

St. Michael's Parish Newsletter

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

My Sisters and Brothers, I personally asked the Editorial Committee of our Newsletter to put this special insert in the Easter Newsletter. It is a Homily given by our Holy Father on the occasion of his First Easter as the Bishop of Rome the Successor of St. Peter.

Our Holy Father has touched the people of the world by his simplicity in expressing the message of Christ. He invites us to know how much we are loved by God and that we are to love as a reflection of God's love for the world.

I ask that you take a little time to read and reflect on his words. May his words touch you as profoundly as they touched me.



Fr. Murray Sample
Fr. Murray Sample
Pastor

Pope Francis' Homily at the Easter Vigil 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Gospel of this radiant night of the Easter Vigil, we first meet the women who go to the tomb of Jesus with spices to anoint his body (cf. Lk 24:1-3). They go to perform an act of compassion, a traditional act of affection and love for a dear departed person, just as we would. They had followed Jesus, they had listened



to his words, they had felt understood by him in their dignity, and they had accompanied him to the very end to Calvary and to the moment when he was taken down from the cross.

We can imagine their feelings as they make their way to the tomb: a certain sadness, sorrow that Jesus had left them, he had died, his life had come to an end. Life would now go on as before. Yet the women continued to feel love, the love for Jesus which now led them to his tomb.

But at this point, something completely new and unexpected happens, something which upsets their hearts and their plans, something which will upset their whole life: they see the stone removed from before the tomb, they draw near and they do not find the Lord's body. It is an event which leaves them perplexed, hesitant, full of questions: "What happened?", "What is the meaning of all this?" (cf. Lk 24:4).

Doesn't the same thing also happen to us when something completely new occurs in our everyday life? We stop short, we don't understand, we don't know what to do. Newness often makes us fearful, including the newness which God brings us, the newness which God asks of us. We are like the Apostles in the Gospel: often we would prefer to hold on to our own security, to stand in front of a tomb, to think about someone who has died, someone who ultimately lives on only as a memory, like the great historical figures from the past. We are afraid of God's surprises; we are afraid of God's surprises! He always surprises us!

continued on page 2...

Pope Francis' Easter Homily continued

Dear brothers and sisters, let us not be closed to the newness that God wants to bring into our lives! Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won't be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up: there are no situations which God cannot change, there is no sin which he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him.



But let us return to the Gospel, to the women, and take one step further. They find the tomb empty, the body of Jesus is not there, something new has happened, but all this still doesn't tell them anything certain: it raises questions; it leaves them confused, without offering an answer. And suddenly there are two men in dazzling clothes who say: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; but has risen" (Lk 24:5-6). What was a simple act, done surely out of love – going to the tomb – has now turned into an event, a truly life-changing event. Nothing remains as it was before, not only in the lives of those women, but also in our own lives and in the history of mankind. Jesus is not dead, he has risen, he is alive! He does not simply return to life; rather, he is life itself, because he is the Son of God, the living God (cf. Num 14:21-28; Deut 5:26; Josh 3:10). Jesus no longer belongs to the past, but lives in the present and is projected towards the future; he is the everlasting "today" of God. This is how the newness of God appears to the women, the disciples and all of us: as victory over sin, evil and death, over everything that crushes life and makes it seem less human. And this is a message meant for me and for you, dear sister, dear brother. How often does Love have to tell us: Why do you look for the living among the dead? Our daily problems and worries can wrap us up in ourselves, in sadness and bitterness... and that is where death is. That is not the place to look for the One who is alive!

Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life! If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms. If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won't be disappointed. If following him seems difficult, don't be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do.



There is one last little element that I would like to emphasize in the Gospel for this Easter Vigil. The women encounter the newness of God. Jesus has risen, he is alive! But faced with an empty tomb and the two men in brilliant clothes, their first reaction is one of fear: "they were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground", Saint Luke tells us – they didn't even have courage to look. But when they hear the message of the Resurrection, they accept it in faith. And the two men in dazzling clothes tell them something of crucial importance: "Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee... And they remembered his words" (Lk 24:6,8). They are asked to remember their encounter with Jesus, to remember his words, his actions, his life; and it is precisely this loving remembrance of their experience with the Master that enables the women to master their fear and to bring the message of the Resurrection to the Apostles and all the others (cf. Lk 24:9). To remember what God has done and continues to do for me, for us, to remember the road we have travelled; this is what opens our hearts to hope for the future. May we learn to remember everything that God has done in our lives.



