



The Divine Messenger

A Contact with Divine Infant Parish

Vol. 18, No.1

November 2022



You are invited...

If you do not attend church at this time but would like to renew your church connections, please call 613-824-6822 to discuss anything with Father Waldemar, Father Steven or Deacons Jeff, Steve, Gerry, Jim or Philip. We would love to hear from you!

A Message from Our Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ!

For this issue of our Divine Messenger I'd like to share with you this brief Advent Message, that Pope Francis gave on the First Sunday of Advent this year, during the *Angelus* gathering. May these words accompany us through the remaining part of Advent and be a great introduction for the joyful and grace-filled season of Christmas. God Bless!

Dear brothers and sisters

In the Gospel of today's Liturgy, we hear a beautiful promise that introduces us to the Season of Advent: "Your Lord is coming" (*Mt 24:42*). This is the foundation of our hope, it is what supports us even in the most difficult and painful moments of our life: God is coming, God is near and is coming. Let us never forget this! The Lord always comes, the Lord visits us, the Lord makes himself close, and will return at the end of time to welcome us in his embrace. Before this word, we ask ourselves: How will the Lord come? And how will we recognize him and welcome him? Let us dwell briefly on these two questions.

The first question: *How will the Lord come?* Very often we hear it said that the Lord is present on our path, that he accompanies us and speaks to us. But perhaps, distracted as we are by many things, this truth remains merely theoretical for us; yes, we know that the Lord is coming but we do not live ac-

cording to this truth, or we imagine that the Lord will come in a spectacular way, perhaps through some miraculous sign. And instead, Jesus says that he will come as in "the days of Noah" (cf. v. 37). And what did they do in the days of Noah? Simply, the normal, everyday things of life, as always: "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (v. 38). Let us bear this in mind: God is hidden in our life, he is always there – he is concealed in the commonest and most ordinary situations in our life. He does not come in extraordinary events, but in everyday things; he manifests himself in everyday things. He is there, in our daily work, in a chance encounter, in the face of someone in need, even when we face days that seem grey and monotonous, it is right there that we find the Lord, who calls to us, speaks to us and inspires our actions.

However, there is a second question: *How can we recognize and welcome the Lord?* We must be awake, alert, vigilant. Jesus warns us: there is the danger of not realizing his coming and being unprepared for his visit. I have recalled on other occasions what Saint Augustine said: "I fear the Lord who passes by" (*Sermons*, 88, 14.13), that is, I fear that he will pass by and I will not recognize him! Indeed, Jesus says that those people in the time of Noah ate and drank "and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away" (v. 39). Pay attention to this: they did not realize anything! They were absorbed in their own things and did not realize that the flood was about to come. Indeed, Jesus says that, when he will come, "two men will be in the field;



What is the difference? Simply that one was vigilant, he was waiting, capable of discerning God's presence in daily life, whereas the other was distracted, "pulled along", and did not notice anything.

Brothers and sisters, in this Season of Advent, let us be shaken out of our torpor and let us awaken from our slumber! Let's try to ask ourselves: am I aware of what I am living, am I alert, am I awake? Do I try to recognize God's presence in daily situations, or am I distracted and a little overwhelmed by things? If we are unaware of his coming today, we will also be unprepared when he arrives at the end of time. Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us remain vigilant! Waiting for the Lord to come, waiting for the Lord to come close to us, because he is there, but waiting alert. And may the

Holy Virgin, woman of waiting, who knew how to perceive the passing of God in the humble and hidden life of Nazareth and welcomed him in her womb, help us in this journey of being attentive to wait for the Lord who is among us and passes by.

"ADVENT INVITES US TO A COMMITMENT TO VIGILANCE, LOOKING BEYOND OURSELVES, EXPANDING OUR MIND AND HEART IN ORDER TO OPEN OURSELVES UP TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE, OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AND TO THE DESIRE FOR A NEW WORLD."

- Pope Francis

In Christ,

Fr. Waldemar Podlasz, SDS



Agape Bible Study Ministry Report

by Lucille Surette

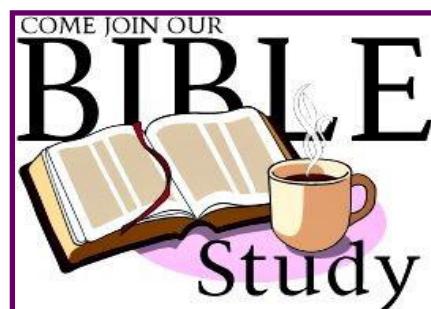
I facilitate, not teach, the Agape Bible Study here at Divine Infant. This ministry has been sharing the Word of God for the past ten years using free written lessons from the very reputable Catholic website [Agape Bible Study](#). I have come to know this website in depth since I am the editor for the daily and Sunday readings, all documents, and books in the publication process.

Since I could not attend any Catholic teachings presented during the day due to my work schedule, I decided to include both evening and daytime opportunities from the very start of the ministry.

The past two years have been challenging and rewarding. Still, the [History of Salvation Study](#) group was able to meet face-to-face using Skype,

while the second group decided to wait until we could remove our masks and meet in person. We resumed our meeting on September 7th and started to study the Pauline letters, in the Acts of the Apostles, following St. Paul on his ministry journeys, beginning with his [First Letter to the Thessalonians](#).

Last year, we twice interrupted our study on Salvation History to prepare for the Birth of Christ with [A Study of the Advent of the Messiah](#) and Easter with the [Lent and Easter Study](#).



DIVINE INFANT PARISH LIBRARY

BECOME A LIBRARY VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FOR ALL WEEKEND MASSES

SEEKING ASSISTANCE TO OPEN THE LENDING LIBRARY
AFTER EACH WEEKEND MASS FROM SEPTEMBER TO JUNE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
E-MAIL: dilibraryservices@gmail.com

What is the Parish Library

The mission of the Divine Infant Parish Library is to serve parishioners of all ages by providing unlimited access to a vast collection of books, dvds, cds, tapes and videos.

