

May 12, 2020

Rev Guy Desrochers
Bishop of the Diocese of Pembroke

Your Excellency Bishop Desrochers:

First we wish to congratulate you on your new appointment as pastoral leader of our diocese. Our prayers have been answered. Many tasks lie ahead and perhaps you have been briefed already by Bishop Mulhall on many if not most issues. We wish to draw your attention to a particular concern of our Polish-speaking community. We were very disappointed to learn that Masses on Wadsworth Lake, except during the 2 weeks of scout camps are to be discontinued. This apparently is due to a concern about local parishioners being drawn away from their parishes.

It should be pointed out that the majority of attendees at the open-air Masses are Polish-speaking cottagers from out of town, including Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa, Ottawa and Montreal to name a few. Many are elderly who spend the summer at their cottage, some walking to the chapel. Some of the cubs and scouts, boys and girls stay in the cottages with their parents or grandparents after the camp season has finished. Yes, a few area parishioners may attend the Masses in Polish on Wadsworth Lake particularly as it is also an opportunity to meet with friends. However these are few in number as only a few local parishioners understand Polish, so we don't think there is a large draw away from local parishes. In fact, attendance is low at local churches year-round, a problem that is concerning in itself.

We ask you kindly to reconsider this unfortunate directive and allow celebration of Mass to continue on Wadsworth Lake during the summer, beyond the 2 weeks of camp, as has been the tradition for over 60 years. The Polish community would welcome your visit at the chapel this summer during one of the Masses. This of course is predicated on our ability to attend Mass this summer free of COVID restrictions.

If you would like more information and in particular if you would like a personal visit to discuss this further, two of us would be more than happy to meet with you at your convenience. Thank you for your attention to this matter and we wish you many years of satisfying pastoral work in this diocese.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

PODPIS(Y)