On this radiant night, let us invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary, who treasured all these events in her heart (cf. Lk 2:19,51) and ask the Lord to give us a share in his Resurrection. May he open us to the newness that transforms. May he make us men and women capable of remembering all that he has done in our own lives and in the history of our world. May he help us to feel his presence as the one who is alive and at work in our midst. And may he teach us each day not to look among the dead for the Living One. *Amen.*

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday – March 28th & 29th, 2015

March 28th at 5:00pm

March 29th at 8:30am; 10:30am; 12:30pm

Mass of Chrism – March 30th

7:00pm - St. Peter's Cathedral

Sacred Triduum (3 Days)

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday

Holy Thursday – April 2nd

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

8:30pm - Adoration of the Eucharist
until 11:00pm

Night Prayer at 11:00pm

Good Friday – April 3rd

10:00am - Stations of the Cross

Led by the Youth

3:00pm - Divine Liturgy

Holy Saturday – April 4th

9:00am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Blessing of Easter Food
(Tradition of many Europeans)



Easter Vigil – April 4th

7:30pm - 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

Easter Sunday – April 5th

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, March 25th

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

Friday, March 27th

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

Tuesday, March 31st

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

(No confessions heard during the Sacred Triduum)

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Give to Grow Campaign Update

by Mike Whelan

Foundations for our Future

The support of parishioners at St. Michael's for the capital campaign, Give to Grow: Foundations for Our Future, has been outstanding. At the time of printing, parishioners had donated more than \$850,000, over half of our total goal of \$1.5 million.



Bishop Fabbro recognized this generosity at the campaign kick-off on January 23rd, and commended St. Michael's for its efforts. He quoted Pope Francis' recent comments on the importance of the parish:

"The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration...It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach."

Give to Grow will ensure that St. Michael's can be the home for the Church in this area for decades to come, and as Pope Francis said, a sanctuary for the thirsty.

The celebration of Easter and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ reminds us of the great gift of our faith, as well as our responsibility to safeguard it for future generations.

Although we have made great strides and will begin to see the tangible results of our work in a few months, our initial success should not make us complacent. We still have a long road ahead, and we will need every parishioner's support and all donations, large and small, to meet our goal of \$1.5 million.

If you have not given, please consider a gift - Pledge Cards are available at the church and online at www.stmichaels.dioceseoflondon.ca. If you would like more information or have questions, please contact Mike Whelan at 519-518-2025 Ext. 22 or Greg Masse at 519-902-9494.



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The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body that assists the Pastor in guiding the overall care and ministry of the Parish. It develops and implements priorities for the Parish based on the Diocesan Pastoral Plan. Its members are elected by parishioners each May for a three-year term. Two youth representatives are appointed for a two-year term. The Council meets once a month and its meetings are open to parishioners.

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) welcomed new members Peter Valiquet and Joanne Zwolski in the autumn of 2014, along with returning members including Gail Brown (Chair), Howie Wright (Vice Chair), Corrie Gicante (Past Chair) and Angela Townend (Recording Secretary).

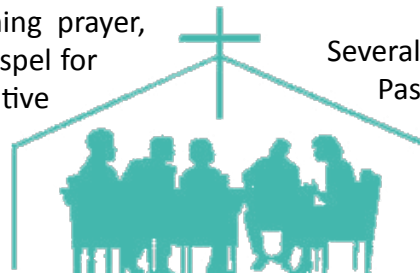
Each meeting begins with an opening prayer, and a reading and reflection on the gospel for the upcoming weekend. This meditative portion of the meeting is led by Fr. Murray and sets the tone for the evening's discussions. The discussions are intended to help foster the pastoral activity of the parish, and have included topics such as the building renovations and capital campaign, a review of the Christmas season activities and monitoring of the Strategic Plan. The PPC receives regular updates from the Pastoral Team consisting of Fr. Murray, Fr. Seejo, Helen Green and Natalie Hleba, and from the Finance Committee Liaison Howie Wright, and parish Business Administrator Doug Manners.

