henry of Nouwen

Saint Maria Goretti, Virgin and Martyr

1890 — 1902

Feast Day: July 6

Patron Saint of: Girls, young women, and rape victims

Maria Goretti was martyred at the age of 11. So how did someone so young become a saint in the Catholic Church?

Maria was born in Corinaldo, a town in central Italy about 20 km from the Adriatic Sea, the third of six children. Her family was very poor and when Maria was five, her parents, having lost their farm, went from farm to farm to work eventually ending up in Nettuno about 60 km from Rome. Sadly, Maria was only nine when her father died, leaving her mother and older siblings to work in the fields. Maria stayed home to look after the house and her younger siblings which did leave any time to go to school. Because they could not afford a place of their own, they shared a house with another family, the Serenellis.

That family had a 20-year-old son, Alessandro, who took an unwelcome liking to 11-year-old Maria. One day, as Maria was mend-



ing a shirt and caring for her little sister, Alessandro grabbed Maria and dragged her into a bedroom. He was so enraged when she refused his advances that he stabbed her fourteen times with an awl and then ran away.

Maria did not die immediately. When her family heard her little sister crying, they ran into the house and found Maria critically wounded. She was taken at once to the hospital and was operated on without anesthesia. She survived another 20 hours during which she revealed

to the police who had attacked her but also said, "I forgive him and I want him with me in Heaven!" Alessandro was sentenced to thirty years in prison and initially was unrepentant. However, several years into his imprisonment, he had a dream where Maria, dressed in white, handed Alessandro lilies which burned in his hands. He knew then that she had forgiven him and he accepted God's absolution.

When he was released, Alessandro went straight to Maria's mother to beg for forgiveness and having witnessed her daughter's faith and ability to forgive, did indeed forgive him. Alessandro then joined a Franciscan order as a lay brother and worked as a gardener in the monastery.

Maria was beatified in 1947 and canonized in 1950, both times by Pope Pius XII. Her mother was in attendance, the first mother ever to see her child canonized.

Saint Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

225—258

Feast Day: August 10

Patron Saint of: Deacons, Chefs, Comedians and Firefighters

Lawrence was born in northern Spain to Christian parents. Not much is known of his early years except that as a young man he met the future Pope Sixtus II who invited Lawrence to come to study in Rome. After Sixtus was elected as Pope in 257, he ordained Lawrence as deacon and later as Archdeacon of Rome. He was entrusted with the Church's treasury and distribution of alms to the poor.

In 258, the Roman Emperor Valerian issued an edict that all bishops, priests, and deacons must be put to death. Thus, Pope Sixtus II was executed on August 6th. The Roman prefect at the time, a greedy man, gave Lawrence the chance to live if he handed over the treasures of the Church. Lawrence requested



three days to gather it all. On the third day, Lawrence presented the prefect and the emperor with a gathering of the sick, the needy, and the marginalized people of Rome. He declared, "These are the treasures of the Church." Infuriated, Valerian ordered that Lawrence be killed and on August 10th, he was martyred. He was likely beheaded as was the custom but legend has it that the prefect wanted Lawrence to

die a painful death so he was tied to a gridiron (or grill) over hot coals and slowly burned, which is why in art he is sometimes depicted holding a grill. He jokingly told his persecutors at one point to, "Turn me over. I'm not done on that side!" Upon witnessing this act of faith in God, many Romans converted to Christianity.

Here in Canada, the St. Lawrence River was named by explorer Jacques Cartier as he arrived at the mouth of the river on August 10th, 1535, the feast day of Saint Lawrence. Cartier initially applied the name to the bay and surrounding area, but when Samuel de Champlain created a map of the river in 1604, he used this saint's name for the entire waterway.

The Pope's Prayer
Intention for July

For respect for human life:

Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God.

To read more of the Pope's Prayer Intentions, visit

<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

The Pope's Prayer
Intention for August

For evangelization in the city:

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

To read more of the Pope's Prayer Intentions, visit

<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

PRAYER for JULY

Almighty God, giver of all that is good, we thank You for the precious gift of human life:

For life in the womb, coming from your creative power,

For the life of children, making us glad with their freshness and promise,

For the life of young people, hoping for a better world,

For the life of people who are disabled, teaching us that every life has value,

For the life of the elderly, witnessing to the ageless values of patience and wisdom.

