

GENERATIONS

Update # 1 - Summer 2013

St Mary of the Visitation Parish, Cambridge
16 Cooper Street..... 519-658-4443

Generations is about faithfulness not only to our mission statement which has led us since 2007, *We are connected to our past, committed to our future and compassionately focussed on being a Family of Faith with something for everyone*, but also our four values:

Eucharistic Spirituality
Hospitality and Welcome
Evangelization
Faithfulness to Who God Made Us to Be

As you know, we hosted our Town Hall Meeting on June 2nd, 2013. The meeting was attended by close to 100 people and was very well received. The spirit after at our special ATown Hall Café was positive and appreciative. At that meeting, and the following weekend, we made available special newsletters with the information concerning Generations, and have had a display present in the Parish Centre since that date, as well as on our website. Feedback forms have all been positive and many offered very constructive suggestions and enhancements to our plans. During the Town Hall Meeting we outlined the basic principles of Generations:

Expanded Parking
Addressing Maintenance
Children=s Wing Addition
A Parish Team for the Future

Since June 2nd, there has been much progress and so I wanted to share a small update. In doing, so I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Finance Advisory Council, as well as our Project team for their valued counsel.

Expanded Parking

As you know we acquired the property at 15 Cooper Street on May 6, 2013, decommissioned the home on it (with proper permit) the week of June 17th and have been involved in discussions with the City of Cambridge regarding next steps. Our formal plans now go to Site Plan for approval on August 23, 2013. During the planning, numerous meetings have taken place to ensure a design that meets municipal standards. We have tried to address concerns from neighbours and City Officials and we anticipate a smooth approval process. We will continue to work with our neighbours to ensure sensitivity to their properties. For safety reasons, we feel the area continues to need to be fenced off. While this aspect of Generations is behind schedule, as my personal hope had been to have the area fully useable by September, I anticipate a great place for parking - complete with sign - by Thanksgiving.

In terms of parking, it is important to also remember, that on Saturday evenings the use of the St.

James Lot is permitted. On Sunday mornings we are not able to use the St James Lot during their service times, however, we do have access to the lower lot of the Johnson Centre. In the Fall, with the adjustment of our last Mass to 11:30a.m., both of our neighbouring congregations will have concluded their 10:00am Services, and so downtown parking will also open up more. I believe we are on the right path in terms of addressing our parking situation.

Addressing Maintenance

The principal areas currently in our Maintenance Plan are the Church lower level plumbing and also the roof of the rectory garage. We continue to work with contractors on the best long term solutions in this regard and these will now be Spring 2014 projects as we wish to put together a plan that is both prudent financially, but also proactive. Increased interim maintenance provisions will be put in place for the short term.

A permit application has been submitted concerning our new LED sign for the front of the Church. The final design order has been made and we anticipate installation by October 2013. Some electrical work will be required to make this a reality so we are going to take advantage of such and do some overdue Atweaking@ as well. This will include the re-installation of a light on the inside of the Church Bell Tower. Given our focus as a Eucharistic community, this light will be ARed@ to symbolize the tabernacle light. Soon we will truly be a >light on the hill.= (c.f. Matthew 5:14-16)

Some initial planning on our new votive candles at the shrines of Our Blessed Mother and the Sacred Heart has begun including the readjusting of the pews in order to make room. We hope to have this project completed in late August. Watch for increased devotional opportunities as well this Fall.

Children=s Wing Addition

The time line for this project is on track. Plans were submitted on July 15th, 2013 following municipal and diocesan consultation, and taking into mind suggestions offered by parishioners. We have also had meetings with the technological and design consultants who will be involved in this project. We anticipate breaking ground at the beginning of September 2013 and hope for occupancy by Christmas 2013 if possible. This will permit us time to adjust our new spacing ahead of the opening of St Gabriel Elementary School in September 2014.

Some initial design meetings concerning our Atrium of the Good Shepherd Program have taken place and soon we will be recruiting individuals who may wish to be involved as leaders. We will be inviting Studio Rubin, which has done work with the Diocese of Hamilton, to be involved in aspects of the interior design of the Atrium and will be calling upon parishioners with wood working experience to be involved in making materials for the Atrium. Our hope is to have at least some programming by the Fall of 2014. We have also had some planning meetings regarding our new Confirmation Preparation Process. This will take on a small group format experience for our youth.

Meetings have also occurred concerning not only the technology portion of the Children and Youth Wing, but also upgrades to our current technology system. We have engaged AVI - SPL, a

local company which has done excellent work with the Waterloo Region Catholic District School Board, to aid us in this undertaking. As a result, it is my hope by Christmas that homilies will be pod casted, web streaming might be possible, that the experience in the Narthex overflow area can be improved and that some enhancements to our website to make it Afriendly@ for tablets and smart phones will also result from their involvement. It is also our goal that during peak times (Christmas, Easter) that the Children and Youth Room can be used as additional overflow. The technology upgrades will make this possible.

