

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

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March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Mass Readings

The **First Reading**, from the *first Book of Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a*, contains, at best, oblique references to the other two readings. The anointing of David as king may be a reference to the anointing in the responsorial psalm both of which may refer to Christ the good shepherd. The figure of David may also be a prefiguration of the anointing to Messiahship of Jesus for his mission. Whatever the reason for its selection for this day, the theme of the liturgy is better reflected in the other two readings for they present implications and applications of the baptism of the believer.

The **Second Reading** from the *Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians 5:8-14* is particularly significant because throughout the season of Lent the community has been urged to cast aside deeds of darkness and walk in the brilliance of the light of Christ. In this reading, for the first time during Lent, the darkness-light theme which will be so predominant at Easter is enunciated. The believer must leave the deeds of darkness and live according to the justice and truth of God through the light of Christ. The selection of this reading for the Sunday liturgy of the second scrutiny emphasizes clearly that the preparation of a person coming to the faith is one of moral formation as well as in-formation about the faith. The preparation of adults to be baptized has more to do with choices and deeds than it does with dogmatic teaching.

The **Gospel** reading from *John 9:1-41*, dominates the liturgy by the length of the reading and its significance. Already, in Old Testament Revelation, the Lord God had shown the People of Israel how the justice of the Creator was so much more profound and true than the thoughts of men. We have, in fact, heard in the first reading '*God does not see as human beings see; they look at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.*' (1 Sam 16:76). The Lord pointed out in this way the true, unique, criteria on which men are judged. He also indicated the unique place in which man can meet God's gaze and enter into a relationship with Him—in his heart. Obviously, by the word 'heart' the Bible doesn't mean the centre of pulsation, but man's 'shrine', his conscience where he can really listen and recognize God's voice and so benefit from the Light: '*for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and uprightness and truth.*' (Eph 5:9)

Man, incapable of remaining faithful to the truth that is in him, falls back to his own limited criteria. This criteria produces every malice, injustice and falsehood and is used to govern himself, to decide between good and evil, whilst hoping that what he obtains will be to his benefit and so in this way he acts '*like God*' (Gen 3:5).

God doesn't give up but comes to meet every one of us in the twofold way described in today's Gospel. Firstly, '*he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes*' (Jn 9:6). God made man, who is a creature. He united Himself to 'our earth' so that man would never need to flee Him, but could come to recognize Him through a meeting with His Holy Humanity. St. John wrote in the Prologue to his Gospel, '*The Word became flesh, he lived among us*' (Jn 1:14).

In the second place from the Gospel account we read, '*He said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam"—which means Sent—*'. (Jn 9:7a). Christ, sent by the Father, takes onto Himself all our sins, which are ultimately the consequences of our blindness, as far as allowing Himself to be stripped, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, rejected by His own people and abandoned by His closest friends. Christ's unprecedented love can't but definitively overcome, with time, every fear in the face of our limitations because there isn't anything that can stop Him from loving us. From the loving assumption of our rejection to our obtuseness murder, the Lord has worked extraordinary feats in history. He frequently offered His Body to the Father for our salvation and therefore has consecrated His entire Person for every one of us. He has introduced us into His Most Holy Heart, inflamed with love for us, which is the same as God's light. In the Light of the Resurrection he made us a '*new creation*' (cfr 2 Cor 5:17) and in the Gospel account we have heard '*he went and washed, and came back able to see*'. (Jn 9:7)

The indestructible link with Christ, which is founded on His love and fidelity, is the 'new creation' that was given to us on the day of our Baptism. Through the Sacraments of Christian initiation we are more profoundly linked with Christ. This 'new creation' cannot bring forth fruit in us without the full and renewed consent of our liberty that, in this earthly life, is expressed, reinvigorated and triumphs through the extraordinary events that Christ works in our lives. The

blind man was interrogated by the world as to the precise details of his cure and with great simplicity he explained what happened to him: *'The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went there and washed and was able to see.'* (Jn 9:11)

Let us ask Most Holy Mary to help us to be faithful to the truth, to the events of our lives, taking the hand that always takes us to live totally for Him, in this life and eternity. *'Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'* (Eph 5:14).

—From the Congregation for the Clergy

Schedule of Mass Intentions

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

SJB 4:00 PM

+ **Gaetan Lebeau**

Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 3:30 PM

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

9:00 AM

SP

+ **Alva MacNeil**

Friday, March 20, 2026

Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 10:15.

