

St. Michael's Parish Newsletter

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

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the Disciples, "I have seen the Lord", and she told them that he had said these things to her.

(John 20:18)



My Brothers and Sisters:

We gather this Easter Triduum to celebrate our call to be Disciples of the Lord. Ponder for just a moment these words taken from St. John's Gospel. Mary had come to the tomb alone, fearful and sorrowful; the one she had served had died. She had witnessed His journey to Calvary. She stood with His mother and heard His final cry, "Forgive them,...into your hands I commit my spirit." She had joined the funeral procession and helped arrange His body in a borrowed tomb. She had not done for Him what was required by Jewish law; she had no time to anoint His body for burial



and now she had come to the tomb in the dark to anoint His body. The tomb was open – someone had rolled back the stone! As she looked inside, His body was gone. She heard a voice, "why do you look for Him among the dead? He is Risen!" What does this mean, "He is Risen"? As she wanders through the garden, she hears a familiar voice calling, "Mary", and Mary asked..."Lord, Is that really you?" "Mary, go tell the brothers that I have Risen." Mary was the first Disciple to bring Resurrection News; this is the call of every Disciple.

Each of us, plunged into the baptismal waters, has been anointed to be a prophet. The prophet's role is to make Disciples of all the nations. We gather on these three Sacred Days to ponder the good news that God loved us so much that He died for us.

We celebrate on Holy Thursday that God became the servant to the Disciples. He who made all of creation washes the feet of the Disciples: "I, your teacher and master, wash your feet; now you must do the same for one another." The one who made all of creation offers His life for the Disciples on Good Friday: the perfect sacrifice that takes sin away. The one who made all of creation enters death but after three days in the tomb conquers death. Yes, He is Risen and this is the message the Disciples need to bring to the world.

We renew that commitment this Easter to be Disciples that bring good news to the world. Yes, God so loved the world that he died for us, so that He could destroy the power that death has over us. I warmly welcome you to come and to celebrate your anointing to be a Disciple.

Christ is Risen... Alleluia!



Fr. Murray Sample
Fr. Murray Sample
Pastor

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Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday – April 12th & 13th, 2014

April 12th at 5:00pm

April 13th at 8:30am; 10:30am; 12:30pm

Mass of Chrism – April 14th

7:00pm - St. Peter's Cathedral

Sacred Triduum (3 Days)

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday

Holy Thursday – April 17th

Mass of the Lord's Supper - 7:30pm

8:30pm - Adoration of the Eucharist
until 12:00 midnight

Night Prayer at Midnight

Good Friday – April 18th

10:00am - Stations of the Cross

Led by the Youth

3:00pm - Divine Liturgy

Holy Saturday – April 19th

9:00am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Blessing of Easter Food

(Tradition of many Europeans)

Easter Vigil – April 19

8:30pm - Culmination of the Triduum

We listen to Sacred Scripture;
we renew our Baptismal Faith;

We feast on the Body and Blood of Christ,
that feeds us to be the Body of Christ;
Catechumens receive the Sacraments
of Initiation

Easter Sunday – April 20th

8:30am; 10:30am; 12:30pm

(at the 10:30am mass there will be a second mass
celebrated in the Parish Hall for the overflow crowd)

Please show courtesy in the parking lot and on
the streets. Please do not block driveways.

Sacrament of Penance

Wednesday, April 9th

(All Day Confessions) - 8:30am-8:30pm

Friday, April 11th

10:00-11:00am; 3:00-4:00pm; 7:00-8:00pm

Tuesday, April 15th

10:00-11:00am; 3:00-4:00pm; 7:00-8:00pm

(No confessions heard during the Sacred Triduum)



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To Our Readers

by the Editors
Keith Rodrigues and Paul Tremblay

Every issue of the newsletter is special to us. We experience the process from ideas and inspiration to the end product that bears witness to the commitment of parishioners and the pastoral team to their faith and their community in Christ.

In one of his numerous homilies posted on the *Word on Fire* website¹, Fr. Robert Barron explains the meaning of the Greek word *metanoia* as “going beyond the mind that you have” or to see and think differently. Fr. Barron points out that Jesus is trying to explain to us that there is an underlying reality that is closer to the divine but that is impossible to see unless we change the way we see, think, and imagine. This is indeed good news, for our journey is a quest on the road to *metanoia*.

The St. Michael's family provides many ways to walk along this road together. We have seen many examples where St. Michael's parishioners do live up to their guiding principle of being a welcoming community, and this we see not only in liturgy but also in the various ministries and groups. We hope that everyone feels invited to participate in these vital activities of the parish. We acknowledge that not everyone is at a stage in their journey where they feel able or confident to participate in ministry activities.

