

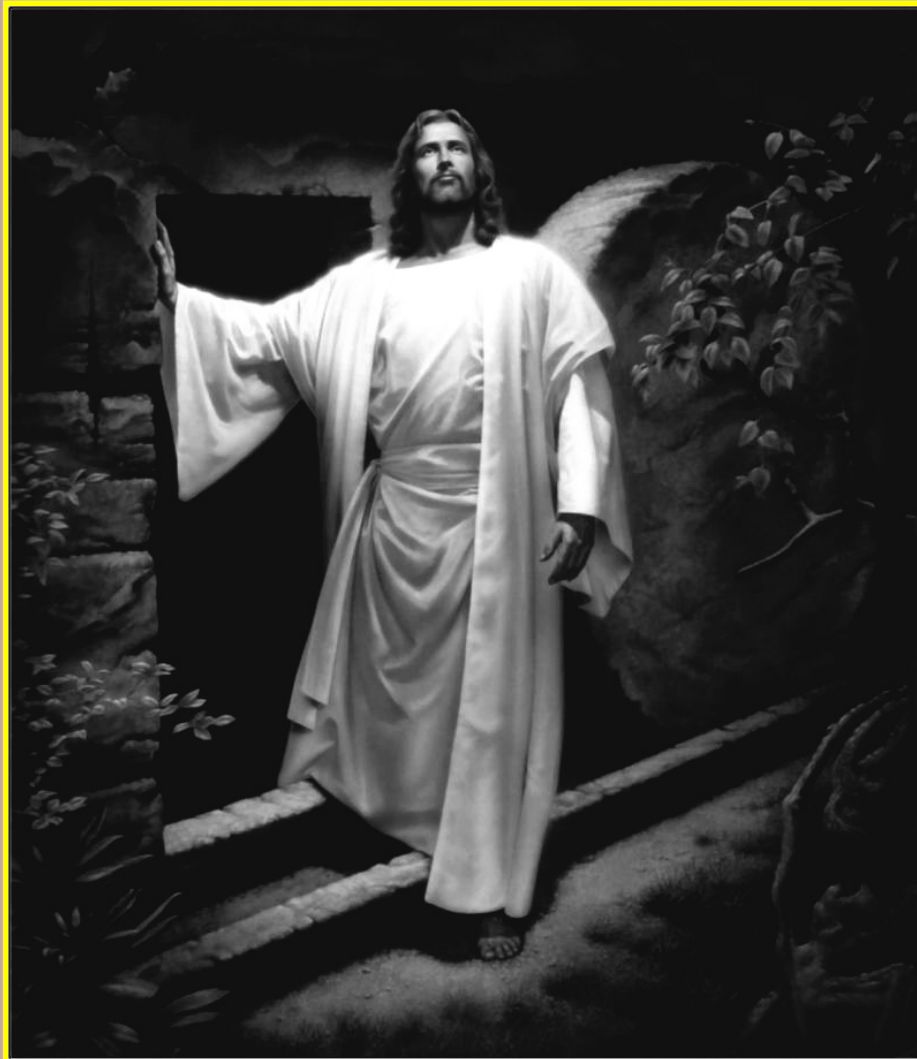


The Divine Messenger

A Contact with Divine Infant Parish

Vol. 20, No.1

March 2024



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 Michael, Father Tavis, or Deacons Jeff, Stephen, Gerry, Jim or Phillip. We would love to hear from you!

A Message from Our Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we approach the most glorious and solemn time of Easter Joy, we turn our thoughts and hearts to Jesus who overcomes death itself and offers the gift of salvation and eternal life. Every year our Easter Joy extends to the Second Sunday of Easter, also called Divine Mercy Sunday. In this article, I'd like to share with you a homily given by Saint Pope John Paul II, on Easter Sunday of 2001. The year is very significant as it is only the second Easter celebrated in the New Millennium and only one year since the canonization of St. Faustina Kowalska and the institution of the new feast of Divine Mercy Sunday. I find these words very inspiring and very relevant to what our world is experiencing today. Happy and Blessed Easter!

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Sunday, 22 April 2001

1. *"Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore" (Rv 1: 17-18).*

We heard these comforting words in the Second Reading taken from the Book of Revelation. They invite us to turn our gaze to Christ, to experience his reassuring presence. To each person, whatever his condition, even if it were the most complicated and dramatic, the Risen One repeats: "Fear not!; I died on the Cross but now "I am alive for evermore"; "I am the first and the last, and the living one".

