

St. Michael's Parish Newsletter

A welcoming Eucharistic community, sharing Faith and reaching out to all...

What a wonderful Parish Mission Statement.

Over the summer months we welcome visitors with our small gesture of welcome before mass begins: a prayer card and a hand shake. I place before you this reflection that I had over the past weekend.



Genesis 18: 1-10 "Abraham looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them."

Luke 10:38-42 "Now as Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home."

As I reflect on our Parish Mission Statement and listen to the readings for the 16th Sunday in Ordinary time (July 21), I am drawn back to a wonderful time in my life. Over 15 years ago I was gifted with a time of study. I went to St. Patrick's Seminary in California to the Institute for Study of Vatican II. While I was studying, I had no Pastoral assignment so I was able to celebrate Sunday Mass at many different parishes. Some of the experiences were truly uplifting. I saw parishes where joy was evident in the way people were present to each other, in the way they lifted their voices in praise of God, and in their outreach in their community.

One parish that I found myself drawn to many times was St. Paschal Baylon. It was a new parish and they were building their new Church. So each Sunday they gathered in the school gym to celebrate the Sabbath. As I entered into the gathering space, I was met by a group of parishioners. These were 6 to 8 people who on a Sunday would be present to welcome the faithful members of the Parish. They would ask about the family members and their joys and struggles experienced over the past week. The visitor was treated with great reverence. The welcoming group would speak to the visitor about where they were from, ask about any needs they had so that the Parish community would lift the need up in prayer during the Sunday mass. I have to say I felt warm and welcomed by the community. At the end of mass, the Pastor would greet the visitors. A special welcome with a Prayer Card was given to each guest. I remember with great fondness that I had experienced Martha as she welcomed Jesus to her home.

I am sending out an invitation to our faith community to be a Warm Welcoming Eucharistic Community. If you have a desire to share in a Special Ministry of welcome, please give Helen Green or myself a call (519-433-6689). We need 8-10 people at each mass, 4-5 at each entrance. I extend the invitation to families, moms and dads with little children. Small children saying "good morning" make people smile. We need youth and seniors, widowed, single and married. All are welcomed to share this Ministry of Welcome. This ministry of hospitality is what St. Paul says marks the Christian Community.

In Christ, Fr. Murray Sample

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To Our Readers

by the Editors
Keith Rodrigues and Paul Tremblay

We expect that this Fall issue of the newsletter will be seen as a testimonial of the enthusiasm with which the St. Michael's Parish Family has lived the Year of Faith 2012-2013. It seems as though the momentum at St. Michael's has not slowed down even after the parish Centennial Year celebrations. Of course this has also been an historical year that has touched us with one humble servant, Pope Benedict XVI, passing the keys of St. Peter to another, Pope Francis I.

We are blessed at St. Michael's to have a dedicated Pastoral Team. It is true that we see its members come and go, but they are on a journey like everyone else and GO wherever the Holy Spirit calls them. This reality was expressed gracefully in Sr. Kathy's farewell message. We are also blessed to have parishioners who decide to lead with zeal in activities that nourish the parish family and its schools. You will see in this edition the work that various ministries continue to do with enthusiasm to bring people together, to celebrate the Sacraments, to build a foundation for our youth, and to maintain fiscal responsibility in the parish.

We were pleasantly surprised to receive more submissions that we could include in this issue. One of us, for example, was supposed to write an article about the success of the Rediscovering Catholicism book that was given to all families this year during the

Easter weekend and followed up with weekly book discussion meetings. Let us mention here therefore a few points about that book event. First we thank Trisha Zanin for her courage and leadership in pursuing her idea to the end. Here is a very short selection of testimonials from the book meetings that attest to its success: "a review of what we knew but forgot;" "let's do it again;" "I really enjoyed the fellowship;" "I really felt more connected to St. Michael's;" "I learned about reverence for saints, how to really experience the Mass, how to improve my prayer life..." "There is no way to measure how much this book has inspired me...There is genius in Catholicism;" "As a senior, it has been nice to mix and listen to younger people." One final point: events such as these do not end when people leave the parish hall. Discussions continue in the parking lot, even when it is dark and raining! Friendships are born.

Thank you all for your work in the parish and contributions to this Newsletter. You can view all our previous issues of the Newsletter on our website:



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“Bringing people together, getting to know the people you see at Mass each week, celebrating special occasions as a parish family, having fun together....”- these are the goals of the Social Committee!