Like Blessed Mary, may we always say "YES" to Your gift. May we defend it and promote it from conception to its natural end. And bring us at last, O Father, to the fullness of eternal life in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

PRAYER for AUGUST

Lord Jesus, as we navigate the busy and crowded streets of our cities, we often encounter hidden struggles, isolation, and loneliness.

We ask that you open our eyes to the people around us.

Grant us the creativity, courage, and compassion to proclaim your Gospel in new ways.

Transform our neighborhoods into warm, welcoming communities where every person feels seen, loved, and valued.

Help us to be beacons of hope in the urban landscape, building bridges and sharing your joy with all we meet.

Amen.

**The world is full of nice people.
If you can't find one, be one.**

Nishan Panwar

Star of the Sea Turban Ministry Recognized in Article On Thursday, May 28, 2026:

Shared by Marg Martin

This is an opinion column by Niagara Health Senior Communications Specialist Diane Moore, published in the [St. Catharines Standard, Niagara Falls Review and Welland Tribune](#). Here are some excerpts.

It starts, as it always does, with a quiet moment of reflection.

Before a single stitch is sewn, the ladies of the Star of the Sea Church, Catholic Women's League, gather and say a prayer for people they may never meet but think about often — people sitting in chemotherapy treatment chairs at the Walker Family Cancer Centre.

Then, the sewing begins, hand stitching hats for cancer patients — chemo caps they call them. And not long after, the laughter starts.

"Can't get a word in that's not a joke," Frances Prindiville quips, as the room fills with conversation, teasing and the familiar rhythm of hands at work.

This is how they've done it for nearly 30 years.

"These ladies mean a lot to me; we mean a lot to each other," says Marg Martin, Leader of the chemo cap ministry of Star of the Sea Church, Catholic Women's League. "Together, we're doing something for people who have a disease that touches us all, and we're happy to do it."

5,581 Acts of care - and counting

The group began in 1998, in a home, with just four women, one man and an idea. To sew hats for cancer patients who lose their hair during treatment.

"I remember thinking, this is a great idea," recalls Elsie Pavelko, of the moment it all started. She was one of those original members and is still part of the group today.

A pattern was found, fabric was gathered, and what began as a simple act of kindness quickly became something more enduring.

Today, the group has grown to include 10 women. Over the years, leadership has passed from one

Margaret to another.

"It's strange... I didn't realize till today that we had three Margarets from the beginning to today," Pavelko reflects.

Now led by Marg Martin (the third Margaret), the group continues its steady, dedicated work. To date, they've made 5,581 chemo caps. Each one sewn, stitched and finished by hand.

In a typical two-hour gathering, they produce between 20 and 25 caps, though they admit they could do more.

"We have to stop to have tea," jokes Stella Pawlik.

More than just sewing

They could do the work alone at home, and sometimes they do. But being together matters.

"We could all take them home... but it's not as much fun," Prindiville explains.

Donna Drozdowski adds, "It's a chance to get out of the house and be social and see each other."

"Best part? Coffee break!" Margaret Vinc (the second Margaret to have led the group) says with a laugh.

Despite the lighthearted banter and the meaningful work, it's not the only reason they come together. It's an opportunity to share stories of their lives.

"I lost two daughters to cancer," shares Pawlik, explaining one passed away from ovarian cancer, and one to brain cancer just last September.

"It was a bad Christmas," she says. "But you don't really want them suffering."

For many in the group, this work is deeply personal. Martin herself wore these caps during her own cancer treatment 10 years ago.



Marg Martin, leader of the chemo cap ministry of Star of the Sea Church, Catholic Women's League, wore these very chemo caps during her own cancer fight.

"I couldn't stand not wearing anything on my head in bed," she recalls.

Others carry their own stories.

Prindiville spoke of her sisters — one diagnosed with ovarian cancer at just 15; another who underwent a double mastectomy at 50.

There's a quiet understanding in the room of why this work matters.



Frances Prindiville hand stitches the final touches into a bright red chemo cap



Margaret Vinc and Marg Martin carefully choose fabrics, mostly donated, for their next chemo caps.

From fabric to frontline care

The caps themselves are made from donated or low-cost materials, often sourced through organizations like the Warehouse of Hope or purchased with funds from the Catholic Women's League.

Each one costs about one dollar in materials. But the time, care and intention behind them? Priceless.

Once completed, the caps are delivered to Niagara Health's Walker Family Cancer Centre (WFCC), where they are given to patients undergoing treatment.