"The first", that is, the source of every being and the first-fruits of the new creation; "the last", the definitive end of history; "the living one", the inexhaustible source of life that triumphed over death for ever. In the Messiah, crucified and risen, we recognize the features of the Lamb sacrificed on Golgotha, who implores forgiveness for his torturers and opens the gates of heaven to repentant sinners; we glimpse the face of the immortal King who now has "the keys of Death and Hades" (Rv 1: 18).

2. *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever!" (Ps 117: 1).*

Let us make our own the Psalmist's exclamation which we sang in the Responsorial Psalm: the Lord's mercy endures for ever! In order to understand thoroughly the truth of these words, let us be led by the

liturgy to the heart of the event of salvation, which unites Christ's Death and Resurrection with our lives and with the world's history. This miracle of mercy has radically changed humanity's destiny. It is a miracle in which is unfolded the fullness of the love of the Father who, for our redemption, does not even draw back before the sacrifice of his Only-begotten Son.

In the humiliated and suffering Christ, believers and non-believers can admire a surprising solidarity, which binds him to our human condition beyond all imaginable measure. The Cross, even after the Resurrection of the Son of God, "speaks and never ceases to speak of God the Father, who is absolutely faithful to his eternal love for man.... Believing in this love means believing in mercy (*Dives in misericordia*, n. 7).

Let us thank the Lord for his love, which is stronger than death and sin. It is revealed and put into practice as mercy in our daily lives, and prompts every person in turn to have "mercy" towards the Crucified One. Is not loving God and loving one's neighbour and even one's "enemies", after Jesus' example, the programme of life of every baptized person and of the whole Church?

3. With these sentiments we are celebrating the Second Sunday of Easter, which since last year, the year of the Great Jubilee, is also called "*Divine Mercy Sunday*". It is a great joy for me to be able to join all of you, dear pilgrims and faithful who have come from various nations to commemorate, after one year, the canonization of Sr Faustina Kowalska, witness and messenger of the Lord's merciful love. The elevation to the honours of the altar of this humble religious, a daughter of my land, is not only a gift for Poland but for all humanity. Indeed the message she brought is the appropriate and incisive answer that God wanted to offer to the questions and expectations of human beings in our time, marked by terrible tragedies. Jesus said to Sr Faustina one day: "Humanity will never find peace until it turns with trust to Divine Mercy" (*Diary*, p. 132). Divine Mercy! This is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to humanity at the dawn of the third millennium.

4. The Gospel, which has just been proclaimed, helps us to grasp the full sense and value of this gift. The Evangelist John makes us share in the

emotion felt by the Apostles in their meeting with Christ after his Resurrection. Our attention focuses on the gesture of the Master, who transmits to the fearful, astounded disciples the mission of being ministers of divine Mercy. He shows them his hands and his side, which bear the marks of the Passion, and tells them: *"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you"* (Jn 20: 21). Immediately afterwards *"he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained' "* (Jn 20: 22-23). Jesus entrusted to them the gift of "forgiving sins", a gift that flows from the wounds in his hands, his feet, and especially from his pierced side. From there a wave of mercy is poured out over all humanity.

Let us relive this moment with great spiritual intensity. Today the Lord also shows us his glorious wounds and his heart, an inexhaustible source of light and truth, of love and forgiveness.

5. The Heart of Christ! His "Sacred Heart" has given men everything: redemption, salvation, sanctification. St. Faustina Kowalska saw coming from this Heart that was overflowing with generous love, two rays of light which illuminated the world. "The two rays", according to what Jesus himself told her, "represent the blood and the water" (*Diary*, p. 132). The blood recalls the sacrifice of Golgotha and the mystery of the Eucharist; the water, according to the rich symbolism of the Evangelist John, makes us think of Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 3: 5; 4: 14).

Through the mystery of this wounded heart, the restorative tide of God's merciful love continues to spread over the men and women of our time. Here alone can those who long for true and lasting happiness find its secret.

6. "Jesus, I trust in you". This prayer, dear to so many of the devout, clearly expresses the attitude with which we too would like to abandon ourselves trustfully in your hands, O Lord, our only Saviour.