Thomas Merton once said “He called out to me from His own immense depths.” Looking back on our own experiences of becoming Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, we felt unworthy of standing at the altar in front of the community, but we know that it was with the help of the Holy Spirit that we were able to do so.



Joining a choir at St. Michael's is another inspiring experience. You may discover that your singing ability is not as bad as you thought. Also, in late winter if you come and sing at the 5:00pm Mass, you will notice that occasionally the sun shines through the stained glass wall of the west side and radiates light all across the church, flooding our faces with its warm yellow hues and adding extra joy to the music. May we cross paths on our own journeys of *metanoia*.

We wish everyone a blessed Lent,
Holy Week, and Easter.

¹www.wordonfire.org/WOF-Radio/Sermons/2009/Sermon-433---Third-Sunday-of-Easter---Resurrection.aspx

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Parish Pastoral Council Report

by Corrie Gicante

At our January meeting we welcomed our second Youth representative to Pastoral Council. Ryan Ahlers is a grade eight student attending St. Catherine of Siena.

Since November 2013, Pastoral Council has focused on several issues requiring reflection and discussion to ensure we are achieving our parish vision:

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

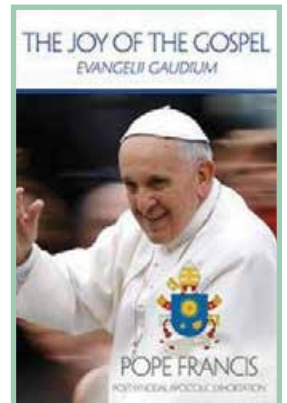
One key question Council addressed was whether St. Michael's Parish should assume the responsibility and expense of hosting Hospitality North - an ecumenical group of four churches in London (Trinity Lutheran, New St. James Presbyterian, Colborne Street United and St. Michael's) which serves a weekly hot meal to those in need. St. Michael's Parish Pastoral Council agreed to join Hospitality North in 1997. Meals are served from the second week in September until the last Thursday in May. Trinity Lutheran Church hosted the dinner for 10 years and New St. James Presbyterian Church for 6. Currently St. Michael's provides one meal per month, which is cooked in our parish hall kitchen, delivered to and served at New St. James' Presbyterian Church, and supported by 30 volunteers from our parish.

At Council meetings since September, Father Murray and Howie Wright (Finance Committee liaison) have provided information, reported on meetings they attended with Hospitality North and the Finance Committee, and addressed several concerns Council raised. At the February 2014 meeting, the majority of Council supported the recommendation that St. Michael's Parish host Hospitality North provided the following concerns were addressed: additional custodial costs, flexibility regarding the time of day to serve the meal given parish and school commitments, and meeting

the required number of volunteers from the parish. Overall, council believes that Hospitality North will lead to a greater understanding of and support for our parish vision "Reaching Out to All".

In preparation for the strategic planning process that will determine our parish goals for 2014-2019, we read the book *Rebuilt*, the story of an American Catholic Parish that addressed the New Evangelization in an effort to engage its parishioners to "become the best version of itself." Starting in February, we shared our reflections about that parish's journey and its relevance to St. Michael's parish as we prepare for the future. Parishioners interested in learning about *Rebuilt* can access the link: www.rebuiltparish.com.

We are also reflecting on Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*. It is devoted to the theme of the New Evangelization and invites us to address current challenges in the church in order to ensure that "there is a life constantly driving, sustaining and assessing ... ecclesial structures" (26). Pope Francis states that parishes are "not an outdated institution" (28); they must be "capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity" in order "to bring them nearer to the people, to make them environments of living communion and participation and to make them mission-oriented" (28). Pope Francis encourages "each particular Church to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform" (30).



As we begin our strategic planning process, we welcome parishioners' thoughts and prayers and encourage you to



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Parish Pastoral Council Report continued

read the *Exhortation* (to access the complete document search for: *Evangelii Gaudium* Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, 2013.)

As we continue to foster the pastoral activity of St. Michael's Parish, I am very grateful to Pastoral Council for their ongoing commitment and support, and to Father Murray, Father Peter and the pastoral team for working collaboratively, "with openness, honesty, courage and respect, for the well-being of the entire parish." (Parish Pastoral Council Blessing: 13-10-27)

Parish Pastoral Council Members 2013-14:

Corrie Gicante (Chair), Gail Brown (Vice-Chair), Ryan Ahlers and Rosa Castilla (Youth Representatives), Kristie Cresswell, Louise Jackman, Katerina Leung, Anita Rodrigues, Angela Townend, Tommy Wang, Ollie Wolanski, Howie Wright, Patricia Zanin.



