

St. Michael's Parish Newsletter

*A Welcoming Eucharistic Community,
Sharing Faith and Reaching Out to All.*



Dear Friends:

Stewardship: allowing myself to be used by God so God can work his wonders.

A friend of mine was preparing to give a talk at a local parish. She said to the parish priest, "I just want to touch people's hearts." His response was "That's not your responsibility. That's God's. Your responsibility is to pray for guidance, to prepare well and to give the talk as best you can. Leave the touching of people's hearts to God."

Sometimes you and I are tempted to assume too much responsibility for other people's lives. If our adult children make decisions that we cannot approve of, we feel guilty. If attendance is low at a parish function that we helped to plan, we feel inadequate. If a friend chooses not to follow our good advice, we feel bad. We act as if we are responsible for the salvation of the world.

God has blessed each and every one of us with gifts. There is the gift of 'time.' We have this day to work for the building up of His Kingdom. This precious gift is fleeting. We have no guarantee about tomorrow and so it is now that we give to God the time we have. We have been gifted with 'talent.' Some of us have the talent of music, counseling, leading groups or giving service. God asks for nothing more than to share the talent we have so that His Kingdom becomes real today. God has blessed us with 'treasure.' This is the gift that has been given to us because of our work. This reward for our work needs to be shared with others, whether it is with one of the many charitable agencies or our Parish Family. God asks that we share our treasure so that His kingdom may come.

Take time to reflect on the time, talent and treasure you have been given, realizing that it has all been given by God. Not that I have to do all the work but that by sharing what I have, God will make His kingdom present among us.

Fr Murray

The Parish Picnic

**You are invited to St. Michael's Parish Picnic In Celebration of our Feast Day
Sunday, September 30 from 2:00 till 5:00 p.m. at St. Michael's School Grounds**

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Last year, 2006, was our 1st annual gathering to celebrate the Feast of St. Michael. Well over 300 people attended and we hope the 2007 event is bigger and better!!!

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To Our Readers

*All of you are Christ's body,
and each one is part of it. 1 Cor. 12:27*

As summer draws to a close and we return to our busy fall routines, it is a good time to remember that we are the Body of Christ. Each body has many parts, and each part has its own special role.

In this third issue of the parish newsletter, you can read about the many parts that help build the kingdom in our midst: the helping hands of the Catholic Women's League, the busy fingers and willing ears of our parish office staff, the wonderful voices of the 5:00 p.m. choir, and the eager hearts of our RCIA candidates. We especially enjoyed featuring a story about the smiling faces and sincere prayers of our youngest members, the children.

Also included is an Annual Report for the parish. This is the first time such a comprehensive report has been prepared. The parish wishes to be more transparent and accountable for the resources that you have given it. This report is a good start.

The Body of Christ is alive and well here at St. Michael's and we hope you enjoy learning more about it as you turn these pages.

On behalf of the newsletter committee, we invite all our readers to enjoy this autumn issue, share it with your friends, and support our advertisers. You may even wish to join the committee or provide an article. We welcome your comments and contributions.

Welcome Fr. John Sharp

by Gail Brown

You may have noticed that our church bulletin names Fr. John Sharp as our Associate Pastor part-time, and wondered why the "part-time" designation?

Fr. John Sharp was appointed a Vicar General in 2004 for a period of five years. The role of a Vicar General is to advise the Bishop and carry out many duties in the name of the Bishop. Since June of 2006, one of these duties is to chair the Diocesan Sexual Abuse Committee and be the main diocesan contact person in these matters.

Fr. John studied at St. Peter's Seminary and was ordained in 1971. He has served parishes in Windsor, Chatham, London, Stratford, Forest and Strathroy.

The move from parish life in 2006 into administration had a huge impact on his priestly life. The life of a priest is nourished by the people he serves. Thus, he was grateful to assist on weekends for six months at Holy Family parish before coming here to St. Michael's. Thanks to the proximity of St. Michael's to the chancery office, Fr. John is taking advantage of the opportunity to celebrate weekday masses here as often as his schedule allows.

There is a degree of isolation in the work Fr. John does in administration, so he greatly appreciates the Wednesday

morning team meetings at St. Michael's. At these meetings with Fr. Murray, Mary and Dan he is able to do some faith sharing as they reflect upon the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday, contribute to the creative planning to serve the pastoral needs of the parish and commit to the team in carrying out these pastoral services. The sharing of some meals with Fr. Murray gives them the opportunity to share and support each other in their priestly ministry. All of this feeds his personal and priestly life.

