

Divine Infant Parish

Annual Report

June, 2016



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Pastor's Message

Dear Friends in Christ,

Another exciting year is behind us. We welcomed our Refugee Family, making new and wonderful friends and helping them to find their stability and peace. This process proved to be a whole new adventure for us as a parish and especially for our Refugee Committee. I have nothing but a sincere gratitude for their hard work and dedication to this project.

Another thank you goes to our Parish Pastoral Council. This year we embarked on the challenging task of creating a Pastoral Plan for our parish community. Many hours of hard work went into it and I was simply impressed to see how every member of our Parish Pastoral Council dedicated their time and talents to every single stage of this exciting endeavor. Still, a lot remains to be done and I have no doubts that together, Parish Council and our Parish Community, we will have this job well done.

The third project I'd like to mention is our New Evangelization Support Team. This ministry, I hope, will truly permeate our Parish Community. This is not just another project, or course, or set of presentations or talks. This is our future as a parish and by reading and listening to at least three recent Popes, this is also the future of our Church. We will continue to encourage and guide all of our parishioners, parish groups, ministries and programs to be more involved and active in the work of the New Evangelization.

May the intercessions of our Blessed Mother and the guidance of the Holy Spirit always give us courage and strength to be a true witness to our faith and God's love and mercy in the world of today.

Fr. Waldemar Podlasz SDS

Pastoral Council

Carl Ward, Chair

Another year has passed and Divine Infant Parish continues to grow in faith and community. We are blessed to have our Priests, Deacons, Administrative Staff and a host of dedicated volunteers throughout our ministries. We are especially blessed to have you, the parishioners, who make up our faith community and contribute to the life of the parish in so many ways.

Under the direction of our Pastor, the Pastoral Planning Process is continuing, as planned, with the objective of completing the Divine Infant Pastoral Plan in the fourth quarter, 2016. Parishioner participation in the recent Pastoral Planning Survey was excellent. We received 324 Parish Family survey responses which represents approximately 972 parishioners.

Also, I am pleased to announce the recipients of the Parish Appreciation Award for this year. The recipients are as follows: Deacon Bill & June Reggler, Deacon Stephen & Blessilda Donoghue, and Stan Siok. Congratulations!

Always remember that this is your parish; and, as your representatives, our Pastor and Pastoral Council are always open to and willing to consider your ideas and assist you in any way we can. We are a parish family with a common goal, which is to Love, Praise and Honor Jesus.

Have a happy and safe summer!

Finance Council

Susan Galarneau, Chair

The parish Finance Council is a committee consisting of our pastor, our parish administrator (non-voting) and approximately six parish members. The role of the committee is to monitor parish finances and to analyze, oversee and make recommendations on financial expenditures. The committee meets three to four times per year with additional meetings taking place on an as needed basis.

The major challenge the finance committee has faced in the last year is the absence of our Parish Manager, Deacon Jeff, as a result of illness. I am pleased to report, however, that other committee members have dedicated additional time and energy to help bridge the significant gap left by Deacon Jeff's absence.

Financial Report Council

The 2015 fiscal year ended in a healthy financial position.

Cash and Bank balances	\$166,662	Mass Account liability	\$ 14,202
On deposit with the Archdiocese	111,472	Special Collections	33,562
Receivables	<u>8,121</u>	Equity	<u>238,491</u>
	<u>\$286,255</u>		<u>\$286,255</u>

Total operating revenues for the year were \$707,272 of which \$629,186 are "taxable" by the Archdiocese. The main sources of revenue are:

- Collections \$595,885
- Sale of books, objects and candles 33,850
- Donations and Fees 26,420
- Contributions from parish organizations 10,744

Expenses totalled \$708,996. Salaries and benefits for the clergy and parish staff were \$422,245.

