

St. Peter's, Holy Guardian Angels, and St. John the Baptist Parishes
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February 23, 2025

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass Readings

The **First Reading** is taken from the *First Book of Samuel* (1 Sam 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23). The prophet Samuel, on the instruction of God, anointed David to be the second king of Israel. Saul the first king, because he had displeased God, was to lose his kingship. His throne was to pass not to his son, but to David, an unknown stranger from the village of Bethlehem. This reading describes the event that occurred during Saul's search for David. Think of the story of David's example of mercy, forgiveness and piety today. Compare what he so unjustly suffered and how easily he could have put an end to that suffering, had his respect for God not prevented him. Compare that with your own case of unjust suffering, which is not always so undeserved as your own self-esteem makes out. Perhaps, with God's grace, your piety and the thought of your own need for mercy will enable you to be forgiving and merciful to those who offend you.

The **Second Reading** is taken from *St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1 Cor 15:45-49). In this Chapter of Paul's first letter to Corinthians the Apostle is speaking of the resurrection of all men from the dead. St. Paul himself said he had no human words or images in which to describe a glimpse of heaven which he had had. Neither could he give a positive description of what we shall be like when risen from the dead. However, we have enough knowledge of that happy state to make any sane man want to share in it. We shall be living and certain of never dying again. We shall be free from all anxiety, all care, living in a state of absolute security. We shall be intelligent beings, but much more so than while on this earth, and the scope for the use of our intellect will be infinite. It will be especially God himself, in his divine nature who will be the object of our intellect. But our knowledge of his infinite nature will cometh us in limited stages, as we shall still be finite beings. It will therefore be for us a new source of joy forever. With such a future awaiting us how trivial are the trials and troubles of life. How happy a moment death should be for the true Christian, for it is the gate to heaven, and the beginning of real life. Our risen life therefore will not be a return to the conditions of the present life, but to those of a life of the spirit, in a spiritual body as St. Paul puts it. It will be the life already possessed by the risen Jesus and communicated from him to those who believe in him.

The **Gospel** is taken from *St. Luke* (Luke 6:27-38). It would at first sight appear that the demands that Christ makes on our charity here are anything but easy. Loving one's enemies is asking a lot. Blessing them and praying for them might be all right for St. Francis but expecting it of us seems to be going very far. Asking for a blow on the second cheek while the first is still twinging with pain seems fit only for a martyr. Not to try to take tack what was stolen from us looks very foolish. Yet it was Christ who made all these demands.

However, before we give up in despair, and decide that this type of Christianity is not for us, let us look a little more closely at the demands that are made. To love our enemy does not mean we must throw our arms about him every time we meet him (he would not let us anyway !). It means we must do all in our power to rid our minds of any hatred of him, and try to see the good that is in him. Not judging and condemning comes under this heading. Human sinful beings that we are, our faculty for seeing in our neighbor the real man as he is before God, is very limited and very prone to error. There are justly convicted robbers and murderers in our jails, in whom God can see a lot of goodness even now, and perhaps future citizens of heaven later on.

Not demanding back what was unjustly taken from us does not mean that we may not have recourse to the legal or other means available to us for obtaining compensation in such cases. What it does forbid is personal (generally forceful) restoration of our rights and property.

Another consoling point to bear in mind is that the vast majority of our fellowmen have no inclination to injure us in our person or our property and will never do so. If we feel we have a lot of enemies only waiting for the chance to pounce on us, we would do well to examine our own consciences very carefully and then look for the many good points there are in our neighbour's character.

"AN EYE FOR AN EYE, A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH, LIFE FOR LIFE" WAS THE PRACTICE AMONGST THE Jews at the time of Christ and for centuries before (Ex. 21 :23-25). Christ sets up the "golden rule" of fraternal charity in place of this Law of Talon. Every man should truly love his neighbor for he is his brother. What is more, Christ's mission on earth has made him a son of God and an heir to heaven. Our chief interest in our neighbor must therefore be a spiritual interest. If he offends us, he offends God which is much more serious. Our charity should help him to seek God's forgiveness. That he should seek ours is of very minor importance in comparison with that.

You would like your neighbour to help you to reach heaven. "You go and do likewise" to your neighbour, and you will both get there.