Fr. John acknowledges the warm welcome the parishioners, team and staff at St. Michael's have extended to him. His feeling of belonging continues to deepen and he is excited about the potential of becoming more involved, contributing to and sharing in the faith life of St. Michael's.

We are very pleased that Fr. Sharp will be sharing as much time as he can with us. It seems evident from the smile on his face as he greets parishioners before and after Mass that he is happy to be here with us as well.



Christmas Issue The Newsletter welcomes your contributions. If you have an idea for an article please contact us before October 15. Email to gail-brown@rogers.com or ftheilad@uwo.ca.

Our **Newsletter Team** members are Gail Brown, John & Michelle Cavaliere, Terry Dollard, Paul Evans, Carmen Gicante, Beth Ann Kendrick, Terry McBride, Dorothy Solomon, Vincent Taylor and Frances Theilade.

The Sound of Music

"When man comes into contact with God, mere speech is not enough. Areas of his existence are awakened that spontaneously turn into song." Pope Benedict XVI

It is, in the real sense, music to our ears. That beautiful sound of the choir leading us in the Psalm of the day and in the hymns which are a part of the structure of the Mass. The word "sing" occurs 309 times in the Old Testament and 36 times in the New Testament. Father Ed Hontiveros, a Jesuit priest known as "the father of Jesuit music," puts it this way - "Our liturgical hymns are prayers wrapped in music. They are, simply put, songs in search of souls."

You must have wondered from time to time, as I have, just who are these people who are willing to share their talent to assist us in the Mass week after week. Well, you are in luck because I decided to get some answers. This is what I found out about the 5:00 p.m. Saturday night choir:
Choir Director - Sue Cavender
Soloists (Responsorial Psalm) - Harry (Butch) Cavender and Jim Campbell
Organist/Pianist - Nando Favaro
Instrumentalists - Jordan Clayton, Johanna Jaborra-Scott and Jim Campbell

The choir was started in the fall of 1998 by Sue and her husband Butch Cavender with the help of their daughters Beth Roberts, Tammy McGrady and granddaughter Jennifer Roberts. The original singers, and still in the choir, include Jim Campbell, Irma Christie and Sue Irwin. The current members include Ted Mizek, Hubert Van Niekerk, Anita Renders, Maureen Boone, Wendy Feron, Jeannie Thysman and her daughter Julia.

Sue is an accomplished, formally trained, pianist and organist and has attended (and been a presenter at) many summer courses on liturgy, music and choir direction. She has directed choirs in Windsor as well as in London and has acquired the organizational and perceptual skills necessary to coordinate the readings for the day with the selection of hymns appropriate to the specific

celebration. She indicated to me just how much these people and all of the other choir members past and present over the last nine years have, in her words, "blessed her life."

According to Sue our choirs are always in need of new members. No experience is needed - you do not have to be a budding opera diva or a Canadian Idol finalist to sing in our church. As a matter of fact there is no audition involved and therefore no initial joining stress. Sue suggests to newbies that they find a singing range that is most comfortable for them and as they grow in the group they will have the choice of singing soprano, alto, tenor or bass, the major components of most sacred hymns.

As a choir member you will have an opportunity to learn how to read music. Copies of the songs are provided on CD and sheet music for you to take home. In other words, learn and practice in your leisure time at your own pace. Each of the St. Michael's choirs has its own particular musical flavor, and the 5:00 p.m. repertoire is a mixture of traditional, folk and contemporary.

The rehearsals, held in the Music Room on Monday evenings from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. September to June, are quick-paced and fun. Sue and the rest of the choir hope to see you there.

Watch for articles on our other choirs in upcoming issues of the Newsletter.



Our liturgical hymns are prayers wrapped in music. They are, simply put, songs in search of souls.



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The Prayer Network

Pray for one another. The heartfelt prayer of a good person works very powerfully. James 5:16

Goal 1 of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan states: "As living signs of Christ's presence we will respond to the call to personal holiness given to all by committing ourselves to opportunities for ongoing conversion and spiritual renewal."

The Prayer Network offers you an opportunity for spiritual renewal while interceding for our brothers and sisters in need. St. Michael's has a vibrant ministry of prayer for special requests made by parishioners on behalf of a person in need, with that person's knowledge. Those for whom prayers are offered do not have to be parishioners, or even Catholic. We are called to be Christ's presence to everyone and so recognize each person as a creation of God and therefore our brother or sister.

