



# St. Michael's Parish Newsletter

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

*Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pushing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had got out of the boats and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet, if you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets began to break. So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. - Luke 5:1-7.*



This Gospel story is an invitation to sit and listen to the Master, then to trust His word and to invite others to share in the work of God. The fishermen were done. They had spent all night fishing and had nothing to show but empty nets. Peter, James and John were cleaning up after an unsuccessful night of work. But



Jesus shows up with an eager crowd of people who want to hear more from this preacher. Jesus steps into their boat and asks them to put out from the shore. In spite of being tired they do what he asks. Then, after he finishes teaching he asks to have the fishermen put out into the deep and lower their nets. Peter responds, "Lord we have been there and done that, but if you say so, I'll do it." What had Jesus taught as he sat in Peter's boat? Whatever it was, in spite of being tired and working all night, Peter responded by setting out for the deep and lowering the nets. The haul was so heavy it was breaking the nets. Peter and Andrew had to call for help.

This incident tells us several important things about following Jesus. Sometimes the Lord calls us when we think we have nothing to give. We are too tired, too old, too broken to be of any use. When Jesus calls He brings along companions for the journey and provides more than enough to meet our needs. "Don't be afraid," He says. Jesus shows up at the most unexpected moments in our lives. He often asks us to do the inconvenient. He invites us to tackle the improbable and invites us to participate in the amazing.

As we begin a new season Jesus is inviting us to allow ourselves to be open to his invitations. In spite of feeling too old, too tired, too young, we are invited to share in the ministry of Jesus. We are not to do this alone but to invite others to share in the life of the Church. Let us journey this year profoundly aware of Jesus inviting us and willing us to be surprised by the abundance of God's generosity.

*Fr. Murray Sample*  
Fr. Murray Sample  
Pastor



# Goodbye to Sid Wocks

An Interview  
by Angela Townend

Sid began working at St. Michael's on August 1, 1981. At the time, he was employed in a job that often took him on the road, and with a third child on the way, he felt a stable job and one without travel would work well. In fact, Sid's father-in-law was the hall coordinator at the time and was retiring from the role himself after 11 years. A new job that not only allowed Sid to be home on weekends, work close to his daughters' school (right next door in fact!) and allowed him to go home for lunch was too good to pass up. Thus began his 35 year commitment to the parish in this role.

Sid has worn multiple hats as hall coordinator. From booking rooms, cleaning, gardening, and dealing with the various tradespersons called in to do work, Sid did it all. A *jack-of-all-trades*, the location of his office also meant he was often the first point of contact for persons coming into the church looking for directions. Managing the schedule and dealing with the busy periods in this role could sometimes be challenging, though as Sid noted, not quite as difficult as rising early on a cold winter's morning to shovel the church sidewalks!

Without question, Sid has loved the constant interaction with other people while in this role, whether with the seniors coming to daytime programs or the many individuals attending the evening groups. Also, the diversity of the job was very attractive and kept it interesting. Sid has appreciated working in a faith based setting. He notes he has felt a connection to his co-workers, a connection that one does not always experience, including the sharing of meaning for many of the Christian holidays. He noted also that he has always felt and appreciated his pastors' confidence in him and in his work.

Sid noted that there were many fun moments he experienced over the years while working at St. Michael's but it would be rather difficult to outdo the one time, before the church had air conditioning and the doors

were left open during Mass, when a neighbourhood cat decided to walk up the aisle. As Sid mentioned, it must have been a *cat-olic*! During Sid's tenure he has worked with a total of four pastors. The most significant change however, most likely occurred in 2000 when the addition was constructed in order to house the administrative offices. Sid also noted that the parish has become increasingly busy over the years and that there is virtually no day of the week without at least one event taking place.



At the time of this interview, Sid was just beginning to train the new hall coordinator. His advice to his successor? Be organized, deal respectfully with others, and ensure the calendar of events is consulted frequently to guide your work as

*event coordinator*, yet another hat worn by Sid over the years. Sid, like many retirees, is looking forward to some personal freedom in the days ahead. He is excited about owning his own schedule, doing things around the house and spending time with his grandchildren. He would like to practice a less rushed approach to life and what better way to do this than to engage in one of his preferred activities...fishing!

Sid has not only been the hall coordinator for the past 35 years but also a valued member of the 10:30 Contemporary Choir, with his wife Pat, since it was formed 25 years ago. It is a tightknit group that he continues to enjoy spending time with. He is also on the Property and Maintenance Committee and a member of the Knights of Columbus.

A fully integrated, loyal and valued employee and parishioner...he will be missed.

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At first glance, technology and religion appear to be unrelated; however, these two spheres can be quite complementary.

For those of you who would like to explore technology in order to enrich your faith, there are many apps available for your mobile devices or tablets.