Operating and maintaining the building complex is a major portion of the costs of running the parish:

- Maintenance 60,467
 - Utilities 34,537
 - Taxes, insurance and water 9,562
- \$ 104,596

Other major operating expenses include the Diocesan Tax (\$70,818), Youth Ministry and Social Committee activities (\$27,309) and office expenses (\$18,012).

In 2015, there was a major roof replacement project; combined with other capital projects, total expenses were \$114,663; these capital expenses were offset by special collections of \$121,473 received as of December 31st 2015.

Liturgy Committee

Marilyn Geis, Chair

Each liturgical celebration is the Church at prayer as Christians gather to celebrate the mystery of Christ. The Liturgy Committee are the ones who take the rituals of life and liturgy and mould them into shape for this celebration as an act of worship – they bring it all together.

The Liturgy Committee is comprised of Children's Liturgy, Music, Altar Servers, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Ushers and Sacristans. Individual annual reports for each ministry, submitted by their leaders, are shown below.

Children's Liturgy

Rebecca Cherry, Leader

The Children's Liturgy is responsible for organizing and presenting the liturgy to children ages two to twelve. Our goal is to help them understand the gospel and prayer at their level. There are three different levels offered: Preschool (ages two to senior kindergarten – parents accompany children); Junior (Grade one to students preparing for 1st Communion); and Senior (students who have received their 1st Communion, until Grade 6). Children's liturgy is offered three Sundays a month from September to June. We currently have eighteen volunteers: seven volunteers lead the preschool group in simple prayer, songs and crafts, five volunteers for the junior and three volunteers for the senior group who guide the children through the liturgy and engage the students in discussion centered around the gospel, and three volunteers who assist the leaders.

We are always looking for new volunteers who enjoy working with children and families. There is a volunteer meeting in September and new volunteers are welcome to observe leaders to help prepare them to begin leading a group.

Over the past year there have been many changes and six new volunteers have signed up. We continue to have space concerns with the preschool and junior groups. The preschool group is now meeting in the main hall and the junior group is meeting in the annex off the main hall. We are very pleased that our preschool group is continuing to grow, but we've now outgrown the annex. This will create some problems in the fall and winter next year when there will be an increase in attendance with the junior group as more families attend the children's liturgy mass in preparation for their child's first communion. The numbers attending our senior group have also increased this year.

With the help of the Knights of Columbus and volunteers we had a very successful Christmas Party in December. It was the biggest turnout we've had in the past four years. We have begun preparation for our year-end party in May and we'll take a break over the summer months.

Music Ministry

Garth Periera, Leader

The Divine Infant Parish music ministry aims to provide music that leads people into prayer and worship for liturgy, sacraments, adoration and other events from time to time. It is not just a music ministry but a worship ministry.

It is made up of different groups of musicians, many that alternate Masses from week to week for each of the five Masses. It is made up of 13 different music groups. Three groups alternate at the 5:00 pm Mass; 2 alternate at the 8:00 am Mass; 3 alternate at the 9:30 am Mass; the adult choir always does the 11:15 am Mass; 4 alternate at the 6:30 pm (Youth oriented) Mass.

The sound in the church has been a problem for many years, not just for musicians, but also in understanding the presider and pulpit. People have had a hard time understanding what is being spoken and played. Some have even said that they walk out into the foyer to hear the homily better. With permission from Fr. Waldemar, we hired a professional sound technician that specializes in church sound systems and implemented the first of a 3-phase sound adjustment. It included the changing out of speakers and proper speaker placement, the installation of a new soundboard, and sound tests to ring out the room and find the best adjustments to give more clarity to the sound. It proved to be a dramatic improvement with many parishioners commenting it to be the first time they have been able to understand what is being said in years. The carrying out of the next phases is still to be determined.

Another problem is that since many of the music groups take the summer off, we need competent musicians that can cover the summer months so that there can still be music. It would also help to have volunteers in the summer that can run the lyric projection for the different masses as well. We hope to be able to offer training and formation for interested musicians, sound people, and lyric projector operators in the fall.

