

# GENERATIONS

## Update # 2 - Fall 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 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013. The meeting was attended by close to 100 people and was very well received. At that meeting, and the following weekend, we made available special newsletters with the information concerning Generations, and had a display present in the Parish Centre, as well as ongoing 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and our last update in August, 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 were involved in discussions with the City of Cambridge and our neighbours regarding next steps. Our Site Plan was approved on August 23, 2013. Work began shortly after that and has been progressing. Regretfully due to numerous delays our hope of having our parking lot by Thanksgiving did not materialize. The project is behind schedule, however my hope is to have a great place for parking - complete with sign - by November.

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**

Our new LED sign for the front of the Church is operational and has already not only received positive comments, but has already attracted individuals to parish events and activities. We also now have a new

red glow within our Church Bell Tower. Given our focus as a Eucharistic community, this “Red Light” symbolizes the tabernacle light. We truly are becoming that ‘light on the hill.’ (c.f. Matthew 5:14-16). Our new votive candles at the shrines of Our Blessed Mother and the Sacred Heart have become popular places of devotion. During the month of November we will be installing in the Parish Centre Narthex some sound panels to reduce the echo especially present during Lord’s Day celebrations. This minor maintenance will make for a more positive worship experience for all.

### **☼ Children’s Wing Addition**

The time line for this project is on track. Plans were submitted on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013 following municipal and diocesan consultation, and taking into mind suggestions offered by parishioners. Meetings were held in August with all technological and design consultants involved in this project. The project began in late August (ahead of schedule) and we hope for occupancy by Christmas.

Formal planning for our Atrium of the Good Shepherd Program, and the commencement of our new Confirmation Preparation Program, “Searching in the Spirit”, will both begin in November. Improvements to our website to make it “friendly” for tablets and smart phones has been done, and soon video work will be seen on our website including a welcome video for all who “check us out”.

### **☼ A Parish Team for the Future**

The presence of Sister Bernadette Caron, a member of the Sisters of Our Lady Immaculate has been a true blessing for our community. 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 (Plugged In) is a true source of blessing.

Our Lay Leadership Day with David Dayler and Anne Jamieson from the Diocese of Hamilton was a source of tremendous blessing and insight for all who attended. Follow up activities are being planned. Some 20 members of our Music Ministry will be attending a separate workshop for our Music Ministry with Brenda Uchimaru, a renowned Church Music Specialist, joining us. Workshops for our Liturgical Ministers will be offered shortly also as a continued spirit of lay formation continues.

### **☼ Making Sunday Matter**

Members of our Small Groups have begun receiving “*Heart to Home*”; a new weekly publication which continues reflections from the weekly homily. Prepared by Father Freitas, for our own parish, this is an excellent tool not only of evangelization but also personal growth and prayer. The new Welcome Centre is in place (with a new distinctive sign) and training and recruitment for attendants is underway – this will become a positive tool of hospitality and information in our parish life. Our expanded Catholic Café continues and is being very well received.

## **GENERATIONS WEEKEND**

The weekend of October 12/13, 2013 was our first of three Generations Weekends. These weekends are not only an opportunity to speak about our progress towards all of the goals of this important chapter of our parish life, but also to financially support these steps as we move forward as a parish family. To date we have raised over \$11,000 toward our achievable and reasonable goal of \$75,000. We pray for this goal to be met during our two remaining weekends (May 2014, October 2014). Contributions can be made at any time. Thank you for all of your patience and support during the various aspects of Generations. May Our Lady of the Visitation continue to be our inspiration, model and guide.

Together in the Lords Service  
*Father F. Freitas, Pastor*