One of the most prominent apps, known for its expansive utility, is **Laudate**. *Laudate* is a free, comprehensive tool that can be incorporated into your everyday routine. It features daily readings, Bible verses, prayers and Saints of the Day. *Laudate* also offers the Liturgy of the Hours, Catechism and Stations of the Cross. Additionally, it provides interactive tools such as preparation for Confession, the Rosary and Chaplet, and the Catechism. Its extras include calendars and Catholic media. *Laudate* is truly multi-faceted and provides us with a comprehensive Catholic app.

**iBreviary** is another app which is exceedingly helpful. It is comprised of the Breviary, Missal, Bible readings, prayers and Rites. It is of great value to those who can be overwhelmed by the many components in *Laudate*.



Similarly, **Living with Christ** is an app that is simplistic in nature and features daily readings, prayers, quotes of the day and the Liturgical Calendar.

The **Pope App**, as its name suggests, keeps you up-to-date with current events surrounding the pope and other breaking Catholic news. It also offers live broadcasts of events from St. Peter's Square.



For those parishioners that like to frequent various churches, **The Catholic Directory** will be of great use. *The Catholic Directory* allows you to search for churches by location and/or find their Mass times. It can also display nearby churches and allows you to bookmark them.

I have not forgotten about the most tech savvy demographic within St. Michael's: the children. **Bible for Kids** is an app that teaches Bible stories through interactive adventures and remarkable animations. It is responsive and provides exceptional visuals that capture the Bible in a refreshing and colourful manner. The app also implements activities and reward systems that are designed to challenge and provide incentives for the children to keep learning. This app exceeds expectations and candidly brings the Bible to life.



I hope you are able to make the most of these apps and integrate them into your personal prayer life.




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# A Year in Reflection

by Fr. Don Pumputis  
Associate Pastor

Entering into my second year of ordained ministry, and serving as the Associate Pastor here at St. Michael's has been a true gift and a blessing from God. It has allowed the four pillars of Formation (S.H.I.P), that is, Spiritual, Human, Intellectual, and Pastoral to continue to develop and solidify within me.

Our Lord is alive and his Holy Spirit is working and acting within this vibrant community. This past year I've been part of many different ministries, and I am grateful to have been part of the school outreach ministry. St. Catherine of Siena, St. Mark's Elementary, and Mother Teresa Secondary School have all allowed me to be part of their community. The time spent has continually fostered the Human side of priestly growth for me. Thanks be to God for our Catholic school system. I have had meetings with the elementary school principals, and I look forward to a greater presence and role within the schools. This will include Eucharistic adoration and taking part in the professional development days with faculty, along with classroom visits as teachers' time will permit.

Finally, after a year, I have officiated over my first wedding with a couple I got to know at the Marriage Prep course offered here at St Michael's. I have another wedding at the end of August with a couple I've been journeying with for a year, and another at St. Michael's in Leamington in September.

During the past year, the number of baptisms at St. Michael's has grown, as various couples of all races and nationalities have asked to have their children baptized into the Church of God. I have taken a *back to the basics* approach to the baptism preparation course, which will help couples to understand the Catholicity of the sacrament they are accepting for their children. This involves a talk by me, followed by a video presentation on the relationship aspect of the first of the sacraments of initiation.

I believe this preparation is presented in a way that doesn't overwhelm the parents, and yet drives home the necessity and importance of the sacrament, if we are to be followers of Christ. This is followed by a question and answer period, where questions are encouraged so that any anxiety and nervousness of those who don't regularly attend church and those who may not be Catholic is abated.

During this year the parish has been blessed to get **Formed**, a Catholic website resource that helps instructors of sacramental preparation develop a program on Catholic teachings. For baptismal prep, the series is called *Reborn*, and it is broken down into three sessions titled "A New Creation," "Entering the Mystery," and "Nurturing a Life of Grace." The idea is to assist moms and dads in realizing that a life of faith does not cease after baptism, and that it is our responsibility to grow it in our children during their lives.



There is also a session called "The Mission to Love: 7 Keys to Catholic Parenting," and one on the importance of selecting and being a godparent called "The Gift of Godparents." These are rounded off with a one hour presentation for the instructor called "Evangelization through Baptism." These resources and presentations, combined with our parish's mission of being a welcoming Eucharistic community and implementing the Strong Catholic Families directive, will ensure that our Lord's message is sent out into the world.

Baptisms continue to be celebrated on the first weekend of every month: Saturday 5pm, Sunday 8:30am, 10:30am, and 12:30pm during Mass, and at 2pm on Sundays after the 12:30pm Mass. Until further notice, the baptismal prep course is on the third Tuesday of every month at 7pm. Please contact the parish office for an appointment.

In the Sacrament of Marriage, God joins the lives of a man and woman so intimately that they become *one flesh*. Marriage gives a couple the grace and strength to continue to grow together in mutual acceptance and love and to become responsible and caring parents. Couples are required to take a pre-marriage course as part of their preparation and should contact the parish office at least six months in advance of their marriage to arrange an appointment with one of the priests.

I look forward to the coming year and to expanding my responsibilities at St Michael's Parish in assisting our Pastor Fr. Murray in achieving the parish goals and mission statement in a Christocentric manner.

