

Our Family of Faith

ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH

16 Cooper Street, Cambridge (Hespeler), Ontario, N3C 2N2.

Telephone: (519) 658-4443. Fax line: (519) 658-6783. Web page: www.stmaryhespeler.ca

PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

Dear Friends:

It has been my honour to be Pastor of this Family of Faith since 2006. Each Lord's Day it is a privilege beyond description to gather with all of you and experience a living illustration of all that God is doing in the life of our parish community. I am reminded of the legacy of faith given to us over 155 years ago by the founding families of Hespeler to do all things "For the Glory of God".

St Mary of the Visitation Parish has been blessed over the last six years with growth rising from 1,835 registered families in 2006 to 2,272 in 2012. We have witnessed our active envelope users rise from 456 in 2006 to currently 558. Our attendance at Lord's Day Masses has also increased from 1,165 to 1,485 persons during this same time. Growth has also been seen in the number of opportunities for involvement due to increased ministries and groups to the point that individual member involvement has risen from 370 to 777. Population projections for our area indicate considerable growth as new development continues. The opening of a third elementary school is also an exciting sign of parish life. This vitality is also seen in the large increase of numbers in our Children and Youth Ministry, not to mention interest by this age group in faith formation opportunities.

Just like when we walked in faith and undertook our Parish Centre/Parking Lot Expansion in 2009, we are at a point where we are called again into a new chapter....which we are calling Generations!

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.

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



"We are connected to our past, committed to our future and compassionately focussed on being a Family of Faith with something for everyone."

The Year of Faith proclaimed last October 2012 is *"an opportunity to usher the whole Church into a time of reflection and rediscovery of the faith."*

As a Family of Faith we are committed to the
Core Values of:

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

Since 2006, our parish community has undertaken many projects to help us truly be a place *with something for everyone:*

- 2007: Installed Air Conditioning, paid off previous debt resulting from fire of 2004 and original purchase of old school building. Celebrated our 150th Anniversary with such activities as our Cookbook, Anniversary Mass and Banquet, Anniversary Hooks, and the Marian Prayer Gardens located behind the Parish Office.
- 2009/2010: Expanded our Parish Centre and ensured our campus was accessible. Acquired 42 Cooper St. to expand our Parking Lot from 48 to 75 spots.
- 2009: New Audio & Video System for the Church.
- 2010: Air Circulation System in Choir Loft and New Front Entry Way.
- 2012: Visitation Gardens.

Since 2006 we also expanded *opportunities for involvement by everyone*:

- Kids Klub (2006) & Da Crew (2007).
- Bible Study Groups & Wise Guys (2007).
- Expanded Children's Ministry with the introduction of Iwannago (2007).
- Introduction of Feast Day Celebrations with Marriage Anniversary Mass, May Crowning (2007).
- Engaged Couples Blessing, Tuesday Nights Together, Older Adult Trips (2007).
- Ladies Day and Men's Breakfast (2008).
- Bereavement Ministry, Dinner for 8 Couples Groups, Catholic Café, Sundae Sundays.
- Adult Sports Teams - Volleyball, Soccer, Bowling, Road Hockey.
- Small Group Ministry.
- Rose for Life, 40 Days for Life, Monument for Life in Visitation Gardens.
- Neighbourhood Ministry.
- Special Relationship with Camp Brebeuf and Sisters of Our Lady Immaculate.
- Summer Parish Pilgrimages to Shrines in Montreal, Washington, Philadelphia, New York.
- Holy Land Pilgrimage (2009), Year of Faith Pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes and Rome.
- Pancake Suppers, Good Friday Fish Fry, Spaghetti Supper, Parish Picnic.
- Family Fun Nights, Skating Party, Trips to Guelph Storm and Toronto Blue Jays.
- Working with our CWL, St Vincent de Paul and Knights of Columbus.
- Welcomed 65 individuals into the Catholic Faith since 2006 in the RCIA.



We have also sought to make a difference and becoming **Hands Across this City**. Together since 2006 we have:

- Collected over 495 Blankets during our Fall Blanket Brigade for the Homeless.
- Collected over 100 School 'back packs' for filled with school supplies for children from our community in need.
- Held our twice annual Service Saturday events where we aid the Carmelite Sisters in St Agatha, Bridges Shelter/Out of the Cold Program and Michael House.