Prayer requests vary greatly: some may be searching for a job, others are having surgery, and many are receiving treatments for illness, especially cancer. Some just ask us to remember a special intention.

A group of parishioners - young and older, singles, couples and families - pray in their own way, at their own time, in their own home, using their own form of prayer.

The Prayer Network Coordinator's name and phone number is listed in the bulletin. When she receives the initial request for prayers she contacts the team captains who in turn call their team members. The number of calls averages three per week. All requests are prayed for daily. Each person is remembered by name for three weeks. Their names are then put into a general category and prayed for continuously.

Many of the volunteers were first recipients, or family of, someone who was prayed for. This is the case of my own involvement. My daughter was five months pregnant when she called to tell me that she did not want to have anything to do with me and told me to stay out of her life. My life was threatened if I made any attempt to reach her. I did not hear from her for two years nor did I know where she was. My instincts told me there was a chance for a

reunion. I contacted the police and was given a lead. My other daughter took a chance and sent a birthday card. Thankfully, we heard back from her after six weeks. I saw my daughter again and met my 16-month-old granddaughter. It was the support of the Prayer Network that brought me to the point of following my gut feelings. After having had this prayer answered I joined the Prayer Network and later became the coordinator.

As a group we meet once a year to share faith and get to know one another. New members are always welcome. We have a small prayer book to assist you. Setting aside a regular time and making a special place with a candle and a sacred object can be helpful in creating a space conducive to prayer. Sacred objects include a bible, a crucifix, a statue, or a picture of a favourite saint. The discipline of regular prayer builds our own faith. Participating in the Prayer Network makes us more aware of being part of God's family and grateful for all the blessings that God has given.

We know that life includes pain and sorrow as well as peace and joy. I am reminded of a Beatles song, "Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away, now it looks as though they're here to stay, oh I believe in yesterday." Well, I believe in today because we are "a resurrection people." We have a God who became one of us, lived as a human, died, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven and sent His Spirit - a complete circle without beginning or end. Jesus invites us to join Him in that circle of life: suffering trials, enduring deaths of many kinds, job loss, broken relationships - but also rejoicing in His resurrection that promises us new life. *If you have a Prayer Request or would like to become a Prayer Network volunteer, please call Dorothy Solomon at 519-659-8242.*



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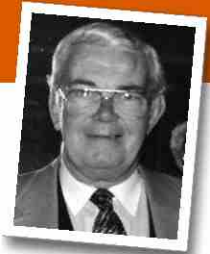
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Bill Smith: Usher Extraordinaire

Welcoming Parishioners for 65 years



Bill Smith, dubbed "The Senator" by our former pastor Fr. Jim Mockler, shared some of his memories and gave me a glimpse into his life of balancing his insurance career, hobbies, family and faith.

It would be easy to speak only of his hobby and love of aviation. Seventy-four model airplanes are displayed on shelves, telling of a life of patience, attention to detail and perseverance, and the walls are covered with paintings of various aircraft. Bill is very sharp of mind with a great sense of humour as he speaks openly about his life. His limited mobility is greatly frustrating, so reliving memories is a great pastime.

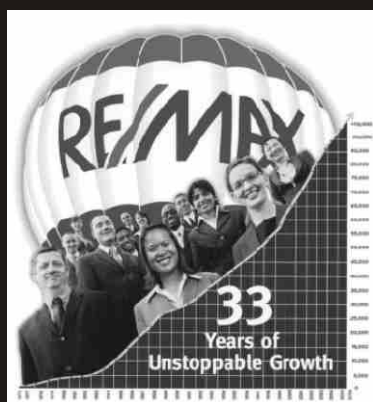
Anyone who attended the 10:30 a.m. Mass will remember Bill as the white haired usher who drove the yellow 1970 Coronet convertible, always dressed very respectfully in a blazer and one of his 127 ties. His 65 years of service have earned him a permanent position on the ushers' schedule though he seldom attends Mass at St. Michael's anymore. Christmas and Easter are still a priority; otherwise he attends the chapel Mass at the Residence on the Mount where he resides.

He fondly recalls the friendships he has made over the years, especially his camaraderie with his fellow ushers and their bowling league. Bill regards service to the church as an honourable pursuit and sees a decline in respect for this vital role in the more casual appearance of those at Mass. He feels there should be a dress code for those serving in a

ministry during Mass. Bill does not consider himself overly religious but he has enjoyed many a conversation with numerous pastors over the years. One anecdote he shared is that in the early years there would be a little pile of dimes and nickels on the usher's desk to make change for the voluntary seating charge of ten cents.