Following a survey last September, we invited parishioners to volunteer to help in various ways with the social events during the year. Over 50 people indicated that they would help out in some way such as baking, setting up for events, preparing and serving food and cleaning up. Through the year working teams and friendships developed. It was not only fun to attend the events, but even more fun to work together organizing and hosting the socials. Even the clean ups became a lot of fun!

This year, we added a new twist to our Coffee Sundays. We tried to make them seasonal and theme based as well as to incorporate them into special events. These gatherings were called Coffee/Social Sundays and each month we saw an increase in the number of people attending after each mass. There seemed to be a “buzz” and friendly spirit as parishioners got to know each other. Special 50/50 Draws were held at most Coffee Sundays. The profits from the draws were directed to the Capital Fund.

Our last Coffee/Social Sunday was a farewell to Sister Kathy O’Keefe. She enjoyed “her party” and the opportunity to say farewell to so many of our parishioners. In November, the Volunteer Appreciation Event was hosted on a Sunday night and was the best ever attended. Parishioners who had served on various committees within the parish were invited to attend. Over 150 attended and were treated to refreshments, a variety of hors d’oeuvres and yummy desserts. Along with the musical accompaniment,

there was a wonderful spirit of family and camaraderie as parishioners met other parishioners.

Each February, we honour married couples who are celebrating a significant anniversary. This year’s Mass was very special as Father Murray blessed them and gave each couple a rose. A reception in the Parish Hall where refreshments and cake and cupcakes were served gave all parishioners an opportunity to come together to celebrate with the couples. Although it was very snowy the day before the event, a small group of dedicated volunteers managed to venture out and worked all day in the new kitchen baking and decorating over 400 cupcakes. It was busy!!!



One of the most beautiful events was the reception in the front foyer after the Easter Vigil for the newest members of our faith. About 125 people attended and enjoyed refreshments and finger foods. Candles along with the beautiful purple and pastel decor provided a warm, night time ambiance bringing parishioners together for Easter. It was a late night for our dedicated volunteers but a most memorable occasion for our new Catholics!

Three other events for which the Social Committee provided the refreshments were the fundraising Irish Dancing Concert, the Wednesday morning and evening Catholicism video sessions during Lent and the reception after the May Mission with Father Chircop.

A very special thank you to all those volunteers who rose to the challenge of serving our parish family at these social events. In September, we will be recruiting more volunteers to join the Social Committee. Look for the new survey in the September weekly bulletins to learn how you can be part of a great team!



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Finance Committee Report

by Gil Owens
Chair

The past year has indeed been a busy one for your Finance Committee. We saw the completion of a number of capital projects such as the replacement of the roof on the parish hall, the renovations to the kitchen and the installation of emergency lighting and exit signs. These projects and those carried out through the Building Committee were all part of the overall list of capital projects identified through the "Building Condition Assessment of Church & Parish Centre at St. Michael Parish" which was a building audit report prepared by Allan Avis Architects Inc.

This comprehensive building and facilities audit was required by the Diocese of London prior to the Parish receiving approval for undertaking any capital construction. This Report was presented to parishioners at a Special Meeting on May 12th, 2011.

This Audit Report prioritized the Capital Projects into four levels. It identified projects that needed to be undertaken from 2011 through to 2020 in order to maintain the integrity of our church building facilities. The estimated cost for all of the work identified at the time of the audit was \$1.2 million. The projects completed to date have resulted in a Loan Fund Debt to the Diocese of just over \$280,000 as of mid-October 2012.

Concurrently with our audit in 2011, the Diocese held a seminar on the potential for parishes to undertake Capital Campaigns. This meeting was designed for all Parish Finance Committees within the Diocese. The meeting was held on November 3, 2011 and was conducted by Paul Mack of Paul J. Mack & Associates Inc. who specializes in conducting fundraising for Capital Campaigns and who has worked with a number of parishes in this capacity.

Following this presentation, the Finance Committee began extensive discussions on future directions as a Parish now knowing the extent of our capital needs. The Finance Committee determined and agreed to focus on how to undertake the required capital work and to be financially responsible in the long term for our current parishioners and future generations.



Next was the question of not only how to make the payments for the existing debt, but also how to be proactive in raising the necessary capital funds to accomplish future identified capital debt. We have the blue print for the future capital building expenses and repairs and we need to also establish the same clear direction and Parish commitment to the financial implication in the long-term. Just as our homes will require ongoing maintenance, so will our parish church buildings.