Browse the large selection of Catholic authors, or reputable works dealing with Catholicism and contemporary Christian spirituality. All contents is aimed to help grow in knowledge of faith, in the history of the church, and in personal spirituality.

Stop by the library after Mass to find books on Jesus, Mary, The Bible, Prayer and Meditation, the Saints, Healing and Social Concerns.

Sign up today as a volunteer! All are welcome. Need volunteer hours? Your immediate support is required to assist at the desk covering the library. Our urgent aim is to keep the library open after each of the weekend Masses. To contact **Nina Regimbald**, please email

dilibraryservices@gmail.com

For more information check out the "Parish Library" link on the main website at
www.divineinfant.on.ca/

Mom's Morning Out and Bereavement

By Andrea Heeringa

With November being the month we remember and give special prayer for the repose of the souls of our deceased loved ones, it was a humbling invitation when a member of the Bereavement Group asked me to speak about my miscarriages. To include the lives of the unborn in the Memorial Mass on the feast of All Souls Day, was an incredible way to honour and give testament to these little ones, since their lives are often unspoken of by their families.

Many families silently mourn the children they have lost through miscarriage and stillbirth, not wanting to make others feel uncomfortable by sharing their grief. Society tells us not to even announce a pregnancy until the second trimester, in the event of a miscarriage. I feel it's for this very reason that we should tell a trusted circle as soon as we find out we are expecting, in order to establish supports.

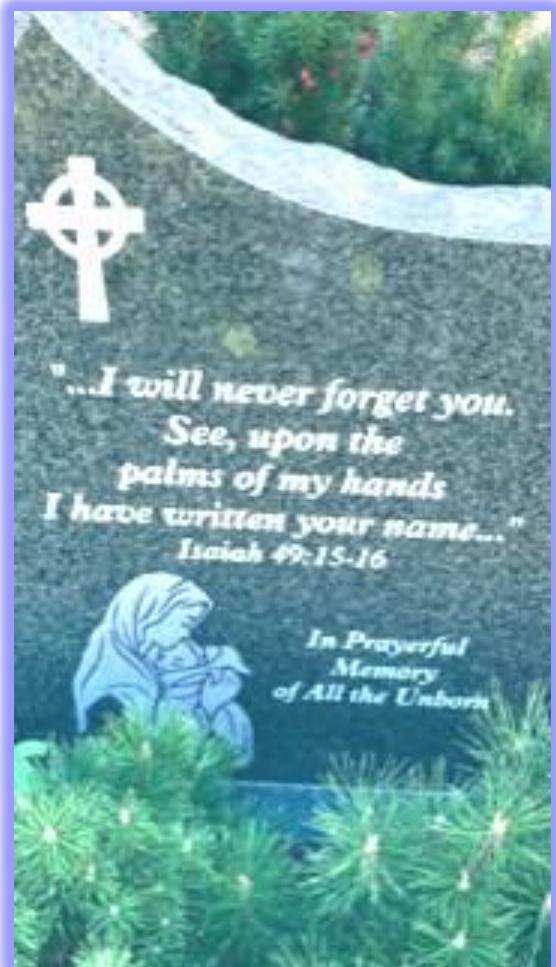
Our lives can, at times, feel isolating and lonely, often because we simply do not openly talk about the uncomfortable. But once we break the silence, we quickly realize that many have gone through similar experiences. And we are not alone. The Lord in His wisdom reminds us of this, by calling us to the Community of Faith, to the Community of Saints.

If you've experienced a miscarriage or stillbirth, give yourself the freedom to mourn - however it looks to you. Grief is an individual experience, and we all go through it in our own way. Know that the life of your child matters, and that you are loved dearly by Our Lord. Know too, that there are supports at the parish through the Bereavement sessions. And if ever you need a listening ear or a prayer offered, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My contact information is in the bulletin.

May the peace of Christ be with you, and may Our Lady wrap you in her loving mantle.



Andrea giving her testimony
at the Mass , compliments of
Andreas's article.



Tenderly Connecting

By Diane Jemus

November 1st, All Souls Day, begins a month of tenderness and remembrance. With memories in hand, embraced by loved ones near and far and those just entering our space, members of the Divine Infant community gathered for a special Mass to honour and remember family members we have lost. During the evening, I encountered many people and listened to their stories.

I met a few elderly gentlemen dressed in their Sunday best, flanked by loving, supportive families. Softly, one said "Thank you for this." I remembered our telephone conversation well. They wanted to come to Mass, but were not mobile. Surely, their adult children would bring them. And they did! Families happy to be in attendance with their dads, and dear dad content to attend the very special All Souls Day Mass in honour of spouses now in heaven, cherished here on earth by them, honoured in the church. Our ushers ensured appropriate seating and communion accommodations.

Another woman introduced herself as she came in with her family. We hugged. I knew her mother (Rosetta). I saw the resemblance. Tenderness filled the space with a mutual recognition. Devoutly, she joined the candle procession with many others. It was a special moment - for her, for me and for the congregation.

I approached a man sitting alone in the hall. His mother had died. He had not attended such a service before. I told him of the planned Bereavement Christmas Workshop. He was from New

Brunswick. Across from us was Mike - a fellow Maritimer from Mirimichi, I introduced them, and before long, they were chatting. Mike's sister, Patsy, had recently passed away. He came to hear her name. It brought him comfort - like it does for so many others.

Chris attended the Mass for the first time. He brought a candle up for both of his parents. "I like this," he said with a big smile on his face, adding "I am going to come again."

All Souls' Day provides an opportunity to publicly honour our loved ones. It is a poignant time. Coming together with the church community provides an opportunity for personal reflection and community celebration - including becoming closer to each other through the shared moments in the liturgy and social gathering that follows. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. Let's keep the conversation going. We were made for intimacy. Keep praying for our dearly departed and sharing our memories.