Thank-you for all your support and prayers.  
God Bless.

# St. Michael's Music Ministry

by Holly Langohr



Are you interested in music? Have you ever wanted to join a choir or form a band but never had the time? Do you like singing during Mass? If so, being part of the music ministry at St. Michael's may be right for you.

The decision to join a choir can be a difficult one. What is the time commitment? When are rehearsals? Do I need to read music or have a great voice? These are all questions people have, and they are simple to answer.

Choirs have either a weekly practice or meet half an hour before Mass begins. No choir at St. Michael's requires any musical knowledge or previous training. Church choir is about praising God, building community with one another and having fun.



The annual St. Michael's Christmas Concert is a great way to participate in a choir without a yearlong time commitment. While all of the choirs join together in the Christmas Concert, everyone is welcome to come and partake. This is a great opportunity to sing the many beautiful Christmas carols and celebrate the season.

Announcements regarding rehearsals (approximately 5 rehearsals) will appear in the bulletin in mid-October.

If you want a reserved seat at one of the Christmas Eve Masses, the choirs welcome new singers and their families to join in the music making. All the music is familiar, easy to learn, and includes a beautiful carol service prior to the beginning of Mass.



New and exciting changes are being made to youth choir this year! All of those countless hours practicing guitar, piano, flute, percussion or strings are about to pay off. Worship team, jam nights and coffee houses are all starting in the new school year. What better way to practice your instrument than playing in a band on You Nights?

If you need to fulfill community service hours, music ministry at St. Michael's is a great way to volunteer and develop your musical skills. Stay tuned for more information in the bulletin and at Mass regarding music opportunities for youth.

If you are interested in joining a choir but have any questions regarding rehearsals, repertoire or musical ability, please talk to any of the Music Ministers (Mark David, Nando Favaro, Tom Hart or Holly Langohr) for further details on any of the choirs.

The Saturday 5:00pm choir, Sunday 8:30am choir, the 10:30am Contemporary Choir, Sunday 12:30pm choir and funeral choir all have unique styles and would love to welcome new members.

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# The Vibrancy of St. Michael's Parish

by Gil & Karen Owens

We think you would agree that St Michael's Parish is a vibrant community. This vibrancy comes from our exciting and meaningful experiences and relationships in the parish. Vibrancy is a powerful energy that resonates in all our church activities. The foundation of this vibrancy is the vigour, enthusiasm and personal energy that each one of us brings to every aspect of parish life.

Have you ever noticed that the *church never stops*? Seven days a week from early morning to late evening, the parish is a hub of activities. There is always something happening whether it is Mass, a committee meeting, a Bible study group, a seniors activity group, people decorating the church, a mother's support group, toddlers playing together, a choir practice, support group meetings, youth group activities, food preparations for Sunday breakfasts, our Feast Day, feeding the hungry in our community, family gatherings after a funeral, parish business meetings, planning committees, Coffee/Social Sundays, and so on. Such energy in numbers!

As we join a new ministry or group, we develop new friendships while at the same time serving others or perhaps being personally supported. The church becomes a spiritual, social or comforting and safe place for all of us at any time. One is never alone.

At all Masses, the priests and greeters welcome us to our house of prayer. The ushers are there to assist as needed. Familiar faces of the people we see or sit near to every week make us feel like we belong to a special family. (They know when we are not there, too!) The choirs and

musicians fill the parish with beautiful and uplifting music as together we rejoice. On Sunday morning, the children hustle off the bus funded by our church, and they are filled with such joy and enthusiasm. They are happy to be with us and then at Sunday School they burst with energy as they learn new songs and sing about Jesus. What a thrill this is to witness their vibrancy!

Through his care, talents, and leadership, Father Murray provides us with spiritual guidance and compassionate friendship. He administers to all of us whether it is at the parish, in the hospital or at a long term care facility or in our homes. He is always there for us. What a wonderful role model he is for Father Don in his first year as a priest. As they lead us in prayer, Fr. Murray and Fr. Don invite us in their homilies to ponder the weekly readings and to think about how these relate to our lives. They are both vital in supporting every ministry, group or committee within our parish.

Our youth are servers or readers, and along with the Eucharistic ministers and Liturgical readers, they assist the priests during Mass and are faithful to their commitment to serve. The Youth Group programs provide opportunities for the teens and young adults to share in their faith together and to collectively channel their energies into outreach activities. Their enthusiasm and vigour is a vital part of their formation and lifelong service to God. They are the future of the church!

Marriage preparation, weddings, baptisms, first communion, confirmation, RCIA and funerals bring our parish community and families closer together as we experience these events with those directly involved. Their faces are a reflection of God's unconditional love, a love that embraces our family and our parish.

During Advent, the sparkling Remembering Tree and the glittering Angel Tree are reminders of our past and our future. Each Christmas ball placed on the Remembering Tree reminds us of our personal family members who have died. The Angel Tree gives us the opportunity to ensure that children in the parish experience a beautiful Christmas.