During the year 2013-2014, the work of the Pastoral Council was largely devoted to the development of goals and objectives for the new Parish Strategic Plan 2014-2019. Since September 2014, the Council has continued to focus on reviewing the Strategic Plan to develop a timeline and structure of reporting on the progress of these goals in order to ensure transparent and consistent reporting to all parishioners.

Several parish strategies listed in the Plan have already been implemented: the RCIA program for children (RCIC), the Children's Choir, additional programs for seniors and Hospitality North are some of them. The Parish Survey which was distributed in

December is a significant step in the strategy to "Invite and engage our parish community in sharing time, talent and treasure," which is part of the Objective under Communication and Stewardship.

As "a consultative body that assists the Pastor in guiding the overall care and ministry of the Parish" Fr. Murray has asked us to focus on how St. Michael's can continue to be a warm, welcoming Eucharistic Community, not to rest on our laurels, but to continue to improve in "Sharing Faith and Reaching Out to All." PPC members also lend their support to the parish in some practical ways, for example by assisting the Pastoral Staff to organize the Ministry Fair in October, and by hosting, with the Social Committee, the annual Volunteer Appreciation Night.



Several PPC members participated in a Parish Pastoral Council retreat on Saturday, October 25, 2014 at St Justin's Parish, presented by the Diocese and hosted by Bishop Fabbro. Bishop Fabbro stressed the diocesan focus on Evangelization in the current cycle of pastoral planning, and explained how our parish pastoral planning has to fall in line with this very important diocesan goal.

On November 21, members attended the Diocese of London Parish Workshop, held at St. Michael's, which covered the topics of new parish software for database management, parish finances and budgeting, as well as the relationship between the Parish Finance Committee and Parish Pastoral Council.

As defined by the Norms For Parish Pastoral Councils developed by the Diocese of London in May 2009, "The Council is a representative body rather than a body of representatives. It is constituted for the good of the whole parish... The nature of the Council is pastoral in that it is concerned with mission and ministry in the parish."

As such, we welcome all thoughts and comments from St. Michael's parishioners to assist us in our responsibilities.

St. Michael's Youth: Servants of God

*"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."
1 Peter 4:10*

The bible is filled with examples of servanthood and those who truly gave of themselves - good deeds, kindness, and sacrificing of personal time and resources with no expectation to be repaid. Serving others is the core of ministry work and there are many parishioners here at St. Michael's Parish who graciously give of their "time and talents" to help with the Sunday mass. Some of these individuals work behind the scenes - the sacristan, the liturgy committee, bulletin inserters, and collection counters.

There is also a growing number of youth who are enriching the celebration of mass with their own time and talents and as the concern of teens falling away from the church is very real for many faiths, the commitment of these youth at St. Michael's brings a sense of hope and encouragement as we gather each Sunday to worship.

Who are these young parishioners and why do they choose to serve on Sunday? We invited four youth who participate in different ministries at St. Michael's to respond to some questions about their ministry work.



Elyse (Eucharistic Minister & Choir)

How did you decide to become involved in this Ministry? I got involved through my mother Louise. I wanted to be a part of the Mass and I wanted to move on from being an altar server. My mom said that I could become one, after my confirmation. I feel that it is better to be involved one way or another with the Mass and to become an Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister was a good way.

Have you ever received some positive feedback from a parishioner about your role? What was their feedback?

No, I haven't received any feedback from a fellow parishioner, but my friend thought it was "cool".

Has your involvement affected your faith in any way? Yes, I feel closer to God through this because I am giving the Body or Blood of Christ to other people. I am spreading my joy at Mass.

What do you like best about your role in this Ministry? I like to give the Blessing to young children or adults who are not yet allowed to receive the Host. It makes me feel joyful.

Julianna (Children's Choir)

How did you decide to become involved in this Ministry?



I decided to become involved with the choir because I have always loved singing, especially in front of people and I thought it would be nice to get involved so I can share my voice. Also, I enjoy the mass songs.