The church has changed some practices over the years and Bill's faith has developed and changed as well. He speaks of God as a good friend with whom he chats throughout the day. His prayers are for his family, friends who have passed away, all who have lost loved ones and his community of St. Michael's. He speaks lovingly of his 53-year marriage to Marjorie who resides at Marian Villa. He longs for their weekly visits but at the same time struggles with a tremendous heartache that they cannot be together. Their three children, Billy a teacher, Jimmy a real estate agent and Leslie a principal, are their most remarkable joys, followed closely by their grandchildren. The motto he lives by provides words of wisdom for us all - "Be considerate and respectful of your fellow human beings and love everybody. That way you will have made a decent contribution to life."

St. Michael's has been blessed to have Bill and Marjorie as parishioners for 65 years. Please keep them in your prayers.



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Becoming A Catholic

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)



Being part of the RCLA process was a terrific experience for me. It allowed me to slow down and contemplate the truly important aspects of my life. Every Wednesday we were introduced to interesting speakers and heard thought-provoking topics. I found myself looking forward to our next meeting with great anticipation. But the best part was the friendships we struck up along the way. We were no longer strangers but truly "companions on the journey." Many thanks to Father Murray, Mary and my sponsor, Maria De Luca. Their guidance and love truly made the RCLA experience a very special part of my life. Caroline MacDonald

I am often asked the question "How do I become a Catholic?" It is a question I love to hear because it presents a wonderfully graced moment in my ministry where, through mutual sharing of values and beliefs, I am privileged to journey with someone eager to learn more about the Catholic faith.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) has its origins in the early Church and was reinstated by The Second Vatican Council as the way in which we welcome new members into the Church. It is a process of study, exploration and faith formation. Sessions are held on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., October to April. Those inquiring about the faith come from a variety of backgrounds. Some have never been baptized, some have been baptized in another Christian tradition while others have been baptized Catholic as infants but have never received First Eucharist or Confirmation.

The first stage of the process is the Inquiry Phase. The candidates meet as a group to inquire about the faith. We cover a broad range of topics including God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Scripture, Heaven and Hell, Prayer, Mary and the saints.

The candidates reflect on their faith and on the teachings they have heard. If they wish to proceed they are invited to come before the parish community to formally request membership into the Church. They are then matched with a sponsor who accompanies them to the weekly sessions and provides support and encouragement

along the way. The sponsor represents the Christian community into which the candidates will be welcomed. The sponsor is normally a member of the parish but can be a family member or friend.

During the second stage of the process, the candidates reflect on the teachings of the Catholic Church. Topics include the Mass, sin and reconciliation, the problem of evil, conscience and moral decision-making, Baptism, Confirmation, and Marriage.

The third stage of the process coincides with the season of Lent. Lent is a time of spiritual renewal for the whole Church. For the candidates, it is a time to prepare for their reception into the Church at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night.

Those to be baptized will celebrate the sacrament that night. Those who have already been baptized in other faith traditions make a Profession of Faith into the Catholic Church. All will receive Confirmation and Eucharist. The Easter Vigil is a time of great joy for the entire parish as we welcome these new members into our midst. This year 22 adults joined our faith community. We are blessed and renewed by the gift of their presence and witness among us.

Welcoming new members is the responsibility of the entire parish community. Through our support and prayers we create an environment in which they can feel truly welcome. In the weeks following their reception into the Church they are eager to discern their gifts and to find appropriate ways to share them with the parish community. We are called to encourage them in whatever way we can so that together we can build the Kingdom of God.

Next year the Easter Vigil will be celebrated on March 22 at 8:00p.m. Why not plan to attend and support the men and women who will respond to God's call this year to become members of our parish family next Easter.

If you or someone you know is interested in exploring the Catholic faith, please call me at 519-433-6689 at ext. 203 or e-mail me at mtaylor@rcec.london.on.ca. Our sessions start on October 3.



The RCIA Process

A Journey of Faith and Friendship



Editor's Note: Jeff wrote this reflection during the RCIA

When Mary Taylor asked me to write something about what the RCIA process meant to me, at first I was honoured, then of course a little worried. I mean, how does one put something that has come to mean so much to me personally and spiritually into words?

