

# GRATITUDE NEWS



## Annual Pasta Supper

*By Angie Hunt*

On Sunday, January 29, 2017, the Stewardship Committee hosted the 4th Annual Parish Pasta Supper. 200 Parishioners enjoyed a menu that consisted of pasta, meatballs, sausages, salad and buns, dessert, coffee and tea, and wine was available for purchase.

The amazing meal was catered by Nick Finoro and his family, and a special thank you goes out to the Stewardship Committee and our high school student volunteers for their help in serving the meal and also for cleaning up. A wonderful evening was had by the many parish families and their guests that attended!

Mark your calendars for next year's event—Sunday, January 28, 2018.

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## Catholic Youth Conference

By: Wendy Obbema



The Cast Youth Group attended the Steubenville Toronto Youth Conference in 2016, with 2000 other Catholic youths from the Hamilton and Toronto Dioceses. Steubenville is rooted in the Franciscan tradition and young people experience a weekend of prayer, praise and reflection. Highlights included; dynamic speakers, music, and masses celebrated by Bishop Bergie and Cardinal Collins. For further details about Cast, please contact Wendy Obbema at [hrprimary\\_youthministry@rogers.com](mailto:hrprimary_youthministry@rogers.com).

## Diocese of Hamilton 2017 Youth Rally

Registration for the Diocese of Hamilton 2017 Youth Rally is now open. Youths in grades 7-12 are invited to participate in the Rally taking place at C.Y.O. Camp Brebeuf, Rockwood on Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. The day will consist of a keynote address, workshops, Celebration of the Eucharist, fellowship and fun! Registration is \$20.00 per person. Please visit <http://hamiltondiocese.com/youthrally/> for more details. Individual and group registration will close May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, so register soon!

## Peru Trip 2017

By Ryan Blower, Student at Bishop Macdonell High School

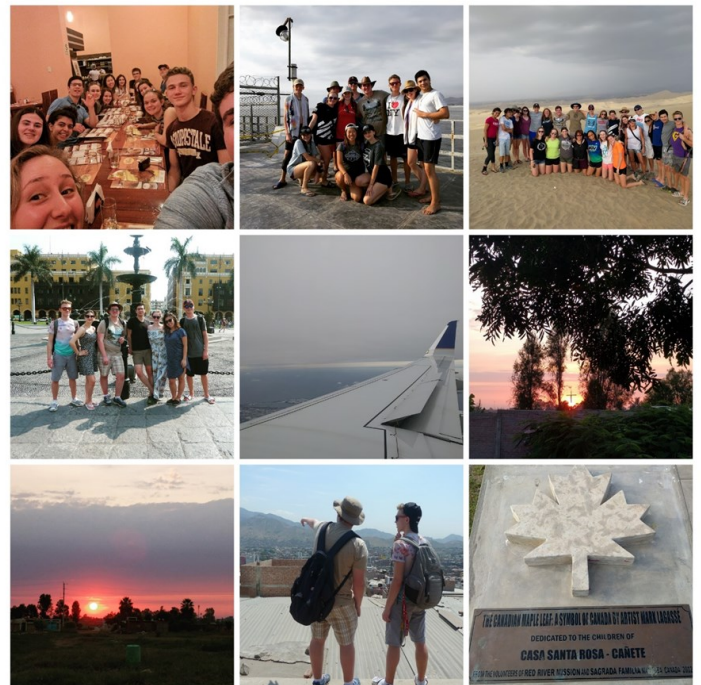
They say that a picture is worth a thousand words and boy if this were true, the photos shown to the right would speak a million words!

This is my look on the 2017 Peru mission trip and all the great experiences I had and will cherish forever. For the 10 days while I was in Peru, I enjoyed one of the greatest adventures of my life so far. I laughed more than I ever have before; I worked harder than my parents have witnessed; I sweated like there was no tomorrow; and I played with the children to the point that it hurt when we had to leave.