At the Offertory, the congregation was invited to bring up a lit candle in memory of their dearly departed loved ones. This is a very solemn time and an activity the congregation derives much peace and comfort from. The congregation was most appreciative for being able to participate since this procession was previously cancelled due to COVID restrictions. It was a very poignant moment. The candles are placed on a table in front of the sanctuary.



Candle Procession at All Souls Mass

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light
shine upon them.
May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*



been well-attended by parishioners. The one hour event begins with a song and a short reflection from a lay person - usually a parishioner. The five minute talk is to offer insight, inspiration and encouragement to those in attendance, as they prepare to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. After this exhortation, one of our priests, accompanied by young altar servers, exposes the Blessed Sacrament. Then there is time for quiet reflection and, with the leadership of musicians, an invitation to lift your voice in songs of worship and praise. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also offered during this hour. All are welcome at The Presence.

Here is what a mother of three young children had to say about her experience when taking part in The Presence:

"As a busy young parent, having The Presence every month has allowed me to intentionally connect with our Lord in Eucharistic Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this time of prayer, I am able to still my mind from all the distractions of life and let my heart be filled with Jesus' love and mercy for me. I always look forward to attending The Presence and I receive so many graces in that hour of prayer."

The Presence

By R.Lockert,
The Presence Planning Team

The Presence is a monthly Eucharistic Adoration event held at Divine Infant on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 7pm-8pm. It has

Madonna Volunteers

By Dolores Cyr

The 2022 year began with the hope of being able to return to volunteering at Madonna. With the introduction of new protocols, we started back in February, offering more Pastoral Care. We were able to bring Communion to residents and Father Steve began celebrating Mass there on a more regular basis. The residents, their families and the staff have been so grateful to see this Ministry return.

Unfortunately many of our volunteers were unable to return, which left us with a much smaller, yet dedicated, group. We are still able to entertain

the residents on a weekly basis and they do look forward to our visits - as we do to seeing them.

There have been many changes throughout these past few years and we have managed to adapt - and will continue to do so for our seniors. If anyone would like to join us, we certainly would welcome you and invite you to join in our sing-a-longs or visits with the residents. There are other areas that need volunteers as well, such as feeding residents and assisting or leading a craft project. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have about volunteering at Madonna Care. Please call me at (613) 830-5571. I so look forward to hearing from you.



The Final Inspection

- Author Unknown

*The soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.*

*"Step forward, soldier,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To my church have you been true?"*

*The soldier squared his shoulders and said
"No, Lord. I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns
Can't always be a saint.*

*I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent
Because the world's awfully rough.*

*But, I never took a penny
That wasn't mine to keep.
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.*

*And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.*

*I know I don't deserve a place
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around
Except to calm their fears.*

*If You've a place for me Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
If You don't, I'll understand.*

*There was silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the soldier waited quietly
For the judgement of his God.*

*"Step forward now you soldier
you've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell."*

- Author Unknown



Cursillo Movement

by Rob Chamberlain

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about many changes to parish life over the past 2 to 3 years. The Ottawa Cursillo Movement is no different; we have seen Cursillo weekends cancelled and fellowship gatherings postponed indefinitely. Perhaps the most significant change to occur to our movement is that after **35 years**, the Maison Notre-Dame de la Providence Retreat House in Orleans is closing its doors. We were notified earlier this year that there will not be any further Cursillo weekends at this beautiful venue which we have come to love. This Orleans location has been a major part of our Cursillo culture and this change will have a huge impact on the myriad of logistics to put together a Cursillo weekend.

Many parishioners at Divine Infant have made a Cursillo weekend. Cursillo is a Spanish word meaning "short course." A Cursillo weekend is 3 days long (Thursday evening to Sunday late afternoon) during which time participants live and work together, listening to talks given by priests and laypersons. The teachings of Christ are presented in a climate of joy and understanding, followed by discussion. There is time to attend Holy Mass, Reconciliation, pray the rosary and visit the Blessed Sacrament. After a Cursillo weekend, there are ongoing friendships and fellowship within the parish and the larger Cursillo community.

The good news is that the Cursillo movement is slowly getting back to normal after the pandemic! Firstly, fellowship gatherings of the larger Cursillo community have restarted. For example,

there is the central gathering at Our Lady of Fatima Parish on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 7 pm. And secondly, a new venue to hold Cursillo weekends in Eastern Ontario has been found! The next Women's Cursillo Weekend will be held at the Centre de l'Amour in Plantagenet, Ontario on April 27 to 30, 2023. The dates for the next Men's Weekend are to be determined.

To register for a Cursillo weekend:

Go to www.ottawacursillo.com

Click on "Weekend"

Scroll to the bottom and click on "Cursillo Candidate Weekend Information HERE" for all the details about a weekend.

Click on "Cursillo Candidate Weekend Application Form HERE" to register for a weekend.

Complete the form and submit it.

Cursillo might be the greatest gift you will ever give yourself (and your family)! Let us remember to prayerfully make a friend, be a friend, and lead a friend to Christ. For more information on Cursillo, check out www.ottawacursillo.com.

On a personal note, I have been the Cursillo parish representative for several years. It's time for me to pass the baton. In the spirit of rotation, I will be passing on this duty to another Divine Infant parishioner who has made a Cursillo weekend. The job is not onerous, and I'm quite willing to assist in the transition. If you are interested in taking on this role or have any questions about Cursillo, please contact Rob Chamberlain at chamberlainr.nuclear@gmail.com



Youth Group Update

By Pia Ocenar

There has been a lot of growth within the Youth Group this past semester, especially since coming out of Covid. It has been growing non-stop ever since we started back up in September.

We have started a new program, specifically for high school leaders. This program is to encourage high school students to grow in their faith and to lead the younger youth in the Junior Youth Group. It

gives them an opportunity to take ownership of the Youth Group that they love so much. I am looking forward to seeing where this new program and our Youth Group goes in the future!