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# The Vibrancy of St. Michael's Parish continued



Many ministries or committees have incredible and endless energy to raise funds to support groups within the parish or in the community. Members of St. Vincent de Paul, the Refugee Committee, the Knights of Columbus, The Catholic Women's League, the Bazaar Committee, the Give to Grow Campaign, all have a specific focus and goal. Collectively their boundless energy is needed to make things happen. Their time commitment is immeasurable. They are the ones who are full of hope for the rest of us.

As one can see from the list below, it is easy to find a personal interest for each of us to volunteer our time and energy in both direct and indirect service to others. Age is not a barrier. Children of all ages, teens and the young adults, adults and the retired folks are all welcomed to get involved.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ✝ Weddings                                      | ✝ Pastoral Council   |
| ✝ Funerals                                      | ✝ Seniors On the Move Exercise Programs  |
| ✝ R.C.I.A. Program                              | ✝ Young at Heart Cards   |
| ✝ Confirmation                                  | ✝ Yarning with Love  |
| ✝ Confessionals                                 | ✝ The Artist's Group   |
| ✝ Welcome Desk                                  | ✝ Alcoholics Anonymous Groups  |
| ✝ Reconciliation Preparation                    | ✝ Young Parents and Mom's Support Groups   |
| ✝ Prayer Line                                   | ✝ School Breakfast Program   |
| ✝ Baptism                                       | ✝ Marriage Preparation   |
| ✝ Eucharistic Minister                          | ✝ Building and Maintenance Committee   |
| ✝ Usher   | ✝ Finance Committee  |
| ✝ Bible Study                                   | ✝ School Breakfast Program   |
| ✝ Sunday School                                 | ✝ Mental Illness Family Counselling Program  |
| ✝ Liturgy Committee                             | ✝ Youth Breakfasts   |
| ✝ Rosary Guild                                  | ✝ Youth Outreach Youth Programs  |
| ✝ Bazaar Committee                              | ✝ Gr. 5-6 Youth Nights   |
| ✝ Liturgy of the Word for Children Choirs       | ✝ Community Meals for the Poor (Hospitality North)                                       |
| ✝ CWL   | ✝ Community Meals for the Elderly  |
| ✝ Family Socials                                | ✝ Communications Committee: Website, Weekly Bulletins, Newsletters                       |
| ✝ Altar Guild                                   | ✝ Social Committee: Coffee Sundays, Feast Day, Appreciation Event and Mission Receptions |
| ✝ Altar Servers                                 |  |
| ✝ K of C  |  |
| ✝ Local Human Rights and Social Justice Support |  |
| ✝ Third World Assistance                        |  |

The real vibrancy within our parish is the impact that people have on people and the relationships that are built. The common thread that binds us together is our faith and sharing our faith with one another. It is only when each one of us takes that first step to become more involved in our church and community that another dimension of the life of the parish becomes powerful. Enthusiasm, vigour, excitement and energy make St. Michael's the vibrant parish that it truly is!

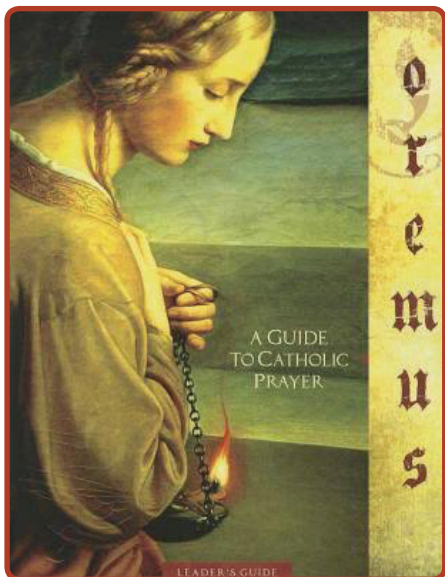




# Oremus: Lord Teach Us to Pray

by Peter Valiquet

A Program to Enrich One's Prayer Life



The overarching theme of this eight week *in parish* program is God's desire to form an intimate, caring and merciful lifelong relationship with each of us. Essential to this relationship is the need to communicate *the desires of the human heart*. It is not something that we initiate but that God himself initiated and remains steadfastly committed to throughout our lifetime here on earth and beyond. The image of the father awaiting the return of his prodigal son and seeing him coming toward him at a distance typifies the anticipation that God has for each of us.

This state of our relationship to our heavenly Father begs the question of how we learn more about Him and his expectations for a wholehearted response to His love for us. For those who responded to this initial call to prayer, a prediction was made that following our experience of Oremus, we would have many new insights into prayer and our views of the subject would be forever changed.

The centerpiece of Oremus (Latin for "Let us pray") is the eight segment video presentations by Father Mark Toupe, the principal author and commentator of the program. In many ways his delivery is quite unique based on the candor with which he discusses his own prayer journey. We can identify with his difficulty in coming to any kind of discipline in response to God's call to pray.