While the Building Committee continued to monitor the building needs, the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Council contacted Paul J. Mack & Associates Inc. to undertake a capital campaign feasibility study. During the spring of 2012, Paul J. Mack completed a detailed Parish Review and Survey. A number of parishioners were contacted directly to share their views on a potential Capital Campaign and were surveyed to identify the degree of their financial commitment to a Capital Campaign. The survey results then were used to establish a potential goal for the fundraising efforts. The Final Report was presented to a joint meeting of the Pastoral Council and the Finance Committee in June 2012.

This report provided a wealth of information on the demographic nature of our Parish Community



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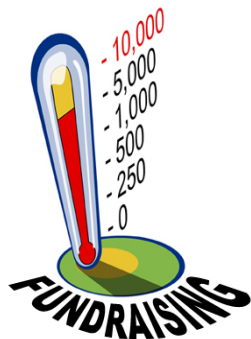
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Capital Fundraising: What's Happening?

and once again confirmed the strong level of support and commitment of parishioners of St. Michael's. The Pastoral Council and Finance Committee jointly discussed the pros and cons of undertaking a Capital Fundraising Campaign and the hiring of Paul Mack to



manage a campaign. This was a difficult discussion; we knew that we could not ignore the very real capital needs of our Parish, as detailed in the Avis Building Audit, while at the same time, we were very aware of the current economic conditions and the financial impact of having a consultant undertake

the fundraising campaign. It was jointly agreed by the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Council not to engage the services of an outside consultant. It was felt that, at this time, the cost/benefits of such a project by a consultant were not appropriate or fiscally prudent.

However, the continuing need for capital fundraising remains very real and immediate. Focusing on this issue, the Finance Committee decided it needed to put its efforts and support into three areas: parish-centered capital fundraising activities, ongoing support through individual donations and ongoing budget efficiencies to pay down the debt.

To this end, over the last half of 2012 and the first half of 2013, a number of Parish capital fundraising events have been initiated, which included two community arts and craft events, an afternoon of Irish dancing, 50/50 draws, donations from the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League, and individual and legacy donations, and fiscal management in 2012 and in 2013.

These efforts have resulted in a more than \$75,000 reduction in our Capital Debt, which is now less than \$190,000 (at the time of the writing of this article). What a remarkable achievement over the past 12 months! This is truly a wonderful testament to the commitment of the Parishioners of St. Michael's to our faith community.

The Finance Committee will now focus, wherever possible on funding as many of the identified capital

needs through Current Building funds, in order to minimize the amount of future borrowing for additional major projects (repairs, replacements, etc.). However, we must acknowledge that certain larger projects which carry significant costs cannot be reasonably paid for through the current operating funds.

The question now is how can my family help to sustain the future of St. Michael's Parish?

We know and recognize that just as each person or family is unique, so are their personal financial situations; however, there are many potential ways to help:

1. If each person or family placed \$5 a month, or about a loonie a week, into a Capital Fund envelope (which is available on the usher's desk), it would raise approximately \$3,000 a month or \$36,000 a year. This would go directly towards our debt.
2. Continue to support social and fundraising events at our parish by your attendance. It is a great way to meet people as well as contribute to the cause!
3. Consider an individual donation at any time and direct it to a specific capital project if you wish.
4. Consider a potential Legacy Gift donation. Father Murray can provide you with additional information to do this.

As your Finance Committee we will continue to plan for and support ongoing capital fundraising initiatives and individual donations, utilizing the leadership and expertise which exists within the St. Michael's Parish Family. On behalf of the Finance Committee, thank you for your ongoing financial support not only on a weekly basis in our Sunday Offertory collections, but also in supporting our capital needs now and into the future.

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Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

This year thirteen people were fully received into the Roman Catholic Church at St. Michael's Parish. They ranged in age from 20 years to 76 years old and came from various backgrounds and faiths. It was awesome to see the changes and development in them as we journeyed together. They were very quiet in the beginning but became very vocal at the end. Questions were asked without any qualms, and discussion became a very big part of our classes. Even the sponsors confirmed that they learned a great deal from spending the time with these neophytes. Community building became a focal point of our meetings on Wednesday evenings. If someone was missing, we were very concerned. There was never a time when someone did not come in with a treat for the coffee and tea table. The seminarians were the beneficiaries of the leftovers (if there were any!!) as Trevor (a seminarian!) was my assistant.