St. Michael's Library

by Louanne Henderson

- ✚ Are you inspired by the lives of the saints and want to learn more?
- ✚ Do you want to know about the challenges and experiences faced by your Saint name?
- ✚ Would you like to be immersed in the writings of modern day Catholic writers?
- ✚ Would you like a personal encounter with Jesus?
- ✚ Do you wonder about different ways to pray?
- ✚ Are you looking for literature to help you introduce God to your young children?
- ✚ Are you facing a crossroads or a challenge and seeking to hear God's voice in your life?

Then draw near to the St. Michael's Parish Library, located in the foyer cloakroom. Our library is stocked with over 200 books on a wide variety of current topics. There are many books with the simple name Jesus in the title, inviting us to learn about and get to know our Saviour. By knowing Him, may we grow in our own personal relationship with Him as He leads us on our journey to the Father. Popes and Prophets figure prominently amongst the titles. These important spiritual leaders speak to their people in their own place and time, and their words echo through to our own times. There are books about prayer

and about Eucharistic adoration that invite us to enrich and deepen our own prayer life, or perhaps provide inspiration when spending time before the Blessed Sacrament. For those interested in the modern day church, there are titles about Parish life and the customs and traditions that make up our Church. In addition many titles invite us to explore the church's teaching on social justice and can inspire us to act in this important area.

Our Library provides many inspirational works about hope, forgiveness, faith, grace and living through grief. There are titles for children as well, introducing them to stories from the life of Jesus, prayer and the Mass. Books are arranged in alphabetical 'groupings', based on the title. The library is available to all. There is a sign out binder located on the shelf. Borrowers are asked to sign the list, enjoy the book, and return within a timeframe of 2-3 weeks. When returned, the book should be placed in the 'Return Basket' on the shelf. Donations of (new or gently used) books can be placed on the floor beside the shelves and will be gratefully accepted.

We hope that the library will be a source of information and inspiration to our parishioners. (See *Parish Photos* page 15)

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RCIA Candidates

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a journey of conversion within the living community of faith that culminates in the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

It is for (1) children who have reached the age of reason (seven years old), (2) adults who have not received the Sacraments of Initiation and who express a desire to study Catholic Christian beliefs and practices, (3) adults who have been baptized Catholic or in another Christian tradition and have not received First Communion or Confirmation but wish to explore membership in the Catholic Church, and (4) adults who have been baptized Catholic and have made their First Communion but have not been Confirmed.

Preparation is done through a process of prayer, rituals, reflection on the word of God and the teachings of the Church. The main task is to develop faith a little bit at a time. Prayer and getting to know Christ, the Catholic Church and how Christians live help make an informed decision about entering the Catholic Church. To put it more simply: You need to fall in love with Jesus.

The four stages for the RCIA are: *Inquiry* (Just looking), *Catechumenate* (Learning about the Faith), *Purification and Enlightenment* (Getting ready for rebirth) and *Initiation* (Membership). Each person comes with a sponsor, who will journey with them, talk about faith issues, be present with them at our meetings, and support them. The sponsor is a practicing Catholic who is not afraid to talk about their faith, who is a good listener, and who is ready to share a conversation.

Easter is a time of celebration. Easter Vigil brings many rituals that are very important to the candidates. We walk in darkness and then into light; we bless water that will be used to baptize; we bless the Paschal candle that will burn during the celebration of our sacraments; we listen to the Word of God and reflect on it; and we celebrate Confirmation and First Communion. What a beautiful witness of faith! Conversion happens and is very evident at this wonderful celebration of the love for Jesus!



The following words are from the adults and children who are looking forward to becoming full members of our faith community:

"I really look forward to Wednesday evenings; not only for the knowledge I am gaining, but for the time spent with my RCIA family. They are an amazing group! Through them I have become a more positive person. I am also thankful for the opportunity to be baptized alongside my children at Easter. I am truly blessed." *Wendy Szucs (Catechumen)*

"The RCIA program helps me to understand more about the faith, life and teachings of Jesus and the gospel. I feel that Jesus is guiding me to a new vision and growth. I found that my relationship with Jesus is growing stronger. I learned that putting God first in my life makes everything else fall into place." *Hema Gopala Krishnan (Catechumen)*

"I have been involved in the RCIA program for several years. It is an excellent program. As the group becomes better acquainted, it is a wonderful experience to see barriers removed and friendships begin to form. It is certainly the work of the Holy Spirit." *Irene Gilpin (Sponsor)*