Children's Choir and Adult Choir

Lisa-Marie Hollis, Leader

Children's Ministry Choir:

This year has been a great rebuilding year for the children's choir. It's been exciting and challenging. Normally, we are made up of Grade 3-8 students; however, this year began with only 5 returning singers (from 15 last year). I opened it up again to Grade 2 students and then to Grade 1, and even accepted 2 Kindergartners. We continued to invite children to join our choir at least 1 Mass a month, and so we grew to 25! Now, even when the kids are sick or away, we regularly have 15-18 at each Mass.

These children are fun, attentive and have learned a great deal about their faith through singing liturgical music. As well, they have been exposed to solid singing techniques and direction that brings out a great sound and enthusiasm for every song they sing. The parents are involved and supportive of the weekly one-hour rehearsals on Thursdays (some stay, too), bringing the children early to church for the Masses twice a month, and they have even made

exceptions for additional rehearsals or taking lyrics home to help the younger ones read and prepare for the Mass.

I am honoured to be leading this ministry, and we all look forward to growing and singing again this Fall.

Adult Choir:

What a committed group of people! Many of our choir members pre-date my 13 years as their director. We have gone through a few growing pains, health-issues, even burying a few members and spouses of members, especially this past year with our dear Ron Conlin. Even though we are all "getting older", the attendance hasn't wavered. Our Thursday weekly rehearsals are very productive, and the 11:15 am Masses are always "chorum" (well balanced). Also, other members have always been welcome, and I am proud to say that after at least 7 years of including students from St Peter High School, this year we welcomed my own 17 year old son, Benjamin, as a tenor. His joining us brings our total membership to 34, with 20-25 members singing on any given Sunday.

Altar Servers

Ludy and Michele Hollick, Leaders

The Altar Server ministry allows youths to participate as Altar Servers at regular Sunday masses, at Christmas and Easter Triduum services, and also at other masses such as First Communion, Confirmation and Weddings. The duties of an Altar Server are divided into four positions that are assigned by a Mass Coordinator prior to the start of mass: Lead, Assistant Lead, Cross Bearer and Auxiliary. Lead and Assistant Leads are candle bearers. They assist the celebrant at the altar and ring bells during consecration. Cross Bearer carries the cross in processions, and with the Auxiliary assists at communion by holding patens.

Ludy and Michele Hollick have coordinated this ministry since September 2002. Every year training is held in the fall for new servers, and to refresh existing servers, to ensure a consistent standard at each mass. One-on-one training is provided as and when required, especially for use of the Incensor when incense is required (normally reserved for Easter Triduum masses).

Mass Coordinators assign duties to servers prior to mass, observe them during mass and provide constructive feedback after mass; however, there is only a dedicated coordinator for the 11:15 am Mass (Anna Thompson) and 6:30 pm Mass (Blessilda Donoghue), who have both been serving in this capacity for many years. Maria Schonert and Jackie Kieruff who are parents of servers or former servers, have helped at the 9:30 am mass on an irregular basis. Victoria Pusiak also supports the ministry by coordinating server requirements for First Communion and Confirmation masses.

Currently the parish has 23 servers but more than half are senior and likely to retire this year. By mass the breakdown is as follows: 5:00 pm Sat: 0-3; 8:00 am Sun: 0-2; 9:30 am Sun: 1-6; 11:15 am Sun: 2-4; 6:30 pm Sun: 4-7. The good news of the seniority of servers is the benefits of their experience and they are to be congratulated for their dedication. Special

mention is warranted to three servers who continue to serve either regularly or occasionally even though they have graduated from High School. Despite the small numbers, most of the Christmas and Easter Triduum masses had altar server support. Parish family demographics have contributed to the decline in youth available for altar serving, but there seems to be a resurgence of young families starting to appear in recent years. Numbers are expected to rise in a few years when a new generation of youth will become of age to serve.

