

GRATITUDE NEWS



3rd Annual Prime Rib Dinner Event

By Angie Hunt

On November 19, 2017, 140 parishioners gathered to enjoy a prime rib dinner in our parish hall catered by Nick Finoro (pictured on right).

The menu for the evening included: Prime rib of beef, mashed potatoes, vegetables, salad, buns, apple pie, coffee/tea. A special thanks to the group of student volunteers from our parish and local high schools that helped to make the evening such a great success.

Mark your calendar—Next year's event will take place on Sunday, November 18, 2018.



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Catholic Women's League— Christmas Bazaar 2017

By: Agnese Nagy, Bazaar General Convener

If you wonder what the word “bazaar” means, the dictionary definition is as follows: *a fundraising sale of goods, typically for charity.*

If you ask a CWL member what the word “bazaar” means, you will hear much more included in the definition: *anticipation, attention to detail, beauty, camaraderie, conversation, creativity, donations, enjoyment, elbow grease, elegance, friendship, frustration, generosity, hospitality, irritation, laughter, passion, planning, satisfaction, sharing, sisterhood, spirit, teasing and...love.*

Our recent CWL Christmas Bazaar was that and more. It was a true *PARISH* endeavour with an unbelievable outpouring of generosity from the Basilica of Our Lady community. All types of donations flooded in during our weekend of preparation and the support and attendance on Sunday, November 5th was outstanding!

The beautifully decorated Parish Hall set a welcoming scene and the many colourful offerings on the various tables and booths, such as Attic Treasures, Bake Table, Boutique, Craft Table, Jewelry, Plants, Seasonal Delights and Touch & Take invited those in attendance to wander and explore. Many took chances on a delightful array of offerings on the Penny Table, Hamper Draw and the Silent Auction Table, while the 50/50 Draw Table saw particular attention. The mouth-watering sandwiches and sweets of the Tea Room offered a delicious break from the bustle of the day.

The overwhelming success of the Bazaar allowed the CWL to make immediate financial donations to the following local charities: Drop In Centre, Guelph & Area Right To Life Association, Hospice Wellington, St. Joseph Health Centre, and to the following national charities: Catholic Missions in Canada, Catholic Near East Welfare Association, Coady Institute, Development & Peace, and the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition. Remaining funds will be utilized to help us meet ongoing obligations for our beloved Basilica and the members of our Parish, city and province.

Our CWL ladies and many non-members, including a number of our Catholic school students, contributed to the success of our bazaar, working together in a spirit of *faith, fun and fulfillment*. We are indebted to all the women (and men) of our parish! To our non-members, we extend an invitation to join the CWL so that we can become an even stronger voice for Catholic women.

A profound thank you is offered to all who worked and supported our Bazaar and heart-felt congratulations to all prize winners. May you all be blessed with a holy and spirit-filled Christmas!



John B. Miller and Friends—Advent Concert

By: Angie Hunt



Photos by: Michael Manchoi Chow, Photographer

On Sunday, December 5, 2017, John B. Miller and Friends performed an Advent Concert at the Basilica of Our Lady. This particular performance was one of seven planned performances for John and his ensemble throughout the Advent season at various churches in the Kitchener Waterloo region. John and his ensemble of five musicians performed for an hour and a half and filled the entire Basilica with the beautiful music of the Christmas season.

His ensemble included assorted string instruments and a piano accompanying the group's harmonized voices in song. The evening also included audience participation when they sang *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*.

John, who is the son of parishioners Bernie and Margie Miller, recalled singing the Christmas classic—*O Holy Night*—for the first time when he was 15 years old from the choir loft in our church. In an encore presentation, John sang *O Holy Night* by special request from our pastor Father Noon.



Upcoming Parish Ministry Fair and Donut Sunday

By: Catharine Doucette

The Basilica of Our Lady is a vibrant and active faith community! There are many parishioners who work to share their time and talents within our parish and contribute to the collaborative spirit of our faith community.

On Sunday January 14th, after both masses, there will be a Ministry Fair Donut Sunday! All parishioners are invited to come down to the church hall after mass for refreshments and also to meet the various ministry leaders in our parish. This Ministry Fair is an opportunity to learn about the great work that many of our parishioners do and also learn about potential opportunities to get involved. Ministry Leaders will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the opportunities to volunteer and share your talents and time with the parish community of Basilica of Our Lady. We look forward to seeing you on January 14th.

Ministry of Compassion

By: Mary Davidson-Pilon

On All Souls Day, November 2nd, a Memorial Mass was celebrated with Father Noon and the Ministry of Compassion Committee to honour and remember all those who had died in the parish...recently, and in the past.

Following the homily, the families and friends of the deceased were invited to light candles for their loved ones. It was a very special evening with the choir helping us to find comfort in our very personal losses. Following the mass, a lovely reception was hosted by the CWL.

The Ministry of Compassion Committee, whose members are Father Noon, Karol Stortz, Deanna Stanley, Nancy Peverly, Tamara Nugent, Randy Fischer, and Mary Davidson-Pilon, has been preparing a program to support anyone who is dealing with grief. The weekly sessions are projected to begin in Spring 2018. Please check the parish website link for Ministry of Compassion from time to time for updates, information, and resources. We hope to continue providing comfort and care through various parish events and programs.

Thank you to all who attended and for making this a very meaningful evening.