"The RCIA program has afforded me the opportunity to deepen my faith. The process has awakened feelings, emotions, and thoughts I didn't know I had. I truly feel changed and empowered to live a life full of the Holy Spirit." *Jeff Rae (Catechumen)*

"RCIA has given me a better understanding of the Catholic religion. I have grown closer to Jesus my Saviour. I now truly and fully understand the importance of Christ dying on the Cross for our salvation." *Suresh Jogie (Catechumen)*



RCIA Candiates continued

"As a sponsor it renews my faith and helps me learn more about certain things I didn't know. It's a great way to meet new and interesting people and learn more about them. It is an honour to be chosen as a Sponsor by someone who knows you." *Brennan Rae (Sponsor)*

"Before joining RCIA I was consumed by my own thoughts about my husband's death two years ago. As I was attending classes, these thoughts became easier or more pleasant. I began to think of my husband being taken care of in a better place and not being in pain any longer. I am also hoping to join him one day." *Esther Ross (Catechumen)*

"I have gained by praying and praying helps me connect with God. I have also gained in getting closer to God. Another thing I have gained from the instructions on becoming a Catholic is friendship, and I have found better ways to like and love other people." *Kelsey Vandewetering (Youth Catechumen)*

"I have received the understanding of how special God is to me and how special I am to God. I feel that the Holy Trinity has led me through the beginning of my

faith journey. As I am becoming a Catholic, I am getting closer and closer to God. Due to this, I am obtaining a better relationship with God." *Nic Vandewetering (Youth Catechumen)*



"RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation for Children) helped me become a Catholic by teaching me about God and Jesus. It also helped me by showing me what it will be like to be baptized, and it showed us the seven sacraments and taught us prayers." *Adam Szucs (Youth Catechumen)*

"Going to RCIC made me feel more helped. I now understand religion and God. I love Anne and the Catholic Church and I feel great. I am glad we joined." *Juliana Szucs (Youth Catechumen)*

"Being RCIA sponsors is such a blessing as it is a great way of learning and knowing in a much deeper way our Catholic faith. Journeying with catechumens is always a joyful and faith-filled experience, and with it comes abundant blessings. We are deeply touched, humbled, loved, grateful and joyful of what the Catholic faith shares and shows us through the RCIA program. RCIA is a conversion process that happens over time." *Claire and Nandy Mortera (Sponsors)*

"The RCIA program has been a wonderful experience. It has given me the opportunity to not only share my faith with others but also a chance to come to a greater understanding of my own faith. It has been a joyful experience to work and share with people who are so open to exploring what they believe and developing a greater relationship with Christ. The RCIA program has certainly been a great blessing for me and has given me many experiences that I will carry into the future." *Glen Ball (Seminararian)*

He is Risen! Alleluia!

God loves us so much that He sent His only Son!
May the Peace and Love of Easter be in your hearts,
and may we grow closer to Him in all that we do.



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Pastoral Ministry Update

Eucharist to the Sick

Tarcisus was a teenager when he first encountered the bravery of the Christians in Rome who stood courageously in the face of persecution and death for the Name of Jesus. He became a catechumen, studying assiduously, and when his relationship with God was strong, he received the Sacraments of Initiation and became a full-fledged Christian.

His first mission was taking Communion to the sick and imprisoned. Towards the end of Mass, the priest would place the Eucharist in a small purse and Tarcisus would hurry through the back alleys of Rome to sneak it to the imprisoned Christians.

One day, two of his peers stopped and asked him what he was up to. Tarcisus told them not to bother him. They demanded to have the purse they saw around his neck. Tarcisus resisted their aggression as he held on tightly to the Eucharist. Finally, he was beaten so badly that he died. Tarcisus was found dead with both hands tightly clasping the little purse. Today he is the Patron Saint of the Ministers of the Altar; that means he protects in a special way all those involved in ministry related to the Eucharist.

In January, those in our parish who take Communion to the Sick and Homebound were invited to a luncheon as an expression of gratitude for their unseen services. Our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Sick (EMHCS) had to brave the wiles of a very aggressive winter this year.

Nevertheless, away they went mandated by the priest from the foot of the altar at Mass to take the Eucharist to our brothers and sisters who could not be in church with us. Father Murray enjoined them to take the Eucharist to the sick within the boundaries of St. Michael's parish.

Including the 5 newcomers this spring, we have approximately 35 persons who take Communion to people in care facilities and private homes. Our EMHCS will be commissioned at Mass on June 22nd, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, and their names will be sent to Bishop Fabbro.