Have you ever received some positive feedback from a parishioner about your role? What was their feedback? Yes. She told me good job and told me I had a wonderful voice and to keep on going.

Has your involvement affected your faith in any way? Yes, being involved in this ministry has affected my faith because I feel more involved in the church.

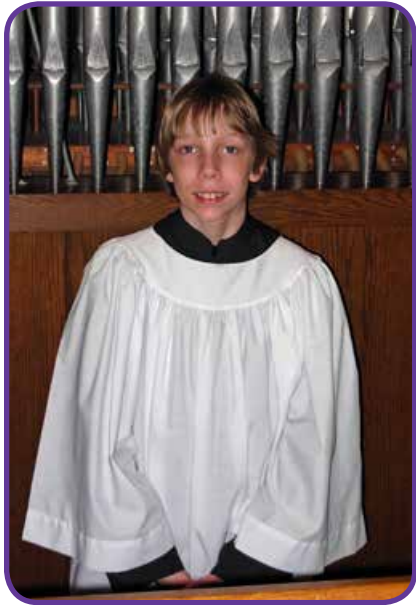
What do you like best about your role in this Ministry? One thing I like about this ministry is that I get to share my voice and love of music with others.

*"For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves."
Luke 22:27*



Julien (Altar Server)

How did you decide to become involved in this Ministry?
When I was younger I wasn't really understanding the masses I attended and I thought that being an Altar Server would be a way to help with the Mass and also to get more out of it.



Have you ever received some positive feedback from a parishioner about your role? What was their feedback?

I've received positive feedback from fellow parishioners about my part in the community. Mostly little things like "good work", but everything reminds me that I am playing an important role in the Ministry.

Has your involvement affected your faith in any way?

I don't think my role has drastically changed my faith, but it has made me more aware of what I'm doing and saying during the Mass. My role has made my faith more concrete.

What do you like best about your role in this Ministry?

I think what I like most about my role is actively doing something during the Mass. Knowing that I am an actual part of the Mass is something that makes me feel good, and it helps me understand the Mass in a deeper way.

Noah (Lector)

How did you decide to become involved in this Ministry?
I became involved as a lector because I felt it was important to have an opportunity to practice the skill of public speaking.

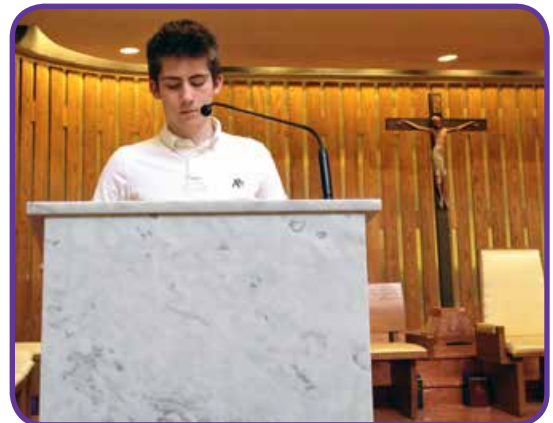
Have you ever received some positive feedback from a parishioner about your role? What was their feedback?
Yes, I have had some parishioners tell me after mass that I have a loud, deep, and clear voice and that I speak really well.

Has your involvement affected your faith in any way?

Yes, being involved in this Ministry has helped me to feel that I am doing my part to serve God.

What do you like best about your role in this Ministry?

I like that I only have to read some Sundays as sometimes it is still hard but when I do read, I feel really good about myself afterwards.



These and all of St. Michael's youth who share their talents are surely God's blessing to the church and we pray they will continue to strengthen their faith and serve in whatever ministry God calls them to now and in the future.





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Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults



On the night when Christians around the world celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord, the Easter Vigil, the elect are led to the saving waters of Baptism, sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist for the first time.

The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)* is the Church's ritual process for calling adults to a conversion of mind and heart and preparing them for a full and active life in the Church as disciples of Jesus. During the process, adults participate in liturgical rites that both mark the progress of their journey and form them more deeply by God's grace. Their journey culminates in the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

The process of becoming a mature Christian involves more than just learning about the faith of the Church. Becoming a Christian presumes a relationship with God who becomes the foundation of our being. It means that we have claimed the values of the Gospel as our own and have committed ourselves to the teaching of Jesus.

