

Una Voce Canada — 'A Mari Usque Ad Mare' Part I

Editor's Comment:

Our goal for 2005 is to continue networking with, linking to, and helping to form and affiliating Canadian traditional Catholic organizations as it is so aptly put on the Canadian Coat of Arms 'A Mari Usque Ad Mare'. It is essential for traditional Canadian Catholics to have a united voice both within our homeland and internationally.

By a special resolution of the Board of Directors, of the Vancouver Traditional Mass Society, traditional groups will be affiliated, or associated under the umbrella of the 'Una Voce Canada'.

Land a'hoys Newfoundland

The oldest known settlement anywhere in The Americas built by Europeans is located at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. It was founded circa 1000 A.D. by the Vikings.

The Cabots sailed from Bristol in 1497, and on 24 June of that year, the festival of St. John the Baptist, they landed in the harbour to which they gave the name of St. John's, which it bears to the present day. The Cabots, like all the early navigators, had in view not only the discovery of new lands, and the increase of the power and wealth and territory of the mother country, but also the spread of the Gospel and the conversion of the heathens to the Christian Faith. Hence they brought with them priests and missionaries. Those who accompanied Cabot were Augustinians or "Black Friars". We may be sure that Mass was celebrated on these shores in 1497.

In the year 1500 the Portuguese under Gaspar de Cortereal took possession of the country and founded the settlement and Church of Placentia. In 1534 the French voyager, Jacques Cartier, visited the country, and explored the Gulf of St. Lawrence. He also had chaplains with him who celebrated Mass at Catalina in Newfoundland, and Brest, or Old Fort, on Labrador. In 1622 Lord Baltimore founded his colony of Ferryland. He brought out three Jesuit Fathers with him,

and had Mass celebrated regularly, “and all other ceremonies of the Church of Rome were used in ample manner as “tis used in Spain.” Such was the complaint made against him to the Board of Trade by the Protestant clergyman, Mr. Stourton. In 1650 the French founded a church at Placentia on the site of the one abandoned by the Portuguese. But none of those attempts succeeded. The real foundation of the Catholic Church in Newfoundland is due to priests from Ireland, who came out towards the close of the eighteenth century.

Position and Structure

The large island of Newfoundland lies off the east coast of North America between latitudes $46\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{N}$ and 52°N . Its capital, St. John’s, is in the same latitude ($47\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) as Quebec, Duluth, Seattle, Paris, and Sakhalin island in the Pacific. Newfoundland is triangular in shape, about 320 miles across, and occupies an area of 43,000 square miles. It is thus about the size of Pennsylvania, and is much larger than Ireland. It lies on the continental shelf of North America, being separated from Labrador by only 11 miles, and from Cape Breton by 70 miles.

Labrador

The huge territory of Labrador was finally allocated to Newfoundland in 1927. It comprises 110,000 square miles. The climate is bleak and cold along the coast — so that tundra vegetation reaches south to Hamilton inlet. Inland there are forests, especially in the lowlands of Hamilton river.

Newfoundland and Labrador

It was the tenth province to join the Canadian confederation. Geographically, the province consists of the island of Newfoundland and the mainland Labrador, on Canada’s Atlantic coast. On entry into Canada in 1949, the entire province was known as Newfoundland, and this name is still used informally. On December 6, 2001, an amendment was made to the Canadian constitution to change the province’s official name to “Newfoundland and Labrador”. The province’s population is 533,800

**Una Voce St. John's,
St. Oliver Plunket Chapter**
By Elizabeth Murphy



Fr. William Ashley Mass Oratory of Sacred Heart at Mercy Convent



Fr. William Ashley



Fr. Devillers FSSP Says Mass In Newfoundland



Our Friends In Newfoundland

In 1997 a small delegation representing a larger group of persons who had been meeting on a casual basis to discuss the Mass and other matters in the diocese visited Archbishop James MacDonald to request a Traditional Mass on a regular basis. We took with us a copy of the motu proprio Ecclesia Dei

adfecta and provided His Grace with some excerpts from Cardinal Ratzinger's The Salt of the Earth which had just been published. We informed the archbishop that we had contacted the Fraternity of St. Peter and the Institute of Christ the King both of which groups had indicated that a priest could be supplied to the Archdiocese if they were invited to come. We also had a personal letter from Dom Gérard Calvet, the Abbot of Le Barroux, to the Archbishop vouching for the two traditional groups and quoting favourable comments of the bishop of Richmond, Virginia about the effect of the traditional Mass in a diocese. The Archbishop took our request under advisement.