Internationally we are **Hands Across World**. We have partnered with "Chalice" child sponsorship where not only does our Children's Ministry and Kids Klub sponsor children, but so do 35 individual families in our parish.

Our Red Stocking Campaign has collected over 1,900 Red Stockings since 2006, which along with our Vests and Teddy Bears (Knitting for the Missions), are distributed by Canadian Food for Children to African Missions.

Our assistance to the Daughters of Charity Orphanage in Bethlehem and our support of Diocesan and Papal Charities has since 2006 equaled almost \$75,000.

In Haiti, together with the Sisters of St Joseph, and the Diocese of Hamilton, we are making an impact. Collecting \$30,777.91 since the earthquake of 2010, we have contributed to numerous renovations, along with the construction of a 3,500 square foot medical supply warehouse and aided in the installation of a potable water well system for the Catholic Hospital in Port au Prince. We have also sent 2,348 Haiti Health Kits and over 50 'Milk Bag Mats' to aide those in need.

In 2014, 8 Young Adults will travel to Haiti on a Mission Trip to continue our work first hand.

PROJECTIONS GOING FORWARD

- Classroom Addition (8) to Our Lady of Fatima School in September 2013
- Dedication of St Gabriel Catholic School - September 2014 (350 students).
- Completion of Millpond Subdivision
- Riverbank Lofts - 140 downtown units
- Arriscraft/Hunt Club Lands - 2,250 units
- East of Can-Amera Parkway - 500 units

An estimated 2,890 new units by 2020 (963 new Catholic families).

Elementary School Aged - 2014 - 974 children
Elementary School Aged - 2020 - 1015 children

OUR CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

Our current debt, remaining from the 2009/2010 Parish Centre/Parking Lot expansion project, is as of December 31, 2012: \$364,837.25.

Our goal has been to repay such at a rate of \$125,000 per year. As such we project our debt at years end to be as follows:

- 2013 = \$239, 837.25
- 2014 = \$114,837.25
- 2015 = Debt Free

This is thanks to your generosity and the prudent financial management of our Pastor and the Finance Advisory Council.

**WE TRULY DO HAVE A PARISH CAMPUS
WE CAN BE PROUD OF!**

OUR CURRENT CHALLENGES

- We continue to experience a shortage of parking especially for our Lord's Day Celebrations. This hampers our ability to welcome new members.
- We are witnessing a need for dedicated space for our youth and children's ministry programs.
- We are in need of additional storage space; especially in our sacristy.
- We have expanded by ministries, services, and number of registered families, and yet remained the same in our staffing which hampers the quality of our service, and ability to retain staff.
- We continue to see the need to enrich in greater ways our sense of hospitality as a parish, increase involvement and develop lay leadership efforts.



Expanded Parking Addressing Maintenance Children's Wing Addition A Parish Team for the Future Making Sunday Matter

EXPANDED PARKING & MAINTENANCE: The Parish has purchased the property at 15 Cooper St (house across from Rectory), at a cost of \$150,000, which we will transition into more parking. *Please see proposed design in this package.* We will also address some on going issues with the plumbing in the lower level of the Church which is causing considerable challenges in both the Church and Rectory Basements resulting in flooding. We also need to address structural issues with the rectory garage.

CHILDREN'S WING ADDITION: We will undertake a small addition onto the Church extending out from the current parish office entrance. *Please see proposed design in this package.* The newly created dedicated space will be for Children and Youth Ministry programs. This space will be 525 square feet - two stories - and fits well into the current footprint of the Church campus. It will also result in improved storage space in sacristy and more natural light to side staircase. The Children's Ministry area will be a technologically connected area where the presentation of the Gospel will be enhanced for today's generation of sight and sound. This space will be used not only by our Children's Ministry, but also our Kids Klub, Da Crew, Kids Choir, First Communion and Confirmation Preparation programs as well as a new Rite of Christian Initiation of Children. It will also, due to its connection via our video system to the Church, be the location of additional overflow space for Lord's Day celebrations, and a "Parent's Room/Nursery".

This space will also permit us to introduce the Atrium of the Good Shepherd Program, which is a religious formation program for children ages 3-6, 7-12, that introduces a tactile way for children to understand the Mass and encourages Eucharistic Adoration for Children.