My goal is not to be better than anyone else, but to be better than I used to be.

Our Lady of Wisdom School

By Renee St. John

Meet the Educator Night

In September we welcomed families back into the school for our student-led 'Meet the Educa-

tor' evening. It was so lovely to reconnect with former students and have our new students introduce their families. Children led their parents on a class scavenger hunt which highlighted student work and co-created classroom learning goals and resources that will be used throughout the school year. It was definitely a terrific start to the year!

Welcome to our Student-Led Program Night

Welcome to our classroom! The Grade ___ students are going to show you important information you need to know about our classroom. Once your child has checked off all of the boxes on this sheet, please submit to the classroom teacher with your child's name on it so they have a chance to win "Lunch with the Principal" or a spirit wear t-shirt!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Classroom and School rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the rules of the classroom? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o French <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents our French ducttang. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My favourite thing about Grade ___ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Class routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell your parents what you do when you come into class in the morning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Art <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents your artwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Safe Place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents our safe placethat we use to help us self-regulate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Meet Ms Lemire! 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Religion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents our Religion table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Math <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents our Math Word wall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show your parents where the silent reading books are found 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Meet Mme Gagnon!

Terry Fox Run

Terry Fox inspired an entire country and set an example that would never be forgotten. On September 23rd, staff and students at Our Lady of Wisdom continued that tradition. Cheered on by parent volun-

teers, our school community walked, jogged and ran to help raise awareness and much needed funds for cancer research. We surpassed our goal, raising over \$1500.00 for the Terry Fox Foundation. Way to go OWLS!



Every Child Matters.





A Christmas Message from the Catholic Women's League

By Martine Barney, President

The Catholic Women's League wishes you and your family and friends a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ bring happiness and joy to your life.

As I gear up to celebrate Christmas with my family this year, I feel compelled to share one of my most memorable childhood Christmas stories. As many of you know, I grew up in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Thunder Bay is known for its frigid winters, as it is located next to Lake Superior. In my family home I had my two parents, my two big brothers, my little sister and our two dogs. One of my brothers has autism. Due to his autism, he is non-verbal and has a tendency to wander. He would frequently roam the neighbourhood and get into all sorts of mischief. Often we would get complaints as he would stroll into our neighbours' houses, garages and fridges. One day, to my embarrassment, my mother and I even found him wandering home naked after skinny dipping in our neighbour's pool.

Now that I've familiarized you with this trend, it brings me to my Christmas story. A couple of days prior to Christmas Eve, my brother got that yearning to leave the house on a cold winter's day. This time he did not wear his hat, coat, mitts or boots. As our family was distracted by the multiple uplifting activities we were doing that particular evening, no one took notice of his absence. When he returned home from his outdoor adventure, we realized the lack of attire he utilized for that weather. He came home shivering with frostbite to his bilateral legs and feet. The frostbite resulted in painful blisters - which consequently landed him immobile, and in a wheelchair for the rest of Christmas break. After empathetically viewing his suffering, I remember being grateful for his safe return home, as alternatively he could have lost his life or could

have been hospitalized for an extended period of time.

This Christmas I am grateful for the boots that protect my feet, the house that keeps me sheltered and the ability to be the caregiver for my family, despite their weaknesses.

The moral of this Christmas story is to keep a watchful eye out on your neighbours, especially if it is a child with disabilities, an adult with dementia or an individual who has indulged in too much of the Christmas spirit. Try to always keep a blanket close to the door, some coffee/tea and snacks at the ready, and a reliable designated driver in case you happen to have unexpected visitors who may stroll by.

In preparation for next year, the Catholic Women's League of Divine Infant Parish will be hosting League Development Day in February, sending out postcards to our local government to repeal MAID and continuing to take on new and exciting challenges. If you feel drawn to deepen your own faith, feel the need to serve others and to address social justice issues, then the Catholic Women's League is the place for you. Our membership fee is now \$40 annually. All women have a place at our table - from those who provide countless hours on the executive, to those who pray for us to come closer to our Lord. Feel free to come to our next meeting. It will be held on January 24, 2023 in the Divine Infant parish hall. Don't forget to bring a smile.

May God continue to bless you!

Mission Statement

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 Catholic Women's League Christmas Bingo

	B	I	N	G	O
St.	St. Joseph	A Tree	A Wise Man	A Candle	A Bible
A S	A Shepherd	A Cookie	Hot Chocolate	Wine	A Star
F	Family	An Angel	A Member of  The CWL	Mother Mary	A Wreath
A	A Rosary	A Present	Baby Jesus	A Card	Lights
A	A Carol	A Candy Cane	A Snowflake	A Priest	A Smile



The Abo Saad and Alhurira Family Reunification – Fait Accompli

By Eric McKay (with input from Guy and Barbara Savard)



In September, after years of waiting for various obstacles (including the Covid pandemic) to be overcome, Divine Infant Parish was delighted to welcome the Abo Saad family (Rita, George and young daughter Joumana). The parish had initiated fundraising a little over six months prior in February, and was well-equipped to assist the family with their immediate and/or short-term needs, including temporary housing.

Arrival – First Special Milestone

Their arrival on September 8, 2022, was amazing for the privileged few who were on hand to witness it. The reunion of the two sisters and their families, after more than six and a half years, was truly something exceptional for all present. What's more, both sisters had given birth while apart, and so both were now meeting their young nieces for the first time. An instantaneous bonding took place between the two nieces (Tia Maria and newcomer Joumana, whose nickname is Jiji). The two girls are close in age (four and five years old respectively)

and are delighted to be classmates attending the same school (Divine Infant Elementary). Jiji's older cousin, Anji Alhurira (the youngest of Tia's three sisters and one brother), also attends the same school.