Father William Ashley visited St. John's in 1997, before we had formed our Chapter, and celebrated a traditional Mass in Our Lady Star of the Sea parish church in Witless Bay about 30 miles from St. John's. We had a very good turnout at the Mass which was not advertised. We let people know by word of mouth. It was then that we realized that there was considerable interest in the Mass of the Ages in the area.

Shortly after this we established our Una Voce Chapter affiliated with Una Voce America. Mr. Bill Basile was very helpful to us as we were getting started. We selected St. Oliver Plunket as our patron since many of our people are of Irish descent and our ancestors, even here, were persecuted for their Faith. Of course, we have entered a new period of persecution today from within and without.

In October of 1998 I travelled to Rome with a friend from Stephenville on the west coast for the 10th anniversary celebration of the Fraternity of St. Peter. I had corresponded with Father John Melnick who was the vocations director of the Fraternity at the time and was fortunate to run into him in Rome. We discussed the possibility of his coming to Newfoundland on one of his trips to visit his parents in Cape Breton. His visit materialized on St. Stephen's Day of that year.

We had scheduled a Mass in Witless Bay on December 27th. It turned out to be a very stormy day when motorists were warned to stay off the roads. I hadn't heard the warning so Fr. Melnick and I set off for the Mass. It was hard going but we made it along with 11 others. Father celebrated the Mass for the small

group and we scheduled another Mass for the next day. This time the weather was more civilized and a much larger congregation turned up.

That evening back in St. John's Father Melnick gave a talk about the Fraternity to a group of about 30 persons.

At the 2000 Forum we made the acquaintance of Fr. Brendan McCarthy who is in the diocese of Grand Falls. We found out that Father was able and willing to offer the traditional Mass. We decided to try to have a Mass in Trinity which is in the diocese of Grand Falls. Father contacted the administrator, as it was a period inter regnum in Grand falls diocese, and obtained permission for the Mass. We had two there that summer both well attended. We hired a coach for the 'pilgrimages' to Trinity. The trip of 255 km. takes about 3 1/2 hours each way. One third of the trip is on secondary roads. Trinity is a popular tourist destination, an attractive village with a very old church which has not been wreckovated. There is no electricity in the church...which adds to rather than detracts from the ambiance. Our only nod toward modernity is a battery-operated keyboard which has an organ mode. There is a pump organ in the church but since the organist is also an important part of the choir we decided to take the modern route to preserve her strength and ease her burden! Also the pump organ is downstairs at the back of the church and we prefer the choir to be in the tribune.

We have a small group of ladies who sing at our Masses. We have mastered Masses VIII, IX and XI. We try to use music which is familiar to the congregation and encourage them to sing. Recently we started working with a small group of students who expressed an interest in learning some Latin hymns. At our next Mass we should have an expanded choir.

In October of 2000 I attended the Una Voce Leaders' conference in Oswego, N.Y. There were 60 or 70 in attendance from across the U.S. and Canada and from Ireland and the U.K. We heard speeches by Michael Davies, Esq., Dr. John Rao, Father John Mole, Father Paul Carr and Peadar Laighleis, Esq. President of the Latin Mass Society of Ireland at the time and now Secretary to Una Voce International. It was a great opportunity to meet and 'schmooze' with Una Vocistas from other places, many who were seasoned workers in the traditional vineyard.

In March of 2001 we were successful in having the local cable channel air the video Pilgrimage at 7:30 p.m. on a Monday evening. They gave us the time slot which is normally occupied by the City Council meeting which was postponed as the Monday was a holiday. The video yielded a number of phone calls. We had to have the video converted to a different format and the technician tacked a trailer on to the end of the film showing our name, address and phone number.