"It feels good to bring a bag of completed caps to the hospital," Martin says. "Because you know the volunteers and patients look forward to it."

Pat Phipps has been volunteering at the WFCC for three years. Among her many duties, she helps hand out the hand-stitched chemo caps to patients who are losing their hair. "It's a very tender topic," she says, explaining the need for a gentle approach.

"I go with my gut instinct and years of experience of reading people. When I ask if they would like one of the hats, I never force it on them. Only after they show an interest do I bring a few different colours over for them to choose from.

"For those who are interested, they just beam! There was a lady yesterday who was thrilled to have one to match her outfit."

Meaningful connection and commitment

Although they may never meet the people who receive their caps, sometimes, thank-you cards make their way back.

Their reach has extended far beyond the local community, too. Caps have travelled as far as Sri Lanka and Abu Dhabi through personal connections.

Even during the challenges of COVID-19, the group found a way to continue.

They sewed from home. Dropped off materials. Kept going.

"Some groups... they kind of dissolved," Martin reflects. "But what would we do without it?"

For a time, hospitals weren't accepting donations, but the women kept sewing anyway, preparing for the day they could give again.

"This is one of our missions," Martin says. "Hopefully, this group will last forever."

Supporting care at the Walker Family Cancer Centre

For patients receiving chemotherapy, something as simple as a soft, handmade cap can provide warmth, dignity and comfort during a difficult time.

The WFCC receives more than 15,000 chemotherapy treatment visits every year.

In addition, the centre provides immunotherapy, radiation treatment, urgent care, pain management, diagnostic programs for lung and prostate cancer and runs clinical trials. Each year, the team helps about 1,700 new patients, including roughly 400 with breast cancer and 600 with prostate cancer.

"We have to keep in mind that a patient receiving chemo incurs so many hidden expenses," explains Phipps. "So, someone bringing them an unexpected small gift like this is so appreciated."

Stitch by stitch

Back in their gathering space in the church basement, the sewing continues.

There is tea. There is laughter. There are stories.

There is also purpose.

"Our goal is community and fellowship... and doing something good," Martin says.

And with every stitch, they are.

Left side - front to back:
Marg Martin,
Margaret Vinc,
Stella Pawlik.



Right side - front to back:
Donna Drozdowski,
Elsie Pavelko,
Frances Prindiville,
Maira Pakiyanayagam.

To read the entire article, go to:

<https://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/news/2026/05/28/ladies-group-stitches-comfort-one-chemotherapy-cap-at-a-time>



Logo: School Sisters
of Notre Dame
(SSND)

The School Sisters of Notre Dame at St. Ann School 1932 to 1962

By Nancy Cameron, Port Dalhousie Historian

The School Sisters of Notre Dame hold a key place in Star of the Sea's parish history. From 1932 to 1962, Sisters from this noted education-focused religious order served as the teachers at St. Ann's School. Resident in a convent on Dalhousie Avenue next to the school, the Sisters contributed in many ways to the spiritual and community life of the parish for three decades.

When the original St. Ann's School was built in 1915 at the corner of Elgin Street and Queen Street (now Dalhousie Avenue), lay teachers initially comprised the staff.

The school building was small, with only two classrooms on the first floor, and an auditorium, St. Ann's Hall, on the second floor. One classroom held Grades One to Four ("the little room") and the other held Grades Five to Eight ("the big room"). With a student population averaging 85 children, that meant over 40 in each classroom with four grade levels, a challenging situation for any teacher. Managing teaching and discipline was difficult and not always well achieved, so that some Catholic families chose to send their children to the public school, a development noted with concern by many in the parish.

"In 1932 the Sisters agreed to the request to staff St. Ann's School in Port Dalhousie."

At that time, Port Dalhousie was an incorporated village of about 1500 residents including about 75 Catholic families. The village had its own Separate School Board to oversee the management and progress of the school. By 1930, members of the Board sought to improve the school situation by requesting members of a religious teaching order to come to St. Ann's and take on the teaching responsibilities. It may be that economic considerations were also a factor, since it was the Depression period and religious teachers were usually paid less than lay teachers. Through the efforts of the Board members and Father Battle, parish priest at the time, a request was made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame to be the teachers at St. Ann's.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame trace their origins back to Bavaria in 1833 as a religious order with a focus on education. In 1847 six Sisters travelled to America to work as teachers for children of German immigrants in Pennsylvania. The Sisters relocated to Baltimore and over the next decades, more Sisters arrived to teach in schools in a number of American cities. In 1871 three Sisters came to teach in St. Agatha, Ontario, their first Canadian mission. More Sisters came to schools in Canadian communities in the next decades. By 1907 they had established 9 convents in Ontario, and in 1926 established their motherhouse in Waterdown outside Hamilton. By 1927, the School Sisters of Notre Dame had 123 Sisters teaching at 19 schools in Canada.