Like many in the class, I married a Catholic, and promised the priest at the time of our marriage preparation course that I would raise our kids Catholic and they would attend a Catholic school. I didn't think much of it at the time. I just wanted to say the right thing so the priest would let me marry Kelly.

I grew up in a Christian home. My father is a United Church minister and I am grateful to my parents for introducing me as a child to church. I sang in the church choir, went to Sunday school, attended youth group. At university I was fortunate to be a paid singer in a church here in London. After that, I became the choir director at a United Church in Thamesford.

For the longest time I thought I was doing my job as a Christian. I went to church every Sunday, did my job and came home. Wasn't that what I was supposed to do? As I grew older I began to discover that something was missing in my spiritual life. I was simply going through the motions, not taking the time to think about my faith and where Christ fits into my life. I was making time for Him once a week, but didn't spend a great deal of time thinking about the Holy Spirit other than on Sundays. I needed something more.

My children were attending a Catholic school; my wife is a Vice-Principal in the Catholic system - the timing was perfect. In the beginning I joined the RCIA for them but was quick to realize that was not the case. I am doing this for myself.

Every Wednesday night, a wonderful group of people gets together with Fr. Murray, Mary, our sponsors and guest speakers to listen and share. Sometimes the

discussion becomes personal as people share their life experiences, and their faith journeys with each other. Other times, there is very little discussion, and I suspect that many in the class, like myself, spend time on their own thinking about what was discussed.

I look forward to Wednesday nights each week, seeing the new friends that I have been fortunate enough to meet, but also allowing myself to be filled with a wonderful feeling of belonging. I am in the right place, and looking back at things, it is my journey of faith that has led me here. I have been amazed at how many people in our group have the same feelings as I do - we have become "Companions on a Journey." Our journey is moving towards Easter when the culmination of our efforts will be rewarded, as we become members of the Catholic Church. Participating in the RCIA has made me realize that the journey does not end here, but should continue for the rest of our lives.

Seek and you shall find

Knock and the door shall be opened

Ask and it shall be given

We continue to seek, continue to knock and trust in Christ that it will be given. I encourage anyone considering taking the RCIA process to do so. You will be rewarded in so many ways.

RCIA Sponsor

Would you like to help someone grow towards full initiation into the Catholic Church? Be part of the team that welcomes, encourages, and supports those who inquire about our faith. You will also revitalize your own faith and make new friends. The time commitment is Wednesday evenings from November until April. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact Mary Taylor.

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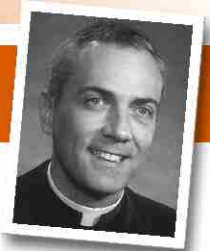
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Parish Mission: Called to be Stewards

Fr. Darrin Gurr

November 18, 19, 20 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.



Do you have an “attitude of gratitude” to almighty God who has given you all that you have? Do you respond to God's love by generously sharing the gifts that you have received with others your time, talents and resources? Do you place your trust in God that He will take care of you, now and for all eternity? Gratitude, Generosity and Trust are three elements of stewardship that Fr. Darrin will focus on as he explores what it means to be a Christian steward in today's world.

Fr. Darrin is a priest of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. He studied for the priesthood at St. Peter's Seminary and

was ordained in 1989. He has worked in both rural and urban parishes and has employed the principles of stewardship in all aspects of ministry. Fr. Darrin has facilitated workshops, conferences, study days and retreats in stewardship throughout Canada. He is currently the founding pastor of the new parish community of St. Gianna in Winnipeg. Fr. Darrin holds a Master's Degree in Liturgy from the University of Notre Dame and serves as the Director of Liturgy for his Archdiocese.

Parish Mission: The Eucharist

*God's Gift for the
Life of the World*

Fr. Philip Chircop, S.J.

April 20 to 23 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The Universal Church is invited to take the year 2008 and meditate on the Eucharist. The world will gather in Quebec City with our Holy Father Pope Benedict from June 15 to 22 to celebrate the 49th International Eucharistic Congress. To prepare our parish for this year of grace we have invited Fr. Philip Chircop, a Jesuit, to preach on this great gift from God to us.

Fr. Chircop considers himself a seeker, always looking for fresh and creative ways to proclaim the Good News,

hopefully helping “fellow pilgrims on the way” to embrace real and radical changes that lead to transformation in Christ Jesus.

Fr. Chircop has preached missions all over the world. He has a great sense of humour and understands the human struggle. He will preach from the heart.