You are burning with the desire to be loved and those in tune with the sentiments of your heart learn how to build the new civilization of love. A simple act of abandonment is enough to overcome the barriers of darkness and sorrow, of doubt and desperation. The rays of your divine mercy restore hope, in a special way, to those who feel overwhelmed by the burden of sin.

Mary, Mother of Mercy, help us always to have this trust in your Son, our Redeemer. Help us too, St. Faustina, whom we remember today with special affection. Fixing our weak gaze on the divine Saviour's face, we would like to repeat with you: "Jesus, I trust in you". Now and forever. Amen.

In Christ,

Father Waldemar

** **

Agape Bible Study Group

By Lucille Surette

Bible study truly requires a group setting so that each Student can be motivated to continue studying a book or topic at a set time and place. The Agape Bible Study (www.agapebiblestudy.com) website is a Catholic website that provides these lessons free of charge. The website's author writes the in-depth lessons in a formal format -no DVDs- scouring various orthodox Catholic sources. This will enable the students to either return to previous lessons or studies to refresh their knowledge or start a new study.

Upon our return in September 2023, our current group continued studying the Letters of St. Paul to the Hebrews. The sessions do not follow a strict schedule to cover one lesson per session. They are paced so that questions and/or discussion, if any, are welcome.

Would you like to start studying the Bible? Please contact me, Lucille Surette, at 613-837-0735 or lsurette81@gmail.com to discuss your intention and how best we can make it happen.



Moms Morning Out

By Andrea Heeringa

Moms Morning Out meets every Tuesday in the parish hall. Moms and their preschool aged children come together to share coffee, snacks, and pray together, all while their kids play.

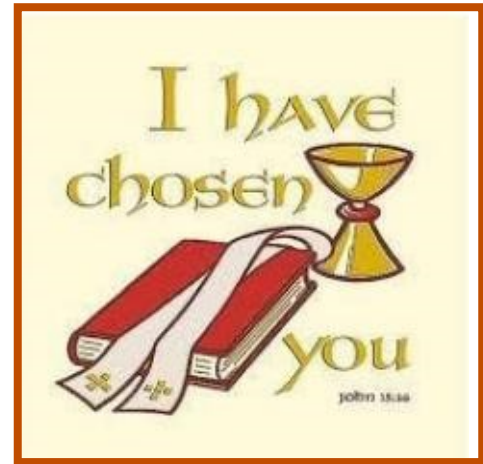
Striving for more than just any other mothers group, we seek to really take time in fellowship to deepen our relationship with God. We take time to pray, read scripture, share reflections, and encourage one another in ways to personally respond to Jesus each week.

It's a gift to be able to come together throughout the week and truly bond over both our discipleship with Jesus and our motherhood. What a gift it is also to our kids to have this be something they witness and enjoy as well.

We have seen many new faces this year, many within the parish and others from around the city, and we welcome any moms who want to join

us anytime! We meet every Tuesday 10am-12pm during the school year.

Pray for us as we continue to lead our families and build up the next generation of disciples!





The Catholic Women's League

By Margaret Heuthorst

The new Catholic Women's League (CWL) Executive was installed at a ceremony after the 7 p.m. Mass on January 23rd. Under the spiritual direction of Father Waldemar Podlasz SDS, taking on their new responsibilities are the following officers:

Co-President: Margaret Chan-Heuthorst and Cindy Kearns-O'Hara

Past President: Martine Barney

Treasurer: Linda Epton

Communications Chair/Secretary: Angela Crawley

Fulfilling the role of Chair representing the three pillars of the CWL are:

Faith: Lorna Baier

Service: Jill Hodgins

Social Justice: VACANT

The new Executive immediately and enthusiastically became engaged in planning the many activities that will be held in the upcoming two-year period. In addition to working behind the scenes in collaboration with, and in support of, other parish ministries, we will be busy with organizing the many events that parishioners know and love.

With a present focus on the Lenten and Easter season, our Spiritual Chair, Lorna began her monthly 15-minute Bible reflections. These will soon be viewed on our CWL page on Divine Infant Parish's website (<http://www.divineinfant.on.ca>). We hosted the popular raffle for the giant Easter Egg. This year we also had a silent auction for a gorgeous quilted Easter-themed wall-hanging made and donated by Linda Epton. Our Service Chair, Jill, is busy organizing the gifts that will be presented to the children receiving their First Eucharist and Confirmation.