Housing

At the present time, there are many challenges in the housing market, including limited rental availability and elevated rental costs everywhere in Ottawa. The Abo Saad family was fortunate to find suitable accommodation in very short order, courtesy of members of the Refugee Settlement Committee, who worked hard to find and present concrete options to the family - most of which were in Orleans, and relatively close to the residence of Rita's sister Sawsan and the Alhurira family.

As was the case over six years ago for the Alhuriras, the Abo Saad family has settled nicely into their new home (blessed by Father Waldemar in November), far away from their home back in Syria. They have benefitted greatly from the generosity of

parishioners, including Faye Powell, who lodged them temporarily for three weeks upon their arrival. It's certainly a blessing to everyone involved that they are adapting well to life in Canada. They seem genuinely keen to meet the many challenges facing them head on and forge a successful resolution to each. In addition to ongoing support received from Rita's sister and the rest of the Alhuriras, the Abo Saad family has already acquired some new Syrian friends who immigrated one year ago and are well-versed in the adaptation and associated machinations required to begin a new phase of their lives here.

Thanksgiving – Second Special Milestone

One month after their reunification in Canada, the Abo Saad and Alhurira families, along with friends, celebrated the Abo Saad family's first Canadian Thanksgiving Dinner. Although they are obviously missing family back home, they are very grateful to be in Canada and often mention this.

For families coming to Canada from warmer climates, such as those the Church has sponsored in Africa and the Middle East, but also the many Canadians and/or parishioners from Southeast Asia, Central and South America and the South Pacific, Canada's climate - and especially the cold weather of winter - can take some getting used to. The Abo Saads are well-advanced in their preparations for the winter months, having recently acquired much warmer clothes as they await, with trepid anticipation, their first winter in Canada.

Second Language Advancement

Rita and George are spending many hours each day studying English, as they take part in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The ESL approach follows a fairly progressive and advanced trajectory – especially for those who are already somewhat advanced in their acquisition of the English language. The Learning Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program is also available to newcomers to Canada who may be starting from a more basic level. It is more suited to individuals who have had minimal exposure to English. Rita and George haven't undergone any formal second language testing as of yet.

Employment: Future Endeavours

George's first focus is on his language train-

ing. Then he wants to take the necessary steps to gain work in areas where he already has experience – namely the food industry, where he can use his finance knowledge and leverage his banking/accounting background. Like her sister Sawsan, Rita has hairdressing experience. Once Joumana is settled into elementary school, and perhaps a little more independent, Rita may pursue opportunities in her field. Both Rita and George intend to work towards obtaining their G1 driver's license.

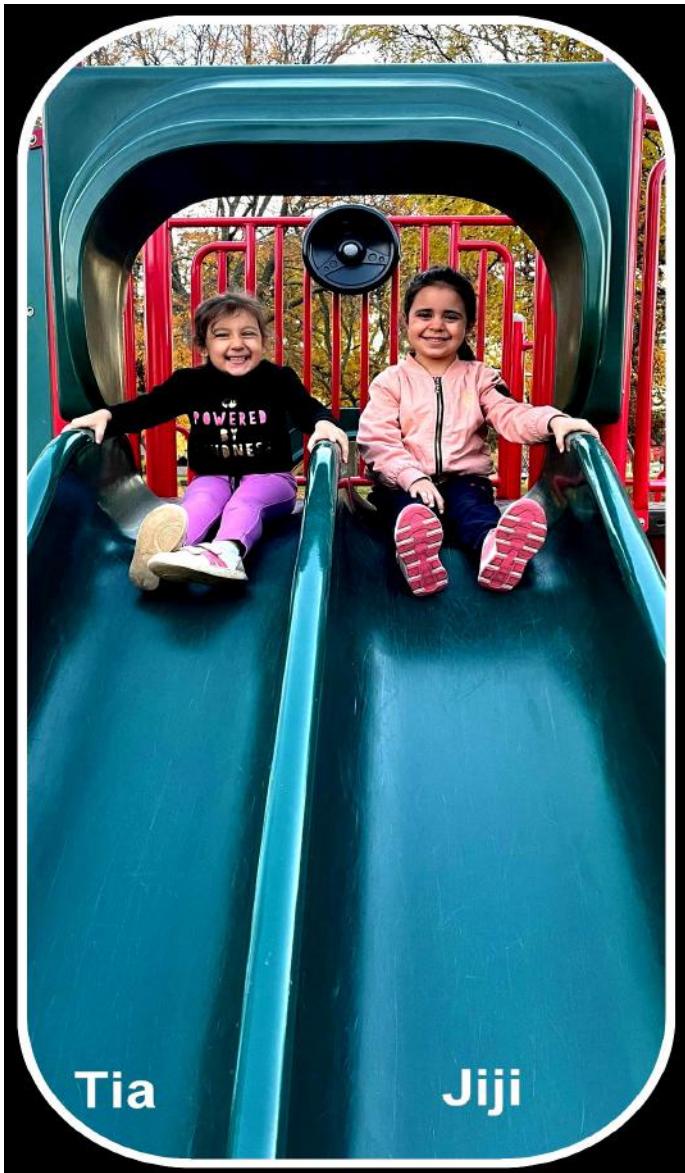
Concluding Remarks

The Divine Infant Parish is privileged to be in a position to assist the Abo Saad family as they take the steps necessary to rebuild their lives in Canada. The family is newly reunited with the Alhuriras, and this close relationship is highly beneficial. It is saving a great deal of extra time and energy that was necessary when the Alhurira family arrived in February 2016.

Father Waldemar and the members of the Refugee Settlement Committee consider it a huge blessing to be involved in this exciting project of assisting immigrant families who have left so much behind, and yet are eager to see what the Lord has in store for them here in their new Canadian home and community.



