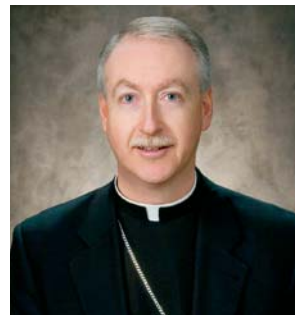


SPE SALVI—OUR HOLY FATHER’S NEW ENCYCLICAL

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National Spiritual Advisor



His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, has given to the church his second encyclical letter. Following upon his first, *Deus Caritas Est* (God Is Love), this new letter dwells upon the virtue of hope. *Spe Salvi* (Saved by Hope) is a beautiful meditation upon and explanation of true Christian hope. It is wonderfully rich, and merits several readings. Here, I am able to highlight only its essential content.

Christian hope is sure because it is rooted, not in any human theories or possibilities, but in an encounter with the living God, Who has become one with us in Jesus Christ. This is an encounter with unconditional and infinite Love, from Whom we can never be separated, not even in the darkest moments of our lives. From this encounter springs a hope that remains steadfast in spite of any and all difficulty, because it is based on the sure foundation of the knowledge and experience of God’s love, manifest in Christ. The love of God grounds our conviction that, despite any feelings to the contrary, we are never alone. Living by faith in the nearness of God, Who has demonstrated in the suffering and death of Christ His will to be near and share in the suffering of His children, we are “redeemed” by hope, rescued from despair and meaninglessness, and thus enabled to look forward to the fulfillment in eternal life of the love we taste here and now.

As he did in his first encyclical, the pope invites the church to a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ. In respect here of the virtue of hope, he asks if the teaching of the church on this great truth of faith as given in sacred scripture and tradition is “informative” or “performative”. That is to say, do we receive it as simply one more piece of information, or do we seek so to be engaged by this wondrous truth that it changes our lives? That engagement happens in the encounter with Jesus Christ. In Him we meet the love of God. In our encounter with Him we discover the truth that only God can give us, a real and abiding hope.

Christians who discover this hope in Christ become its messengers and agents. Since human nature is weak and constantly beset by many trials and hardships, our world is in constant need of people who bring to others the real

hope that they have found in Christ. With the help of our patroness, may all members of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada discover anew the joy of Christian hope and willingly share that great news with others. †

CROSS PRO-ECCLESIA ET PONTIFICE RECIPIENTS IN REGINA



From left to right: Honorary Life Member Jean Mahoney, Julia Klein, Most Rev. Daniel Bohan, Marianne Skoropad.

Most Rev. Daniel J. Bohan, Archbishop of Regina, conferred papal honours on December 15, 2007. Three recipients of the Cross Pro-Ecclesia et Pontifice were Honorary Life Member Jean Mahoney (1982-1984), St. Francis of Assisi Parish Council member Julia Klein of Regina and St. Cecilia Parish Council member Marianne Skoropad, also of Regina. The Holy Cross Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice is an award of the Roman Catholic Church. The English translation of *Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice* is “For Church and Pope”, and is also known as the “Cross of Honour”. The medal was established by Leo XIII on July 17, 1888 to commemorate his golden sacerdotal jubilee and was originally bestowed on those women and men who had aided and promoted the jubilee, and by other means assisted in making the jubilee and the Vatican Exposition successful. It is currently given for distinguished service to the church by lay people and clergy. It is the highest medal that can be awarded to the laity by the papacy. †