We celebrated at Easter Vigil as each and every one was accepted into our faith tradition. What a moving experience for them and for me! Now they are in a relationship with Jesus and can receive Him into their hearts on a regular basis. After Easter, we gathered to share a potluck dinner with the neophytes, their families and sponsors. What a celebration it was! We fed 60 people and celebrated with a wide variety of foods. May God bless each and every one as they continue their relationship with Him.

Unfolding Our Hands to Receive Jesus

One hundred and forty children made their First Reconciliation and First Communion this year! What a tribute to God that they wanted to be closer to Him and receive Him into their hearts. Most of these children prepared for the sacraments in our four feeder schools while some came from other schools that were not Catholic or were language specific. We brought them together on two evenings and a Saturday morning

in November to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. Moms and dads introduced their children to Father Murray. They then returned to their places while the children made their confessions. Before they left, Father gave the children a wooden cross as a reminder of their commitment to try to be a better person. Sister Mary Jo Fox, CSJ, met with those children who did not attend the feeder schools and prepared them for First Reconciliation and First Communion. Each child had a prayer partner during the preparation classes. Many of these prayer partners came to celebrate the First Communion with the children. Parents were invited to attend the classes as well, and I am sure they learned a great deal about our faith.



First Communion was celebrated over a five week period from April 13 to May 12. We organized the celebrations with small groups of no more than ten children so that there would be plenty of room for them in the sanctuary and so that parents could see their child as they listened to the words, "This is My Body" and "This is My Blood". Every Mass over that time had a child or ten who received Jesus for the first time! They went from folding their hands over their chest to opening them up to receive Jesus. What a gift!

Thank you to the teachers who prepared these wonderful gifts from God so that our children can be closer to Him. You did an awesome job.



Experiencing the Graces of God in Life

by Sister
Bonnie Pember

My name is Sister Bonnie Pember and I am a parishioner at St. Michael's since July 2012. My full religious title is Sister Marie of the Incarnation OCD and I am a cloistered Discalced Carmelite nun on an extended leave of absence for health reasons. Fr. Murray has been so good to me since my arrival in London and I would like to thank him, Sr. Kathy O'Keefe, Helen Green and everyone at St. Michael's for their goodness and prayers.

Presently, I am the office coordinator at the London Area Right to Life office at 1193 Oxford Street East, Unit # 3. The board there hired me on November 5th 2012, and ever since that time I have been learning more about current pro-life issues. Each life is precious and sacred from natural conception until natural death. Recently, the bishops in Ontario have released an eight-page document summarizing the basics of Catholic social teaching. Abortion is listed as the first abuse of human rights. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Article 5, Number 2270 states that:

"Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moments of his (her) existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person—among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life."

The office is open from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm from Monday to Friday, and our website is www.right2life.ca. I am in the office full time and available for any questions you might have about the issue of protecting all lives, young and old alike. Our branch is the educational branch and we are involved in the elementary pro-life school program, Grade 11 pro-life retreat in Sarnia as well as outreaches such as the Life Chain, Walkathon, 40 Days for Life and booths at the Western Fair and Ilderton Fall Fair to name a few. I am excited and honoured to be part of this necessary service to educate people and witness to the love of God in our world.

God bless you all!

English Learners Program

by Colleen Leckie

The English learner program at St. Michael's was initiated by Father Bijou John in the fall of 2012 in accordance with the goals of our Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

This program provides opportunities for those from non-English speaking countries to learn The Mass, its responses, readings, gospels, and prayers in English.

Classes are offered weekly from October 1 to May 30. Presently there are three volunteers. Orientation

and guidance are provided for each volunteer. Most learning is achieved on a one-to-one basis although one volunteer might provide guidance for two to three learners of the same language. Each week we dwell on The Mass for the coming weekend and also facilitate discussion, questions and inquiries.

Our challenges include being able to reach those in need of classes, and recruiting and retaining volunteers. If you are interested in helping out please contact the Parish Office at 519-433-6689.

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Goodbye from Sister Kathy



It is with mixed emotions that I take this next turn in the road on the journey of my life. I am deeply grateful to God, to all of our St. Michael's Parish Family, to our Pastor Fr. Murray, to all of the Parish Pastoral Team, to the parish staff, and

to each of you, our parishioners. It has been a great blessing to be present with you during the ordinary day-to-day as well as the very significant times in your lives, such as your celebrations of sacraments, your times of great joy and intense sorrow. The 100th Anniversary Year celebrations of St. Michael's Parish were truly wonderful! Our Pilgrimage to the Holy Land to travel in the footsteps of Jesus was for me a dream come true!



