

GRATITUDE NEWS



2nd Annual Parish Roast Beef Dinner Event

by Angie Hunt

On Sunday, October 23, 2016, 122 parishioners enjoyed a delicious Autumn Dinner in the Basilica Church Hall catered by Nick Finoro. The meal included prime rib of beef, mashed potatoes, vegetables, salad, buns and carrot cake for dessert. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by all.

Special thanks to the volunteers from the Parish that helped with the event including youth volunteers from our high schools.



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CWL Christmas Bazaar

By Diane Jones, President - Basilica Catholic Women's League

On Sunday, November 6th, the Church hall was elegantly decorated and transformed into a winter wonderland for the Catholic Women's League Annual Christmas Bazaar. The Catholic Women's League of Canada is a national organization, rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.

The ladies of the Basilica work diligently for our parish, city, province, country and the world. The money raised at our bazaar helps fund regular local donations and commitments to: our church, the youth and elderly of our parish and city, the Drop-In Centre, the Right To Life Organization, St. Joseph Health Care Centre, Hospice Wellington and others. We also support Canadian and global missions. We take very seriously our mandate to provide "service to the people of God."

The Christmas Bazaar offered something for everyone. Visitors were invited to visit the many tables such as Attic Treasures, the Boutique, the Bake Table, the Craft Table, Green Space, the Penny Table, the Children's Table, Seasonal Delights, to name only a few. Each table was laden with a fabulous assortment of treats and treasures that enticed parishioners and visitors to stop and shop.

Our Tea Room offered a light lunch featuring the Basilica ladies' delicious sandwiches and sweets. No one makes egg salad sandwiches like our Basilica ladies! Our Christmas Bazaar was a huge success again this year and special thanks are extended to all our parishioners and visitors for their donations and support and to our Basilica ladies for their enthusiasm and hard work.



From L to R: Entrance to tea room; Seasonal Delights table, Lillian Mokanski; Attic Treasures Table, Marilyn Langlois and Olympia Bendo

Student Reflections on Confirmation

By Angie Hunt

On Saturday, November 12, 2016, our Grade 7 students from St. Michael, St. Ignatius and St. Paul schools and our Correspondence Program received the Sacrament of Confirmation with Bishop Anthony Tonnos as celebrant.



St. Michael's student, Matteo Martinello, shared that he chose the name *Michael* for a few reasons: St. Michael defeated the devil; is the name of his school; is the patron saint of police officers and his Dad works for the police service. When asked about the fruits of the Spirit, he spoke of faithfulness. It stood out to him because he wants to be faithful to God and to learn what God has planned for him. He chose his cousin to be his sponsor because he is like an older brother to him and a good role model. He stated that he looks up to him and he has many qualities of the gifts and fruits of the Spirit and Matteo wanted those qualities in his own life.



Owen Wilsie of St. Ignatius School said he found his Confirmation to be a very happy experience with the support of a loving family, classmates and friends. He said he asked his cousin to be his sponsor because he has always shown an interest in him. He chose St. George for his Confirmation saint because he was a man of bravery and chivalry and it was also his great-grandfather's name. He welcomed the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit to help him be strong and faithful and he was struck by the odour of the oil of Chrism. Owen raised his hand several times and volunteered to be the first to answer a difficult question posed by Bishop Tonnos: "Will the Toronto Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup this year?"

Euthanasia—Caring not Killing

By: Kathy Gemin

On Tuesday November 29, over 70 people gathered in our Parish Hall for a powerful and informative presentation by Alex Schadenberg on Euthanasia/Doctor Assisted Suicide.

We listened as Alex led us through the video—***The Euthanasia Deception*** - that was created to combat the false belief that dying is the only way to deal with pain, suffering, and terminal illness. It was created from true accounts of people here in Ontario and from around the world who are living with the after effects of euthanasia. Euthanasia does not just affect the dying person. The people who administer the death drug and the family left behind also become victims of this killing. Alex made the point that once the decision has been made and the drug is administered, there is no turning back because the result of euthanizing someone is death. Doctor Assisted Euthanasia is not a medical procedure but right now there are 3 Euthanasia Deceptions that are being presented by governments and pro-euthanasia groups to lead us to believe that euthanasia is the only way to relieve suffering:

1. Assisted Death is Compassionate
2. Euthanasia is All About the Individual
3. Safeguards will Protect the Vulnerable

The fears that lead someone to consider euthanasia or assisted suicide are real and legitimate, but euthanasia is not the answer; a caring, compassionate community is the answer because a person suffering alone is much more at risk of choosing death. Alex encourages each of us to become knowledgeable in this important issue that is facing our world because one day we could be one of those vulnerable people.

Special thanks are extended to Jane Nunan, convener of the CWL Christian Family Life Standing Committee and Theresa Winchester, convener of the CWL Legislation Standing Committee for organizing and promoting this event.

Visit the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition website at www.epcc.ca to increase your understanding of this “life and death” topic and what is currently happening in Canada and around the world.



From L to R: Theresa Winchester, Alex Schadenberg, Jane Nunan

Dr. Michael Higgins—Francis and Mercy

By Ian Macpherson

On November 3, the Knights of Columbus hosted an enlightening talk by Dr. Michael Higgins entitled: “Francis and Mercy: Why We Need Mercy in a Time of Turmoil”. Citing many examples of how life today is much more promising than it was two centuries ago, Dr. Higgins asked why there might be a general sense that we have a greater need for mercy?

In the past 200 years, our average life expectancy has increased from 33 to over 80 years; half of the population of Britain lived in abject poverty 200 years ago; there was widespread famine throughout many countries; most women lived fewer than 30 years; and while slavery was common in the 19th century, there is not a place on earth today where it is legal. We have made great advancements in technology, medicine, nutrition and science; and yet, there is a great feeling of malaise and a spiritual quietness. “It appears that we live on the cusp of an apocalypse”, and one need only look as far as the proliferation of zombie movies and television shows to experience the feeling of impending doom.

