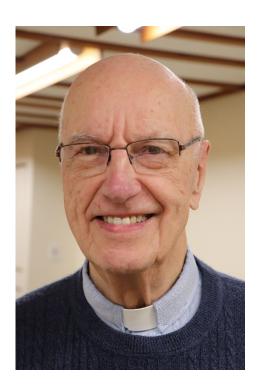
Noël Delaquis --- February 19, 2024

Bless the Lord, O my soul for 50 years of episcopal life



A word or explanation:

Noël Delaquis was ordained a bishop on February 19, 1974. The following reflection was first communicated to the residents of Villa Aulneau. The intention was to mark this wonderful anniversary by inviting the Villa Aulneau

residents to join him in joy and gratitude, sharing a glass of wine and a piece of cake to mark the occasion.

Psalm 103 caught my attention as soon as I was ordained a bishop fifty years ago. This psalm has always been very significant throughout my episcopal life, and even before that, as a priest.

Today I'd like to share it with all of you, to invite you to rejoice with me in these many years of faithfulness, especially faithfulness on God's part towards me. It is He who chose me to be His Pastor; it is He who has watched over me throughout my life to keep me on the right track in my personal life, to carry out a satisfying ministry; not forgetting to heal me, with very good medical care of course, from a car accident (on Christmas Day!) that could have been fatal; and finally to enable me to have an enriching experience of monastic life, and finally to exercise my priestly ministry occasionally during the too-long period of retirement from regular ministry and pastoral responsibility, following my accident.

The psalm is a hymn to God's mercy which, in His unfailing tenderness and love, leads me to praise and thank him for all the wonders of beauty, goodness and love that we can discover in the universe and our world; and above all the wonders of grace that have surely helped me to deepen my understanding of His Love for our poor humanity and for me in particular.

For so much goodness and love, I want to join the psalmist in singing of God's great mercy, expressing my gratitude and praising his most holy name:

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—
who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit,

who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live[a]

so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses,

his acts to the people of Israel.

The LORD is merciful and gracious,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger for ever.

He does not deal with us

according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west. so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, for those who fear him. For he knows how we were

so the LORD has compassion made:

he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass;

they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting

on those who fear him,

and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.