Each evening we will gather at 7:00 p.m. for the talk, praise and prayer. During the day, from the time of morning mass until the evening talk, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will take place.

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New Ambo Given in Remembrance

The Traher family has called St. Michael's their parish home since its opening in 1911.

Late in 2006 St. Michael's Parish was blessed with the installation of a new marble Ambo designed to match the altar. In a dedication ceremony during the 8:30 a.m. Mass on December 24, 2006 Father Matthew blessed the new Ambo.

In response to Father Murray's request in a Sunday bulletin, Mary Catherine and Kevin Flynn decided to donate the Ambo as a tribute to Mary Catherine's parents, Rose and Joe Traher and her sister Anne Marie Traher. Mary Catherine says they "are more than thankful to be able to do this. My Mom, Dad and sister were given to me as my family and because of them my life and the lives of my own family have been more than abundantly blessed in so many ways."

The Traher family has called St. Michael's their parish home since its opening in 1911. Joe Traher was an active member of the parish until his death in 2001 at the age of 88. He and his siblings all attended St. Michael's Elementary School and for many years he was active in the usher's ministry. Until her death in 1998, Rose Traher was very involved in St. Michael's parish life through the CWL. She also was a strong and positive influence on the family's spiritual lives by ensuring their regular attendance at Mass, Missions and special devotions such as Forty Hours. In the Traher family there was no question about attendance at St. Michael's, "it was our life, our faith, our parish."

Anne Marie Traher attended St. Michael's Elementary School and was an enthusiastic member of St. Michael's Parish until her death in 2005. St. Michael's parish family is grateful for this generous donation. Father Murray emphasizes "each time the Ambo is used for the proclamation of the Sacred Scriptures we are reminded that the Word must be a lived reality. As Rose, Joe and Anne Marie lived their faith we are challenged to do the same."




Lector at new Ambo



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The Liturgy of the Word for Children

*a learning experience
for all*

The Liturgy of the Word for Children is a wonderful opportunity for children in grades two to four to discuss the teachings of Jesus in a comfortable and interactive environment. Led by a variety of volunteers throughout the year at both the 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses, this experience is one that truly touches your heart and soul.

Debbie Lucas and I have had the joy and privilege of leading The Liturgy of the Word for Children from April to June for the past three years at the 8:30 a.m. Mass. About ten children attend each week and we are often touched by the incredible understanding and insight that children have with regard to their faith. We are also constantly reminded of what we can learn from children, if we just take the time to listen.

The readings covered in The Liturgy of the Word for Children are the same readings heard at the Mass but are written at the child's level. The children take turns lighting the candle and proclaiming the readings. Following the Gospel, we are able to talk in depth with the children about what the readings mean and how we can put the teachings of Jesus into practice in our daily lives. This is by no means a one-way conversation. The children listen carefully to the readings and frequently ask thoughtful and probing questions. This is a wonderful time for discussion on how we can live the lives Jesus wants us to.

One of my favourite Liturgy sessions was the Sunday we were talking about forgiveness. The conversation focused on

why it was important for us to forgive others if we have been hurt by someone's words or actions. After much discussion on this topic, one of the children shared the following, "It is important for us to forgive someone who hurts us. Otherwise, you carry all that hurt and anger around in your heart and it makes you not a very happy person."

this experience is one that truly touches your heart and soul.

Before returning to join their parents for the remainder of the Mass, the children offer their own Prayers of the Faithful. The prayers often include

family members, teachers, friends, and sometimes pets who are ill, who have passed away, or who hold a special place in their hearts. These prayers are a wonderful way of learning what is going on in the lives of these children. The children are able to freely express their love, friendship and grief for those who are close to them through prayer.

The Liturgy of the Word for Children has played a special role in my life. It has been so rewarding to see the children grow in their faith as they listen to and discuss the readings from week to week. To see their confidence

increase as they read the opening prayer to their friends, participate actively in the discussion on the readings, or when they can finally say the Apostle's Creed by heart, is a joy to witness.

To all the children who have taught me so much over the past three years, thank you for sharing your faith and for touching my life with your honesty and compassion.



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A Student's Confirmation Experience



Grade eight means more than just the top of the school, better year-end trips and graduation. It is also the year that you are given the opportunity to be confirmed.

Confirmation is the sacrament we receive when we are ready to renew our baptismal promises. When we were younger our parents made the decision for us to become part of the Catholic Church. Now God feels we are old enough to decide for ourselves. The sacrament of Confirmation brings us closer to God as we become adults in the Church. We prepare for this by studying in school and meeting with Dan Moynihan. There were two retreats that were highlights for me in my journey.