My heart has been touched by your faithfulness to God, your prayerfulness, your desire to grow in your spiritual life, your generous giving of your time, talents and treasure to our faith community, your courage during times of difficulty, and your loving support of one another. Thank you for your kindness, your thoughtfulness, and your warm hospitality, and for inviting me into your homes to visit and to share a meal with you.



Over the years my pastoral ministry has been diverse, including a total of ten years of parish ministry, more than seven years of full-time hospital chaplaincy and many years of part-time pastoral care, and

five years as Director of Field Education at St. Peter's Seminary. And, through my studies at Regis College in Toronto, I am a trained Spiritual Director.

Recently, the Sisters of St. Joseph of London joined with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton, Peterborough and Pembroke to become the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada. My new ministry



will be at Villa St. Joseph Retreat and Ecological Centre in Cobourg, Ontario. In addition, I will be a member of the Canadian Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph Ecological

Committee. I will be living at the Villa, working with three other Sisters of St. Joseph in the daily operation of the Retreat House, as well as offering Spiritual Direction, Prayer Days, Retreats, and assisting with the Village Earth Program. On the Retreat House grounds, there is a Community Garden. To my delight, another resident of my new home is a golden retriever named Noah!

Joining with St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians, I express these sentiments: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1: 3-6.



I extend a heart-felt thank you to all of you for your prayers, well-wishes, lovely cards, generous gifts, and your affection! A huge 'thank you' to Karen Owens and her Social Committee teams for the wonderful gatherings after all of the Masses on the weekend of June 8th and 9th, 2013. May the peace of Christ remain in your hearts and minds until we meet again.



Sr. Kathleen (Kathy) O'Keefe, CSI

Parish Photos





COR is a youth movement which invites young people to an awareness of themselves, their parents and families, and their relationships in

the family. It reveals to them the presence of Christ in others. The COR movement originated in South Bend, Indiana. The First COR weekend in Canada was held in the Diocese of London in 1970. The word "COR" (the Latin word for Heart, the symbol of love) stands for CHRIST IN OTHERS RETREAT.

A COR weekend engages young people (Grade 11 and up) in a new, exciting and challenging approach to their faith. Through discussions, activities, prayer, and just living and sharing together for a weekend, COR attempts to open lines of communication and areas of reflection that will carry over into their everyday lives - home, school, parish and place of work. The theme of COR is "Pass it On". The retreat encourages its members to Pass it On by extending themselves to the community in service. This is all achieved in the spirit of Christ.

Check out what some of St. Michael's Parish youth participants and adult volunteers have to say about their COR experience:

"My first COR was as a young adult in a leadership role. It was such an awesome experience to be as prepared as we were going into the weekend, but then giving God permission to take over. The transformation of the whole group was beautiful." *Lauren, adult leader*

"My COR experience was unbelievable. Ever since COR, I have known who I am, and who I want to be, as a Christian. I not only developed a stronger love for God, I gained a deeper appreciation for my friends and family." *Elizabeth, youth*

"I was 16 years of age when I attended my first COR weekend and learned very quickly that it was more than just a retreat. Seventeen years later the impact of that weekend still resonates with me. It impacted my family life; it bridged the teenage gap between my parents and I and brought my family closer together. The friends that I made through COR became lifelong friends. Even to this day when I see someone I met at COR, we still hug and are excited to reconnect because there is something special that we shared. My COR experiences also richly deepened my faith. Following my first COR weekend I started attending mass weekly and joined the growing group of youth who were termed the "orphans" in the back rows of our church (because we all wanted to be together and to attend mass with or without our parents). The weekend gave me a chance to talk about, explore, and ask questions about my faith at a time when I was discerning what I believed. COR was one of the most moving experiences of my life. It made me excited about my faith, confident in who I was and motivated me to give back to those around me. The retreat lit a spark in me when it came to youth ministry which became a fire that spread throughout so many aspects of my life. It even helped me to discern my career path as a teacher in the London District Catholic School Board. COR has been a blessing in my life, and I am proud to be a part of the team who brought COR back to our parish where we can continue to "Pass it on" to others." *Sue, adult leader*

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COR: November 15-17, 2013, Grades 11 & Up

"The COR Retreat was awesome! Through it I have made COR family members that I will have for the rest of my life! I have also deepened my love for my own family." *Ian, youth*

"The COR retreat has taught and influenced us a lot in how we view teenagers and families. It made us aware that teens are faith-filled and joyful people. They are very family oriented and are caring and loving not only to their friends and families but including elderly people that are not personally known to them. They taught us how to pray and have deeper faith." *Claire & Nandy, adult leaders*

