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2005 St. Marc St.,
Montreal, Quebec H3H 2G8
Tel.: (514) 937-2301 ex. 1
Email: giving@pillarstrust.org
Website: www.pillarstrust.org

Synodality Project

As a longtime Pillars Trust supporter, I am grateful for the way in which Pillars has fostered the growth and development of our English-speaking Catholic community for over 50 years now. Their support of seminarians and ongoing formation for priests, of university chaplaincy and youth ministry, of our seniors who have served so faithfully, and more recently, in parish renewal and evangelization, has been a true blessing.

This year, during my six-month research project on synodality, I have benefited personally from the support of Pillars Trust. This has allowed me, during my sabbatical from my regular duties as director of the OEPS and episcopal vicar to the English-speaking community in the Archdiocese of Montreal, to cover the expenses linked to my work with the Synod of Bishops in Rome: first, at the Parish Priests for the Synod gathering from April 28-May 3, and from October 2-27, as a table facilitator at the 2nd session of the Synodal Assembly on the theme: “How to be a Synodal Missionary Church”.



In between, I have benefited from a three-month stay in the Archdiocese of Regina, working on their leadership teams and gaining practical insight into the dynamics of engaging our dioceses and parishes in a journey of communion, participation, and mission, as well as two weeks of intense formation with the Jesuits on the topic of “Communal Apostolic Discernment.” I look forward, upon my return, to being able to share much of what I have learned and experienced with our community, and I am very grateful for the financial support I have received from Pillars to help make this possible.



This year **Camp Caritas** marked its 53rd summer on the shores of Lac Labelle in the Laurentians. For two weeks, a staff of 20 young men, ages 16-23 yrs, led 94 campers in sports activities and outdoor camping. The purpose and goal of Caritas is to reach out and establish a place of contact with today's teenagers, challenging their personal development and presenting positive life values. Father John Baxter, who founded Caritas in 1972, says “Thank you, Pillars, for your help in making our dream come true, especially when the material side of the dream is so expensive.” Caritas shows young people how to respect themselves and others, and to see value in everyone.



The **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program** for children continues to expand in Montreal-area parishes. The CGS program uses special materials designed for children ages 3 to 12 to hear the Word proclaimed and grow in their relationship with the Good Shepherd. Level 1 (ages 3-6) is now being offered at six local parishes, with three more to come. Level 2 (ages 6-9) has now been added at St. Ignatius, and soon at St. John Fisher and St. Willibrord. Rebecca Malone and her team are also helping catechists at Église Saint-Antoine-Marie-Claret launch the program in



Credit requested - Jon Eric Marababol

French. Pillars has supported Malone's CGS training, as well as the development of more catechists. "I'm not exaggerating when I say that Pillars' support has been absolutely essential to the steady and solid growth of CGS in Montreal," says Malone. "Thank you to all involved!"

Momentum | Catholic Single Mothers is a point of pride for the Pillars Trust Fund. In 2016, Talitha Cere approached Pillars to help her launch a vibrant faith community for Catholic single mothers. What started as a retreat for Montreal-area Catholic single mothers and their children has grown into a movement that is spreading across Canada and now into the United States.

The Montreal chapter hosted its annual retreat for single mothers and their children in June at the Dominus Vobiscum Retreat Centre with 80 participants, including volunteers. The theme, "Finding Joy in Suffering," was explored through the Joyful Mysteries. It was a unique opportunity for single mothers and their children to attend a

family camp. Father Garrick Huang from St. Willibrord's supported the retreat with Mass, adoration, and confession. "We are grateful for the joy shared, the dedicated volunteers, Dominus Vobiscum, and The Pillars Trust Fund for their support," says Talitha Cere.



The **Newman Centre of McGill University** has had a fantastic year, in large part due to the generous support of The Pillars Trust Fund. Thanks to Pillars' support, we established a monthly Ask Me Anything series where students could converse with Catholic experts in fields such as journalism, African studies, bioethics, and religious ethnography on leading issues affecting the Church and the world today. The generosity of Pillar's Supporters also allowed us to nourish the students spiritually by putting on retreats with speakers from outside of Montreal and arranging mini pilgrimages to the tombs of local saints without charging the students a nickel. In my mind, the most important thing that The Pillars Trust's support enabled us to do was to hold our annual St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Lecture in Education.

Our speaker, Prof. T. M. Vanessa Chan-Devaere from the University of Notre Dame, was a former Newman Resident and executive member of the Newman Catholic Student Society.

She was able to share with students how she still uses the lessons she learned at Newman in her life today and provide them with a concrete example of how their time at Newman can help set them up for a life on mission.



The **Diocesan Priesthood Guild (DPG)**, administered by ordained clergy in the diocese, sustains and supports seminarian candidates for priesthood in the Archdiocese of Montreal. It is a founding pillar and highest funding priority for the Pillars Trust Fund from our establishment 53 years ago. With our financial assistance, seminarians have no financial burdens to bear while studying and preparing for ordination and incur no debt to repay after ordination.

This year we are contributing \$40,000, as requested, and that amount will likely increase significantly to the extent that more priestly vocations are realized. All that the Pillars Trust Fund provides goes directly to cover the costs of seminarians.

Over the years there have been lulls in the number of candidates, but right now we can rejoice that there are three candidates to sustain, and prospects are encouraging for an increase in the near future.

We rely on support from the community to meet these demands.