A Parish Team for the Future

Sister Bernadette Caron, a member of the Sisters of Our Lady Immaculate, will be starting on September 1st, 2013 on our parish team. She will be a familiar face not only on the Lord=s Day Weekends but also in time through her work as Catechist with RCIA, Children=s Ministry, First Communion Preparation and our new RCIC program for children who attend public school or older children seeking baptism. Sister will also be taking the lead on the starting of the Atrium of the Good Shepherd Program which we hope to have in place by September 2014. Sister will be working with our current programs and with our current lay volunteers in all of these programs.

Following some re-appraisal we will be not be filling the Youth Minister position during 2013 but will aim for 2014. In the interim we will continue our very successful volunteer led Kids Klub, Da Crew, Young Adults Group and now Searching in the Spirit programs. We will also continue our partnership with Camp Brebeuf seeking to provide opportunities for youth ministry.

Our *Lay Leadership Day* is coming together very well. There have been several points of communication with David Dayler and Anne Jamieson from the Diocese of Hamilton who will be leading the day, which will take place at the St Brigid Retreat Centre in Guelph. Currently we are sending out invitations and ensuring last minute details are in place. Keep us in prayer. A separate workshop is also being planned for our Music Ministry with Brenda Uchimaru, a renowned Church Music Specialist, joining us. This will be a wonderful opportunity for refreshment among this Atone setting@ ministry in the parish.

We will also be sending some exciting information to members of our Neighbourhood Ministry as we continue to expand this outreach ministry. This Fall, a lay volunteer leader has been selected and some new protocols to not only better meet needs, but ensure follow up involvement

We will also be sending important information to all of our Small Group leaders as we set up Fall plans for enhancing Small Groups. In the Fall, we will be holding a workshop for all Small Group Leaders in order to refocus all our Small Groups to be centered upon the Lord=s Day Message and its applications to Heart and Home. We will also seek to ensure that all our small groups are open, inclusive and centered upon our four values as a parish.

Making Sunday Matter

On the weekend of August 31/September 1, 2013 we will slightly adjust our Lord=s Day Mass Schedule to Saturday at 5:00pm, Sunday 8:00am, 9:30am, **11:30am**. With our continued focus on hospitality and fellowship, the slight change in the schedule allows for even more time to visit with one another, participate in our Caf  after Mass, or visit the ministries in the Narthex. This

slight adjustment, as previously mentioned, will also aid some of our parking concerns.

The new Welcome Centre is in place and recruitment for attendants is underway B this will become a positive tool of hospitality and information in our parish life. Plans for an expanded Catholic Café are in the works(twice/month) this is an amazing part of our parish life.

With the Fall Liturgical Schedule we will be welcoming numerous new Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers and Lectors, including several young adults who will be taking on these roles. This is a great sign of life in our parish! Others signs of this life include our Tuesday Night Together (Catholicism series), Children=s Eucharistic Adoration; all of which will continue. Beginning in September, on Tuesday evenings, we will add an additional time for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our Lenten Mission in 2014 is also being currently planned and I am confident will also be a great blessing!

In the midst of all of these projects we must not forget our commitment to the people of Haiti. Since 2010 we have been instruments of making a difference as we have worked with the Sisters of St Joseph and the Diocese of Hamilton. In 2014 we hope to undertake a first hand Missions Trip in order to ascertain the work we have done, do some hands on work ourselves in the missions, and determine steps moving forward in our commitment there. A mission team of 8 young adults will travel in 2014. More details on ways to help them will be shared soon.

GENERATIONS WEEKEND

The weekend of **OCTOBER 12/13, 2013** will be our first of three Generations Weekends. They will be opportunities to speak about our progress towards all of the goals of this important chapter of our parish life, but also plans as we continue to move forward as a parish family.

Generations Weekend is also the weekend for your financial support. Thanks to very generous support from the Diocese, our achievable and reasonable goal is to raise \$75,000. This will be done during the course of these three weekends (October 2013, May 2014, October 2014). If every family in the parish commits to (in addition to their regular Sunday offering) a single \$50.00 contribution during each of these weekends, we will be able to meet our Generations goal. Some will be able to give more, others less, but each gives as has been given to them.

During the Summer months, I have undertaken several speaking engagements which have, on a two weekends, taken me away from the parish. These have been opportunities, to not only speak elsewhere but also continue sales of my book *Are We There Yet?*. The proceeds of the sales from this book, which is dedicated to this parish, are being donated to the Generations campaign as my contribution.

I am convinced that God will continue to bless us as we honour the plans He puts before us in this season of our journey. My prayer is that your heart will embrace this fresh opportunity to once again do all things for the Glory of God. May Our Lady of the Visitation continue to be our inspiration, model and guide.

Together in the Lord's Service
Father F. Freitas, Pastor