"I attended my first COR retreat in my second year of university. I am so glad I did because it was a great way to get more involved in my faith and, more importantly, explore my faith in a more modern, youth led way. I recommend that everyone attend a COR at some point in their journey because it is a great opportunity, as it steps away from the more traditional ways that we are used to and is tailored to modern faith in our society today." *Jennifer, youth*

"For me the COR experience was a God experience, it once again showed me how when two or three are gathered in His name, God is truly present. It showed me that when we all pray for a common goal, God blesses each one present and the experience as a whole with peace and love." *Joan, adult leader*

"Just Do It! Now, that might sound like a Nike cliché, but miracles do happen. Yours to discover - Self, Fellowship, Community!" *Dominic, adult leader*

We are looking for adult volunteers to make this life-changing opportunity available for the youth of our city on the weekend of November 15-17, 2013 at John Paul II High School. The COR back-up team is the backbone of the COR retreat weekend: preparing items for the retreat in advance, cooking, cleaning, packing, unpacking, driving and praying. The back-up team is welcome to stay for the whole weekend or to serve for part of the weekend.

If you are in grade 11 and up, be sure to register for this incredible opportunity! Check the Youth Ministry bulletin boards for forms or contact Natalie at nmackay@dol.ca



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Youth Ministry Family Events 2013-2014

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

St. Michael's Youth Ministry values the role of the family in the life of the Church. We look for opportunities to gather families, foster the faith life and build community.

Families of ALL ages are welcome to come out to the following events.

FAMILY FALL GATHERING

Saturday, October 5, 6-8:30pm, 9123 Century Drive

St. Michael's Parish is hosting a fun fall gathering near Mount Brydges (9123 Century Drive) for all parishioners that includes hayrides, a campfire, snacks and more. This event is totally FREE! Check out the posters on the Youth Ministry bulletin boards for more information and for a map.

Please RSVP to Kelly Wharton at kwharton@fanshawec.ca if you plan to attend.



FAMILY CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, December 8, 1:30-3:30pm, Parish Hall

Come and journey as a family as we discover the "True Spirit of Christmas." Songs, games, refreshments and surprises! As in previous years this promises to be an exciting, uplifting and fun family event!



FAMILY SKATE

Monday, March 10, 2014, 3-5pm, Carling Arena

All are welcome to join us for an afternoon of skating at Carling Arena, located at 675 Grosvenor Street, just east of Adelaide Street. Skating is free, however we would ask that you bring canned goods for the London Food Bank.



Celebrations at Saint Kateri School

by Nathan Regier &
Louanne Henderson

A Changing Moment

This past year has been special for a particular school of the St. Michael's Parish community! That school was Blessed Kateri. And after this special moment it is now Saint Kateri! On May 8th the Blessed Kateri school community celebrated a wonderful moment, changing the name of the school to Saint Kateri after the canonization of Kateri Tekekwitha on October 21, 2012.

This past year I was a grade 7 student and thrilled to be returning to school for another year. To be honest, going into September, I didn't know much about Blessed Kateri becoming a Saint. But when students and teachers found out, the big dilemma was what would happen to our school name. Everybody was in favour of changing our name, but still how would we do this? Teachers talked and members of the community got involved and it was settled that in May the school's name would be changed during a special celebration.



Let us fast forward to April. The big name change was now only a month away. My teacher, Mr. Murphy, gave our class an assignment: to come up with a creative way to express the school's name change. So all our groups got together to work on the project. The best project would be presented at the Mass and/or reception after the celebration. But by the end of the assignment all the groups had something so good, yet so different to share. So we had a class compromise. We combined all the assignments and made an 'all-star' presentation. One presentation was for the Mass and the other was for the reception afterwards. The first presentation focussed on Kateri, the person, while the second was about the school's history and development. The plan involved a Mass with the whole school community, Father Murray and other members of St. Michael's. After the Mass everybody would gather outside for a tree planting to commemorate the name changing. Each class would write a prayer or reflection to put on the tree. Finally, there would be a reception in the library with snacks and drinks and a second presentation.



To relate all this back to my original topic, the importance of this event to the school and the community is quite simple. All this work shows how much effort the entire school put into this celebration. And even though I'm not in Grade 8, the Grade 8s should be very excited to be the first graduates of Saint Kateri. This will also be one of the first schools to have two names. One year named after a Blessed, the next a Saint. We call this a changing moment.