The *RCIA* is primarily intended for those who are unbaptized and preparing for the sacraments of initiation, however, the rite provides adaptations for those who are already baptized. Once unbaptized inquirers are formally accepted into the process, they are called Catechumens.

The whole process includes a number of elements: evangelization, engagement with the community, catechesis, formation for mission and the sacraments of initiation.

Holy Scripture is the foundation of our faith. God reveals himself in the scriptures and invites us into a personal relationship. God's word is proclaimed and we come to know who God is.

The Community of believers surrounds catechumens with love, support, prayer and Christian witness.

Catechesis exposes the catechumens to the teachings of Jesus. The ultimate goal is not just to acquire religious information, but to enter into the mystery of Christ, to encounter the living God and to discover the meaning of life in Christ. Catechumens learn how to pray, how to make moral choices, and what will be expected of them as faithful members of the Church.

The formation process is intended to prepare men and women for living their faith in the world. We are called to be doers of the word of God, peacemakers, instruments of justice and ministers of reconciliation. *Our call to Mission* begins at home but it truly has no borders.

The crowning experience of the initiation process is the celebration of the sacraments of initiation. The Church chooses Easter Vigil for Baptism because in the liturgy of Easter Vigil, we commemorate the mystery of Christ's rising from the dead, breaking the chains of sin and death, and opening the way for us to share more deeply in the life of God.

In Baptism, we can say that we too have died with Christ and have risen with Him to new life. In Confirmation, we are conformed more closely to the image of Christ as we are sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. When we share in the Eucharist, we are given a taste of heaven's feast and recall the promise of Jesus, that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will live forever.

The faith journey that leads to the celebration of the sacraments of initiation is initiated by God, who calls each of us by name. Responding to that divine call is personal but is aided by the Christian community that helps an individual discern that call. The entire community is responsible for the formation and welcome of new members but they cannot effectively offer personal



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Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults continued

support, guidance and challenges. That is why a Sponsor is so important.

A sponsor who witnesses how one lives the Catholic faith in the family, at work, in the neighborhood, and within the parish can have a significant impact on the person who is still learning the Christian way of life. Praying with an individual and introducing traditional Catholic prayers, devotions or ritual gestures can be a link to the community.

Sponsors are companions who affirm the awareness and insights of a catechumen. They share the delight and joy as the catechumen discovers his or her newfound faith. They encourage an individual when the experience of conversion is most challenging and demanding. In times of doubt or confusion, they will be a welcome companion along the way.

A Sponsor does not have to be a perfect Christian but should recognize the importance of continuing to grow

in faith. Sponsors are sometimes surprised by how much they benefit spiritually from participating in the RCIA. The Easter story of the travellers on the road to Emmaus is repeated whenever a sponsor walks with a catechumen along the way of newfound faith.

A Sponsor's role is that of mentor. They share their experience and beliefs in the course by offering counsel, encouragement, guidance and honest feedback. Simple acts of hospitality, such as sharing a cup of coffee or attending a social, cultural or athletic event offer opportunities to engage in conversations that may raise questions or concerns that a catechumen might not feel free to ask in a group setting.

By making a personal commitment to prayer for the catechumens as well as the catechumenal community, the sponsor humbly acknowledges that ultimately it is God who makes a new Christian.



Social Justice Committee Report

by Charles Scollard

What does the face of poverty look like? To me it is a little girl, about 5 years old, who, upon arriving at school and being asked if she has had breakfast replies "No, my Mom has no money today but she might have some tomorrow". This anecdote serves to illustrate an important social justice issue just steps away from our parish church, at St. Michael's Catholic School.

For the last 6 years there has been a breakfast program operating at St. Michael's Catholic School of which I was totally unaware, as were many of my fellow parishioners. About 65 students are being provided with a nutritional breakfast each school day. This is approximately one-third of the student population at the school. Many of these same students also receive a healthy snack during the day and a few are also provided with lunch.