A PARISH TEAM FOR THE FUTURE: Our Parish has grown by over 400 families since 2006, and yet our staff has remained the same in number. This has not only affected staff retention, but also our ability to fully serve those in need. We are expanding our Parish Staff in the Fall in order to welcome a Catechist and a Youth Minister to aid with the leadership of current programs and give the opportunity to begin new programs including the introduction of the Atrium of the Good Shepherd, as well as an outreach to our teens, and greater opportunities for lay adult leadership formation; especially through Small Groups.

MAKING SUNDAY MATTER: Our parish is known for its Hospitality, Inclusion and Vision. We will be increasing the frequency of our popular Catholic Café to twice a month and introducing an Information/Welcome desk in the Parish Centre. *We will also, following consultation, in September 2013, be adjusting our Sunday Mass schedule to make the 11:00am Mass commence at 11:30am.* This will provide us with more time in between our Sunday Masses, providing greater opportunities for hospitality, and easier transition in our parking flow.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is the cost of all this?

The total project costs will be \$400,000 which includes property development, construction, new programs and initial staff salaries. The Diocese of Hamilton has committed \$200,000 toward Generations. We have further applied for a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from a Diocesan Foundation. This means that 63% of the costs are covered. A further 18.5% will be retrieved from our current reserves. Therefore, we need only raise \$75,000 over the next two years to make Generations a reality.

How will we raise the funds?

We will be asking every active family in the parish to consider a Seasonal Contribution of \$150.00 over the course of the next two years. This will be in the form of a donation of \$50.00 above their current level of giving on special **“Generations Weekends”**: October 12/13, 2013, May 10/11 & October 11/12, 2014.

Don't we have a debt?

Yes we do. Our current debt is \$364,837.25. Our goal has been to pay this down by \$125,000 per year. In 2013 we will adjust this and aim to pay down our debt by \$75,000 (2013=\$289,827.25). In 2014 we will resume our \$125,000 benchmark resulting remaining debt levels in 2014=\$164,837.25, and 2015=\$39,837.25. This means that by June 2016, only six months from our current plan, we would be debt free. We do have a debt, but we also have a plan in place to still eliminate it.

Can't we wait until the debt is paid off in 2015 and begin this project in 2016?

The growth in our community is happening now; and we need to get ahead of it in order to maintain our mission of providing something for everyone. We undertook our Parish Centre project in 2009 because the need was there, it was a bold step in faith that blessed our community. We are at the same point of opportunity today.

Is this project just for Kids?

A part of Generations is our Children & Youth Wing, but Generations is much more than a building project, it is about developing lay leaders, additional staff which means providing more opportunities, additional overflow space for major celebrations, added parking - Generations is for everyone!

How about World Mission?

Yes we need to do more! This is why in 2014 we are engaging in a Mission Trip to Haiti in order to explore how to develop strategic partnerships and to work with the Diocese in order to continue to be a hand of impact for this needy area of the world.

Is not \$150.00 a lot of money for some?

Yes - but it is over two years. Each of us gives as we can...as the Lord has blessed us....each doing their part! It is not about equal amounts, but equal sacrifice. Some may not be able to fully give \$150.00, others can give more.

This will not help me - why should I give?

The simple answer is because before you, someone gave for you. We are part of a heritage of faith - strong for more than 155 years as a parish. Others before did their part - we can too - this is our opportunity.

What if it goes over budget?

We have accounted for that - even if it does, debt free by the end of 2016 is still possible.

The Finance Advisory Council supports this - is Father Freitas sure and does he support it?

Yes! In fact he is so sure, and supports it so strongly, that he is donating the proceeds of his book *“Are We There Yet?”* to this project - that is his part - are you ready for yours?

PARISHIONERS' RESPONSE PAGE

Your response is most important for the Parish Advisory Council. Please return this page before the weekend of June 29/30, 2013 thru the Sunday Collection Basket. Your signature is required.

1. What do you like about the proposal?:

2. What, if anything, would you like to change?:

3. Which user group would you, or a family member, be a part of? :
(you may check more than one)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CWL | <input type="checkbox"/> Wize Guys | <input type="checkbox"/> St Vincent de Paul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrating the Word Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cursillo | <input type="checkbox"/> Iwannago | <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Luncheon/Receptions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ladies Days | <input type="checkbox"/> Euchre Club | <input type="checkbox"/> RCIA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday Night Together | <input type="checkbox"/> Married Couples Evenings | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | | |

4. Please feel free to offer any other comments:

Signature _____ (required)