Jiji
walking to school bus stop

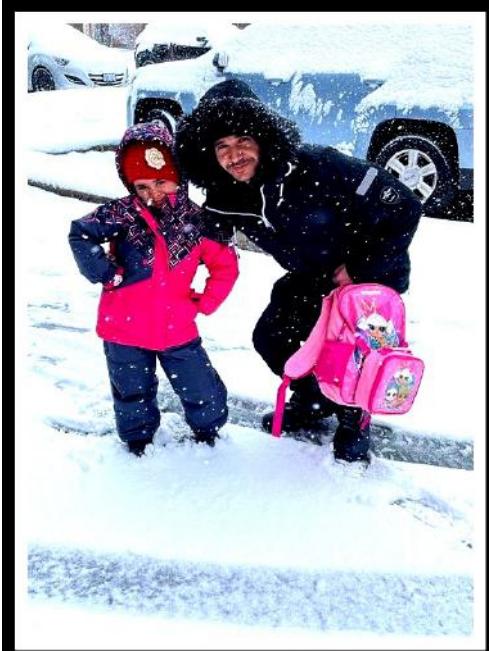


What a beauty

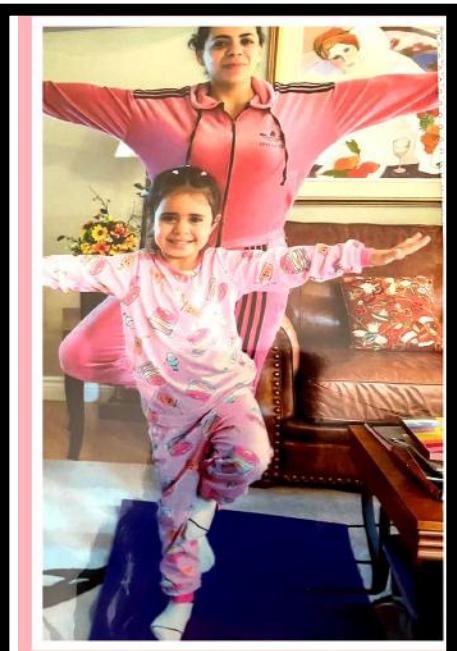


Jiji and Tia Maria





Jiji and dad First snow fall...



Jiji & Mom
1 ... 2 ... 3 ... up...



Divine Infant Church Schedules

Regular Mass Times :

Monday	7:00 pm*
Tuesday	7:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am
Thursday	9:00 am
Friday	9:00 am
Saturday	5:00 pm*
Sunday	8:00 am 9:30 am 11:15 noon 5:00 pm

Heading to Divine Infant Church—Christmas trees for their beautiful altar display



CONWAY

Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction: Every Wednesday after the 9:00 am Mass.

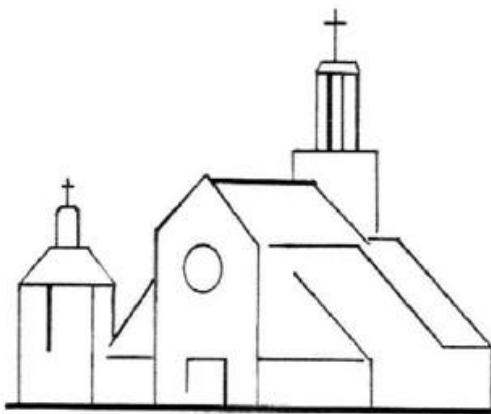
Confession Times:

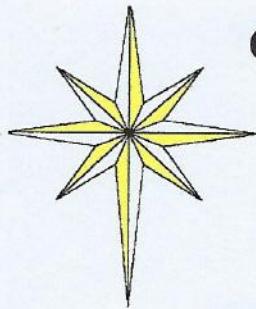
- Saturday & Sunday, 4:15-4:45
- Weekdays, 1/2 hour before Mass
- By appointment

***Note :** On statutory civic holiday Mondays, Mass is at 9:00 am instead of 7:00 pm. On First Saturdays extra Mass is at 9:00 am.

Recurring Weekly Events: Please see the bulletin posted on our parish website to learn more about how you can volunteer and how you can be a participant. Also check the bulletins for upcoming special events and more information on ministries or associations.

See next page for Christmas and New Years Mass Schedules





CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE

Wednesday, December 14th ~ 7:00 pm

CHRISTMAS EVE

Saturday, December 24

Divine Infant Church

Children's Christmas Pageant	3:30 pm
	5:30 pm
	7:30 pm
	9:30 pm
	12:00 Midnight

CHRISTMAS DAY

Sunday, December 25	8:00 am
	9:30 am
	11:15 am

MARY, HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Saturday, December 31

Vigil Mass	5:00 pm
Adoration & Benediction	11:30 pm

*"in thanksgiving for graces received in 2022
and for all needed blessings in 2023"*

Sunday, January 1	8:00 am
	9:30 am
	11:15 am



NOTE: This year our parish will **not** celebrate Christmas Mass at St. Peter's High School or be using the parish hall to accommodate overflow. Rather, we have scheduled an additional Mass on Christmas Eve to accommodate the expectations of our parishioners and guests.

Please, also keep in mind that we are in cold/Flu season and the COVID viruses are still a threat. If you are concerned about these, please consider attending one of the later Masses on Christmas Eve as these liturgies might offer better opportunities for social distancing.

While not mandatory, we also encourage mask wearing and hand sanitization. God Bless!

News from St. Francis of Assisi School

By Jennifer Conway

Staff and students at St. Francis have had an awesome beginning to the 2022-2023 school year. It has been a time to renew friendships and build new ones. We continue to highlight deep learning during this year, and we are "Rooted in Joy." Here are some of the highlights so far!

