

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

St. Francis de Sales



Meanderings...

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THE little church in Victoria Harbour was up on a hill looking out over Georgian Bay. The lake effect snows meant that almost every day the sidewalks needed to be shoveled to remove the accumulated snow. At the bottom of the hill, within stone's through of the Church was the local cenotaph.

Each year, one of the three churches was in charge of providing the music for the outdoor commemoration of the laying of the wreaths. While I was there, it was the Catholics' turn to sing the national anthem, and provide the music following the parade to the monument.

Fall mornings can be blustery and cold, but this morning the winds coming off the Bay were exceptionally bitter. At times when the winds whipped up, the voices were stolen away with the breezes.

Now it is hard to move a choir from the confines of an acoustically strong church to the wilds of an outdoor venue, fraught with traffic and waves beating the shore, and the merciless winds, especially since the organ could not accompany them. But we did our best, and it was just important to be there and support.

The other day, in the Parish Office, one of our new parishioners asked about the red flowers everyone seemed to be sporting. He wondered why everyone was accessorizing this way. It struck us that many people mightn't know the full meaning behind the poppies.

We wear the poppy to remember— to remember those men and women who selflessly chased after higher principles, who gave their lives so that future generations may live in freedom and peace, noble values all. The cost of our freedom, of our rights, of our human dignity was their lives, strewn on the shores of Europe and other parts of the world. Their hearts, filled with the power of conviction and the hopes of a better world, answered the call to pay the ultimate price, for no other reason than our way of life.

So the poppies are to remind us to treasure our freedoms, and to remember those who won it for us. It is meant to be an active remembering. What this means is that we do not just recall with affection the sacrifice of so many young men and women, but rather, in remembering, we exercise and respect the rights and duties that are associated with them. We live them, and we never allow those treasures to be diminished.

"To you from failing hands, we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high."

- *FR*