I wish we could have stayed longer— although, I suspect that no amount of time in Peru would have been enough, and there would always be that dreaded, “Good-Bye.” To think that a year of planning has come and gone in a heartbeat! We are forever changed! As for me, I am a 17-year old guy from one Ontario high school who was given the opportunity of a lifetime, and trust me when I say that

I would do it all over again faster than you can say “Peru”. It is awesome to be able to say that I have completed a mission trip when so many others my age may never have the opportunity, or perhaps they could not imagine themselves doing such a thing. It was an honour to be part of such an amazing trip with so many talented young people! We truly were a family working together to achieve a common goal. We got to know the children at the NPH Orphanage and spent time playing with them. We also had the chance to do some physical work including fixing screens, painting, removing and planting trees and the much-loved installing of brick walkways. For me, the best part of our trip to Peru was seeing how happy the orphans were to be with us, and watching them enjoy life to the fullest, despite their simple lifestyle. We, learned so much from them as well, and I believe that we achieved our goals in just a few days.

I would like to send a huge “thank you” to all the people who helped my school to be part of such an amazing experience! It is one that I will not forget!



## Habitat for Humanity Adopt A Day

By: Mark Sammut

Habitat for Humanity Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph is partnering with Creating Homes to provide affordable homeownership to 30 families in our community. Habitat for Humanity units will be supporting fixed income seniors, special needs individuals, and low income families with 100% interest free mortgages. Our Knights of Columbus Basilica of Our Lady Council #1507 have pledged sponsorship to support an Adopt-a-day event coming later this year. Would you like to help with this event? Details are still being finalized, but if you are interested, please contact our event coordinator Denis Dipratto at 519-822-9194



# Garden of Grace

By Jakki Jeffs

Over the three decades that I have served in pro-life ministry, I have held many women in my arms. There have been those:

- desperately seeking the assistance and support to help them carry their unexpected child
- pressured by family or boyfriends to undergo abortion.
- who have screamed and yelled at me because I dared to propose that there was a better way than abortion to deal with an unexpected pregnancy.
- who had already undergone induced abortion unable to cope with the aftermath of their decision.
- who told me very clearly that abortion was the route they would take no matter what I said or what help I offered.

Many of these girls and women felt that work, education, relationship or family challenges made their path very clear and this did not include carrying their baby to term or considering adoption. So many different faces, lives and life circumstances - yet somehow they each ended up in my arms and we both cried.

There have also been fathers that I supported who had no chance to save their child from abortion or who admitted to me that their lack of support had driven the mother of their child to have an abortion. The grief that these men carry is unfathomable and often shown in violence toward others, abuse, alcoholism or other addictions.

In Canada, there have been almost 4 million abortions over 48 years and so the growth in the number of victims, beside the child that are killed, has been enormous. Society offers and allows abortion as an option; however, many of these mothers and fathers regret their decision and quietly but painfully carry their grief every single day of their lives. No grave do they have to mourn their little one.

**So why the Garden of Grace?** A few years ago I had an inspiration to provide a space for all parents who grieved the loss of these tiniest of children. I ran the idea by a colleague of mine who had experienced abortion and she was so overwhelmed she could not speak. Finally she told me that the Garden of Grace would be a gift from God for her and the millions of other mothers and fathers who have no place to grieve their loss. Many of these babies are named and will be remembered in our beautiful garden which we hope will be a silent witness to the grief and sorrow carried in so many hearts across our land and a place of healing and remembrance.

The statues (see picture, top right) will be placed in April and we have an official opening set for May 31st 2017 which is the Feast of the Visitation.

The Garden of Grace will be dedicated to the memory of Denise Brazolot who was a great pro-life warrior. Denise had nine living children and experienced six miscarriages, and we are certain that she will be a Guardian Angel for our garden. I cannot thank Peter Brazolot enough for making it financially possible to complete this amazing project.



Our thanks also extend to Bert Tami who has purchased our first statue. For all donors, our committee, our volunteers and, of course, a special thank you to Father Noon for allowing us to have the garden under the shadow of the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate.

We will need an army of gardeners the last week of May to assist with the final planting, erecting the bench and gazebo, and many other last minute jobs. I would ask for your prayers for this new ministry on "Catholic Hill" and heartily welcome you all to our official opening at 2.00pm on May 31, 2017. Our garden will be for everyone of every faith who has suffered the loss of a child before birth. We welcome them with open arms and pray that the Garden of Grace will provide solace, reconciliation and joy to all.