In 1932 the Sisters agreed to the request to staff St. Ann's School in Port Dalhousie. A comfortably furnished house on Queen Street (Dalhousie Avenue) next to the school was provided as a convent (with a chapel) for three Sisters who arrived in the village that summer. Two Sisters would teach at St. Ann's and the third would be the convent housekeeper.

One of their first visitors after their arrival in August 1932 was Monsignor Denis Morris who always took an active interest in the expansion and development of the local parishes. Many welcoming visits from parents and community members followed.

For the next three decades, the School Sisters devoted themselves diligently to their Port Dalhousie students. Teaching over 40 students in each of the two classrooms, with four grade levels in each room, required great management, organization, and teaching skills. Discipline was an important part of school life, reinforced by student and community respect for the authority of the Sisters. Parents noted that the Sisters taught with real concern and care for their students. On many occasions, students were invited to the convent. Catholic families that had sent their children to the public school returned to St. Ann's.

The Sisters were also active in many parish activities, and their presence added greatly to the spiritual life of the parish.

In 1956, the new addition expanded the school with three new classrooms to alleviate the overcrowding. Some lay teachers joined the staff to take positions opened by the new classrooms.

In 1961 Port Dalhousie amalgamated with the city of St. Catharines, so St. Ann's was no longer overseen by the Port Dalhousie Separate School Board. The Lincoln County Separate School Board was established to oversee all the local separate schools. This new Board decided that the School Sisters of Notre Dame would leave Port Dalhousie to live in St. Catharines and staff St. Anthony School, and later the new high school Denis Morris. This brought to an end the three decades of the Sisters' dedicated and eventful participation with St. Ann's, the parish of Star of the Sea, and the community of Port Dalhousie. Beginning in September 1962 the school was once again staffed only by lay teachers. The Port Dalhousie convent was demolished in the summer of 1962 and that area added to the school playground.



Sister Andre with some of her students.

Sister Andre was the principal at St. Ann's in the 1950s.

Today the School Sisters of Notre Dame are an international teaching order working in many missions on five continents across the globe, continuing "to proclaim the Good News, directing our entire lives toward that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent." Their years of service in Port Dalhousie added greatly to Catholic education here and to the rich history of our parish.



We welcome the newest members of our parish family who were baptized in June:

Taylor Drozdowski

Leo Campbell

Addison Harrison

Lucie Scott

Prayer for Child's Baptism:

Heavenly Father, surround these children with Your love and protection.

Fill Your little ones with the Holy Spirit and receive them into the family of Your church, that they may walk with us in the way of Christ, and grow in the knowledge of Your love.
Amen.



Strawberry Social — June 9, 2026



Winner of the 50/50 →



Basket Raffle Winners ← ↓ →





Saint Francis Student Helpers



Always happy to see the SOLI Sisters



Deacon's Franciscan Bench — #6 Blessing

In January 2026, the Franciscan family gathered to begin the year-long celebration of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' death. They identified **six Stages** in St. Francis' Legacy: Mercy, Prayer, Fraternity, Work, Peace, and Blessing.

Blessing is the culmination of the first five.

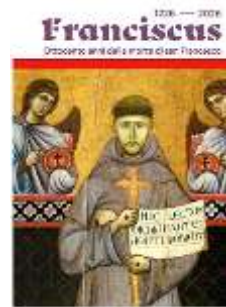
On a small parchment, which is preserved in the Basilica of St. Francis,



St. Francis wrote, (in his own hand,) **a blessing** for Brother Leo. "*May the Lord **ble**ss you and **keep** you. May He **make His face shine** for you and **be gracious** to you. May He **turn His countenance towards** you and **grant** you His peace!*" Numbers 6:24-26

Pope Benedict XVI, in his homily for the World Day of Peace, 2013, said, "*The blessing repeats the three times the Holy Name of God ... and each time links the Name to **two words** indicating action in favor of people.*" Blessing is not just a spiritual action - helping only souls. Benedict spoke of **blessing** as **earthly too**.