We are very excited to share that we have received the blessing and approval of the Pastoral Council to begin work on leading a 18-month parish-wide mission entitled **"Living The Beatitudes, Love In Action."** This is an exceptional opportunity for spiritual growth where every parish ministry and



Front Row: Jill Hodgins, Lorna Baier,
Martine Barney & Angela Crawley

Back Row: Margaret Chan-Heuthorst,
Fr. Waldemar Podlasz SDS &
Cindy Kearns-O'Hara



Quilted Easter Wall Hanging
created by Linda Epton

every parishioner will be invited to consciously learn, live and love in accordance with each of the eight Beatitudes. We will have two months to become deeply conscious of one Beatitude, and by the end of our proposed timeline of 1.5 years, we will, as an entire parish family, have lived all eight Beatitudes in concrete and transformative ways. The official launch will take place following Pentecost Sunday on June 11th with living the first Beatitude this September. Information will be available in the near future on our website, the CWL bulletin board and the next Divine Messenger.

We will close with a prayer to our patroness.

Mary, Our Lady of Good Counsel, filled with the Holy Spirit, you were a faithful disciple of Jesus, your Son. Intercede with your Son for us that we may be faithful to our baptism, fervent in prayer, and generous in the service we give to our sisters and brothers. Amen.

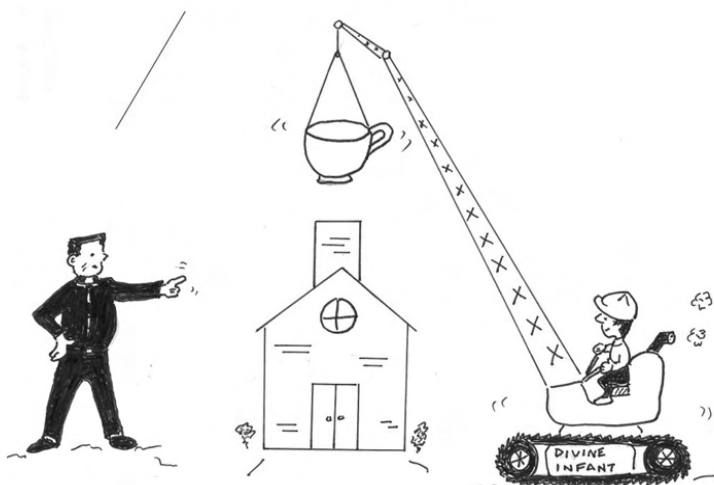


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- SO THAT KIDS CAN GET THEIR EASTER EGGS EARLIER



CONWAY

NO! NO! NOT A CUP! -WE ORDERED A CUP-OLA



CONWAY



Pastoral Care Ministry

by Dolores Cyr

Pope Francis wrote the following quote in his message for the annual observance on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes: “We came into the world because someone welcomed us: we were made for love, and we are called to communion and fraternity.”

Our parish observed this firsthand with people coming to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and the Anointing of the Sick given by Fr. Waldemar and Fr. Michael. February is not typically an easy time for many to venture out, yet we were blessed on February 10th, as it was exceptionally mild. As a result, many more people were able to attend Mass for the Sick and receive these precious sacraments.

Pastoral Care also hosted a luncheon in the hall after Mass and it was there where over 80 people gathered to socialize and share a special time together. It was a lovely occasion for fellowship and a wonderful way to reconnect for so many. A true blessing for all in attendance!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Mass for the Sick.



Bruce and the Angel Visitation

By Beverley P.

I feel I have to give a bit of background to the story of my husband's final days.

In July 2019, he was diagnosed with multiple health issues and given 1-3 years to live. Of course, that diagnosis was followed by many tears and conversations of what lay ahead. He acknowledged that only God would determine his time, and decided to make the best of the years left.

Fast forward to 2022 and the times he told the specialist, and everyone else, that he was on an extended warranty. Over the next year, he lost weight and grew weaker as time went on. After losing consciousness on April 23, I brought him to the hospital. Following a barrage of tests, they found that, in addition to his existing ailments, he had lower ventricular heart disease. They also found a small tumour in his lung. He was released and referred to the cancer department. It was determined that in his weakened condition, he could not undergo an operation, chemotherapy or radiation.