The new EMHCS who have been shadowing the veterans for a while will receive their own pyx to carry the Eucharist, a name badge and an authorization letter from Fr. Murray.



It is edifying to hear from our parishioners how grateful they are to receive a personal visit from Jesus Christ himself. I can only imagine how Jesus must wait for the chance to get there. Both Jesus and these parishioners are limited; neither of them drive! They depend upon those of us who have our health and a driver's license to ensure they get together.

The EMHCS who go to care facilities conduct the identical Communion Rite that we have at Mass. Depending upon the facility, they also lead a Liturgy of the Word for groups of Catholics and other denominations that gather to hear the Sunday readings and commentary. Some EMHCS go to facilities where people just cannot get out of their hospital beds to receive Jesus. In private homes, our EMHCS do their best to go two-by-two just as the first disciples in the Gospel were sent out by Jesus in mission. In other cases, a sick husband or wife will ask their spouse to bring Communion with them after Mass.

The blessings of this ministry are as boundless as they are humbling. Imagine the Son of God becoming so small that he can be held between our two fingers and completely dependent on us for getting him out of the tabernacle and into the world!





St. Joseph's Hospice is proud to continue our long legacy of compassionate care in our beautiful new home with an exciting new journey into residential care. We have a new home and an expanded mission, and we invite you to help us celebrate the next step in our journey...together!

Hospice palliative care aims to relieve suffering and improve the quality of living and dying for people who are faced with a life-limiting illness. It strives to help patients and families deal with important physical, psychological, social, spiritual and practical needs at this difficult time. St. Joseph's Hospice also helps people cope with loss and grief.



St. Joseph's
Hospice

Share the Journey

The two women who founded Hospice of London more than 29 year ago had a dream to build a residential hospice. That dream is now a reality. After months of searching, a site was found and a new partnership with the Sisters of St. Joseph was formed. Construction was quickly started on 18,000 square feet on the third floor of the Sisters of St. Joseph's Congregational Centre and from June to December 2013 significant renovations were undertaken that allowed us to move in according to our projected plan.

St. Joseph's Hospice made history on February 20th when we welcomed our first resident into one of our ten new residential suites. We currently have four residents living in our hospice home, and we anticipate full occupancy in the coming weeks. This was a momentous occasion and the culmination of years of planning, with the support of many, many people in our community.

The new residential program helps fill the gap for hospice palliative care beds in London and Middlesex County. Alongside the residential program, St. Joseph's Hospice will continue to expand our community programs, which include home visiting and support for palliative clients, caregivers, and the bereaved, which it has been providing since 1985.

The St. Joseph's Hospice Home has an extraordinary staff of professional caregivers who work together to provide the highest level of comprehensive and compassionate hospice care. The Hospice team is comprised of a hospice medical director who works with other palliative care doctors in our community, nursing staff, PSWs, a spiritual care / supportive care worker, complementary therapists, a nutrition coordinator and specially trained volunteers.

Now situated on Windermere Road in London, Ontario, within the boundaries of St Michael's Parish, St.

Joseph's Hospice offers a peaceful, natural setting which includes mature trees and garden areas. The design and construction focused on respect for the environment, honouring the Gold LEED-certified standard as established by the Sisters of St. Joseph who are devoted to being environmentally responsible.

The 10 residential suites include a bedroom, living room, ensuite bathroom with shower, and private balcony. Family members have the opportunity to sleep over with their loved one in the suite, and the home provides supportive communal living spaces as well; a great room, dining room, terrace, garden courtyard and quiet rooms for residents and their families.

St. Joseph's Hospice is an incredible gift not only to our residents, their caregivers and family members, but also to the larger community. The physical proximity to Western University and hospitals will provide students the opportunity to partake in meaningful learning experiences about dying with dignity.

The Capital Campaign to build and sustain the new St. Joseph's Hospice is set at \$5.5 million. To date we have received gifts and pledges totalling \$4 million. We are extremely grateful to all of the very generous donors to our Capital Campaign, but our work is not yet done, with \$1.5 million of our goal remaining to be achieved. Help give palliative and bereaved families what they need most...a place of comfort, care and hope in our new home including a residential hospice.

We continue to provide tours to the community. Please contact Gabriella Catolino at 519-931-3460 if you are interested in visiting or volunteering to serve our Sisters and Brothers.

Find out more at www.sjhospicelondon.com





The NET Retreat for Confirmation Candidates 2014

On Friday January 17 and Monday March 3, the National Evangelization Team of Canada (NET Team) was at our parish to lead the Confirmation candidates in a retreat.