HGA 11:00 AM

+ **Gaetan Lebeau**

Saturday, March 21, 2026

SJB 4:00 PM

+ **Lucille Boudreau**

SP 5:30 PM

+ **Frank Boudreau (SJB)**

Sunday, March 22, 2026

SH 9:00 AM

HGA 11:00 AM

+ **Deceased members of the Peters, Martell & Logan families**

Receipts

St. John the Baptist

March 7, 2026

Envelopes & Loose \$ 830.00

Total \$ 830.00

St. Peter's

March 7, 2026

Envelopes & Loose \$ 732.00

Total \$ 732.00

Holy Guardian Angels

March 8, 2026

Envelopes & Loose	\$	1,032.00
Candles		36.50
Share Lent		10.00
<u>Total</u>	\$	<u>1,078.50</u>

A letter from Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick

March 7, 2026

My Dear People,

The well-known proverb “Bad news travels fast,” and today, in our digital age, that speed is even greater. You have likely already heard the concerning news: the end of the Mission Assurance Agreement between the Sisters of St. Martha and the Nova Scotia Provincial Government concerning St. Martha’s Regional Hospital. The Sisters have announced that they can no longer serve as the sponsor for this agreement when it comes up for renewal on September 30, 2026. They had engaged another Catholic agency willing to assume this responsibility, but the Province declined to accept a new sponsor.

Founded by the Sisters of St. Martha in 1906, St. Martha’s Regional Hospital has been a vital part of our community for 120 years. Until 1996, it was operated directly by the Sisters. Since then, it has functioned under a Mission Assurance Agreement with the Nova Scotia Provincial Health Department, a partnership designed to ensure the hospital remains true to its Catholic mission of compassion, service, and spiritual love, values that have defined it throughout its history.

The Sisters of St. Martha recognized that they could not continue with the current Agreement. Since the Agreement was to be renewed on September 30, 2026, they sought a suitable Catholic sponsor to carry on their legacy, reflecting their unwavering dedication to compassionate care and community service. However, the provincial government announced that the Agreement would not be renewed, would end on that date, and that future operations would no longer be under the distinctive Catholic identity that has long distinguished St. Martha’s Hospital.

When I visited the hospital recently, I noticed a poster that read: “Use your voice for kindness, your ears for compassion, your mind for justice, your hands for stewardship, and your heart for hospitality.” I am sure you would agree that such values should be at the core of any healthcare institution.

As Bishop of the Diocese of Antigonish, I support the Sisters of St. Martha and their unwavering commitment to compassionate, faith-based care. Their decision to transfer the Mission Assurance Agreement to another Catholic agency affirms their desire to maintain the hospital’s spiritual and ethical integrity in line with their mission. I commend their dedicated service and had hoped that this transfer would uphold the spirit of their mission for many years to come.

Regrettably, the Nova Scotia Government has decided not to approve this transfer of Mission Assurance. This decision raises important questions—why now? I am compelled to question the reasons behind this decision and to consider what factors may have influenced it. It is possible that the increasing secularism across our country, along with recent complex medical and ethical challenges, played a role in shaping this outcome. It’s worth recalling that Catholic healthcare has a rich history in Canada, spanning over 400 years—instituted by religious congregations dedicated to caring for the sick, the vulnerable, and Indigenous populations. These institutions have played a crucial role in shaping modern Canadian healthcare, often forgotten by a secular society that sometimes overlooks the profound influence of faith-based care.

Our Catholic healthcare tradition is rooted in the Gospel and inspired by Christ’s love. It calls us to serve all people, regardless of faith, with compassion and dignity—offering healing, accompanying the dying with self-sacrifice, and bearing witness to the inviolable dignity of every human person. This calling reflects our shared responsibility to love our neighbour and to serve and defend human life at every stage.

While all hospitals provide skilled medical care, St. Martha’s Regional Hospital embodies much more: it is a living testament to faith in action. Its legacy is woven into the very fabric of our community and our shared values. Without a doubt, the Catholic ethical framework that has guided the hospital’s mission will diminish if that legacy is not preserved.

What changes will this bring to our community? Sister Brendalee Boisvert, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St. Martha, expressed sadness at the Province's decision but also hope that "the DNA of the Mission will live on through this new structure."