He became weaker and weaker, and was once again brought to the emergency department on June 1, 2023. After many discussions, he accepted that the end was nearing and chose to die at home. I brought him home on June 19. His first request was that I go to make his funeral arrangements, as he thought it would be less stressful for me to do it before his time came. Our days were spent together and, as you can imagine, discussing what was to come and feeling blessed for all the time we had had together.

Our priest came several times, praying and administering the Sacrament of the Sick. The doctor, nurses and personal care worker also made regular visits. He became weaker and weaker as time went on, unable to move unassisted. He had great faith. He told friends and family not to cry, saying that he had lived a good life, and was ready whenever his time came. He had accepted the inevitable - death was part of living.

An Angel Visitation

I had placed a bell on his bedside table, so he could summon me in the middle of the night, should the need arise. In the wee hours of September 27, he was profusely ringing the bell and I jumped out of

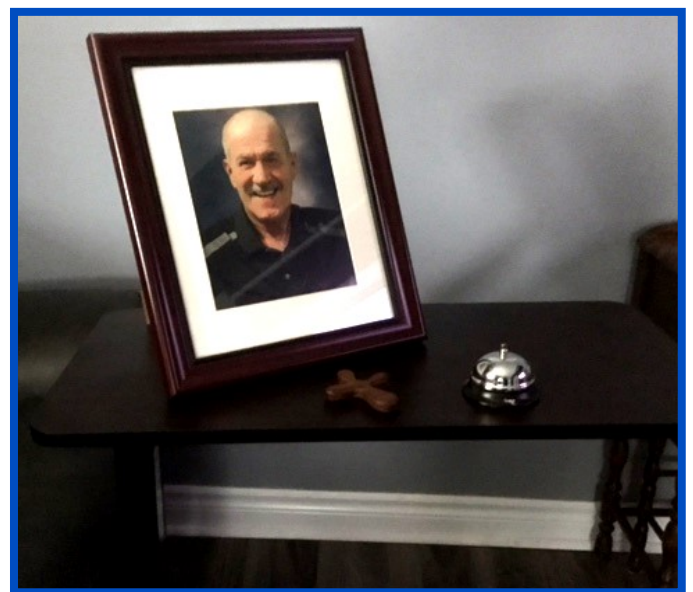
bed to find him crying. When I asked what the problem was, he told me an angel had woken him, tapped him on the shoulder and told him that he was going to die. I told him we knew that he was dying. He insisted that I didn't understand - he was dying. I climbed into his hospital bed. We held each other until morning.

Two days later, on the Feast of the Archangels, God called him to his final rest. My daughter is certain that the angel had been inviting him to welcome death.

I was intrigued by his vision and began researching. I found that St. Michael, as well as being the guardian and defender of the faith and protector of souls, is also regarded as the Angel of Death, accompanying the souls of departed Christians to heaven. Dying on the Feast of the Archangels seemed appropriate.

I believe that St. Michael the Archangel was in his role as the Angel of Death, accompanying my husband, when God called him to his new life with Him in heaven. Death is not the end but the beginning of everlasting life.

**Note Bev is a participant of the Winter Bereavement Session. She shared this comforting story at one of the meetings, thereby encouraging others to do the same. Bev agreed to its publication in the Divine Messenger.*



Bruce and the bell



Honouring Dad By Maureen P.

Maureen, Bruce's daughter, joined the fall bereavement Session, mourning the passing of her dad. At the Christmas session, she happily shared with the group the angel she made using her dad's tie. She actually planned to make seven more. The group responded with delight, some even wanting the pattern. What a lovely way to remember Dad - not only at Christmas but at Easter, Father's Day, Birthdays.....Maureen's angel tie honouring her dad is an inspired heaven sent gift that all can take comfort in for years to come, be it honouring a brother, son, uncle, husband, etc.

Angels grace the pages of the bible. They are depicted in art, celebrated in music, and literature, garden ornaments and, more personally on ties! They are associated with protection, comfort, healing, inspiration and travel. as well as messengers

of God. Thank you Maureen for sharing, comforting not only yourself, but, with all those with whom you shared the splendour of Dad's Angel tie!

Opening of the Memorial Bereavement Stone Garden

by Diane Jemus

The opening of the Bereavement Stone Memorial Garden is just around the corner. Mark your calendar! The opening will take place on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 after the Evening Mass. Following the opening of the Memorial Garden and the Blessing of the Stones, there will be a social event. You are welcome to attend this memorial event.