NET teams consist of 10 to 12 university aged youth who commit themselves to travelling across Canada over a year and leading retreats and faith experiences for thousands of young people. NET ministries see Confirmation as a vital time in the faith journey of young Catholics.

Retreats such as these provide opportunities for our young people to dive deeper into their faith. During every NET retreat the youth are given a time for prayer, allowing their own responses to God. They are also given some tips on how to continue to grow in their faith through prayer, the sacraments, fellowship and service. We consider these four “tools” essential to the fostering of an active faith life.

What our Confirmation candidates had to say about this retreat experience:



“The retreat was awesome. I enjoyed the games and activities that I participated in. One of the games we played was Maze Runner.” *Tyler*

“I enjoyed the NET retreat because it helped me understand how the concept of confirmation relates to our own lives. My favourite part of this experience was the 30 minute prayer time because it allowed me to deepen my relationship with God.” *Erin*

“I had a very good time. I enjoyed the songs, skits and the game. My group leader Karl played the “Game of Life” with me on my iPhone during one of the breaks.” *Alex*



“My highlight on the retreat day was when we played games and went into small groups and discussed different topics. I liked the games because we all played together and had fun.” *Matti*



“One of the greatest things about the NET retreat was the skit that was performed for us. Another thing I remember was the games that we played. A highlight from the retreat day was the prayer time because it connected me with my goal of confirmation.” *NET Participant*

“I remember the small group and the games we played. I also liked when we went to church for the prayer session because it helped me learn about God and Jesus. I also learned a lot about confirmation from Ian, my small group leader.” *Tanner*

“I thought that the retreat was fun. I really enjoyed the mass that we went to.” *Daniel*

“I enjoyed all of the games we played; my favourite was the maze game. It was a fun way to make new friends and learn more about Jesus. The NET retreat helped me make my decision about being confirmed. It helped me learn about God in a different way, and it helped me become closer to my faith. The counsellors were very welcoming and supportive. Overall I had a great, memorable day at the NET retreat.” *Taylor*

Youth Ministry Update continued

"The NET retreat was really fun. We played many games. The people there were really nice. They taught us to become closer with God. I liked how we got into groups and talked about God." *Alison*

"I really enjoyed the NET retreat. The games really helped me because they were about working together and having fun with others. The skits they performed all had good messages. The leaders were really welcoming and kind to everyone. They also helped me to strengthen my connection with Jesus, in a fun way. It was a wonderful experience." *Czaryna*

"The NET retreat really helped me because the leaders really explained what it means to be confirmed, how God is present in our life everyday and why we should follow his ways. The most interesting parts of the day were the small groups where my leaders showed me how God was present." *Sachu*

"The NET retreat was so good! The counsellors were great role models and it was nice to be honest and express our feelings. It has been a great experience and it helped me understand the meaning of Confirmation. I loved the activities that everyone participated in. I felt as if it strengthened my beliefs and made me more connected to God." *Rylie*

"I had a great day. I learned a lot about my faith, Confirmation and how God teaches you to take the right path." *NET Participant*

"My favourite part of the day was mass because it was quiet and I could reflect on my sins and ask God for forgiveness." *NET Participant*

"I had a great day. I learned a lot about my Confirmation. I learned about taking the right path and had a fun time learning with my friends. I loved the games and prayers. I also loved having Ian as my small group leader." *NET Participant*

"I thought it was really fun and they were really nice. I taught myself how to be closer to God and how to be more like Jesus. The best part of that day for me was the songs, small groups, skits and the games. They were all very nice and funny." *Madison*

"I thought it was really helpful. It was fun with all the activities. It helped me understand what is going to happen at Confirmation and what to expect." *Claire*



"The NET retreat was amazing! I learned many things that day. I found that they taught us many different things in many different ways like doing skits, connecting to their own lives, or just simply talking to us. I also enjoyed playing some of the games because

I felt like they wanted to show us the right pathway to God." *Mikaela*

"I had a great day. I learned a lot about my faith and Confirmation. I learned how to follow the path of God. I met some interesting people." *Austin*

"The NET retreat was great. I enjoyed all the skits they showed us, the games we played and the songs they taught us. It was a very fun day with the NET team because they showed me how to become closer with God in my everyday life. It was an unforgettable moment in my life." *Melissa*

"I really enjoyed the NET retreat. The way they created skits to teach us the true messages of God helped me to strengthen my beliefs and become closer to God. It was a lot of fun breaking into small groups and playing co-operative games. It let me understand more about the sacrament of Confirmation and the commitment I will be making." *Rachel*

To learn more about the
NET Teams of Canada, visit
their website at:
www.netcanada.ca





Dignity of the Person: Reflections from St. Michael's Social Justice Committee

Throughout 2013, our Social Justice Committee embarked upon a review of the major themes of Catholic Social Teaching. At our monthly meetings, we reviewed such themes as Dignity of the Human Person, Solidarity, Dignity of Human Work and Rights of the Worker, and Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. The review was intended to help orient our social justice endeavours within the framework of ethics illustrated for us by the Church.