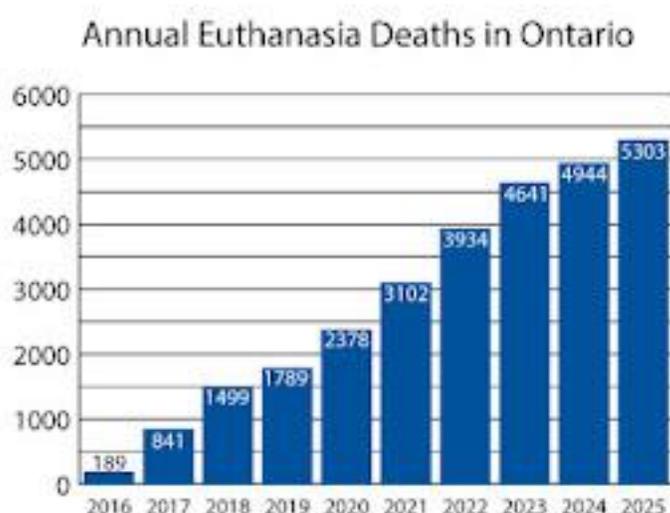
I, too, pray that the spirit of their mission endures in future decisions and services. Let us pray for mutual respect and compassion as we face these changes, trusting that the values exemplified by the Sisters of St. Martha will continue to inspire and guide us.

May we remain faithful to the call to compassionate, faith-based care, and may this transition be marked by respect, dignity, and hope.

With gratitude and faith,
+ *Wayne Joseph Kirkpatrick*
Bishop Wayne Joseph Kirkpatrick

From Alex Schadenberg
Executive Director, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition
Monday, March 2, 2026

Canada will soon surpass 100,000 euthanasia deaths.
I predict that Canada will surpass 100,000 euthanasia deaths in April 2026.



We recently received the 2025 fourth quarter Ontario euthanasia report from the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario. The report stated that in Ontario there were 5303 reported euthanasia deaths in 2025 which was up from 4944 in 2024, which represented a 7.2% increase. This was up from 4641 euthanasia deaths in 2023 which represented a 6.5% increase that year.

Therefore, the growth in euthanasia deaths is increasing, not stabilizing.

The report indicated that all Ontario MAiD deaths, in 2025, were clinician administered (euthanasia). In jurisdictions that legalize both euthanasia and assisted suicide, nearly all of the deaths are euthanasia.

The 2024 report stated that there were 16,499 reported (MAiD) Canadian euthanasia deaths which was up by 6.9% from 15,427 in 2023.

Since Ontario represents 39% of Canada's population, I conservatively predict that the number of euthanasia deaths in Canada increased by 7% in 2025 and I estimate that there were approximately 17,650 Canadian euthanasia deaths in 2025.

According to Health Canada, from legalization until December 31, 2024 there were 76,475 Canadian MAiD deaths. Based on my prediction that there were about 17,650 euthanasia deaths in 2025, I predict that there were around 94,125 MAiD deaths in Canada from legalization until December 31, 2025.

I predict that Canada will surpass 100,000 euthanasia sometime in mid - late April 2026.

From exception to expectation.

When Canada legalized euthanasia and assisted suicide, that we called MAiD to make us feel better about poisoning people to death, we were told that it would be for people who were terminally ill and suffering. We were sold killing as a last resort solution and we were assured that it would not be common but rather it would be an exception. There was nothing further from the truth.

Canada immediately experienced euthanasia deaths that did not fit the euthanasia sales pitch. In November 2016, only a few months after legalization, we were contacted about a woman who died by euthanasia in British Columbia, who may have only had a bladder infection.

What made the case even more grievous was that the euthanasia doctor didn't bother to do any tests to determine whether or not the woman was actually dying and when the family expressed concern about the death approval, the euthanasia doctor waived the 10-day waiting period, killing the woman within 3 days.

More recently there have been several concerning euthanasia deaths that have been published by the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario. To list a few:

- A woman was killed by euthanasia after her husband requested it for her
- A man sought euthanasia after experiencing hospital overcrowding
- A man with an essential tremor, who was lonely died by euthanasia
- Some euthanasia deaths were driven by homelessness, fear and isolation
- Ontario Coroner's euthanasia report: Poor at risk of coercion
- Ontario: At least 428 non-compliant euthanasia deaths

Other notable Ontario euthanasia data:

In 2025 final consent was waived in 250 Ontario euthanasia deaths.

One of the outcomes of passing Bill C-7 in March 2021 was that the legislation allowed doctors to kill someone who was incapable of providing final consent, as long as the person had consented to be killed while still competent.

Therefore 1 in 21 Ontario euthanasia deaths was done to someone who was not capable of providing final consent.

Organ donation after euthanasia:

The Ontario report indicated that in 2025 only 31 of the 5303 people who died by euthanasia also became an organ donor. Some might suggest that this is insignificant, but the circumstances for approving organ donation after euthanasia are limited. Many people with a terminal condition do not have healthy organs. Since only 30% of the euthanasia deaths take place in the hospital, it is very difficult to kill someone outside of a hospital and then retrieve their organs in time for donation purposes.