The breakfast program is operated by volunteers while the majority of the financial support is provided by families who are sponsoring the program. The Ontario Student Nutrition Program provides a total of \$1000/year but this doesn't come close to what is required to support the over 300 breakfasts per week that are provided.

I had an opportunity to visit the school and witness the work of school staff and volunteers and the impact they were having on students and families in need was inspiring. As I observed the program in operation, I couldn't help but think of my two young grandsons and how grateful I would be for such a program if they were in need and arrived at school with an empty stomach each day.

Our help and support can make a real difference. Support for the breakfast program can be given through a cash donation, gift cards to local grocery stores, or donations of food for breakfast or snacks.

If you wish to have more information about the program you may contact St. Michael's Catholic School at **519-675-4424**.



*"Whatsoever you do to the least
of my people,
that you do unto me"
Matthew 25:40*



We are blessed to have 5 active and vibrant parish schools - 4 elementary and 1 secondary. Each school is unique in its own way. Together, the triad partnership of home, school and parish is strengthened and nourished. Through these links and bonds our children are nurtured in the faith and challenged to go out into their communities to live the Gospel message of Christ.

Some of our schools have served our parish for decades, while others have opened more recently as North London continues to grow. Each school strives to impart the mission of the London District Catholic School Board:

To serve the Catholic student in a community that nurtures a living faith and provides a quality Catholic education that enables the individual to become a contributing member of the Church and Society

Here is a snapshot into the values and lessons that are shared:

ST. MICHAEL'S

Each Of Us To The Best Of Our Ability



Expectations of Students at St. Michael's:

A Self-directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner who,

- ✚ Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others. Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability.
- ✚ Takes initiative and demonstrates Christian leadership. Responds to, manages and constructively influences change in a discerning manner.
- ✚ Sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work and personal life.
- ✚ Applies effective communication, decision-making, problem-solving, time and resource management skills.
- ✚ Examines and reflects on one's personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life's choices and opportunities.
- ✚ Participates in leisure and fitness activities for a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

ST. KATERI

My Spirit is one with You, Great Spirit



✚ Literacy is front and centre at St. Kateri, through a number of engaging initiatives. Author Sigmund Brouwer brings his Rock and Roll Literacy show to both students and families to encourage reading and writing with his practical advice.

✚ Students also learn to use their personal electronic devices for teacher-directed educational activities, capitalizing on the rich resource of the Internet, while learning to be responsible digital citizens. These initiatives support the school's goal of excellence and the nurturing of responsible students.

ST. MARK

Teach me Goodness and Discipline and Knowledge



✚ St. Mark School has been serving its north London neighbourhood for half a century. (1964-2014). This spring, during the month of April, the 50 Year Anniversary will be celebrated in the school community.

✚ Undoubtedly this will be an exciting time for the current students and a momentous time for the community of students who have passed through its doors over five decades. St. Mark School is a strong example of Christian witness in our city. Congratulations!

St. Michael's Parish Schools continued

ST.CATHERINE OF SIENA

The Spirit is Truly Alive at Siena!



✚ St. Catherine of Siena School, opened in 2004, is one of the newest Catholic schools in London. The school community seeks to follow in the footsteps of St. Catherine, known for her intelligence and compassion. The students engage very actively in many charity campaigns in order to serve those less fortunate.

✚ Some of these campaigns include the London Food Bank, Holy Childhood Association, World Vision, United Way, the Terry Fox Run and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Through these projects it is evident that the Spirit is active at St. Catherine!

MOTHER TERESA SECONDARY SCHOOL

Inspired by Christ - Learning together - Serving together



✚ The students at Mother Teresa have many opportunities this year to live out the words of the school vision statement – inspired by Christ, learning together, serving together. Here are some of the many opportunities for students – Ash Wednesday liturgy, Share Lent campaign, Grade level retreats, Day of Reconciliation, Holy Thursday prayer, Marian Mass, Prayer Crawl, and Catholic Student Leadership Conference.

✚ These opportunities for prayer and service are important steps in the students' faith journey. They are inspired by the words of Mother Teresa, "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier."

Let us keep the students, families and staff of our St. Michael's Parish schools always in our prayers as they seek to teach and live Christ's gospel message of love and service.