Gradually, as he discerned his call to a priestly vocation, he became aware of the need for quiet moments in a busy life, the need to become sensitive to finding the optimum time to pray each day and the space in which to do so. Insights emerged around the fact that one's prayer life is not a smooth journey; there are periods when it appears to go well, but there can also be times of dryness. In spite of this, God is always there, our constant companion, willing to persevere mercifully and listen patiently even when life's burdens seem unbearable.

Oremus is a program that uses sacred scripture from the Old and New Testament and sacred art as the mediums by which we can discern the will and presence of God in our lives. The handbook, a beautiful keepsake and journal, provides daily readings for the eight week program. The approach to the reading is informed by the content of that week's accompanying video and includes five questions that invite personal reflection. Participants gather for sessions in which they can share their perceptions.



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# Oremus continued



The themes explored in each segment are as follows: What is Prayer?, Before You Pray, Lectio Divina, Relational Prayer, Spiritual Senses, Discernment in Prayer, Dealing with Distractions, and Desolation and Consolation. The main sources of influence in the writing of Oremus were from the writings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, Saint John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. Participants are expected to have a Bible, to purchase the handbook *Oremus: A Guide to Catholic Prayer* (\$20.00) and optionally, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Here are some comments from parishioners involved in the initial offering of Oremus:

- ✝ *Prayer life has become deeper and richer*
- ✝ *Took God for granted, but now feel closer to God*
- ✝ *Faith has grown immensely*
- ✝ *Love imaginative prayer*
- ✝ *Through other prayer groups "I" was familiar with the methods; but knowing and doing it are very different.*
- ✝ *I would like to do Oremus again.*
- ✝ *Personal prayer changes lives, it's a spiritual growth.*
- ✝ *Father Mark is inspired and inspiring. He has the ability to communicate and simplify the concepts and teachings on prayer. He lives the life.*
- ✝ *Oremus was an answered prayer. I wanted a stronger prayer life but was not sure how. I have learned meditation.*
- ✝ *People are all different and how God communicates with each one of us is different. I have learned different ways to receive God's word. It has been a great opportunity to learn and grow in my faith. I especially appreciated the imaginative prayer method.*
- ✝ *I am so thankful. This was very helpful. Though I was not able to keep up with the daily readings, I was encouraged to persist, even with just one or two readings a week. I learned a lot and want to have another chance at attending another session.*
- ✝ *This program has opened up my prayer life.*
- ✝ *An exceptional speaker; Father Mark takes us on a prayer journey by sharing each week his own deeply moving and personal story and shows us how we too, should pray from the heart.*
- ✝ *Prayer life has been forever changed*

The next eight week session of **Oremus - Let Us Pray** will begin on Tuesday, October 4th and be completed on November 22nd. This evening offering is intended to run from 7:00 to 9:00 pm with the hope that these hours will prove more convenient to a broader segment of our parishioners.

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# In Full Communion through RCIA/RCIC

by Lydia Salmon

We each came to the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) from various backgrounds with various expectations. We had been Atheist, Hindu, Anglican, Protestant, Coptic, Greek and Russian Orthodox. Journeying with us was a Catholic with an equally diverse background.

Our Sponsors were Seminarians, future Pastoral Ministers, and other Catholics. Our sponsors created intense bonds with us, the Catholics-to-be. Each one of us committed two hours every Wednesday evening from September until April to take a faith journey.

Our Sponsors, in some cases, even stepped in as guest speakers. Each candidate attended RCIA with hope in their heart. The Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) ran on Monday evenings for an hour and a half.

Think of RCIA as an orientation program or a *how-to-guide* for new Catholics. We had journals, snacks, coffee/tea, handouts, heated discussions and videos. A typical night began with a prayer, the introduction of a subject, reflection, journaling, and discussion around pointed questions.

We were given a handout relating to the topic at hand and then watched a DVD (Symbolon) which walked us through the Catholic position. Nutrition breaks were also part of the evening. We ended each meeting in prayer, stayed a while for more discussion and then disbanded for another week.

Two hours for the adults and their sponsors, one hour and a half for the children, in addition to weekly Masses sounded like a huge commitment in the beginning, but as the program progressed, we all felt that we actually needed more time.

Our Pastoral Minister, Yana Adkinson, skillfully kept us moving and on point, balancing the list of subjects with the importance of reflection and introspection. No subject was taboo and no question discouraged. On nights when we veered away from the prescribed structure, some very impressive guest speakers took the helm and steered us through their areas of expertise.

Father Danny Santos came all the way from Leamington in a snowstorm to do a Lectio Divina session with us. We now know what Lectio Divina is! We had a convert speak to us about Sola Scriptura and why we need more than scripture as Christ's followers.

Father Don took us on a tour of the church, and we learned about the importance of the things we see and those we don't see. We learned how and why holy water is returned to the earth. We learned about the different articles and colours of vestments worn by priests and about the markings on the altar. We learned about the candles, the tabernacle and much much more. RCIA was truly an immersion course.