Volunteers are needed to fill the Mass Coordinator positions so that dedicated adults are available to supervise, teach and encourage youth on a regular basis. Masses with regular coordinators have a better retention rate than those that do not have a regular coordinator.

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist

Joan Scott, Leader

At regular Masses and on special occasions, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, or Communion Ministers as they are more commonly known, assist the Priest in serving communion. They serve communion with dignity and humility, impressing upon others the living presence of God – that is the Eucharistic Ministry.

This ministry is generally smooth running with no major problems. One troubling issue is when ministers do not show up when scheduled and do not find a substitute. This results in the sacristan having to look for last minute replacements, and if a particular minister proves unreliable by missing three or more scheduled servings without a valid reason, they may be asked to leave the ministry. From time to time reminders of the need for reliability are sent out to ministers and this usually helps.

Numbers of Eucharistic Ministers varies at times due to people entering or leaving the ministry because of changing health or family circumstances. At the beginning of September the number of Communion Ministers for each mass was as follows: 5 pm – 23; 8 am – 17; 9:30 am – 19; 11:15 am – 20; 6:30 pm – 11. There are also a number of ministers who serve communion at daily masses. We are blessed with devoted ministers but additional volunteers would be most welcome at all masses, particularly at the 8 am and 6:30 pm masses and during the summer months. A strong core of Eucharistic Ministers are necessary to supply the needs of special occasions such as Christmas and especially at the Easter Triduum when both the host and wine are served and extra masses are said at St. Peter High School. For some liturgical events over 70 Ministers of Communion, including clergy, are required.

This is a true ministry of love and a blessing for all who participate in it.

Lector/Reader Ministry

Richard Boulianne, Leader

Those involved in this ministry must proclaim the Word of God in a clear and precise voice so that parishioners can hear and understand in a meaningful, powerful and effective way. The Reader should grow in a warm and loving knowledge of Scripture, which is the living Word of God.

The Lector Ministry consists of 5 Mass co-ordinators and Lectors for each of the five weekend Masses. Each co-ordinator schedules their Readers for their specific Mass. They also canvas their Lectors to find volunteers for special occasions such as Christmas and Easter Time. Lectors are responsible to prepare for their assigned Reading.

At this time there are approximately 70 parishioners involved in this Ministry. The breakdown for numbers of lectors by Mass times is: Saturday 5pm -12; Sunday 8am – 12; Sunday 9:30am - 15; Sunday 11:15am - 23; Sunday 6:30pm – 7.

It would be nice to have a few more volunteers for the youth Mass on Sundays at 6:30pm.

Ushers/Greeters

Richard Charette, Leader

We are very fortunate to have a great group of dedicated ushers, both women and men. Their duty is to assist our priest by facilitating greeting and ushering activities at liturgical celebrations. There are currently approximately 60 ushers to assist before and after masses and to answer any questions you may have. They will assist you in finding a seat, they take up the collections, assist during communion, pass out the bulletins, help out if someone has a medical emergency, and do anything else they can to help you enjoy your stay during and after mass. We have ushers serving at the 5 pm Mass on Saturday, the 8 am, 9:30 am and 11:15 am Masses on Sunday, and the teens are there to serve at the 6:30 pm Mass on Sunday.

We are also very proud of the work being done by our ushers when they are needed for special events. There is always a need for additional male and female ushers, so please think about it and feel free to see one of our ushers and give them your name and phone number or your email and we will be happy to get in touch with you. We have a few ushers that are ready to retire and others need to step up and replace them.

As of June 1st Stephane Therrien will be our next chief usher. Her phone number is 613-590-0769 and her email is: stephane2012@rogers.com.