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Come Journey to the Holy Land

by Natalie Hleba & Students
of St. Michael's Elementary

Natalie Shares her Holy Land Pilgrimage Stories

Last September, I had the great honour of being a pilgrim in the Holy Land. This spiritual journey deeply impacted me and I knew that I had a duty to share my stories and photos during my class visits to the schools. Over the last two months, I visited with the students of St. Michael, St. Mark, St. Kateri and St. Catherine of Siena and invited them to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.



Here are some excerpts of reflections by Todd Wilcox's Grade 7/8 Class at St. Michael School on how the presentations affected their faith journey as young Christians:

Johnny: "I would really like to see where Jesus was born and walked on water. It would make me feel as if God was getting even closer to me."

Jennifer: "Now I know that it is possible to actually see and imagine being right next to God by visiting these amazing places. In our faith journey, we should always be looking for opportunities to get closer to God and I think that this is an awesome way to do it. It has been great to see the places where all of the legendary stories and events from the Bible actually happened. I truly hope one day in the future I will go visit."

Angele: "It made me amazed to see all the pictures of the places Jesus went and made me think about maybe going there someday to learn more about God."

Christopher: "It affected my faith because everything is not what we think it is and this helps us become closer to Jesus and God."

Mark: "It changes the way I think about Jesus. I always assumed that there was no evidence that Jesus was alive but after seeing all the places he has been and the things he has done I feel changed."

Salvatore: "This affects my faith journey because I'm looking at photos of ruins from Jesus' time and that's amazing just thinking that he was there at one point in time."

Ryli: "I learned that the Sea of Galilee is where Jesus walked on water, stopped the storm and filled the fishermen's nets with lots of fish. I also learned that the church of the Holy Sepulchre is the site where Jesus died."

Jlean: "This presentation really inspired me to learn more about the places in the Bible and to read the Bible more."

Julia: "I learned about the Israeli flag. I also learned the ancient meanings of the flag. The presentation helped to make the stories of the Bible more real."

Nick: "This affects my journey because I got to see real images of the place where Jesus lived and it just gave me more proof that Jesus was real at one point in time."

Diana: "This affects me because sometimes we all might start to think "did this really happen?" since Jesus lived so long ago. After seeing the photos of Jesus' journey, it makes me believe it even more."

David: "These places affect my faith because they make me think more about Jesus and all the things that he did"



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Come Journey to the Holy Land continued

before he was crucified. It makes me think of how much more I should connect to him (like praying to him more often)."

Santino: "It really gave me a lot more information about how Christianity was created, and it also helps me to believe in it a lot more because there were actual photos of Jesus' journey."

Lauren: "When I heard about Natalie's amazing experience of praying for forgiveness at the site of the crucifixion, it made me realize that even if I can't be on the land where Jesus was crucified, I can still pray and ask God for forgiveness."

Blake: "I learned many new things but I feel all it did was make me want to go visit Israel myself."

SheeM'lee: "I learned that there is more to God than just hearing stories about Him."

Zaina: "I learned that people of the Western Wall always pray at the wall. The men pray at one side and the women to the other side of the wall, and the Hebrew people had to read the book from right to left and what affected me is that they had to build the new Jerusalem there."

Beverly: "What I learned during the presentation is that Jesus was baptized at the Jordan River. Jewish people and people of other religions all pray at the Western Wall and people leave their prayers on paper in the cracks of the wall."

Timmy: "This will affect my faith journey because before Natalie came, I didn't see any proof of the Holy Land other than by reading the Bible. But now, I've seen pictures of the ancient places."

Isabella: "By learning about Natalie's journey I saw how these structures are still there, so it just shows that Jesus was really here, so if I was questioning my faith, now I really know that they were there."

Hailee: "It helped me believe and understand Gods

journey better! I found new facts and I know if I ever want to take my faith to another level, I can do what Natalie did and go on the twelve day tour around where Jesus actually lived thousands of years ago."