During Lent the Chapter sponsored Holy Hours comprising the Rosary, a homily and Benediction. Archbishop (retired) William Aquin Carew was the celebrant and homilist. We had the Holy Hour at St. Francis of Assisi church in Outer Cove not far from the City. Archbishop Carew had recently retired from the Vatican diplomatic service. He was the nuncio in Japan before his retirement. We used the chapel of St. Clare's hospital for four and St. Francis of Assisi in Outer Cove for the fifth, thanks to Fr. John Hanton the parish priest. Although St. Clare's is now part of the Health Care Corporation the chapel is still maintained and is traditional in its architecture and ambiance.

We repeated the pilgrimages to Trinity in the summer with good attendance both times. In December we returned to St. Francis on two occasions for Holy Hours.

We started 2002 with another Holy Hour this time at the Pastoral Centre in St. John's. On that occasion we had a number of snags. Firstly an official from the Chancery questioned the propriety of having the Rosary and Benediction juxtaposed. We called Fr. de Valk and Fr. MacDonald in Ontario and both assured us that it was perfectly acceptable. We were also able to find a couple of Notitiae which confirmed this opinion. That hurdle negotiated we had several more snags to deal with logistical in nature rather than imposed from without which elevated our blood pressure since they happened on the day and not long before the Holy Hour was to start. We repeated the Holy Hour in March and twice again in May.

In June and July we had Masses in Trinity, both celebrated by Fr. McCarthy. Father McCarthy retired in July of 2002 and offers the traditional Mass daily in his private oratory with the permission of his bishop, Martin Currie.

Bishop Currie has been very generous to Father and to Una Voce St. John's in extending permission for the traditional Mass in his diocese. His view is that if it is acceptable to the Holy Father it is acceptable to him.

In September Father Robert Ryan was home on a quick visit from Ottawa where he has been working on his doctorate and looking after two parishes in the Ottawa Valley. This Mass was offered at Roncalli chapel a few miles from the centre of the city. Father John McGettigan obliged us by allowing us to use this chapel which is attached to a school and is part of his parish. On this occasion Father Ryan received permission for the Mass from our new archbishop Brendan O'Brien. We estimated 85 people in attendance. The Mass was organized on very short notice.

In November, we struck out by bus again this time to Harbour Grace. Fr. McCarthy celebrated the Mass for us in the Cathedral. Father Aylward, the parish priest, was very welcoming and helpful.

In 2003, we sponsored a Holy Hour on five of the six Sundays of Lent at St. Francis of Assisi with Archbishop Carew celebrating and preaching a series of homilies on the life of Our Lord which the congregation found very beautiful and uplifting.

St. Patrick's Day is a statutory holiday in Newfoundland although it is celebrated on the nearest Monday. In 2003 the 17th fell on the Monday and we decided to try for a Mass on that day. We didn't get all the 'ducks lined up' until late on the 13th. We started ringing people on the 14th and attracted a good congregation again. The Mass was at Roncalli with the permission of Fr. John McGettigan who has always been very courteous to us.

In the summer, we went to Trinity again by coach and in October to Hr. Grace on the Feast of Christ the King.

Last year we repeated the St. Patrick's Day Mass even though the 17th wasn't the holiday. We managed to find a convenient time for those who were working and those who had other engagements in the evening. We are grateful for Sr. Helen Caule and the Sisters of Mercy for allowing us to use their gorgeous chapel.

We went to Trinity in August and saw several new faces in the large congregation.

In September Fr. Ryan was again home on a visit and we organized a Mass with only two days to prepare! We had to find another organist as Marie St. Croix, our regular and excellent accompanist and singer, was not able to be there. We are grateful to Brenda Mooney for filling in at the last minute literally. I was going to do it but wasn't that confident and accosted Brenda as she was leaving her car to walk to the convent! She had no notice, period, and did an excellent job even throwing in an impromptu voice solo, Gounod's Ave Maria, before Mass.

In September, we were able to do a spot of 'networking' when Wyn Marie and Garry Hamilton were in the city. Wyn Marie is a member of the Traditional Latin Mass community in Calgary. While it's not Christian to be envious we do experience something of the sort when we meet our counterparts in locations where the full menu of traditional Catholicism is available. On the other hand, it reminds us that there is hope of improving our lot. We are a capital city, we have a university and many people coming here in connection with the oil industry, not to speak of a vibrant tourist industry.

