

DIOCESE OF SAULT STE. MARIE



DIOCÈSE DE SAULT STE-MARIE

August 11, 2023

Prot. No. 696/2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is with sadness that I inform you that Archbishop Marcel Gervais passed away on Sunday August 6, 2023.

Prior to becoming Archbishop of Ottawa, he was the 4th Bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. I ask all of our Parishes to kindly remember him in the Prayers of the Faithful at Sunday Mass, either this weekend or the weekend following.

Details of Archbishop Gervais's life as well as funeral arrangements can be found attached and also on the website of Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (cccb.ca).

Yours in Christ,

+Thomas Dowd
Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie

Death of Most Reverend Marcel A. Gervais, Archbishop Emeritus of Ottawa

Wednesday, August 09 2023

August 9, 2023, Ottawa – The Most Reverend Marcel André Joseph Gervais, Archbishop Emeritus of Ottawa, passed away on 6 August 2023 at the Bruyère Hospital in Ottawa, Ontario.

Archbishop Gervais was born on September 21, 1931, in Elie, Manitoba. In 1954, he entered St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario, to begin his formation for the priesthood. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of London on May 31, 1958, by Bishop J.C. Cody. After ordination, he continued his studies in Rome at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (1959-1960) and then at the *École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem* (1960-1961).

Upon returning to Canada, the then Father Gervais was stationed at St. Peter's Seminary where he taught Sacred Scripture from 1962-1976. During this time, he became member of the Advisory Committee of the International Commission for English in the Liturgy (1974-1978). He also served as Director of the Divine Word International Centre of Religious Education in London (1974-1979), which had been founded as a resource for Catholic adult education by the Most Rev. Gerald Emmett Carter, then Bishop of London. From 1975 to 1980, he was a liaison officer to the Canadian Bible Society.

Still a priest, Father Gervais became a member of the Education Committee of Development and Peace, a member of the Anglican-Catholic Dialogue for Canada, Chairman of the Board of the Cardinal Carter Centre for Bioethics in Toronto, and Chancellor of the University of Sudbury (1975-1980).

On April 19, 1980, Pope Saint John Paul II appointed Father Gervais the Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of London. He was ordained to the episcopate at St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica on June 11, 1980, by the Most Rev. John M. Sherlock, Bishop of London, who was the Principal Consecrator. On May 9, 1985, Bishop Gervais was appointed the Ordinary of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, taking possession of the diocese on June 17, 1985.

On June 21, 1989, Bishop Gervais became the successor to Archbishop Joseph-Aurèle Plourde as the Archbishop of Ottawa. His episcopal inauguration took place on October 27, 1989, at Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica. In the same year, he became the Chancellor of Saint Paul University in Ottawa. On June 19, 1990, he received the Sacred Pallium in Rome from Pope Saint John Paul II, becoming the Metropolitan Archbishop of the ecclesiastical province of Ottawa.

As a member of the then Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB), he served generously in a number of areas. He was a member the Education Commission, the Chairman of the Theology Commission, a member of the Constitution Committee, and the Chairman of the *Ad hoc* Committee for the preparation of the Family Life Curriculum, Phase III (1975-1980). In October 1994 received the Father Patrick Fogarty Medal of Honour from the Ontario Catholic Education Foundation.

As a member of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), Archbishop Gervais also served in many capacities. He was a member of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (1979-1983), Co-Chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Theology (1979-1983), Chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Christian Education (1983-1911), and member of the Episcopal Commission for Social Affairs (1989-1997). He was elected President of the CCCC in 1991 for a two-year term.

Following his tenure as CCCC President, he continued to serve the Conference generously until his retirement in 2007 as Ottawa's Archbishop. During this time, he was appointed as the CCCC representative to the Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation (1994), member of the *Ad hoc* Committee on Financial Issues (1995), Chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (1997-1999), member of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (1999-2000), and member of the Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity, Religious Relations with the Jews and Interreligious Dialogue (2001). He was also appointed a member of the CCCC Advisory Committee on Financial Issues in 2003 for a term of three years.

In 1989, he was asked to join the Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers, in which he served until 1993.

The rite of reception of the body will take place at Notre-Dame Cathedral (Ottawa) with None (Mid-afternoon Prayer), on Monday 14 August 2023 at 1:30 p.m. The cathedral is located at 385 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1J9.

The remains of Archbishop Gervais will lie in state at the Notre-Dame Cathedral from 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The funeral mass will be held at 7:00 p.m. the same day (14 August).

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