Sacristans

Marilyn Geis, Leader

Liturgical celebrations take place in a carefully prepared manner by the sacristans to ensure that the Church is a welcoming, visible sign of love and reverence toward God. The sacristan is responsible for arranging the books needed for the proclamation of the Word and presider's prayers, and setting out the chalice, paten, cruets, bowl, altar linens, hosts and altar wine. Doors must be unlocked, vestments, altar and chair cloths, appropriate to the liturgical season or feast day are laid out, lights and the sound system turned on, and candles filled.

Last year a number of new sacristans joined our ranks and the number for each Mass is as follows: 5 pm – 3 sacristans; 8 am – 2; 9:3 am – 4; 11:15 am – 3; 6:30 pm – 3. For weekday Masses there are: Monday and Tuesday – 3 sacristans; Wednesday – 1; Thursday – 1; Friday –

1. It is necessary to have sufficient sacristans for each Mass so that replacements are available for those who must be absent due to illness, holidays, family responsibilities or people who move away or retire from the ministry. Before being given the keys to the church a police clearance must be obtained.

During special celebrations or at Christmas or Easter, extra diligence is necessary to ensure that everything goes as it should. At funerals, and sometimes during summer months, sacristans must not only see to the preparations for the Mass but also act as altar servers. For funerals and special occasions more experienced sacristans are needed.

Parish and Community Life

Marilyn Geis, Leader

The social committee is responsible for overseeing events which contribute to parish and community life, such as gatherings for celebrations, to say welcome or farewell, or just to relax, play and enjoy each other's company. The committee organizes events, decorates the space appropriately, and arranges for the provision of food and drink so that all may enjoy coming together with fellow parishioners for special occasions. They also ensure that the kitchen is always well stocked with items such as coffee, tea, sugar, milk, napkins, plates and glasses. At events, duties include purchasing or receiving donated foods, setting out the food and beverages, seeing that plates are restocked when empty, and then clearing up afterwards. Dishes are washed in the dishwasher and put away in the cupboards.

As most events occur outside of regular Mass times, there is no tie-in to any particular Mass. A small group of persons assist on a regular basis and many others offer their services from time to time. Also, some attendees graciously offer to help in the clean up after an event.

Baptism Ministry

Linda Moyle, Leader

The Baptism Ministry team is divided into groups for specific activities: 1) Presentation Sunday - two volunteers alternate each month in assisting Deacon Steve; 2) Parent Gathering - one Tuesday a month (except during Advent and Lent), there are five volunteers who assist with these meetings of parents. At the moment all five volunteers attend every gathering, but changes are being planned for this activity; 3) Baptism Ceremony – there are two teams for this, one has three members, and the other has four members.

Normally there is one Presentation, one Parent Gathering and two Baptism Ceremonies each month except during Advent and Lent. For July and August, there is a Presentation Sunday and Parent Gathering at the beginning of July. A Baptism Ceremony is held in July and in August. The number of children at each Ceremony varies between one or two up to seven or eight.

At the moment we are managing with the volunteers we have, but if we had more people we could alternate more often. It is very difficult to get music for the ceremonies, but it really

adds something special to the occasion. Angela Lavictoire has graciously been helping us when she can but we don't want to impose on her.

Marriage Preparation

Michael and Amy Hall, Leaders

The Marriage Preparation Team is made up primarily of married couples who provide an opportunity for engaged couples to learn about and discuss several different topics prior to getting married. This past year we provided two courses: one in-home small group course in the Fall and one in the parish hall for twenty engaged couples in the Spring.

Currently, there are five married couples and one additional parishioner who assist with the Marriage Preparation Courses either by facilitating a course or by providing a presentation on a particular topic. Recently, a few married couples have expressed interest in joining this team. Michael and I are currently transitioning to the role of Coordinators in order to relieve Michael and Anne Seath who have served our parish community faithfully as Coordinators for many years. They will continue to be of assistance to the Marriage Preparation team, for which we are grateful.