Navigating the Holidays

Grief is a very difficult road to travel, and winding one's way through Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, or any holiday come with many obstacles. It can be overwhelming. Here are a few self-care suggestions you may find helpful:

1. Acknowledge your limitations and expectations and do what YOU want to do; not what someone else thinks you should.
2. Christmas will be different, and this sad reality requires some adjustments. Re-evaluate the traditions and decide which are kept and which are not...if any.
3. Talk about and share memories of your loved one. Denying the death is unhealthy and possibly increases the stress.
4. Take time to be thankful for what you have.



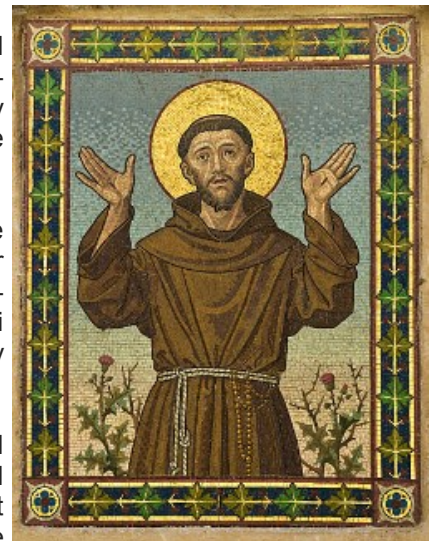
St. Francis of Assisi— A Spiritual Travelogue

By: Robin Fishburn

On December 6th and 13th, parishioners attended two presentations by Robin Fishburn on the Life of St. Francis of Assisi.

St. Francis is perhaps the most loved Saint in our Church, and for me personally, the city of Assisi and vicinity is one of my favourite places.

For two evenings, we told stories of St. Francis, and saw pictures of significant places in his life. We looked at his life and discovered the personal journey he made. The evenings set the life of St. Francis within Church history with scriptural references, quotes from Saints, and several personal experiences and stories.



Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

Amen

Dr. Michael Higgins' Talk

By: Ian Macpherson

The Knights of Columbus, Council 1507 once again hosted an evening with Dr. Michael Higgins, who reflected on the issues that face the Catholic Church in Canada and what the future might hold. In a talk titled "*Despair is Not an Option*", Dr. Higgins pointed out changes and trends from the past 50 years, and led listeners to understand why there are still signs that we should be hopeful for the next 50.

Sharing a number of 'uncomfortable truths', Dr. Higgins encouraged us to build the future by facing the reality of the past and reading the 'signs of the times'. Using examples like the decline in attendance in the sacraments, the decrease in influence in business and politics enjoyed by prominent Catholic clergy and theologians, the increased social isolation of youth even as they are more strongly connected through artificial 'virtual' networks, and in particular the 'hemorrhaging of large numbers of women' from the Church, Dr. Higgins painted a bleak picture that could easily lead many to despair.

However, he continued to suggest that 'withdrawal into the citadel' was not an option, and that as much as we may have a desire or urge to retreat to the 'old ways', this has never worked in the past and is not the direction we should be moving towards now. Instead of mourning the loss of such well-known organizations as the Scarboro Missions, whose decline is so severe that they have closed their seminaries and recalled all of their missionaries so that they may peacefully and quietly fade into history, we are encouraged to read the trends of the past to recognize that there is a natural cycle to life, which includes death and resurrection, and to carefully discern what is needed now and for the future.

Pointing to a number of positive signs - active retreat houses, including the Ignatius Centre here in Guelph; modern spiritual authors, activists and artists like Richard Rohr, Ronald Rolheiser, Susan Moran, Mary Jo Leddy and David Adams Richards; Bishops filled with hope and vision, and a Pope who is eager to listen to them - Dr. Higgins suggested that there are many ways in which the Catholic Church in Canada can reclaim its role in the public arena. It is still the largest single religious body in Canada, and many of our politicians, including the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition identify as Catholics. Teachers, administrators, chaplains and staff in Catholic schools and universities are committed to their faith, to creating real communion within and among their students and to living the story of incarnation and resurrection.

We are not a people of 'false optimism'. We are, however, a people of hope. By living prayerfully, we can bear witness to our faith for our children. Our schools can demonstrate that having a faith-based education system that promotes the gospel messages can have a tangible benefit for all of society. By speaking openly and honestly about challenges and solutions, our Bishops can be confident that they will be heard by a Pope who appears to have an open mind. We can encourage our leaders - in religious, secular and political realms - to speak up for the values of the Church and to reclaim the strong voice that we once had.

The evening was well-attended and considered a great success by all. The insightful and thought-provoking questions posed after the keynote address indicated a great desire on the part of participants to learn more and to move forward. Dr. Higgins' entertaining and captivating style was greatly appreciated and the Knights of Columbus hinted that there may be further opportunities in future years for us to benefit from his deep insight.



Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate

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

Gratitude News is brought to you by the Stewardship Committee, and published three times a year to keep Parishioners informed and connected.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Ministry Fair/Donut Sunday—**January 14th**
- ◆ Pasta Supper—**January 28th**
- ◆ Volunteer Appreciation Night—**April 24th**

For more details about upcoming events, visit the Events section of our website at www.basilicaofourlady.com

Coats for Kids— a great success!



By: Mark Sammut

The Knights of Columbus launched the "Coats for Kids" program to ensure that every child in need would have access to a warm winter coat.

Since the program started in 2009, Councils have purchased and distributed nearly 400,000 new winter coats to children throughout North America. This year, Councils in Guelph and Wellington County purchased over 420 coats that were distributed to local schools.

A very worthwhile initiative helping those in our community to stay warm throughout our cold winter months.