Father Murray gave us a tour of the Mass, walking us through the significance of every bow, kiss, and Amen. We learned when and why we stand, kneel and sit. Father



**Dr. Maria Cernea**

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## RCIA/RCIC continued



Murray shared his sincere passion for the miracle of the Mass. He was our leader through our first Reconciliation at an all-day Saturday Retreat.

At the Rite of Election, the Bishop himself welcomed all the RCIA candidates from the Diocese who were going to be baptized. Names were recorded and called out one by one at St. Peter's Cathedral. People travelled from Blenheim, Windsor, Lucan...the entire Diocese. The perspective on the reach of the Catholic Church was humbling. The choir sang for us and as on many other occasions, people were deeply moved and tears were shed.

Each Sunday leading up to Easter Vigil, we attended Mass but would leave the church before the celebration of the Eucharist. We would then "Break Open The Word" and practice Lectio Divina. We spent time with the readings to gain greater understanding through discussion.

The story of the prodigal son became real to us; we were struck by how blessed we were that the fatted calf was sacrificed in celebration of our joining the Catholic Church.

It seemed that it was not just the faithful Catholic attending Mass daily/weekly who was celebrated and blessed, but also the RCIA members who were receiving all the graces too. We were listened to, answered, prayed over, and absolved. We received in a condensed form what many who are raised in the Church receive over the course of years. It is profound.

Our fears were allayed and we were given assurances that God was waiting with open, loving arms for us. I learned that it is a huge mistake to put limits on the love,

acceptance and forgiveness of God who is limitless. Fears melted, giving way to anticipation.

Anticipation after all of that may seem a bit indulgent. What more could be coming? So much was yet to come. We learned, rehearsed and experienced. Many of us experienced Mass on Holy Thursday, The Stations of the Cross, and the Good Friday liturgy for the first time. Wow! We knew that Easter Vigil was to be the culmination of everything.

The church went from darkness to light as we were told to remember to be the light of Christ. We marched around the church as the Saints were called by name to pray for us. We saw our Seminarian sponsors participate in the Mass. We were baptized, confirmed and received first Communion as members of a new family.

We continued to meet on Wednesdays following Easter Vigil for another month. We are all changed. We are now in full communion. Pray that we never take full communion for granted or forget that Jesus really is Good News in a world that could use some.



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Knights of Columbus St. Michael's Parish





# What's Happening at St. Michael's

by Louanne  
Henderson

St Michael's Parish is blessed to have a number of volunteers and interest groups who meet each week to provide service, fellowship and a sense of community to various segments of our parish family. Enjoy reading about what is happening during the week. Perhaps there is a place for you to participate or serve your fellow parishioners.

## For Parents & Children

The **Mom's Group** meets bi-weekly on Tuesday morning from 10:00am until noon. The women gather to study scriptures and the Catholic faith using programmes such as *Women of Grace*. That gathering gives busy moms a much appreciated time of fellowship and spiritual support. Small babies join their moms, and older pre-schoolers are cared for by two experienced moms who volunteer their time to ensure that the younger women can enjoy this time of prayer and community.

The **Babysitting** programme takes place during the 10:30am Sunday Mass. Dads and Moms can drop their young children (up to 3 years old) off so that they can participate in the Mass without distraction. Parents are even provided with a monitor so that they can be contacted if needed. The children are happy and engaged in song, games and crafts, under the competent care of volunteers, who see this as a real ministry to young parents. This programme is always looking for more volunteer hands, particularly loving grandmothers who could give of their time for the young ones.

## Prayer

The **Prayer Line Ministry** - *"Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition and listening to His voice in the depths of our hearts."* - Mother Teresa. The mission of the Prayer Line is to give all families of St. Michael's an avenue to request prayers for themselves, family members or friends who are facing struggles in life. The Prayer Line consists of approximately 25 volunteers who remember your requests in prayer each day.

## Gifted Hands

The **Rosary Guild** - This group of dedicated parishioners meets once a month with a special task in mind – to make rosaries! They fashion rosaries out of string or wire and beads and send them off to the missions. They also make rosaries for St. Michael's parishioners who request a special rosary to honour a birthday or anniversary.

Birthstones can be incorporated into the rosary. They enjoy having new members and are only too happy to share their skill so that others can join in this rewarding ministry.

The **Yarning with Love** group meets in the library on Saturday mornings to knit prayer shawls and warm accessories for those in need. Yarn, supplies and lessons for new knitters are all supplied. Each item is labelled with this tag "Made with love and prayers for your warmth, comfort, hope and healing."

The **Art Club** meets each Wednesday. This group of artists enjoys expression through art and finds their time together both enjoyable and meditative. Each brings his/her own ideas and supplies. They use the time to paint or draw and help each other in developing techniques and artistic expression.