Fruitful discussion flowed. The themes brought us all to a deeper reflection not only on our committee's projects but also on the richness of these truths as experienced in our own lives. The following article is a collection of three personal reflections that witness to the beauty and truth of these Catholic Social Teachings.

Right to Care and Inclusion

Reflecting on the dignity of the human person this year was an opportunity to deepen my conviction about each person's right to care and inclusion; to see where I have grown and where I am still challenged to see the face of Jesus. "Created in the image of God"; that is the ground of my and all of our worthiness to be valued and protected.

I have spent a lot of my volunteer time advocating for the mentally ill and addicted, so I was excited and grateful for the recent thought-provoking sculpture that received a lot of attention: a homeless Jesus lying on a park bench. It reminds me that Jesus is very concretely present in

human suffering. It challenges me to be vigilant about ingrained or blind biases I carry and the effects of stigma with regard to a population of people who wait for the day when society will see them for their personhood and not their illness. I feel thankful for the Church's wise and deep reflections on the necessary components of a just society that keeps our conscience and our call alive.

Cathie Gauthier

Celebrating Life throughout Illness

Our secular culture lauds independence and equates human dignity with physical abilities and accomplishments. However, my experiences have challenged this notion. My grandparents and their siblings, by their lives and, in particular, their dying have shown me that the dignity of the person is both innate and inalienable in all people, at all stages.

When my great-uncle Joe lay immobilized and nearing death from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), I was amazed at his inner peace. Gracing me with a kiss on the cheek, and in brief sentences owing to his shortness of breath, he told me "you are beautiful...I love you". Though completely dependent on others for personal care, he still managed to do what he had always done best when he was healthy - gather together his large family and make you feel special!

In my role as a resident physician training in neurology, I am often called to serve those experiencing debilitating or life-threatening illnesses: disabling strokes, brain tumours, dementia. Despite the tragedy of illness, caring for the sick offers the privilege of witnessing a patient's courage and peaceful acceptance despite the loss of health and independence.



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Knights of Columbus St. Michael's Parish

Social Justice Committee Report continued

Caregivers who patiently serve their ill loved ones affirm with their actions, “I love you” and “your life has meaning”. I remember that Christ, in humbling Himself to accept our humanity, accepted even death on a cross. Christ tells us “I was sick and you visited me.” (Mt.25:36). Look into the eyes of the sick; there you will find the face of the suffering Christ. **Lauren Mai**

Welcoming the Newcomer: Affirming Human Dignity

My parents’ immigration story, just like many others, is filled with challenges, pain, hope and love. Before they came to Canada, my father went to law school and became a prominent banking lawyer. My mother was an accountant for the municipality. When we arrived in Canada from Vietnam, they had difficulty finding work. My father was fired from one of his first jobs at a gas station for being too slow. My mother considered herself fortunate when she was hired to sew in a factory making minimum wage. She too was constantly criticized and humiliated. We were often made to feel disconnected, unwelcomed, unworthy.

Yet in their struggle, they found love and compassion among Canadians who were willing to lend a hand. Some taught my father how to drive while others sacrificed their time to help my parents learn English. When my father finally found meaningful work as a settlement counsellor, he felt valued and dignified. Remembering the generosity shown to our family, my parents are now helping newcomers to establish their roots. Now in their retirement, my parents volunteer to help immigrants prepare for their citizenship test and transition to their new life. It is their joy to do the work described by Pope Benedict XVI in the encyclical “Charity in Truth”, that the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity. **Duc Mai**

For further information on Catholic Social Teaching, an excellent list of resources can be found by searching the website of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:
www.usccb.org

Parish Notice Board

✠ The Catholic Women’s League of Canada is a modern, vibrant organization with over 170 members here at St. Michael’s. We meet once each month to share faith, friendship and fun, with activities to support each other and the goals of our parish mission statement. Women of all ages and walks of life belong to the CWL – any woman over the age of 16 is welcome to join and become involved as little or as much as desired. For more information, check the CWL information page on the parish website, watch for



ST. MICHAEL'S C.W.L.
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notices in the Sunday bulletin, or contact President Maggie McGee at 519-951-1827. New members are always welcome. *(See Parish Photos page 15)*

✠ Theresa Johnston, featured for her work with NELCE in the last newsletter, wishes to clarify that Shannon Calvert, a social worker with the London Intercommunity Health Centre, designed the survey about the needs and capacity to build a healthy community in northeast London. Theresa and her husband Gord simply knocked on doors to get residents out to meetings.