Growing our Faith:

On October 4, we celebrated the feast day of our patron saint — St. Francis of Assisi. We had a Google Meet to learn more about this special saint. We wrote joyful prayers and added them to a school prayer basket which was placed in the front entrance. After school, our school community welcomed Deacon Stephen Donoghue, who blessed our

pets. We were very fortunate to have Father Steven Gaudet join us when we gathered to celebrate our Thanksgiving Mass. It was especially joyful because it was the first time in over two years that we all were able to attend a school Mass together. We gave thanks for the many blessings and gifts we have in our lives and shared with others by collecting food for the Cumberland Resource Centre. On November 11, we gathered as a school community to remember all those who sacrificed for us so that we can live in peace in our awesome country, Canada. We thank LCol Joe Hartson for taking the time to speak to us. November 16 was an exciting day for the Grade 4 students. They received their bibles from Father Steven Gaudet. They enjoyed spending time looking through their bibles as they completed a New Testament scavenger hunt.





Celebrating Special Days:

We were thrilled to welcome our parents and guardians to St. Francis on September 9 from 4:00 to 6:00. The students had the opportunity to take their family members on a tour of the school and classrooms and introduce them to their teachers. The junior students took their first field trip to Major's Hill Park to participate in Festival Franco Ontarian. We all wore green and white on Journée Franco Ontarian Day. We wore orange shirts on Truth and Reconciliation Day when we reflected on the life of

Indigenous children and the phrase All Children Matter. We gathered together to honour Terry Fox as we took part in the Terry Fox Run, raising \$2050 for his foundation. We highlighted the importance of Remembrance Day as we read about brave men and women who served and continue to serve, how animals helped during wartime (including Winnie the Pooh), the importance of the poppy and how Dr. John McCrae played an important role. If you are at the Orleans Legion, check out the ceiling tiles. Two of them were designed and created by the students in Ms. Conway's Grade 3 class.



Having Fun:

There have been many opportunities to participate in creative, fun and joyful activities in our classroom. These include STEAM activities, online presentations, going outside for special learning activities such as math scavenger hunts and nature walks and, for some of us, getting the chance to take part in the Board Cross Country Tournament and the Volleyball tournament. As a school community, we

celebrated Halloween by participating in a school-wide pumpkin decorating contest, getting Boo'd by another class, wearing our costumes to school on October 31 and having fun as we enjoyed the school dance. The boys' volleyball tournament was a huge success when we hosted on November 10. It was great to see students from St. Clare, St. Dominic, St. Theresa and St. Kateri Tekawitha join us.



What's Ahead

We are now back at work, putting forth our best effort as we learn new skills and interesting facts. Before you know it, we will be reading, writing and researching all about the joy-filled Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of Jesus - and of course, getting ready for a well-deserved break!



KNIGHTS IN ACTION

Submitted by Grand Knight Paul Bourke with input from Financial Secretary Peter Corcoran and Past Grand Knight Terry O'Donnell

Throughout 2022 - and in spite of the constraints of Covid19 - our Divine Infant Council 7873, has been involved in spiritual and social activities aimed at bettering our parish and local community. Many Knights are active as members of various parish organizations and initiatives. Our Council is always open to welcoming new members and would love to hear from you.

Here is a sampling of our 2022 activities:

Aid to Ukraine

Following Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine in February, our Knights partnered with Soul & Stone Restaurant and other area Councils, including the Ukrainian Council in Ottawa, to hold two take-away Pierogies and Borscht dinners. Over \$30,000 was raised to help the people of Ukraine with emergency supplies, food and aid. Our own "Toonies for Ukraine" collections at Divine Infant revealed the deep generosity of our parishioners, raising \$3,200. Thank you!

Faith Support

The Knights Grocery Gift Card Program provided \$3,500 to Divine Infant Parish.

Knights Vocation Program: Since spring 2019, our Council has provided financial, moral and spiritual support annually to Ottawa seminarian Michael El Nacheff during his theological studies at St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto. As we continue to accompany Michael on his spiritual journey, we look forward, God willing, to his ordination to the priesthood in 2023. Congratulations Michael!

Youth: The Knights continue to support our National Evangelization Team (NET) and the Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) that help spread the

"good news" at the University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Algonquin College, as well as the various youth groups at Divine Infant Parish.

Special Masses, Rosaries and Adorations: These were held to celebrate the Holy Triduum, the St. Joseph Icon and Our Lady of Guadalupe (Silver Rose Mass and Rosary). Many Knights and parishioners attended these celebrations.

Support for Families and Youth

In addition to the youth support activities above, our Council is also active in the following programs:

'Coats for Kids': Divine Infant Council purchased five boxes of warm, attractive, new winter coats (\$1,080) for distribution among less fortunate children in our community.

'Food for Families': Through this program, approximately \$1,500 was distributed to the 'Help our Students' (HOST) program, (founded and administered by a brother Knight), the Shepherds of Good Hope and the Orleans-Cumberland Food Bank.

Support for Culture of Life:

Miriam Centre: Council 7873 partnered with four Knights' Councils in Orleans to host the annual Steak Barbecue which raised \$3,200 for the Miriam Centre. This local centre is a great support to pregnant mothers and young women in distress. Furthermore, Divine Infant Council donated \$2,000 to the Miriam Centre from our bottle and pop can recycling program as part of the 'Aid and Support After Pregnancy' (ASAP) program.

Welcoming new members

Over the past year, Council 7873 has welcomed nine new members, the majority of whom are younger men who joined under the new on-line process or who transferred to us from other Councils.

We are especially happy to welcome our Associate Pastor, Father Steven Gaudet. This bodes well for the future of our Council as we continue to welcome young men - and the young at heart - to share with us and participate in the "good works" of our Council.

If you are a concerned Catholic male - single or married - feel free to contact John St Jean our Worthy Chancellor (jstjean3537@gmail.com) or our Worthy Grand Knight Paul Bourke (Paul.Bourke@sympatico.ca) or any member of our

Council. Feel free to chat with any of our Knights during any Parish events, such as special Masses, Devotions, Stations of the Cross, Breakfasts, BBQs, etc.