Here are some excerpts of reflections given by Julie Hinde's Grade 4/5 Class at St. Michael School on how the presentations affected their faith journey as young Christians:

Jacob: "When Natalie showed us the pictures of the Holy Land it made me believe in him 5000 times more than I did before. I always believed in him but I didn't really know where he lived and that some of the buildings were still there. I want to go to the Holy Land myself."

Santiago: "The presentation helped me to get closer to God because I felt I was in Israel as well."

Julio: "Every time that Natalie talked about Jesus and showed us pictures, it inspired me. My friendship with Jesus will never end."

Sofia: "I felt like I was there and I saw where Jesus was born, baptized and crucified."

Hayley: "I feel closer to Jesus because I feel like I was there where he was born and where he died. I also feel closer to Jesus because when I talk to him, I feel like I am talking to my great-grandparents and my uncle that died."



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Men of Faith Conference 2015

by Mike Whelan
Men of Faith Chair

On Saturday January 24th, 2015, two hundred and twenty-five men gathered to celebrate and grow in their rich Catholic faith at St. Michael's Church. After registration began at 8:00am, young and older men filed in, ready to start off the day with a special devotion to Mother Mary and pray the Holy Rosary together, before 9:00am Mass.

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, Bishop of London celebrated Mass with Father John Sharpe, Father Seejo John and Deacon Rudy Terpstra...and what a beautiful Mass it was. Catholic Central High School Boys Choir raised the roof with their voices to Our Lord, with Nando working wonders on the organ pipes!



To hear 225 men join in with prayer and song was very inspiring as the Holy Spirit lifted us all in praise and worship. After Mass and refreshments it was time to get down to business and find out what the acronym "B.O.B.B" stood for, as it was the theme of the 2015 Men of Faith Conference.

Dan Moynihan, our first speaker, proceeded to explain what Project B.O.B.B., "Bring Our Brothers Back" was all about, and the importance of understanding why so many men have left the practice of their faith. Dan was able to share with us some very interesting and practical research completed by Bernadine Ketelars from St. Peter's Seminary. To take on the project of bringing our brothers back, we first needed to know why they left in the first place. As Dan presented some of the research we began to realize that everyone had their own personal reasons for leaving. We were reminded that listening to our fallen away brothers and being a good friend was the best remedy towards welcoming them back to our parish community.

Dan was supposed to be our "set-up man" for the prime speaker of the day, but as he proceeded to wow

the crowd with his real-life stories, great sense of humour and natural ability to get his point across, he added much to the success of our day. Thanks Dan!

Now that we had gained a good understanding of why our brothers had left their faith, Patrick Madrid took us through three powerful presentations to help equip us to B.O.B.B. He emphasized the importance of knowing the basics of our own faith and using the many educational resources that we have at our fingertips before we go trying to bring our brothers back. Patrick Madrid's book and CD, entitled *Why Be Catholic?*, was a very useful resource offered to all of us at the conference.

After a very timely break for lunch, catered by Marshall's Pasta Mill, we were ready for the afternoon program. We made our way back into the church where we were blessed with 45 minutes in Eucharistic Adoration, Confession, prayer, worship, and song. What a beautiful time spent with our Lord.



As Patrick proceeded to feed us with ammunition to bring our brothers back, his book "Search and Rescue" was presented with very useful tips. Patrick's third and final presentation was titled, "Turn Away From Your Childish Things and Become The Man Christ Wants You To Be".

This was a very strong challenge to all of us to take our faith seriously and really try to bring at least ONE of our brothers back to the faith. Prompted by Pete Aarsen (our MC), and by a show of hands, the majority of men agreed to try and bring at least one of our fallen away brothers back to the faith...back to next year's Men of Faith Conference, in January 2016.

A special thank you to Father Murray for generously offering St. Michael's Church and Hall to our many visitors.

Parish Photos



He is
RISEN

Parish Information

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

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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.*

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Parish Council Chairperson

Gail Brown

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	March 28 & 29
Holy Thursday	April 2
Good Friday	April 3
Holy Saturday	April 4
Easter Vigil/Sunday	April 4-5
First Communion	April 18-19 & 25-26
	May 2-3 & 9-10
Confirmation	April 29-30
Ascension	May 17
Pentecost Sunday	May 24
Knights of Columbus Garage Sale	May 30