Nathan Regier

Father Murray's Reflections on the Celebration

Father Murray was deeply moved by the beautiful moments of this school celebration and shared them with the St. Michael's community. He witnessed how the parents, school community and parish came together to mark the canonization of the first native Canadian.

The Mass celebrated Kateri's culture through the beating of the drum during the glorious hymn of praise to our Heavenly Father. A special moment during the Mass occurred when six young women took the role of Kateri, each in her turn wrapped in a rough brown shawl and each portraying key moments along Kateri's life journey.

In his homily, Father Murray reminded the children that they, like Kateri, are messengers of God's love, and encouraged them to take on aspects of Kateri's character, despite teasing or ridicule, just as she rose above those who ridiculed her.

Sister Kateri, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, was a special guest who spoke of her life journey, carrying Kateri's name. The students wrapped her in the special shawl, and she was greatly moved to be speaking to the students in the name of Saint Kateri. For 60 years of her sisterhood she has prayed for Kateri's canonization and was a special guest in Rome when the wonderful day arrived.

For Father Murray this day of great joy highlights what our Catholic schools are all about – a place where we, children and adults, can talk and sing about God's glory and love for each of us.

Louanne Henderson



Fr. Philip offered fifteen practices during a three day Mission at St. Michael's this past May 20 to 22. Fr. Philip is a Jesuit priest with advanced degrees in Pastoral Theology,

Communications and Spirituality. However, it is his lived faith and deep prayer life that truly enabled him to share with us the practices of living faith in such a way that we sense God and experience God in all things. He helped us to realize that these practices will allow us to have eyes that see, ears that hear, hearts that love, and mouths that praise God's goodness.

TRUST

Truthfulness. The measure of your truthfulness will be the measure of your courage. Truthfulness is the virtue which consists of showing oneself to be true in deeds and words. "Your actions speak so loud that I cannot hear what you're saying!"

Reconciliation and remembering. Sin damages or breaks our communion with God. To be reconciled is to be restored to the dignity and blessings of the life of the children of God. To remember who we are reconciles us to the Church which represents all of God's creation. We are restored to peace and the certainty in our hearts and minds that we are living our lives for a worthy purpose.

Unity (Shalom). Practice unity so that you are aligned in oneness, wholeness - what we think, what we say and what we do reflect the same thing. When all is in unity, we are in shalom space. What fills our minds? Thought determines speech and action. Prepare our hearts and minds to be at one with God so that our lives will be in harmony with God. In Him, with Him, through Him.

Silence and stillness. These are great friends we must get to know in our daily lives. They introduce us to ourselves and to God, because in silence and stillness we discover the deepest desires of our heart. They point out the path to the only One who can fulfill these desires. It takes a great deal of energy to develop these

gifts, sitting still, quietly doing nothing, being patient with yourself.

Tenacity and perseverance. Just as a toddler learning to walk takes a tentative step falls, takes two steps, falls etc. so we must be tenacious and persevering. We fall, ask God for help and get up again. We must be passionate about accepting forgiveness. Take courage, Jesus says. Stay focused on your goal of living a life of faith that says you are God's beloved. Growth in faith, love and peace does not happen by accident - it takes nourishment like the sacraments and parish missions.



FIDELitas

Foot washing. This is a non-negotiable part of the Eucharist according to the Gospel of John - in the middle of supper, not the traditional Jewish welcoming foot washing ritual as guests arrive, but rather as a sign of service. Fr. Philip calls this a "radical inclusion"; everyone gets the same treatment. We are not easily identified by our feet. Jesus did not look up to see "Is this Judas who will betray me?" or "Is this Peter who will deny me?" We must also allow Jesus to wash our feet.

Immersion. In Baptism we are immersed into the waters of new life; we die to our selves, disappear so that Jesus can appear. We are to be like salt and disappear and yet like light and appear. We are to live life as the Paschal mystery - the life, death and resurrection that Jesus lived. "We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song." - St. Augustine

Unwrapping the Gift of Faith with Fr. Philip Chircop S.J.

Devotion. Choose to embrace the one that nurtures our faith. Devotion is an attitude whereby we acknowledge that we are the creatures and God is the creator. Yet He invites us to unite with His compassion and allow ourselves to be the dwelling place of His Spirit.

Enthusiasm. We are desperate for meaning and belonging. Faith is a quiet light that illuminates our minds and hearts to connect us to God, creation and ourselves. Our passion for life is sustained from that space in our soul where only God dwells. What is nearest to the heart is often farthest from the word, so enthusiasm reflects itself in our actions.