On the Saturday before the Feast of Christ the King Father McCarthy came in from his home in Shoal Harbour as he was to celebrate Mass on the following day. The weather was very blustery and we were concerned for his safety but he was equal to the drive and got here safe and sound. We had 80+ at Roncalli, including two young people from Nova Scotia who were here for the weekend, and a French speaking gentleman for whom we were able to produce a French/Latin missal.

Our last event for 2004 was a Mass on December 12th. Father McCarthy was flying out of our airport to the U.K where he would spend Christmas with family members so we pressed him into service again. He doesn't need much pressing however because he loves the Mass and the opportunity to make it available to us.

During the Christmas holidays I was in Ontario and was delighted to be able to meet and talk to Eileen Anderson of Una Voce Toronto. I spent the night as her guest and met another member of the Toronto group. Whenever we travel

we try to connect with traditional parishes and parishioners in other places. A few years ago Mike Brazil, our always reliable and eloquent alter server, was visiting Houston where he assisted at the traditional Mass at Annunciation parish and met with Heidi Kalian and others from Mater Ecclesiae Chapter.

For a number of years our choir has been going to St. Agnes parish in Flat Rock not far from St. John's to participate in a sort of memorial service they have for parishioners who have died. Our contribution is the singing of a couple of Latin hymns. A member of our group once lived in the parish and still helps out with the St. Agnes choir. We are not the Mormon Tabernacle choir but our contribution seems to be appreciated. Our next Mass will be on Palm Sunday at the chapel of the Mercy Convent, Deo volente.

Thus far our story. The best is yet to come we pray.

Editor's Comment

Fr. Deviller Visits Newfoundland

At the request of the VTMS Fr. Devillers visited our traditional friends in Newfoundland in early June. The visit was extremely successful with Father saying Mass and visiting Archbishop O'Brien. The Archbishop has requested a report from Fr. Devillers which is always a good sign. Father was also impressed with stability of the community.

The time is now opportune for our friends to meet with their Archbishop. Our prayers are with them and we stand ever ready to help in any way we can.

Archdiocese of Saint John's, Newfoundland

Archidioecesis Sancti Ioannis Terrae Novae

Type of Jurisdiction: Archdiocese

Elevated: 8 February 1904

Metropolitan See

Rite: Latin (or Roman)

Bishop(s)

Brendan Michael O'Brien, Archbishop

James Hector MacDonald, C.S.C., Archbishop Emeritus

Alphonsus Liguori Penney, Archbishop Emeritus

CATHOLICS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

By Murray Nicolson

[This article is taken, with permission, from the Jan./Feb. 1996 issue (Vol. IV, No. 1) of the Canadian magazine Catholic Insight, edited by Fr. Alphonse de Valk, c.s.b. Address and subscription information below.]

Dr. Nicolson [of Sir Wilfrid Laurier University] continues his history of the Catholic Church in English Canada, begun in our issue of December 1995. He reminds us of what we might easily neglect — the fact that the Irish Catholics who settled in Newfoundland in the 18th century suffered under the harsh penal laws against Catholics which prevailed throughout the British dominions — except for the territories which became Upper and Lower Canada.

What becomes apparent in any study of Catholicism in English Canada is the adversities its followers faced in their efforts to establish their faith in the new country. The problems stemmed partly from the religious disdain of the English majority towards those who refused to align themselves with the tenets of the Protestant Reformation and partly from animosity towards the ethnicity of the people who professed Catholicism. These sentiments applied particularly to the Irish, whom the English regarded generally as a pariah group. In no place was the antagonism more vividly demonstrated than in Newfoundland where, unlike in Canada, the Penal Laws applied. And yet, regardless of the influence the Irish had in most of English-speaking Canada, it is in Newfoundland that the roots of Irish Catholic ethnicity run deepest.