As St. Francis neared death he **blessed** his companions - present and future, invoking blessing **BOTH in heaven AND on earth**. St. Francis didn't seek blessing for himself, or didn't simply speak blessing to others; he wished **to BE blessing**. Words are important - when they communicate one's intention, but words alone are **not** blessing. **Blessing** is "**ACTION** in favour of people," Blessing **acts** to bring faith, love, and hope to companions, current and future.



From the Testament of St. Francis "*And whoever **observes** [all that is in the Testament of Francis] ... may [she or he] be filled **in heaven** with the blessing of the Most High Father, and **on earth** with the blessing of His beloved Son, with the Most Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and with all the powers of heaven and with all the saints. And I, little Brother Francis, your servant, for the little I can do, confirm for you this most holy blessing **within and without**.*" 40

During the opening liturgy of the commemoration of the 800th anniversary of Francis' death, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the Friars Minor, linked Francis' understanding of "**blessing**" to the **goodness of creation** and, (thus, implicitly,) to the ultimate blessing of the Incarnation: blessing made flesh for the sake of all people. Br. Massimo pointed to the fruit which blessing produces in lives here and now, describing "**blessing**" as the gift that "**asks to become flesh**," (not spirit, but flesh,) and connecting blessing to corporal and spiritual works of mercy done in the real world: "**the practice of Good**." Blessing does not raise us up **out of** human life, but "*draws us **into life more fully** and invites us to **bring out the good inherent in every creature**.*"

Intervention of Br Massimo Fusarelli, OFM "*Dear sisters and brothers, In his Testament, shortly before taking leave of his brothers, Francis leaves his followers ... words of blessing...*

*Blessing is speaking good to affirm it and to make it bear fruit. **Blessing** is a **gift** from above that asks to become flesh through the practice of good... Our world, in God's eyes, is good. This anthropological and creative optimism does not foster a naive attitude toward darkness, but rather **draws us into life** more fully and invites us to **bring out the good inherent in every creature** [that is, person.] Francis recognizes, in **blessing**, the very **presence of God**, who is the Good, all Good, the Supreme Good. ... Francis' blessing is an invitation **to become, ourselves, blessing for the world**."*

pax et bonum - deacon maurice o.f.s

In Memoriam

We remember the recently departed faithful of our parish:

Sue Vail

Mary Jane McIntee

Dan Finora

Let Us Pray:

God our Father, those who die still live in Your presence; their lives change but do not end. In company with Christ, unite us again in Your heavenly kingdom to sing Your praise forever and ever. Amen



The Vatican and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Shared by Wilma Vanderzwaag

On March 2, 2026 a seminar was organized by the Secretariat for the Economy and the Office of Labor of the Apostolic See, on the “Potential and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence”. At the opening proceedings the message from Pope Leo expressed the hope for “deeper awareness in this highly relevant and complex field”.

There were several speakers including the Secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Bishop Paul Tighe. To summarize the consequences of the widespread uptake in 2022 of ChatGPT, Bishop Tighe used the acronym VUCA: Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity. He referred to recent developments and the case of Anthropic, a U.S. based company founded with the aim of promoting more ethical AI and reportedly subject to “government pressure to relax its ethical commitments regarding military and surveillance uses”.

The development of new technologies, he noted, does not occur in neutral spaces but is intertwined with “geopolitical rivalries, commercial pressures, and personal ambitions”. The Bishop then referred to the document *Antiqua et nova*, which points to the “wisdom of the heart, capable of integrating the whole and its parts”, as what humanity most needs today.

For its part, the Church possesses “moral authority” and the ability to bring together qualified panelists, thereby becoming a meaningful partner in guiding the development of AI.

Father Paolo Benanti, professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University and at Luiss Guido Carli University, focused on the ethical challenges of artificial intelligence, proposing a new “ethics of technology” that questions the “politics” embedded in such models. “Every technological artifact, when it impacts a social context, functions as a configuration of power and a form of order,” Fr. Benanti stated.

This is an urgent issue, he added, discussed at “various tables”, from the Holy See to the United Nations. Fr Benanti is a member of the UN Committee on Artificial Intelligence, where these “configurations of power” are increasingly influenced by commercial agreements. This is also reflected in the field of information. The visibility of an article does not necessarily depend on its quality, but increasingly on the position an algorithm grants it on web pages.