If you want a stone, let us know. If you need help decorating the stone, contact us. Feel free to provide your own stone and decorate it yourself. All artists interested in helping, please contact us. We also need gardeners to help water, plant and weed the garden. If you have any ideas, please share them. It's your garden. Thank you for the privilege of co-ordinating this event. Thank you for sharing your stories and your memories. Let us comfort one another in our hope that our loved ones share in Jesus' resurrection. See you on June 5, 2024.



Cruising Along

By Diane Jemus

They started as strangers with a common, unwanted experience: the loss of a loved one; the burden of necessary grief; loneliness. Their trusted partner was no longer at their side, across from the breakfast table, etc. They first met at the Divine Infant Bereavement Sessions. They met as strangers and became friends - both within the parish and within the larger community. There were coffee meets, telephone calls, and even some shouting at each other in the Tim Horton's parking lot during COVID. There were many church events - from the All Souls Day Liturgy, Memorial Stone Garden liturgies, participating in the Stations of the Cross and the Socials that included cake, coffee and delightful chatter.

There are two established groups that interact quite frequently. Don B. spearheaded their latest outing - a Caribbean cruise that included Fort Lauderdale, Nassau, Bahamas, Cozumel, Mexico, George Town and Grand Cayman. According to Ralph, "The sights were phenomenal, the shows spectacular and the meals tantalized our taste buds!" On the cruise our group had joining rooms. On land, here in Orleans, they like mini golf, going for walks, touring the local sights, playing darts, and going to dinner parties at Linda N's after Saturday evening Mass.



HOLY WEEK & EASTER



2024 SCHEDULE

WE JOURNEY TOWARDS EASTER

PENITENTIAL SERVICE - Wednesday, March 13 at 7:00pm

CHRISM MASS AT NOTRE DAME BASILICA - Tuesday, March 26 at 5:00 pm
(There will be no evening Mass on Chrism Tuesday at Divine Infant Parish)

EASTER TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday, March 28th

Mass of the Lord's Supper – 7:30 pm
11:30 pm— Liturgy of the Hours and
reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Good Friday, March 29th

Stations of the Cross by the Youth – 10:00 am at the church
Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – 3:00 pm
The church will remain open for private veneration of the Cross
Stations of the Cross led by the Clergy – 8:00 pm

Holy Saturday, March 30th

Blessings of food baskets – 11:00 am
Easter Vigil – 8:00 pm

Easter Sunday, March 31th

Masses at 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:15 am and 2:00 pm

There will be no Mass on Holy Saturday at 5:00pm or on Easter Sunday at 5:00pm
There are no Confessions during Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday –Easter Sunday)

News from St. Francis of Assisi School

By Jennifer Conway

This article has to begin with some information about December at St. Francis because it was such a great month, filled with lots of learning, but also lots of fun. Thanks to the Parent Council and all our school community, students had the opportunity to buy gifts for their families at our Christmas Store. Students were also invited to take an angel from the Angel Tree and purchase a gift for someone. We participated in Spirit Week, a Door Decorating Contest and even had our first Snow Day. We welcomed Father Michael, who celebrated our Advent Mass, and all parents, grandparents and relatives who came to our Christmas Concert when the students entertained everyone with songs and dances and other special activities. On the last day of school before the Christmas Break, the school community participated in a PJ and Board Games Day.

Welcome to 2024!

Over the past two months, St. Francis staff and students have continued to be a hope-filled community that focuses on setting and reaching goals, striving to be the best we can be, as we learn together, play together and grow together in faith and in love. Here is a look at what we have been up to in 2024.

Celebrating Our Faith

At the beginning of January, the Grade 4 students welcomed Father Michael who led the Bible Blessing Ceremony. Many of our students are now preparing to take important steps on their faith journey. Students in Grade 2 are preparing to celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Grade 6 students are preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. We extend our thanks to Father Waldemar, Father Michael and Mrs. Pusiak for their support and help. Thanks to the Parent Council, students had the opportunity to eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. On Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday, the St. Francis school community gathered for a Prayer Service and to receive ashes as we began the season of Lent. As part of our preparation for Easter, we will follow The Stations of the Cross as we walk the hallways in our school and reflect on each station.



