

## **FRATELLI TUTTI CELEBRATION**

The pastoral missionary unit of St. Francis of Assisi of the diocese of Rouyn-Noranda organized a Fratelli Tutti (We are all brothers and sisters) celebration on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023. The objective of the gathering was to taste the togetherness, diversity, interconnectedness and the spirituality of different cultures, nations and peoples. It is wonderful to see when brothers and sister live in harmony and peace!

Listening to the need and reality of our times, responding to Pope's call to build bridges and encouraged by our Bishop Guy Boulanger to build a church and society which is welcoming and open, we launched ourselves into this adventure in the region of Temiscamingue. The region is situated in the north west of the province of Quebec, Canada. It is becoming more and more intercultural area and people come from Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America to work and live here. The additional richness of this region is the presence of the seasonal workers from Guatemala and Mexico and whose presence and work is very much appreciated by the population in general. The surprising note is that it is one of the youngest regions of Quebec which has a history of 125 years only and the principal village called Ville-Marie was founded by Brother Moffet who was an Oblate of Immaculate Mary.

The activity was organized at the basement of the Church. First of all, Fr. Gaspard gave a warm welcome to everyone stating that we are all sons and daughters of the Creator God. Then, we had prayers from different languages and religions: First of all, we recited a prayer for the mother earth which is taken from Laudato Si, and it was led by Dr. Jannet Zaveleta, then we had a prayer in Sanskrit (Asotoma Sat Gamaya) which was sung by Fr. Reegan (India), then Fr. Gaspard (Congo-RDC) recited the prayer of Our Father, then a Muslim family recited some Surat which corresponds to Mary and Jesus from Quran, then we recited a prayer for our world from Fratelli Tutti.

After that, Mr. Bernard Flebus, originally from Belgium and ancient Mayor of Ville-Marie, talked about the history of the region especially about the foundation of Ville-Marie and Brother Moffet. Then we all shared our potluck meals. Everyone was invited to share what they brought. We had food in abundance and we can say it was an experience of the multiplication of bread. We had our stomach full and we took some food back to our homes. There were more than 15 varieties of food.

Then Fr. Reegan animated some activities for children and adults like: pinata, dance by different group of people, drawing and draws for children. Every group had a chance to present themselves and show the dance from their countries.

All together, there were more than 50 people from 13 different countries: It was a very lovely, fraternal and fun moment. We finished our gathering with a prayer of gratitude to our Creator God done by Francois Vallet (France). We would like to thank Fr. Luc Ngonda (Congo RDC) who is the pastor of our Lady of Rosary parish, Ville-Marie and his finance committee for having given us the basement free of charge to organise this wonderful event. Also, we thank wholeheartedly Mr. Francois Vallet who helped us with the music and DJ with his musical system. Everyone went back home with beautiful memories and wanting to have more of this event to build bridges and walk together as brothers and sisters of one human family.

We would like to build on this event to keep this Fratelli Tutti movement going and we plan to do more this sort in the coming future. May the Creator God bless our good and honest intentions and efforts!

**Shalom and Shanti to everyone!**

Fr. Reegan Soosai, CMF

Diocesan responsible of Intercultural Ministry