

Church of Our Lady
Immaculate

Gratitude News

What's Going On In Your Parish Community?

Christmas 2013

INSIDE

Children's Christmas Eve
Pageant

Challenge Days at
Bishop Mac

125th Anniversary
update

Honouring Zita Finora
and Sister Elaine

Renovation Update



*Please contact the church
office for information
about upcoming events*

Children's Christmas Eve Pageant

by Kelly Raftis

The Advent Season is upon us and with it comes the excitement of what has become a tradition at Church of Our Lady - the Children's Christmas Eve Pageant. Families gather after 9am mass in the Church and visit while the children and Pageant Leaders prepare and practice telling *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. It takes a team of about 15 dedicated adults to lead the 40 Parish children involved. The 5:15pm Christmas Eve Family Mass has become a much anticipated Celebration!



Challenge Days at Bishop Mac

by Reilly
Everitt Cunningham

Grade 10 students at Bishop Macdonell Catholic HS recently participated in the school's first ever Challenge Days on December 11 and 12. Challenge Day is an interactive program which tours all around Canada promoting compassion and equity among students in order to create a more positive and inclusive school climate. The event was a hit for students and teachers

alike. All participants were able to take many valuable lessons out of the days. Results from the workshops are already visible; students are saying they have a new understanding of their peers and they are exerting kindness towards all. Challenge Day definitely promoted the school's principle of 'faith based education' as students learned what it means to treat all people with the respect and dignity as exemplified by Jesus.

125th Anniversary of the Church of Our Lady Immaculate: Closing Celebration

by Madeleine Hughes
& Angie Hunt

On Sunday, October 20, 2013, our parish family welcomed Bishop Douglas Crosby on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the dedication of the Church of Our Lady Immaculate. Bishop Crosby was celebrant and homilist at our three masses, which made this occasion inspirational and memorable. The Bishop spoke of the significance of this house of worship for parishioners and

the Guelph community. Bishop Crosby noted the generosity of our forefathers, who had limited resources but generous hearts and a deep faith. We were inspired by his words to be grateful for the past, to live with joy in the present, and hope in the future.

Bishop Crosby, Father Noon, support staff and parishioners then gathered and enjoyed a gala luncheon at the Guelph Place Banquet Hall.

Zita Finora was born in Italy. At the age of seven, she began her training to care for the church altar cloths and prepare the altars. She also learned how to make hosts at the convent there, using broomsticks as rolling pins. She immigrated to Canada in 1954 and in 1956 married Maurice Finora, caretaker of the Church of Our Lady. Maurice and Zita raised their children, Gerry, Virginio, Livio, and Yolanda in the little house next to the rectory. They even planted a large garden, which Zita dug by hand. Maurice erected a clothesline that ran from their house to Northumberland Street. Zita had two children in 10 months and the clothesline was filled with diapers. She recalled, with a chuckle, that Father Noonan had offered to buy Zita a washer and dryer, as he had received numerous complaints. Zita had refused the offer and advised Maurice that he should look for a new job.

Zita spoke fondly of the many pastors and staff that she worked with over the years. She recalls the choir master, John Marrin, inviting her to sing “Agnus Dei” on special occasions.

After 8 years of service at Church of our Lady, Sister Elaine Weinstein will be leaving the parish in January to begin a new position at St. Clement's in Cambridge. In December, at a farewell reception, parishioners wished Sister Elaine well and let her know how much she will be missed!

As sacristan, Zita remembers making and edging altar cloths with fabric that her mother sent from Italy. She launders the cloths and altar server vestments, ensures that the liturgical vessels and decorative objects are kept in good condition and available for celebrations. Zita stated, “I like my sanctuary to be perfect.” Father Noonan was so impressed with the quality of her work that he told her she should have been a nun!

On Sunday, October 20, 2013, the Church of Our Lady celebrated its 125th Anniversary. On the recommendation of our pastor, Father Noon, Bishop Crosby presented Zita Finora, our long-serving and much loved sacristan with the Diocesan Medal of Service at Mass. This honour was a complete surprise to Zita, who has served our parish for 50 years. It was a stirring moment for our parish family. Zita received standing ovations.



Church of Our Lady says Thank You to Long Serving and Much Loved Sacristan, Zita Finora

by Madeleine Hughes
& Angie Hunt

Thank You Sister Elaine!

Renovations to Church Interior are Beginning

In January, work will begin on the renovation of the interior of the Church of Our Lady. The plan has had a lot of input from parishioners. Recently, the architect for the project presented draft of the plan to parishioners and the feedback was very positive.

At several times during 2014, this work will involve major disruptions to the normal way that Masses and other important events take place in the church. In January, the organ and the rose window behind it will be removed for reconditioning. Next, all of the pews will be replaced with temporary chairs until about September. New pews are being constructed using the carved ends from the old pews. This is a great way to preserve an important artifact of the church's history, and it also saves \$300,000 on the cost of the new pews!

The renovation will also involve repainting the entire interior,

installing new lights and wiring, and replacing the floor with new ceramic tile. During the planning for the renovations, a beautiful mosaic similar to the Lamb of God over the church's main doors was discovered under the carpet of the sanctuary. This mosaic will be uncovered and restored during the renovation.

A new altar will be installed, along with matching baptismal font and ambo. The opening in the communion rail will be widened, and the shrines around behind the sanctuary will also be renovated.

The total cost of this phase is \$6.5 million. It is being paid for through your generous donations to the building fund and with financing from the Diocese of Hamilton. More donations are needed to complete this work! It is going to be a challenging year, but we are confident that people will really be pleased with the result!

28 Norfolk St.
Guelph, Ontario, Canada
N1H 4H8
p: 519.824.3951

Mass times during
ordinary time:
M,T,W, F: 7:30 am Th: 7 pm
Sat: 5:15 pm Sun: 9 am, 11 am
www.churchofourlady.com



The Stewardship Committee

The Church of Our Lady Stewardship Committee includes parishioners from various Parish ministries and produces this newsletter to highlight activities within the Parish. The committee meets monthly, and its purpose is to find ways to advance the Stewardship mission within the Parish. It has initiated events like the annual picnic, donut Sundays, and the golf tournament. The committee meets regularly with leaders of other parish ministries in order to support their work.