Presently, we are short of couples who are trained in providing the FOCCUS (Facilitated Open Couple Communication Understanding and Study) pre-marital inventory. This is an area that will require some attention in order to build a new team of married couples who would be able to share their gifts in this regard. In the future, we would like to consider a means of providing post-marriage support or follow up to those couples who have attended our Marriage Preparation Course or to other newly married couples in our parish community.

Mass breakdown for our volunteers: 5 pm – 1; 9:30 am – 3; 6:30 PM – 2. As well, we have one married couple from another parish who gives one presentation at each Marriage Preparation Course.

RCIA/RCIT

Dcn. Jeff Le Bane, Leader

The Rite of Christian Initiation remains the principal way adults (RCIA) and teens (RCIT) are baptized (catechumens) into the Catholic Church, received into full communion from other Christian communities (candidates) and for those baptized Catholics who have not received all the Sacraments of Initiation, to be prepared to receive them. Earliest Church records indicate that the RCIA has been a Rite in the Church from 371 AD. Preparation is lengthy and requires considerable time commitment and devotion from the catechumens and candidates as well as godparents and sponsors and team members. Conversion is such an important process. The parish program begins in September, with weekly meetings on Wednesday evenings, and proceeds through the Easter Season. From the First Sunday of Advent, catechumens and candidates also attend the 11:15 am Sunday Mass and are dismissed following the homily, to reflect on the Sunday Gospel, per the African RCIA model. There are four parts to the RCIA year – the pre-catechumenate, the catechumenate, Lent and mystagogy. The latter are interspersed with important rites that the parish follows faithfully. These include: the Rite of

Acceptance (First Sunday of Advent) the Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion(First Sunday of Lent) at the Cathedral, the Stations of the Cross on a Lenten Friday, the three Lenten Sunday Scrutinies, and the Easter Vigil itself, where the catechumens and candidates receive the Sacraments of Initiation and become fully Catholic Christians.

The parish has been blessed with a vibrant program for many years now and receives many inquiries all through the year for both the adult and teen programs from within the parish as well as from all of Eastern Ottawa. The RCIA ministry has a growing team of well prepared and highly committed members, including a spiritual advisor, a program coordinator, a music director and a hospitality coordinator. Parishioners who have gone through the program have made themselves available to be godparents and sponsors when needed. The program uses the Journey of Faith reading materials prepared by the Redemptorist Fathers. These are regularly updated and have proved to be popular with both team members and candidates.

This year we have noted a significant increase in the number of catechumans in both the adult and teen programs. At the Sunday 11:15 am Mass, especially during Lent, we usually have a large turnout, of up to 45 persons, from present and past RCIA programs.

It has been approximately ten years since the parish hosted an RCIA retreat for all those who have been involved or gone through the adult and teen programs. The last retreat had a full one day program with a spiritual theme, a guest retreat master, concelebrated Mass, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation available before Mass. The turnout was very large. We are hoping to do the same this coming pastoral year, perhaps during either Lent or the Easter season. This will require careful preparation and communication outreach in the parish.

Sacramental Preparation

Victoria Pusiak, Leader

School Age Sacramental Preparation is for children enrolled in school seeking reception of the sacraments. Preparing and celebrating sacraments is one of the many important functions of our parish.

Baptism for school aged students is usually held the first weekend following Easter. This year 9 students were baptised.

Profession of faith was received by 4 students this year. It is for those students who were baptised in a recognized valid Christian faith, one of the parents must be a Catholic for the profession of faith to occur.

First Reconciliation for students in Grade 2 and above usually is held in January or February. This year 181 students received First Reconciliation.

First Holy Eucharist is for students in Grade 2 and above and is usually received by school at a special 2:00 pm Mass during the Easter season. This year 179 students received First Holy Eucharist on April 9th, 10th and May 1st.

Confirmation is for students Grade 6 and above and is received at the parish in two celebrations by the Archbishop or Bishop. We will have 165 students receive Confirmation on May 27th or 28th.