Laughter. It was Joseph Ratzinger, who was later elected Pope Benedict XVI, who said that in the early Church, the liturgy included the Easter Laughter. The homily had to contain a story that made people laugh so that the Church resounded with a joyful laughter. Ratzinger added "That may be a somewhat superficial form of Christian joy. But is there not something very beautiful about laughter becoming a liturgical symbol?"

VISION

Vulnerability. We must celebrate our brokenness and stop pretending that we are invincible. Our navels are reminders of our neediness; once attached there was the umbilical cord that gave us life. Today prayer is the cord that maintains our connection to God, our unique intimacy with the Divine.

Inclusion. "God thinks like the Samaritan who did not pass by the unfortunate man. He helped without asking for anything in return or whether he was a Greek or a Jew, rich or poor. He simply helped." Pope Francis - Audience, March 27. Respect for the human person requires that we honour his dignity as a creature of God. Who are we still excluding?

Simplicity. Let go of all that is unnecessary so there will be room for the necessary. It is impossible to live simply unless we know our value as a child of God and trust in his abundant mercy. Live the sacrament of the present moment so your deepest desires are compatible with God's desire for you.



Imperfection. Celebrate your imperfection, your incompleteness without God. Let us remember that we are clay awakened by the breath of God who Himself incarnated as a human to show us the Way to perfection.

Obedience. Our culture has little to offer us by way of explaining what true obedience means. Obedience is "heart listening." What is God asking of me? We sometimes fight the call to grow and change. It takes courage to open up and be receptive to the call we hear in our hearts.

Father Chircop reminds us that we are an Easter people and as we live our own resurrection stories let us hear God coaxing us to welcome Him into our lives.



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Parish Information

St. Michael's Parish, 511 Cheapside St., London, ON N5Y 3X5

Phone: 519-433-6689 • Fax: 519-433-2301

E-mail: stmichlon@dol.ca • www.stmichaels.dioceseoflondon.ca

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:00 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.

African Caribbean Catholic Community Mass (St. Josephine Bakhita)

4th Sunday of each month at 2:30 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Free Bus Service to 10:30 a.m. Mass



The route . . .

9:50 a.m.

- 64 Wyndham
- Blackwater east of Adelaide - bus stop
- Grenfell just east of Blackwater
- Fanshawe/Trossacks - bus stop on corner
- 770 Fanshawe Park Rd east of Fremont - bus stop
- Fanshawe Park Road - west of Fremont
- Adelaide/Fanshawe - bus stop south of Fanshawe
- Kipps Lane/Adelaide - bus shelter just east of Adelaide
- Kipps Lane/Barker
- Kipps Lane - bus stop east of Barker
- Kipps Lane/Kenmore Place - bus stop
- 295 Briarhill
- Cheapside/Boullee
- Huron Street - bus stop east of Wedgewood Drive 10:15 a.m.
- Royal Oak Apartments - 3 stops go to St. Michael's Church

The bus will stop at regular bus stops or wherever it is hailed along the route.

Pastoral Team

Father Murray Sample, Pastor

msample@dol.ca

ext. 202

Father Peter Amszej, Associate Pastor

pamszej@dol.ca

ext. 205

Father John Sharp, Weekend Ministry

jsharp@dol.ca

Deacon Gaston Mabaya, Deacon

gmabaya@dol.ca

Helen Green, Pastoral Minister

hgreen@dol.ca

ext. 215

Anne Hanley, Pastoral Minister

ahanley@dol.ca

ext. 203

Natalie MacKay, Coordinator of Youth Ministry

nmackay@dol.ca

ext. 206

Staff

Pat Estabrooks, Receptionist/Secretary

stmichlon@dol.ca

ext. 201

Jolanda Squire, Financial Secretary

jsquire@dol.ca

ext. 208

Sid Wocks, Hall Coordinator

swocks@dol.ca

ext. 210

Parish Council Chairperson

Corrie Gicante

Children's Ministries

Sunday: 10:30 a.m. Mass

Liturgy of the Word: Grades 2, 3 and 4

Sunday School: Aged 3 to Grade 1

Babysitting: Infants to age 3

Calendar of Events

Feast of St. Michael

September 28 & 29

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

October 2

Thanksgiving Mass, 10:00 a.m.

October 14

Mass of Healing, 12:00 noon

October 29

Confirmation Parent & Candidate Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

November 4

Volunteer Appreciation

November 10

All Day Confessions

December 13