## Seniors

**Seniors on the Move** has been active in the parish for 22 years. For 12 weeks in the fall and 20 weeks from January to May, seniors gather on Wednesday and Friday for exercise classes, coffee and social time. The leader is a certified, CPR-trained fitness instructor and is very mindful of the participants' various medical conditions. The sessions are good for the body and the spirit. Participants enjoy socializing, support through life circumstances, guest speakers, special lunches and even some special off-season outings, focussed on activity.

**Young at Heart** card players have been playing bridge at the parish once a week for over a decade. Anywhere from 4 to 7 bridge tables are set up, and there is coffee, tea and goodies. New players and visiting players are welcomed into this friendly group.

Several other Parish Ministry groups reach directly out into our parish and wider community to offer real hope and practical assistance to those experiencing mental health challenges, economic difficulties and those who are refugees. These groups include: **You Are Not Alone/New Day, St. Vincent de Paul, the Social Justice Committee, the Refugee Committee and Hospitality North.**

Our Parish Bulletin lists contact information and schedules for all these groups. It's a busy place at St. Michael's and our parishioners are always encouraged to come out and join in, making our community strong and vibrant!

# The Babysitting Room

by Melissa Veenvliet



If you have ever come to the 10:30am Mass through the south doors then you've undoubtedly seen the fun-filled room on your left, probably already starting to fill up with many excited little ones.

This is our babysitting room, an important service to our parish community, and just one of the many children's programs we offer.

It is an exciting ministry that you should know about, and perhaps by the end of this article, you might even consider donating some of your time to helping out in this room in the future.

The babysitting room, named in honour of St. Josemaria Escriva (thanks to the generosity of the Whelan family during the Give to Grow campaign) is across from the kitchen entrance and is large enough for up to ten children. Each Sunday an adult volunteer and a helpful teen volunteer greet several families who entrust their youngest children to them for the hour.

The children can play with many different types of toys, and with the other children in the kitchen centre, read some books in the reading tent, participate in activities like bubble time, and perhaps even sing songs. And while the children are enjoying their time in the babysitting room, Mom or Dad can participate in the Mass more fully.

Parents are also reassured as they are kept in close contact with the volunteer caregivers by way of a silent paging system. Parents are given a pager when they sign in their child, and in the event of eyes that won't stop crying, or a diaper that is in need of changing, the volunteers can activate the parents' pager that vibrates and flashes to request the needed hugs, kisses, and helpful hands (the accessible washroom in the parish also has a child changing station).

Another recent addition to the babysitting room is a speaker that allows the volunteers to listen to the Mass. It also allows parents who are spending time in the room helping their children transition and settle to still hear and participate in the Mass.

***Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." Matthew 19:14***

Our adult volunteers are often people with young children of their own, but this is by no means a requirement! In many ways, grandparents and people with older children are perfect for this volunteer role.

If you regularly attend a different Mass you are also welcome to help out in the babysitting room. You can continue to attend your regular Mass and still come for 10:30am, ready to meet others in our parish community and serve them in this important ministry. If you are uncertain as to your ability to care for our little ones, I (Melissa) am more than happy to have you join me on a Sunday to see what it is like. I can give you some tips and skills for working with groups of children, as I am a trained Early Childhood Educator. I worked for more than 10 years in various day-care centres before transitioning to full-time care of my own children at home.

Our hope and goal for the babysitting room ministry is to allow young families with children to know and experience St. Michael's as a warm welcoming Eucharistic community. We are called as a parish to come alongside young parents and help them experience Mass more fully each week by serving them in this tangible way.

St. Josemaria pray for our children and  
for our volunteers!





# Not Your Grandmother's CWL

by Joan Lobsinger



The past eighteen months have been an exciting time for St. Michael's Catholic Women's League. In January 2015, St. Michael's council researched and wrote a resolution titled *Provision of Regulated Housing for the Chronic, Severely Mentally Ill*. This resolution was presented and adopted at the CWL Diocesan convention in April 2015, and it was accepted at the Provincial Convention in July with the additional clause "That this resolution be forwarded through national council to the other ten provincial councils, encouraging them to become aware of this issue as it pertains to their province/territory, and to act on it, as deemed necessary/prudent." It then became one of the resolutions carried to the Ontario provincial parliament by CWL provincial delegates.

You can read the Resolution on the provincial website at [cwl.on.ca](http://cwl.on.ca) – Resolution ON.15.04

Another CWL endeavour was a successful postcard writing campaign in January 2016, with over 200 parishioners filling out postcards urging stricter enforcement and strengthening of laws against pornography and increased protection for its victims. The signed cards were mailed to our local members of parliament to make our views known on this important issue.

The new medically assisted dying legislation in March 2016 again presented the need to make our voices heard. With the encouragement of Bishop Fabbro and our Pastor Father Sample, the CWL hosted a more extensive letter writing campaign.