THE FISHERIES AND THE IRISH

With its harsh climate and poor soil, Newfoundland was of little value for agriculture and therefore did not attract settlers. Its rich resources of fish, however, demanded labourers to accommodate the growing industry. In the late seventeenth century, migrants from Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny and Tipperary counties in Ireland responded and became seasonal visitors to the Island, working in the fisheries during the summer and returning home in the fall. These arrangements were inconsequential in improving the financial status of the migrant Irish workers, who were seldom paid a wage by the English merchants. Nonetheless they presented an opportunity that otherwise would not have existed. The fisheries provided an inexpensive passage to America, making more feasible the plans of many to proceed from

Newfoundland to Nova Scotia and, after two or three years of work, to gain entry into the American colonies where, it was hoped, circumstances would be better. By 1765, five thousand Irish were employed in the fisheries, some of whom would remain and, over a period of time, create a permanent Catholic presence in Newfoundland.

It seems appropriate to look upon Newfoundland in this early period as a purgatory for the Irish. Within the framework of its judicial system, they stood little or no chance of either justice or mercy when accused of a crime. Irish Catholics were denied a defence counsel and had no way of knowing an indictment until it was read in court. On occasions when the crew on board the fishing vessels was too few to meet the demands, the Irish on-shore in Newfoundland were seized and pressed into service. If they complained they were tied to the ship's shrouds, stripped and whipped, and they received no payment for the work done.

The Catholic Church, at that time, was an illegal institution and had great difficulty assisting the Irish in Newfoundland. Since it operated as an underground organization, its spiritual and religious role was repressed and its social activity was retarded.

PENAL LAWS IN USE

Under the English penal laws, enacted from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I to that of King George III, when they were repealed in 1783, one can see the attempt to reduce 'Popery' by making it impossible for a Catholic to exist, except in the lowest and most degraded state imaginable. For example, Catholics were barred from holding public office, operating schools or sitting in parliament. They could not own property or lease it — except for ridiculously short periods of time. They could not own a horse worth more than \$5. The practice of their religion was proscribed.

As stated, the penal laws were applied in Newfoundland. Moreover they were augmented by local orders and practices. Catholics could not bury their dead; only an Anglican incumbent was permitted to read the service of burial and collect a fee for doing so. Aware that Catholics were practising their religion by stealth, the local authorities hunted the itinerant priests who hid, said Mass and fled. Punishment for participation in the Mass was severe. One account

refers to a Michael Keating of Harbour Main who, in 1755, was fined \$50 for allowing Mass to be celebrated in his fish store; his house was demolished, his goods were seized, and he was banished from the Island.

Despite the hardships, many Irish sought to remain in Newfoundland, to the dismay of local authorities. Under the guise of better “preserving the peace, preventing robberies, tumultuous assemblies and other disorders of wicked and idle people remaining in the country during the winter,” a set of official orders was issued on 31 October 1764 :

- That no papist servants, man or woman, shall remain at any place where they do not fish or serve during the summer proceedings;
- that not more than two papist men shall dwell in one house during the winter except such as have a Protestant master;
- that no papist shall keep a public house or vend liquor by retail;
- that all idle and disorderly men and women be punished according to law and sent out of the Country.

Socially depressed, religiously deprived, linguistically variant and culturally different, the Irish were not readily accepted or assimilated in Newfoundland. Because English law provided no assistance to them, whether in Ireland or Newfoundland, they sought some form of extra-legal protection. The purpose was served through the development of Irish regional associations determined to mete out some form of justice, such as the Clear Airs from Tipperary; Whey and Yellow Bellies from Waterford; Doans or Kilkenny Boys, Dadgeens from Cork; as well as Young Colts, White Boys and Black Feet. These regional identities were upheld and carried over to Newfoundland for security, often, however, exploding into faction fighting that did cause concern for the local authorities.

IRISH CULTURE AND THE CHURCH

Nevertheless, the Newfoundland Irish expressed a unique culture in various dialects, crafts, and traditions particularly related to weddings and wakes, cooking, art, music and writing, all of which are still identifiable. Gaelic or the Irish language was commonly spoken among the Newfoundland Irish until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Its influence caused an Irish pattern of

speech and a vocabulary that is still noticeable in current Newfoundland English, especially in the Avalon Peninsula.