As we witness the “rise of aggressive straw men” in eastern countries and the “demise of liberal democracies” closer to home, we are seeing an increased lack of civility, with an erosion of our privacy: everything can be compromised for public knowledge and entertainment. Add to this a tendency towards “xenophobic nationalism” and the rising threat of global war and we find we have a great need for progress tempered by mercy.

Enter onto the scene: Pope Francis, who has made mercy, as the outward sign of Christ’s love, the cornerstone of his papacy. It was no accident that the Pope made his first trip outside of Rome to the small Italian island of Lampedusa, where refugees from northern Africa have been arriving by the boatload for several years. Although it is natural to be wary of the foreigner, Pope Francis has answered the call to “concentrate on mercy and its concrete expression” to others.

In canonizing Saint Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), Francis has given us a model of what it means to be a saint. Dr. Higgins reminded us that saints are not perfect; rather they are humans with weaknesses, like all of us. Saint Teresa manifested the unconditional love of Jesus Christ through the “ferocity of her love” for the outcast and the forgotten.

In conclusion, Dr. Higgins says: It would be impossible to conceive a society without mercy. It would be a prison of solitaries. Mercy is a glue that holds us together in solidarity. A society without mercy is a society without love; and a society without love is a society at war with itself.

Advent Parish Mission: Feel the Joyful Mercy... Pope Francis Leads the Way

By Kathy Gemin

Thank you to Father Michael Prieur for facilitating our Advent Parish Mission. Father gave us powerful explanations and illustrations on three themes and he encourages all of us to receive God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We are all called to be "ambassadors of mercy as we sing knowingly of God's amazing mercy."

Following are some quotes and highlights from Father Prieur's message for further reflection:

- "Reconciliation is the number one reason Jesus Christ came to earth"
- "Mercy is not an abstraction; it is concrete, simple and demanding. Mercy turns things upside down."
- "We are swimming in a sea of mercies!" (Cynthia Bourgeault)
- "God is clothed in the robes of His mercy, voluminous garments - not velvet or silk and affable to the touch, but fabric strong for a frantic hand to clutch." (Carmelite poet: Jessica Powers)
- "Mercy is the fundamental, determinative attribute of God" (St. Thomas Aquinas)
- Cardinal Walter Kasper's Book: "Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life, N.Y., Paulist, 2013
- The Parable of the Prodigal Son
- St. Faustina Kowalska: "God's mercy is the greatest and highest of the divine attributes and mercy is the divine perfection pure and simple"
- Angels are spiritual creatures who glorify God without ceasing and who serve His saving plans for other creatures.

Presentation by Cardinal Collins - The Road to Emmaus

By Angie Hunt

On Friday, October 28th, we had the honour of hosting Cardinal Collins for a presentation entitled "The Road to Emmaus". He began the evening with an opening prayer invoking God's help to allow "the words of Sacred Scripture to grow close to our hearts." He spoke of the Year of Mercy and asked us to reflect on the word of God, encouraging us to read the Gospels: **Matthew** – a teaching Gospel; **Mark** – the Gospel of power and majesty of God; **John** – the sublime Gospel; and **Luke** – the Gospel of mercy.

He focused on Luke's Gospel using examples of the encounters of the merciful Lord which are warm and loving. In quoting Pope Paul VI, the church seeks witnesses and personal encounters of Jesus as our Saviour. We are to be servants of the Lord. A few highlights of Cardinal Collins' presentation:

- The ritual at mass prior to hearing the Gospel, when we make the sign of the cross on our foreheads, our lips and over our hearts. The ritual represents knowing God in our minds, speaking God's message from our lips and living God's message from our hearts. The word of God is transforming and life-changing.
- Mother Teresa saw the face of Christ in other people and these were life-changing experiences
- We need to spend our lives loving God and serving our neighbour and must guard against the dark undercurrent that led to the Crucifixion, which is rejecting Christ.
- Like Luke's Gospel account of the Good Samaritan, we are tempted to look the other way and keep on going when we encounter trouble but we are called to be like Jesus and we ask ourselves do people see Jesus in us by our response.

Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate

28 Norfolk Street
Guelph, ON N1H 4H8
519.824.3951
www.churchofourlady.com

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Donut Sunday and Parish Ministry Fair - **January 8th**
- ◆ Annual Pasta Dinner - **January 29th**
- ◆ KofC Breakfast - **February 26th**
- ◆ Lenten Program—**March 12, 19, 26**
- ◆ Donut Sunday - **April 2nd**
- ◆ Annual Golf Tournament - **June 4th**
- ◆ Donut Sunday - **June 11th**

- The only exam that will matter is at the end of our lives when we will be asked: Have you loved the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind, and your soul? Have you loved your neighbour as yourself?
- In the story of the road to Emmaus, there is an extraordinary meeting with the Risen Lord through the Word and the Eucharist. We need to be engaged in recognizing Jesus in Word and Sacrament
- God speaks to us like a gentle breeze. He does not force or impose. He uses a gentle voice and we have a choice to stay or to walk away. Are we caught up in me, myself and I [(the unholy trinity)
- Challenge: prior to Mass, read the scriptures ahead of time and prepare to receive the word. Be intentional Christians

Cardinal Collins concluded the evening by reminding us that each one of us is called to greatness. We do not have the luxury of mediocrity. He ended with his personal slant on a familiar slogan: STOP, LUKE and LISTEN.

Visit from our Refugee Family

On the November 20th Donut Sunday, we hosted our Refugee Family, Saeed and Amal and their children—Seedra, Hameed and Roya.