Euthanasia based on disability in Ontario.

For people who were approved to be killed by euthanasia and self-identified as having a disability, the disability was: 20.37% mobility, 11.47% pain related, 7.09% flexibility, 5.36% dexterity, 2.34% hearing, 1.28% memory. Other disabilities were listed but were less common.

The youngest person to be killed by euthanasia in 2025 was 20 years old while the oldest person was 108. The average age was 78.

From the Catholic Register, March 10, 2026

Liberals, Bloc force Bill C-9 through

In a 186-144 vote, the House of Commons today closed debate on the controversial Bill C-9, the Combatting Hate Act, opening the door to remove the good faith religious speech protections in the Criminal Code.

All Liberal and Bloc Québécois MPs participating in the vote about the procedural pathway of this bill answered “yes,” while the Conservatives were joined by the NDP and Green Party MP Elizabeth May in responding “Nay.”

Now, when the Standing Committee of Justice and Human Rights next reconvenes — a meeting is slated for March 11 starting at 4:30 p.m. EST — the members will be ordered to swiftly vote on all remaining amendments and subamendments on the table. They are not authorized to adjourn until completing clause-by-clause consideration. This body has reviewed the legislation since last September.

Repealing of the good faith religious speech defence in Section 319 of the Criminal Code has attracted concerns and criticism from a large coalition of religious leaders, legal experts and civil society organizations.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), Toronto Cardinal Frank Leo and the Catholic Civil Rights League (CCRL) are among the major Catholic entities and figures who have published major statements against the bill. In Leo's words, the stripping of this exemption creates “uncertainty for clergy, educators and all people of faith who seek to pass on the teachings of the Church with charity and integrity.”

If the committee does conclude its work on March 11, Bill C-9 could move to the report stage in the House of Commons the following day, according to the motion tabled by Government House Leader Stephen MacKinnon. With just one sitting day allotted for the report stage and one for third reading, the bill could advance to the Senate as early as March

13. It is probable that the governing party will move on this accelerated timeline as Parliament will recess from March 16-20.

Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Sean Fraser tabled this bill, of which the main tenets are “criminalize intimidation and obstruction outside of establishments used by faith-based groups and ban certain terror or hate symbols in public.” He admitted that “limitation of debate is not normally the approach I like to take,” but did so because progress on the bill is “being obstructed and filibustered by the Conservatives.” Fraser also spoke about his engagement with religious groups over the holidays and expressed his willingness to address their “substantive objections” through changes to the text of the bill.

There was an amendment introduced during a Feb. 23 committee meeting from Parliamentary Secretary Patricia Lattanzio that reads: “nothing in subsection 319(2) or (2.2) shall be construed as prohibiting a person from communicating a statement on a matter of public interest, including an educational, religious, political or scientific statement made in the course of a discussion, publication or debate, if they do not willfully promote hatred, hatred against an identifiable group by communicating the statement.”

However, Phil Horgan of the CCRL and Derek Ross of the Christian Legal Fellowship both recently informed The Catholic Register that the protections for good faith religious expression are still not communicated clearly within the text of the amendment.

Horgan suggested the uncertainty could “leave open the possibility of a charge if the Crown is of the view that a discussion of certain religious texts is not in the public interest, and in the absence of the good faith religious defence, a pastor or faith leader would be at the peril of a charge.”

The public campaign against Bill C-9 is also continuing during this pivotal week. The Christian political organization ARPA Canada is hosting a Parliament Hill rally on March 12 starting at 11:45 EST.

(Amundson is an associate editor and writer for [The Catholic Register](#).)

Community News

HGA: Thank you to all who participated in the (Ecumenical) World Day of Prayer 2026 at Holy Guardian Angels Church last Sunday afternoon. A special thanks to the clergy, to the music ministry, to each of the churches, and to all who helped with the lunch afterwards - a fine example of how prayer and action are inseparable! Thank you for the \$676.00 which we sent to the Women’s Inter-Church Council of Canada for their project grants. "We lift our prayers for fair and just relationships, that all people are embraced in kinship under God."

The regular monthly meeting of KOC Council 14280 will take place at the glebe at 6.00 PM on March 19th. We encourage everyone to attend.

Richmond RTO Regular Meeting March 10th; NOON Luncheon “The Island Nest Restaurant” Arichat. ALL RTO Members WELCOME!5