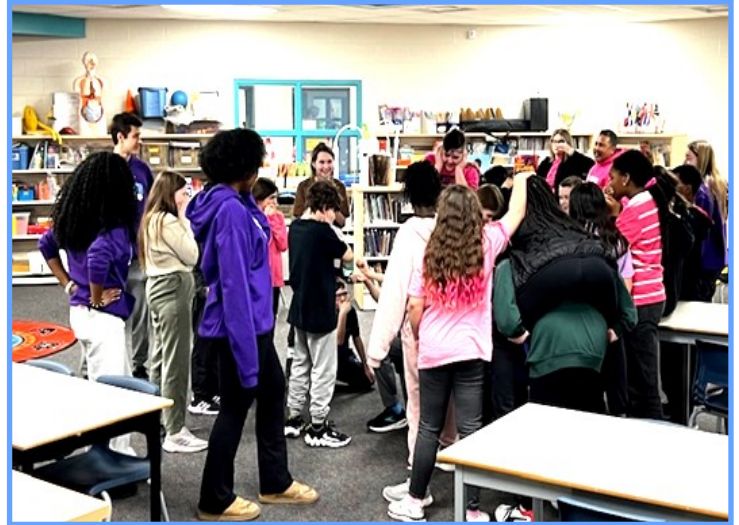


Celebrating Special Days

During the months of January and February, staff and students participated in many special days, such as Black Shirt Day, Bell Let's Talk Day, Groundhog Day, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Flag Day and Pink Shirt Day. There were also a number of special events when we welcomed guests to our school. Aubrey Noronha from Hello Hope led a session for students from Grades 3-6 entitled "Stick with the Truth." Students enjoyed a Twin Flames concert and a play activity led by Jess Amato. During Black History Month, we welcomed students from St. Peter High School who read a novel in the Grade 4 classrooms. Thanks to the Parent Council, students had fun with Rocks and Rings as they tried out the sport of curling. There was also a special WITS presentation which reviewed strategies that can be used to help solve problems and bring kindness to others. The Grade 11 Leadership class at St. Peter came to our school to teach us some new recess games. We had so much fun!







Celebrating Our Community

On February 16, members of the St. Francis school community participated in a PJ Walk in support of Ronald McDonald House, our Lenten project. That event was one way that we honoured Hosam, a student at St. Francis who passed away. The St. Francis community also gathered for a Celebration of Life in memory of Hosam. Staff and students enjoyed participating in Spirit

Week with the following themes: School Colours, Rainbow Colours, Sprinkle Kindness like Confetti, Crazy Socks Day. On February 29, the Parent Council organized a special event - Leap Year Dance, which was enjoyed by all participants. Snowshoes arrived during the month of February, which gave students an opportunity to try out their skills.





As we begin the month of March, we are all looking forward to March Break. Following our return to school, it

will soon be time to highlight the first day of spring, reflect on Holy Week and get ready to celebrate Easter.

* *



Be thankful for dirty dishes. They have a tale to tell. While other folks ae starving we're eating very well.

To get his wealth, he spends his health and then with a might and main, he turns around and spends his wealth to get his health.

Whistle and hoe, sing as you go, shorten the row, by the songs you know

HAPPY EASTER

Divine Infant Church Schedules

Regular

Weekday Mass Times :

- Monday 7:00 pm*
- Tuesday 7:00 pm
- Wednesday 9:00 am
- Thursday 9:00 am
- Friday 9:00 am
- First Saturday 9:00 am*

Note: On Statutory Holidays Masses are at 9:00 am

Sunday Masses

- Saturday 5:00 pm
- Sunday 8:00 am
- Sunday 9:30 am
- Sunday 11:15 am
- Sunday 5:00 pm

Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction: Every
Wednesday after the 9:00 am Mass. (9:30 am)
First Friday after the 9:00 am Mass (9:30 am)

Confession Times:

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

Recurring Weekly Events: (Some activities are cancelled due to pandemic and others may be cancelled.)

RCIA, Wednesday, 7:00-9:00 pm, Hall, ***Youth Programs***,

DI-JYN, Fridays, 7:00-9:00 pm, Hall

DI-SYN, Sundays, 7:00-9:00 pm, Hall

Please check our parish website (www.divineinfant.on.ca) for the latest updates or contact our Youth Ministry at (diyouthministries@gmail.com) for the latest information regarding the Junior and Senior Youth Group meetings at the parish.



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