On September 24 our parish attended a Spirit Rally at John Paul II with students from surrounding parishes. Singing and acting were used to deliver positive and inspirational messages. My favorite speakers were Brad and Gene, who travel across Canada spreading God's word energetically through skits and real life stories. The most important thing I learned from this retreat was that through belief and prayer anything can be accomplished!

In January we attended another wonderful retreat put on by the NET team (National Evangelization Team), a group of 10 teenagers who have taken a year off school to teach teenagers around Canada about God. My family was fortunate to have two of the teens live with us while they were in London! The retreat was a great experience and easy to relate to because we learned from people our age.

They taught about God through skits, games, real life stories and discussions. Before leaving they gave us each a bookmark with scriptures we could read to get to know God a little better. Going into this retreat many people thought that it was going to be boring, but coming out their thoughts were totally different.

For Confirmation the Church wants us to have a sponsor to help us through our faith journey. This person should be special to you, encourage you in your faith and be faithful themselves. This person will always be there for you as you go through life's challenges.

On the night of Confirmation we gather in the church with our family, friends and sponsor to celebrate Mass. The bishop anoints us with Chrism (oil) on our foreheads just as we received in baptism. This anointing seals us with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit- Understanding, Knowledge, Fear of the Lord, Piety, Wisdom, Counsel and Courage. To thank God we must use these gifts when they are needed.

My journey through Confirmation was full of learning and brought me closer to my faith. As your son or daughter prepares for this sacrament I encourage them to get involved in the retreats and other opportunities. I also assure you that your sons and daughters will have a great time as they prepare to become adults in the church!

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The CWL Invites You!

For God and Canada

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God. At St. Michael's, this service takes many forms, both financial and practical. The CWL makes contributions to local school and parish programs and community organizations, Save a Family Plan, and missions in Canada and abroad. Members volunteer at retirement home prayer services and bingo's, sell daffodils for the Cancer Society and organize parish functions such as receptions, bake sales and garden sales. Perhaps our most visible parish contributions are the funeral luncheons prepared and served by our members, which are appreciated as much for the warmth and support extended to families and guests at the death of a loved one, as for the meal they provide.

Our CWL Chapter celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2003 and has long been considered a vital part of parish life. Meetings are held in Room E at 7:00 p.m. the first Monday of the month from October to June. The first meeting of the new CWL year takes place on the second Monday in September with a Welcome Back Social. Each meeting features a short spiritual reflection and a business segment, followed by refreshments and a speaker or activity. Featured speakers have included a naturopath, a

wills and estates lawyer, and representatives from the many causes and organizations supported by the CWL, such as Women's Community House and L'Arche. Activities have included cake decorating, scrap booking, and movie nights. You don't have to be a member to attend a meeting - all women of the parish are welcomed and encouraged to join in.

You don't have to be a member to attend a meeting - all women of the parish are welcomed and encouraged to join in

As noted on the national CWL website (www.cwl.ca), an invitation is extended to all women to purchase a membership in the Catholic Women's League of Canada. The cost is \$20.

While your presence at meetings is important, we realize that in this busy world it may not always be possible for you to attend. Be assured that your interest and support is as important as your attendance! Included in your membership is The Canadian League magazine (published quarterly) which will keep you informed of League business and projects and in contact with other members across Canada.

Please consider joining the 165 members of St. Michael's CWL. Our President, Mary Maxwell, can be reached at mmaxwell@rogers.com.





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Our Office Staff: A Dynamic Duo

At some point we have all come into contact with Pat Estabrooks and Jolanda Squire. Pat's official title is Receptionist/Office Assistant, and Jolanda's is Financial Secretary. Their real title ought to be the Dynamic Duo; however, they are too modest to wear their capes.



starting out as the receptionist, and growing into her current role. She is also busy with the parish outside work hours, having been Sunday School coordinator, parish representative to St. Michael's school, and coordinator of the

Christmas pageant. Jolanda and her husband, Phil, have two children. They are busy with soccer, neighborhood events, school, family and, of course, their parish.