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Pilgrimage Walk

by Al Adili

The Camino de Santiago de Compostela is a pilgrimage route with origins that go back 900 - 1000 years. It was originally part of a trade route used by Roman traders and eventually became a pilgrimage route.

This past autumn Connie and I walked the Camino, beginning on August 23 at St. Jean Pied de Port near the French-Spanish border. Our journey ended on September 28 at the shrine of St. James in Santiago de Compostela in Northwestern Spain.



Our journey was both physical and emotional. We backpacked across the Pyrenees, passing over beautiful and serene mountain valleys. Hiking through forest trails with trees forming a canopy over us was truly peaceful and comforting. We crossed the Meseta, which is a flat plains area with a character all of its own. Some pilgrims dislike this part of the journey, while others embrace it as an essential element.



The trails are often very rugged with steep climbs. Some are flat, smooth and groomed for easy passage. Others are strewn with rocks, boulders and are very treacherous. If you were not careful, it would not be very difficult to fall and suffer a serious injury or break a bone.



The weather can also be a factor. At times the temperature can be over 30 degrees, especially on the Meseta. When walking through the region of Galicia, rain can play a role. In fact, Connie and I were drenched by all-day rain during the last two days of our walk.

The Camino rewarded us with many special memories and treasures. Along the journey you meet people from all over the world. You meet as strangers and travel as friends. It was always a special joy to be recognized by both fellow pilgrims and locals and wished a sincere "Buen Camino". Bonds are formed quickly and many of the friendships endure for years to come. It is amazing to see and experience the care and concern that pilgrims extend to each other.

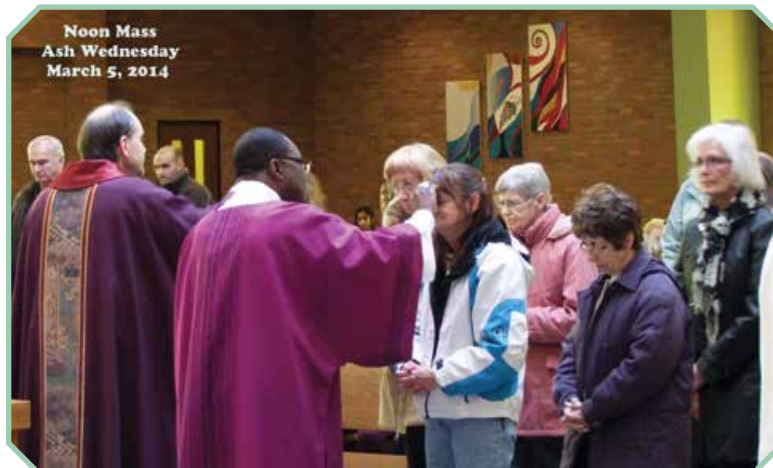


For both Connie and me, the spiritual rewards were numerous. We attended some very beautiful and emotional Masses along the way. When you walk along the mountain valleys and the great openness of the Meseta, you cannot help but be inspired by the beauty of God's artistry in nature. The solitude allows you to sense the presence of God. The soul is infused with new life and the body is totally re-energized. The peacefulness is revitalizing. We also enjoyed many opportunities to stop in chapels along the way for moments of quiet prayer and reflection.

For me, it rekindled a new passion for my art work and Connie's interest in photography blossomed. But, the biggest gift was that Connie was with me and we were able to experience this journey together.

It is no exaggeration to say that walking the Camino has a tremendous effect on your life. To experience the Camino is to breathe life into the soul.





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

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Deacon Gaston Mabaya, Deacon

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Helen Green, Pastoral Minister

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Anne Hanley, Pastoral Minister

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Natalie MacKay, Coordinator of Youth Ministry

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ext. 206

Staff

Pat Estabrooks, Receptionist/Secretary

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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

Palm Sunday	April 13
Holy Thursday	April 17
Good Friday	April 18
Holy Saturday	April 19
Easter Vigil/Sunday	April 19-20
First Communion	May 3-4 & 10-11 May 17-18 & 24-25
Confirmation	May 5-6
Knights of Columbus Garage Sale	May 31
Ascension	May 31 & June 1
Pentecost Sunday	June 8