It has been noticed that a growing number of students in our Catholic schools are either not Catholic or for many reasons do not register to receive the sacraments. Beginning this year, Father Tadeusz and I attended and presented at a curriculum night for one of our 7 elementary schools. This allowed us to present the opportunity for the sacrament to parents in a small group in the classroom, answer questions and give an overview before the actual registration process. As a follow up, Father Tadeusz made a school visit to the same school to speak with the Grade 6 students about registering for Confirmation (there was a very low number of students registered) which brought forth 2 students who indeed wished to receive Confirmation, however, needed to be registered. Father Tadeusz has had a few opportunities to meet with the confirmation candidates in each of our schools, the principals and teachers have been very welcoming and accommodating and meeting the students in small numbers allowed for a more in depth discussion. This has proved very beneficial for the instruction of the students. One of our challenges is that Confirmation has recently been returned to the Grade 6 school year and this is our third year celebrating this sacrament in Grade 6. It is a new concept to the families in the school, however, with time, and as it becomes a part of what Catholics in Grade 6 will be given the opportunity to experience, I expect the number of students who register for Confirmation will increase.

Adult Faith Formation Group

Joyce Rogers, Leader

The Adult Faith Formation Group consists of twelve participating members who meet bi-weekly at the home of Joyce Rogers. We study Sacred Scripture with the focus of “how do we apply the sacred truths to our daily lives.” Participants prayerfully prepare the chapter between sessions in order for us to have a more meaningful discussion. We have been meeting for six years and this year we are studying the Gospel of Mark.

Father Tadeusz is our Spiritual Director and the group is facilitated by Joyce Rogers. This group is small and currently is at full capacity. We are self-sufficient and are not in need of any further parish resources at this time.

Youth Ministry

Rob Halpin, Leader

The Youth Ministry here at Divine Infant is for the youth in our parish starting as young as age 11, Grade 6 right up to 18 or 19, or graduation from High school. The Junior Youth Nights on Friday are for everyone in Grades 6 to 8, and the Sunday Youth Nights are for anyone of high school age. The new Young Adults ministry also is currently under the Youth Ministry, more on that below.

Youth

The mission statement of the Youth Ministry is “Evangelizing Teens, Teens Evangelizing Teens” but more recently we have taken more to “Fuel, Send, Serve” as a motto that is more catchy and better to put out there for everyone to see. The message remains much the same with an additional emphasis on serving in the parish, in the Youth Ministry and serving God in all of life. This Motto was adapted to chart out a curriculum for the themes and topics for the spring time youth nights and hopefully for the upcoming year. This motto sums up our goal. Fuel: To encounter Christ and draw closer to him in the Sacraments, and in prayer. Send: to be led by the Holy Spirit in all of life. Serve: to be a witness of the Father’s love to family, friends and peers, to serve God and others and to invite them to also encounter Christ.

The Youth Ministry provides Sunday night youth as a place for teens to grow in their faith, through prayer, teaching, fellowship in the form of small groups and of course fun and food. A team of young adults leads and supports this ministry. Friday night youth provides the same for the junior youth. The peer ministry team is made up of teens who volunteer their time to help run the junior youth night. This provides an opportunity to grow in leadership and in service. Every week we go over, with this team, three or four of the following components during a meeting time preceding the Friday Junior Youth Night. The first is something to grow as leader. This can be very general or specifically related to what they do as leaders of the younger youth, like leading games or small group discussions. The second is something spiritual for their own personal growth, the third is community which is sometimes incorporated into the spiritual component, but usually involves a game of soccer or frisbee behind the church now that it is nice outside.

This Ministry has grown this year, but having continued growth of new participants joining the ministry is also a challenge. More promotion and publicity will be required. Every year a handful of young adults volunteering in the Youth Ministry head off into a new season of life that may not involve supporting the Youth Ministry as a volunteer, so there is an ongoing need for adult volunteers for both the Junior and Senior youth ministries.