—*Excerpted from The Sunday Readings by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.*

Recovery of Pope Francis

Message by the Most Rev. William T. McGrattan, Bishop of Calgary and CCCB President, praying for the health and recovery of Pope Francis
Wednesday, February 19, 2025

As President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), I wish to assure the faithful of Canada that I am united with my brother Bishops in praying for the full recovery of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, as he continues to lead the Church with courage and a generosity of spirit.

I invite individuals, families, parishes, and all Catholic movements and associations in Canada to join their local Bishops in lifting up Pope Francis in their prayers and intentions.

May the Lord, through Our Lady's powerful intercession, grant him renewed strength, health, and energy in his vocation to serve the Church as the Successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ on earth.

Schedule of Mass Intentions

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

SJB 4:00 PM
+ *Stan MacPhee*

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

SP 9:00 AM
+ *Theresa Mombourquette*

Friday, February 28, 2025

HGA 11:00 AM
+ *Alfred Masters*

Saturday, March 1, 2025

SJB 4:00 PM
+ *Harold Landry*
SP 5:30 PM
+ *Mary M. Fougere*

Sunday, March 2, 2025

SH 9:00 AM
+ *Theresa Mombourquette*
HGA 11:00 AM
+ *Irene Briand*

Receipts

St. John the Baptist

February 15, 2025

Envelopes & Loose \$ 518.00

Total \$ 518.00

St. Peter's

February 15, 2025

Envelopes & Loose \$ 690.00

Candles 5.00

Altar Society Dues 35.00

Total \$ 730.00

Holy Guardian Angels

February 16, 2025

Envelopes & Loose	\$ 659.00
Candles	28.55
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$ 687.55</u>

Community Notes

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER "... a global ecumenical movement... who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice."

2025 Theme: I made you wonderful. This year's service will be held at St. John the Baptist Church, River Bourgeois, on Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 1:30PM.

HGA: L'Ardoise Community Centre will be hosting a Cold Plate Fundraiser on Sunday, March 23. The meal includes turkey, ham, potato and macaroni salad, coleslaw, roll and dessert.

To purchase tickets contact Raymonde @ 902-587-2675, Andree @ 902-587-2201 or Cotie's Convenience. Deadline for tickets is March 16.

\$17.00 per person. Advance sales only. Eat in or take out. Fundraiser is to purchase a new upright freezer. Thanks for your support.

Rev. Paul McGillivray

Passed away suddenly on February 18, 2025, following complications after surgery at the QEII Health Centre in Halifax.

Father McGillivray served as a priest in the Diocese of Antigonish for nearly 42 years, having been ordained at Holy Redeemer Church in Sydney on May 22, 1983, by Bishop William Power. He served in many parishes; including Stella Maris, Inverness; St. Anne, Glace Bay; St. Peters, Ingonish; Holy Family, Eskasoni; St. John and St. Leo, Glace Bay; St. Anthony Daniel, Sydney; St. Michael's, Baddeck; Mary Queen of the World, Wagmatcook; St. Margaret, Grand Mira and Sacred Heart, Marion Bridge. He also served as Chaplain at Cape Breton Regional Hospital from 2010 until his retirement in 2024.

Visitation will take place on Tuesday, February 25, from 9 – 11 am at St. Marguerite Bourgeois Church followed by a funeral Mass at 11:00AM with Bishop Kirkpatrick officiating. A reception will be held after the Mass at St. Theresa's Parish Hall.

From Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Canada's euthanasia law was no slippery slope; it was a cliff.

Alex Schadenberg

Executive Director, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

An article by Yuan Yi Zhu, a Canadian academic, that was [published as a Special to the National Post on February 18, 2025](#) explains that 10 years after the *Supreme Court of Canada Carter decision* (that legalized assisted death in Canada) that Canada's MAiD law was not a slippery slope; it was a cliff.

Zhu writes that the *Supreme Court of Canada Carter decision* claimed that no slippery slope would happen, which is exactly the opposite of what has happened. Zhu wrote:

February marks the 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Carter v. Canada* (Attorney General), in which the court unanimously ruled, against both basic logic and its own precedents, that the right to life, guaranteed by the Constitution, included the right to a state-assisted suicide through what came to be known euphemistically as "Medical Assistance in Dying" (MAiD).