No matter what political and legal arrangements governed the practice of Catholicism in Newfoundland, Rome acted on its responsibility to the Island's Catholic population. From 1535 to 1784, Newfoundland was placed under the administration of the Bishop of Rouen, then the Bishop of Quebec and, finally, the London Vicariate. A number of itinerant priests were sent to Newfoundland under great difficulty, and, at considerable risk, they traversed the rough terrain, surreptitiously said Mass, and then moved on. These men were under the constant threat of surveillance by Protestants, who felt obliged to report their activities. One example, documented in 1755, stated :

- Whereas I am informed that a Roman Catholic priest is at this time in Harbour Grace, and that he publicly read mass which is contrary to the law and against the peace of our sovereign Lord, the King.

And while good and dedicated priests struggled to bring religion to the people, their efforts were occasionally undermined by the scandalous behaviour of a few vagabonds. There are accounts of one priest living in a sinful relationship with the wife of a Protestant man; of others, in drunken fits, making sport of the Catholic religion; and of another revealing openly from one harbour to the next, the contents of what he heard in confession. Without local ecclesiastical control, it was impossible to harness the activity of these independent and restive clergy.

In 1784, "liberty of conscience" was proclaimed in Newfoundland and the first Catholic chapel was built. That same year Rome appointed an Irish Franciscan, James Louis O'Donel, Superior of the Mission of the Island of Newfoundland. O'Donel oversaw a small group of mostly Irish priests who sailed from one outport to the next. The priests were welcomed by the inhabitants of these forlorn coastal settlements which had been spiritually deprived. Thousands converted to Catholicism over the next decade because of the ministry of these priests. Moreover O'Donel's presence effected law and order among the Irish settlers, and his diocesan statutes, issued in 1801, helped to bring under control those priests who had created scandal. O'Donel was succeeded in 1806 by Patrick Lambert from Ireland, which affirmed the continuity of Irish clergy in

Newfoundland. Because of this close association, contacts with the Diocese of Quebec were minimal.

By the early nineteenth century about half of Newfoundland's population was Roman Catholic, but the church was still short of priests and funds. Between 1817 and 1829, under the third Vicar Apostle, Thomas Scallan, the number of priests available to serve the needs of the Island and Labrador ranged from seven to ten. The arrival of Scallan's replacement, Michael Anthony Fleming, another Irish Franciscan, signalled change. Fleming divided Newfoundland into regular missions and obtained more priests from Ireland to expand the work of the Church. Two orders of nuns came from Ireland, the Sisters of the Presentation in 1833 and the Sisters of Mercy in 1842; they set up boarding schools, an orphanage and a home for working girls.

Although by mid-nineteenth century the Catholic population was no longer an absolute majority, it was sufficient to warrant a formal diocesan structure. Fleming became titular Bishop of Newfoundland in 1847, with another Irish Franciscan, John Thomas Mullock, as coadjutor. One of the first projects undertaken was the construction of the cathedral at St. John's, the symbol of metropolitan development, which was not consecrated until 1855. The following year the diocese was divided; John Dalton became Bishop of Harbour Grace, with a jurisdiction that included the whole of the Labrador coast, while the Newfoundland Diocese fell under Bishop John Mullock. Mullock continued to promote institution building and charitable and educational work. He directed efforts towards the training of native Newfoundlanders for the priesthood by establishing in St. John's, in 1856, St. Bonaventure's College as a diocesan seminary. The Christian Brothers arrived from Ireland in 1857 to begin their program of educating Catholic youths. It was not, however, until the twentieth century that St. Clare's Mercy Hospital was opened (closed in 1995).

Conditions for Newfoundland's Catholics, predominantly Irish, gradually improved as the laws changed. Certainly benefits were gained when Catholics received the power to vote and, finally, to sit in the assembly and on the Legislative Council. The creation of a Catholic school system aided the progress of the people. The struggle to obtain the rights of their religion was hard. And now, at the close of the twentieth century, one wonders what the

faithful will have to face as the provincial government plans to dismantle the school system, the scandal of an institution gone wrong hangs over their head, and the once-rich resource of fish that sustained them is depleted.

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