## Nicaragua—Mission Trip Reflection

By: Mia Kurtz-Favero and Mattie Bower, Students from Our Lady of Lourdes High School

We have all heard of the issues occurring in third world countries; however, we never fully understand what is going on and how truly privileged we are until we see it for ourselves. Heading into our Mission Trip to NPH in Nicaragua, we knew our job was not only to help with physical labour at the orphanage, but to share our love and God's love with everyone. Work days started early. We worked in the kitchen sorting beans, on the farm planting crops, in the classrooms teaching English, or laying concrete for sidewalks. The kind and compassionate workers at the orphanage made challenging jobs more enjoyable and knowing that we got to see the kids when the work was completed kept a smile on our faces. Our lives were impacted by the orphans in such a tremendous way in such a short time. These special children don't take a single thing for granted, and they are the happiest human beings we've ever met. Needless to say they don't have very much but you'd never be able to tell due to their loving personalities and endless hugs. We witnessed this at mass when they prayed for the poor and less fortunate even given their circumstances. These experiences brought our team closer together and created a bond like no other. Our group of students has now become a family. This trip has changed the lives of each and every one of us. It has given us the opportunity to follow in the Lord's footsteps. Our eyes have been opened and we now see things in a different light.





## Bereavement Committee

By: *Father Noon*

A few months ago, there was an approach made to the parishioners to form a Parish Bereavement Committee. After a training course and receiving information from other sources, we have begun the process which involves a great deal of well-thought-out planning.

We are grateful to Mary Davidson-Pilon who has agreed to chair this committee. Mary has experience in this field and trains the volunteers at Hospice Wellington, and is also a former chaplain at Bishop Macdonell High School. We plan to have a committee of six people and are looking for a few more people who may be interested in joining our team. As of January this year, we have sent bereavement cards to families who have lost a loved one and we will be planning a Memorial Mass on November 2nd for all who have died during the past year.

For this ministry to be successful we will proceed carefully in forming our team and with sensitivity to all the bereaved. Please pray that this ministry will be another source of support and outreach in our parish community.

## Parish Mission to Guatemala

By: *Ted Laxton*

This coming July, members of the parish of the Basilica of Our Lady will be taking part in a mission to Guatemala. The mission is being offered by our local not-for-profit group called 'One by One,' whose governing members have been involved in leading 60 missions over the past 17 years in Guatemala.

We are trying to answer the call of Jesus for corporal works of mercy: "For I was hungry... I was thirsty...I was a stranger...I needed clothes...I was sick...Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Our mission includes: establishing long-term relationships with our communities; asking the communities what their needs are and employing local labour.

Members of our community will be participating in several of the following activities: providing food, dental supplies, clothing, 'environmentally-friendly' soap; repairing schools and homes; hiring local doctors and dentists; providing medical supplies; building playgrounds and planting flowers. We hope that by doing so, we are responding faithfully to Jesus' call to discipleship, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

When we come home, we often see tears in the eyes of both the mission participants and the families we serve. In the words of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, "These are the tears of Jesus. They are tears that flow from the beatitudes." In the words of the community leaders: "Who are we that you should think of us?" and "We know that God has sent you."



## Golf News

By: *Steve Nagy*

The robins are back chirping and jumping on the back lawn and the sun is setting after the 6 o'clock news. That can mean only one thing - the Basilica of Our Lady golf tournament is almost here! The tournament will be held on Sunday, June 4 at Victoria Park Valley Golf Course. We have been able to keep the costs the same as last year - \$95 for 18 holes with cart, a meal, and a prize table.

So come join us for our famous putting contest, a worry-free round of 18 holes on a picturesque golf course (you'll swear you are in North Carolina!), and lots of fun. Watch out for announcements in May for further details. Foooore!



## Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate

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

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ Doors Open Guelph—**April 22nd**
- ◆ CWL Annual Brunch—**April 23rd**
- ◆ Volunteer Appreciation—**April 25th**
- ◆ Cupcake Sunday—**May 28th**
- ◆ CYO Youth Rally—**June 3rd**
- ◆ Annual Parish Golf Tournament—**June 4th**
- ◆ Donut Sunday - **June 11th**
- ◆ Parish Picnic—**September 10th**
- ◆ Food Fiesta—**September 24th**

## Knights of Columbus sponsored Parish Breakfast

By: *Mark Sammut*

On Sunday February 26th our own Knights of Columbus Basilica of Our Lady Council #1507 hosted a Parish Breakfast. The breakfast is open to all parishioners after both the 9am and 11am Masses. This has become a very popular event and is held a few times each year throughout the winter months. Stay tuned for a BBQ lunch date in the coming months.

Pictured (left) are members of the Knights serving their fellow parishioners a delicious breakfast!