At the time, the court dismissed evidence from other jurisdictions that the legalization of euthanasia inevitably led to its open-ended expansion as well as abuse against the vulnerable. Belgium's disastrous euthanasia experiment, which saw children and people with psychiatric disorders dying at the hands of doctors, was, the court said, the "product of a very different medico-legal culture.... We should not lightly assume that the regulatory regime will function defectively, nor should we assume that other criminal sanctions against the taking of lives will prove impotent against abuse." There would be no slippery slope, the court promised us.

Zhu examines his assertions about Canada's euthanasia law.

In 2016, Parliament legalized MAiD for people whose deaths were "reasonably foreseeable." A short five years later, unnoticed in the midst of the pandemic, Canada's euthanasia regime was expanded to cover those with chronic conditions whose deaths were not imminent. At the same time, Parliament legalized euthanasia for mental illness alone to come into force in 2023 (it has since been postponed to 2027), making a mockery of our society's commitment to mental health and suicide prevention.

Zhu examines several of Canada's euthanasia horror stories, such as Paralympian, Chritine Gauthier:

The horror stories Canada's euthanasia regime has generated — the Paralympian who was [offered](#) MAiD by a government employee when she asked for a wheelchair ramp, the disabled woman living on welfare who [opted](#) for MAiD because she could not secure adequate housing, the cancer patient who [chose](#) to kill himself because he could not access chemotherapy in time — have become so commonplace that they have blunted our sense of decency, of what is the minimum we owe to our fellow citizens. Meekly, we have accepted that such horrors, and many more unreported ones, are part and parcel of Canadian society.

We have no answers to the contradictions raised by the legalization of MAiD. The civil servant who suggested it to Christine Gauthier was [fired](#); but why did she lose her job, when MAiD is healthcare and when Gauthier, who is confined to a wheelchair, is eligible for euthanasia under Canadian law because of her disability? Was she not simply doing her job, providing information to those who may need it?

Zhu then comments on Canada's euthanasia statistics:

When it was introduced, proponents claimed MAiD would only account for a small number of deaths. In 2023, almost one death out of 20 in Canada was due to MAiD. In Quebec, which has adopted the practice more enthusiastically than virtually any other human society, the figure is [7.3 per cent](#), the highest such figure anywhere in the world. Last year, Quebec unilaterally [legalized](#) MAiD by advance directive — which under the Criminal Code is murder. The federal government's [reaction](#) was to hold a series of national roundtables to discuss the idea more.

What about the "regulatory regime" on which the learned judges of the Supreme Court rested their hopes to protect the vulnerable? In [Ontario](#), the chief coroner's office recorded at least 428 cases of non-compliance with Canadian law by MAiD providers over a five-year period, in what was described as "a pattern of not following legislation, a pattern of not following regulation." Most cases led to nothing more than an email to the provider; only four cases were referred to professional regulators. Not a single law-breaker was referred to the police.

To confirm how Canada's euthanasia law is being widely interpreted, Zhu refers to comments by Canada's leading euthanasia academic:

[In the words](#) of Jocelyn Downie, who received the Order of Canada for her promotion of MAiD, when doctors or nurse practitioners are assessing a patient's eligibility for MAiD, "you can ask as many clinicians as you want or need" for a second opinion, allowing them to shop around until they find a colleague who will sign off on a MAiD request. On another occasion, she told medical professionals that, when it came to signing off on MAiD requests, "There is no certainty or unanimity required. There is not perfection required." Legally, she was right: Canadian law does not require medical professionals to be right when they authorize MAiD for someone; they must merely have reasonable belief. The MAiD assessor does not even need to meet the patient face-to-face: a Zoom meeting is sufficient.

Finally Zhu refers to the role of the courts in Canada's euthanasia horror:

As for the courts, which opened a Pandora's box, they have largely washed their hands from it all. Last year, an Alberta judge [ruled](#) that an autistic woman with no apparent diagnosis of a physical illness could receive MAiD, even though the judge himself did not understand how she came to be approved for MAiD and even though at least one doctor had turned down her request. Some judges are even proud of the role they played in ushering in MAiD: in 2018, Richard Wagner, the chief justice of Canada, [agreed](#) the Carter decision and other rulings of its kind made the Supreme Court, as one Vancouver lawyer had characterized, "the most progressive in the world," and added that he was "very proud of that."

A decade on, there was no slippery slope; it was a cliff.