Brothers Jim Paquette (Left) and Paul Duford (Right) present cheque from Council 7873 to Miriam Centre staff member Christine Dacquary (centre left) and Executive Director Sister Rita Lacelle (centre right). Grand Knight Paul Bourque in background.



Saint Damien of Molokia

By Joan Scott

Saint Damien may not be as well-known as many saints, but the story of his life working among the most poor, rejected, neglected and needy people in the leper colony on the peninsula of Kalaupapa, on the Island of Molokai in Hawaii, is worthy of repeating. Kalaupapa peninsula was isolated from the rest of Molokai by the world's tallest sea cliffs. That was where those with the worst cases of leprosy were dropped off to spend the rest of their lives - cut off from the outside world.

Joseph de Veuster, (later Saint Damien) was born in Tremelo, Belgium on January 3, 1840. He was the youngest of seven children, and the fourth son. Two of Joseph's sisters, Eugenie and Pauline, became nuns and his older brother Auguste, became Father Pamphile, a member of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary (Picpus Fathers). Joseph's father was a farmer and corn merchant. He sent his son to a college at Braine-le-Comte to prepare him for a commercial profession, but after attending a mission given there by the Redemptorists in 1858, Joseph decided on a religious vocation.

In the novitiate of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary at Louvain, Joseph took the religious name of Damien, probably after the original Saint Damien, a fourth-century physician and martyr. On October 7, 1860, he was admitted to the religious profession. While completing his religious studies, Damien prayed daily before a picture of St. Francis Xavier (patron of missionaries), that he would be sent to a mission. Three years later, his prayers were answered. Damien was allowed to take his brother's place because his brother was unable to travel to Hawaii, due to illness. Damien arrived at Honolulu Harbour on O'ahu on March 19, 1864, and was ordained as a priest on May 21, 1864.

The Kingdom of Hawaii at that time was struggling with a number of issues - including a public health crisis due to rampant mortality rates from infectious diseases such as leprosy, smallpox, cholera, influenza, syphilis and whooping cough. These scourges were brought to the islands by foreign traders, sailors and immigrants. Thousands of natives died because they lacked immunity to these diseases. It was believed that leprosy (now called Hansen's disease), was a highly infectious disease at that time

and that it was brought in by foreign workers in the 1830s and 1840s. Some action needed to be taken to alleviate the spread of these diseases.

In 1865, Hawaiian King Kamehameha V and the Hawaiian Legislation passed the "Act to Prevent the Spread of Leprosy." Under this law, lepers were to be quarantined, and the most serious cases moved to the settlement colony of Kalawao on the eastern end of the Kalaupapa peninsula. This settlement of Kalawao was developed and separated from the rest of the island of Molokai by the tall cliffs. At first, the government provided the community with food and other supplies. The plan was for them to be able to care for themselves and to grow crops. This was not possible due to the constraints of their disease and the poor living conditions. The local Bishop felt the community needed a priest, but he was reluctant to appoint anyone to this task because of the dangerous working conditions. He asked for volunteers and four priests came forward, among them Father Damien. The bishop wanted the priests to take turns in working with the inhabitants, and Father Damien was the first to volunteer.

Bishop Louis Desire Maigret introduced Father Damien to the inhabitants (some 600 lepers). They were told that he would be a father to them and that he loved them so much that he would not hesitate to become one of them - to live and die with them. At this time, the settlement was a very poor, lawless, degenerate place. Father Damien worked tirelessly to better the conditions of the settlement. He bandaged their sores, dressed their ulcers, comforted them, built hospitals, houses, chapels, coffins and dug graves. He worked with them to build a church and establish the parish of Saint Philomena. As he cared for them, he also worked to improve the community's living conditions and establish leaders. Basic laws were enforced, shacks were upgraded to homes, farms were organized and schools established. When his term was up, he asked to be allowed to remain in the colony to continue his work. At his request, and the wishes of the inhabitants, Father Damien remained on Molokai. As word of his work became known, especially after King David Kalakaua presented him with the honour of "Knight Commander of the Royal Order of Kalakaua," he became internationally known, particularly in the United States and Europe. As a result, large sums of money, food, medicine, and supplies were sent to the settlement.

After Father Damien had been there for 11 years, he contracted leprosy. He discovered it when he accidentally put his foot into boiling hot water. Although his leg blistered, he felt nothing – a sure sign of leprosy. But he still continued to carry on as before. For 18 years, Father Damien gave his all to the people of Kalaupapa. On April 15, 1889, Father Damien died of leprosy. The next day, after the Funeral Mass, the whole settlement followed the funeral cortège to the cemetery. He was buried under the same pandanus tree he first slept under on his arrival to Molokai.

I first learned about Father Damien when I was in Grade 2 or 3 – many, many, years ago. Our teacher gave each of us a 4 page ‘comic-book like’ handout, telling the remarkable story of his life. It made such a lasting impression on me as a child, that I have never forgotten it and the story it told. The handout was intended as a teaching tool to encourage and help us with our reading, while giving us a window into the world of sickness, poverty and dejection - and what one man was able to accomplish for the neediest of the needy. Saint Damien has been referred to as “the St. Teresa of Molokai.” He lived more than a century before St. Teresa, but his zeal was comparable to hers. It is astonishing what Saint Damien accomplished during his life and under the conditions in which he worked.

On June 4, 1995, Father Damien was beatified. On October 1, 2009, he was canonized as St. Damien by Pope Benedict XVI.

St. Damien of Molokai Prayer

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the powerful witness of love that you provided in St. Damien of Molokai.

I pray that I will have the same love toward all I meet, especially those who are different than me.

Amen



Statue of St. Damien

Thank you to all the people involved in Ministry at Divine Infant Parish for sharing your experiences as you carry out the work to help, guide, teach, enlighten, and support the parish and its parishioners.

Thank you, too, for sharing information on your ministry, its purpose and aim. Your contribution to this publication is greatly appreciated.

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