When I asked Pat and Jolanda what their jobs consisted of, the lists were long and seemed intertwined. Pat answers the phone, never knowing who or what might be on the other end: a birth, a death, a celebration, someone who needs help. Jolanda takes care of the finances: payroll, accounts, tax returns, as well as the bulletin. Together they support over 50 ministries in the parish. They maintain the database of the parishioners, keeping track of the sacraments, marriage preparation, funerals, mail outs and much more. They are an integral part of the everyday functioning of St. Michael's.

Pat and Jolanda agree that the people are the best part of St. Michael's. Pat enjoys the many visitors who come through the office everyday, whether looking for information, picking up a mass card, or just stopping by. Jolanda says she has found the ministries to be a great way to meet people and that it's a wonderful community of which to be a part.

Pat has worked at St. Michael's for two years and has been a parishioner here for 34 years. It's now become her "home away from home." At her other home, Pat and her husband, Brian, have two daughters and a son, and three grandchildren. They enjoy spending time with their friends and family.

Although neither seemed to want to talk much about themselves, there is a lot to say. There is an endless amount of things they do to keep St. Michael's functioning. So, the next time you have a Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, wedding, funeral, receive a mail out or look at the bulletin, think about Pat and Jolanda. We are very lucky to have such wonder women who care so deeply about our parish, as should we. In Pat's words, "this is your parish; treasure it and support it."

Jolanda has been with St. Michael's for four years,



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† Missing Numbers

Figure out the pattern to fill in the missing numbers.

2	4	6	—	10
30	—	50	60	70
3	6	10	—	21
25	20	—	10	5
9	—	13	15	17

CROSS†SEARCH

Can you find 20† crosses on this page?

† Tangled Letters

Follow the path of each letter, write it into the circle and discover the mystery word!†

T R I I S P

† ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

WORD SEARCH

Find the words in the puzzle by searching † up, down, across and diagonally.

CATHOLIC
KINDNESS
SHARING
PRAYER
THANKSGIVING
JESUS
KINGDOM
JOY

CELEBRATION
FAITH
HOPE
†PARISH
LOVE
GOD
GIFT

T	H	A	N	K	S	G	I	V	I	N	G
S	P	C	E	U	I	T	F	D	†	N	C
S	S	A	S	T	F	N	R	A	I	K	I
E	P	E	R	I	D	O	G	R	I	E	L
N	J	R	G	I	N	T	A	D	L	T	O
D	O	R	A	L	S	H	H	I	O	L	H
N	Y	C	N	Y	S	H	M	O	S	M	T
I	E	L	O	V	E	S	N	E	P	Y	A
K	N	O	I	T	A	R	B	E	L	E	C

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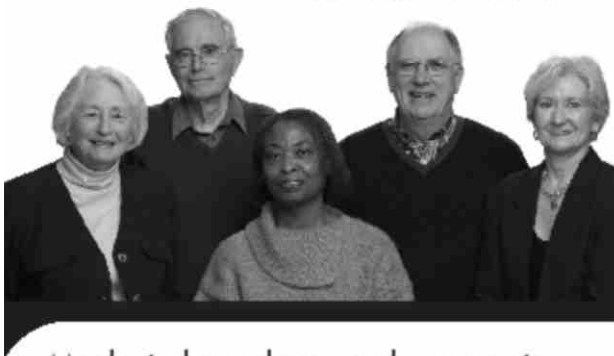
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Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.



Sunday Masses

Saturday: 5:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m.

Weekday Masses

Tuesday & Thursday: 12:00 noon

Wednesday & Friday: 8:00 a.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m.

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Mary Taylor, Pastoral Minister

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ext. 200

Sid Wocks, Hall Coordinator

ext. 210

Parish Council Chairperson

Mark Van Den Bossche

Ministries to Children

8:30 Mass & 10:30 Mass - September to June

10:30 Mass - July & August

Liturgy of the Word: Grades 2, 3 and 4

Sunday School: Aged 3 to Grade 1

Babysitting: Infants to age 3

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. & 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.

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Calendar of Events

Parent Meeting Confirmation	September 26
Parish Picnic	September 30
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)	October 3
Parent Meeting - First Reconciliation	October 17 & 24
Mass of Healing	October 25
Parish Mission	November 18, 19, 20
First Reconciliations	November 21, 22 & 24
Ministry Fair	November 24/25
Mass of Remembrance	November 27
1st Sunday of Advent	December 2
Parish Mission	April 20, 21, 22, 23

New Parishioners? Moving?

We invite all new parishioners to register with the Parish. The registration form is available at the Welcome Desk or parish office. If you have recently changed your address or phone number, please advise the parish office. Thank you.