Again, more than 250 parishioners made their way into the hall after each Mass to write letters to local MPs and to the federal Justice and Health Ministers, as well as to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

There have been many opportunities for spiritual growth as well. Starting on December 8, 2015, Pope Francis declared an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. Archbishop Oscar Romero was designated as the London Diocesan Patron, and each month we reflected upon his life as a martyr and the way he lived the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

Our St. Michael's council devoted itself to celebrating this Holy Year by participating in both spiritual and corporal works of mercy. For Holy Week, CWL members prepared special purple crosses for all parishioners to take, wear and exchange when they came to Mass. The crosses represented our desire to become more aware of the struggles we all carry, and our willingness to help carry the burdens of our brothers and sisters each week through prayer.

Following on this strong spiritual start, the council then focused on increasing its regular charitable contributions (Birthright, Women's Community House and My Sister's Place to name a few) in order to answer our Pope's call. In January, a number of members volunteered at the Food Bank, and in April we organized a used book drive for donation to the local jail. All local CWL councils have been asked to keep track of these events as they are recorded, and they will be collected by the National Office of the CWL, to be forwarded at the end of the year to the Vatican.

In recognition of Mary, Our Lady of Good Counsel, as patroness of the Catholic Women's League, our members participated in a special 12:00 noon Mass on her Feast Day, April 26th.



Following Mass, members gathered at the Statue of Mary to recite the League Prayer and Hail Mary.

On the evening of May 2nd, CWL members were pleased to invite parishioners to a special crowning of Mary ceremony, complete with a recitation of the rosary, a procession to the Lady Chapel next to the altar, the laying of the crown of flowers on the statue of the blessed Virgin and music provided by our members.

It was a lovely, touching event, obviously appreciated by all those who attended. Another CWL National initiative was 12 hours of Prayer for Palliative Care on



## CWL continued

May 4th. Our council organized a schedule to ensure our members along with many other parishioners prayed at St. Michael's from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

There are many social events too. Our council has a Welcome Back Social in September, a Christmas Party, and the Potluck dinner in June. Here we recognize our members for their years of service. Our potluck always has some special entertainment. In the past we've been wooed by Elvis, participated in square dancing and this year we were thoroughly entertained by SOUP, the Southern Ontario Ukulele Players. Many of our members also attended the Fun Night hosted by the London Region and the Diocesan Convention in Sarnia.



The Convention is always an informative, spiritual and fun experience. As members reconvene in September after the summer break, the St. Michael's CWL looks forward to sharing more faith, fun, and fulfilment over the coming months.

All women are welcome to join the Catholic Women's League of Canada. As a woman in our parish, you are eligible to join if you are age 16 and older.

Whether you are single, married, separated, divorced or widowed, you can belong to the League and are welcomed to participate in all activities. Returning members and new members are always welcome. Our annual membership drive begins in the fall.

Together we are making a difference and together we can do more.



## K of C

by Keith  
Rodrigues



Many of you know us for our pancake breakfasts. On selected Sundays bright and early, the Knights of Council 12820 get together, don our aprons and hats and fire up the griddle to cook and serve a full breakfast for those who attend the 8:30am and 10:30am Masses.

The monthly Knights' breakfast, the annual yard sale, and the Shrove Tuesday dinner are just a few of the more visible activities that we are known for. We are also active in our parish schools. The "Free Throw Basketball" competition and the "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contests are very popular with the younger students in the parish. I thought this would be a great opportunity to share some insight around who the Knights are, why we do all this and to let you know how your support, donations and contributions are shared with our parish community.



Thanks to your ongoing generosity and the many hours of time volunteered by our brother Knights, we are able to work closely with other ministries in the parish, while at the same time reaching out and providing a helping hand to many other great organizations in the city. Here are just a few of the programs that our Council is happy to support:

- ✚ The Parish "Give to Grow" campaign
- ✚ St Michael's School Breakfast Program
- ✚ Coats for the St. Vincent de Paul Christmas program
- ✚ Support for Seminarians
- ✚ London Mission Services
- ✚ Missions Canada

Our Council, **#12820**, was founded in 2000, and has been very active in St. Michael's parish ever since. We are looking for men from our parish, 18 years of age and older who are committed to making their community a better place and to support their Church.

We are a family-oriented fraternal organization based on the principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. If you are interested in being a part of our work, or even just curious, please get in touch.

Contact the Grand Knight, Bob Gauthier at  
**[bobgauthier@rogers.com](mailto:bobgauthier@rogers.com)**

# 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](mailto:stmichlon@dol.ca) • [www.stmichaels.dioceseoflondon.ca](http://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](mailto:msample@dol.ca)

ext. 202

Father Don Pumputis, Parochial Vicar

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Rod Tramble, Hall Coordinator

[tramble@dol.ca](mailto:tramble@dol.ca)

ext. 210

## Parish Council Chairperson

Peter Valiquet

## 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, after Masses September 24 & 25

Thanksgiving Mass, 10:00 a.m. October 10

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

October 13

Confirmation Parent & Candidate Meeting, 7-9 p.m.

October 26

Parish Holiday Bazaar

November 12

All Day Confessions, 8:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. December 16

Mass of Healing, 12:00 noon Mass November 29