Professor Corrado Giustozzi, lecturer in the Master’s Degree program in Intelligent Systems Engineering at Campus Bio-Medico University in Rome, focused on the nature of one of AI’s essential components—the algorithm. The algorithm and the critical issues associated with decision-making processes based on it. One critical issue is bias; algorithms may at times incorporate prejudices—whether unintentional or deliberate—that distort results or render them inequitable. Professor Giustozzi emphasized training, which is the phase in which an algorithm is developed through data input assumes decisive importance.

Vatican News 02 March 2026

More News on AI--Pope Leo XIV signed his first encyclical on May 15, a document on the protection of the human person in the age of artificial intelligence, the Vatican announced today. His signature came on the 135th anniversary of the promulgation of Pope Leo XIII’s famous encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*,” which came in response to the upheaval of the Industrial Revolution and is considered the beginning of the church’s modern social teaching.

The new encyclical is titled “Magnifica Humanitas” (“Magnificent Humanity”), following the convention of identifying an encyclical by its first two words in Latin. It was presented in the Vatican’s synod hall on Monday, May 25. According to sources, the encyclical is lengthy. Check the following link to download.

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html>

“All of us, I am sure, are concerned for children and young people, and the possible consequences of the use of AI on their intellectual and neurological development.”

Pope Leo XIV
Vatican News
20 June 2025



SUMMER READS

Suggestions from Pat Waters

Looking for something to read this summer? My three suggestions for your summer reading are novels written by Canadian authors set in Canadian locations. Two of the books are inspired by real life events and the third is an evocative read that brings new meaning to traditional themes.

When the World Fell Silent by Donna Jones Alward (2024)

Is an historical fiction novel set during the 1917 Halifax Explosion. It follows two women - nurse Nora Crowell and widow Charlotte Campbell - whose lives are shattered by the disaster, exploring themes of resilience, trauma and rebuilding amidst the devastation of World War I. A rare novel that is both heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time as it explores the challenges faced by women during WWI.

Liberty Street by Heather Marshall (2026)

Is a riveting story about an editorial assistant, Emily Radcliffe, working at Chatelaine magazine who follows a lead that takes her on a harrowing journey into the infamous real life 1960's women's prison (Mercer Women's Prison) on Liberty St. in Toronto. A riveting historical novel about rights and reforms that were made not that long ago following the repeal of the Female Refuges Act that was used to incarcerate "incorrigible women".

Etta and Otto and Russell and James by Emma Hooper (2015)

Eighty-three-year-old Etta wakes one morning in her windswept Saskatchewan home and realizes she has never seen the water so after leaving a note for her husband, Otto, she begins walking east to the ocean. This book is the story of her travels and how it affects Otto her husband, Russell a neighbour who has loved her from afar, and James, a coyote she meets along the way, who becomes her companion and protector. It is a mesmerising story of unsung heroes, last great adventures, and indestructible love.

Suggestions from Wilma Vanderzwaag

The Way of Gratitude

Short stories from a variety of writers share their experience and ideas on the joy of being thankful. Some authors are Joyce Rupp, Henri Nouwen and Thomas Merton

Pope Francis and Our Call to Joy by Diane M. Houdek

Like his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis discovers joy first and foremost in a personal encounter with Christ in the Gospels.

The Wounded Healer by Henri J. M. Nouwen

In this hope-filled and profoundly simple book, Nouwen offers a radically fresh interpretation of modern ministry.

Suggestions from Angela Van Kralingen

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman (2020)

What do an ex-spy, a retired nurse, a former union activist and a psychiatrist have in common? Not much except that they all live in the same retirement village and have somehow become friends. Not wanting to join any of the clubs already in place at the village and since the club room has a free time-slot on Thursday afternoons, they decide to book it for themselves and use the time to solve cold-case murders, hence the title. The old case connects with a new one and these seniors work somewhat with the police (whether the police want them to or not) to solve the case.

If you like British humour and murder mysteries, you will like this novel.

Once you are done with this one, then join these senior citizen sleuths on several sequels by the same author.



Dear Pastor Letters From Children:

Dear Pastor,
I'm sorry I can't leave more money in the plate, but my father didn't give me a raise in my allowance. Could you have a homily about a raise in my allowance?