Young Adults

The Young Adults Ministry is a new ministry that Father Andrew was instrumental in bringing to life. Once a month following Mass, adults in there 20’s, 30’s and a few recent graduates of the Senior Youth Ministry gather, usually for Adoration, praise and worship and some sort of faith sharing or catechesis and a reception. There are also two small groups that meet one other time through the month for a small group study.

Every month about 20 people come together following Mass on a Tuesday evening. Having more people willing to lead other small groups would help this ministry grow.

Pastoral Care

Bev de Montigny, Leader

Pastoral Care is a ministry of presence and outreach to those among us who are sick and/or housebound. Parishioners or their family members usually call the parish office with a request for

a home visit and as we respond to these requests, which most often include bringing the Eucharist, we endeavor to convey our parish community's spirit of care and concern to those we serve.

Over the past year our team, which has increased to fourteen members, has made weekly visits to ten parishioners in their homes, either over the short or long term depending on their need. As well, we make on-going visits to two Seniors Residences, Queenswood Villa and Promenade, serving thirty to forty seniors each week, while our clergy ensure that the residents of Madonna Long Term Care have access to the Eucharist on a regular basis. Members of our team also lead a group rosary at Madonna twice a month. Four Eucharistic Ministers from the parish volunteered to accompany us to Promenade on Sundays, as we needed their occasional assistance in meeting the new requirements set out by the Diocese in the Code of Pastoral Conduct.

We meet as a team about four times a year to share with and support one another in ministry and to plan the yearly celebration of the World Day of Prayer for the Sick which we host, with the assistance of other groups in the parish, on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes in February. Most team members have completed a Basic Pastoral Care Course, a requirement for all who are making home visits, with a couple of them planning to take the course in the near future. We are always happy to welcome new members to join us in this rewarding ministry, especially now as we are required to go in pairs when visiting if there is no other family member or support worker present. If you are a good listener, have a heart for bringing a loving, caring presence to those you serve, and are able to devote as little as an hour or two a week to this rewarding ministry, we would encourage you to consider becoming part of the Pastoral Care team.

Bereavement Group

Finola Belanger, Leader

The Bereavement Group reaches out to people who have lost a loved one to ask how they are doing and invite them to participate in a series of eight weekly sessions dealing with various aspects of grief. When there is a death many people come to offer help and support to the bereaved. Later, these people become busy with their own lives, and while still concerned, don't feel the need is as pressing. This is when the reality of the loss sets in and the bereaved feel very alone. These are the ones we wish to reach out to. Those who join our group have lost a spouse, child, parent, sibling, close friend etc. and may need to hear that their emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual reactions are normal and similar to those experienced by other people.

Last fall the group ran sessions and put on a "Coping With Christmas" seminar in December. We offered a spring session to begin in March, but did not get enough interest to run a group. There were, however, a couple of people who really seemed to be in need of some support, so I have been meeting with them informally, to watch the videos and talk.

I feel that it is time to find someone new for this ministry for next fall. It is difficult to be constantly taking on the pain of others, and I am beginning to feel burnt out. I mentioned this to Fran Tremblay who works with the group, but she says she could not take on the leadership role if I leave, but she may be willing to help out if someone new takes over. Hopefully someone will be interested in taking on this challenge.

Divine Mercy Cenacle

Cindy Kearns O'Hara and Stan Siok, Leaders

Divine Mercy Cenacle is a group of people who meet weekly for song, prayer, and discussion on Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the writings of St. Maria Faustina, as a small Christian community. The revelations given to St. Maria Faustina are excellent for spiritual growth and also give a deeper understanding of our merciful Lord.

The idea of beginning our own Divine Mercy Cenacle at Divine Infant Parish and eventually joining with Good Shepherd Parish was approved by both pastors in the fall of 2015. There was great interest expressed for this initiative by Divine Infant parishioners when it was introduced at the beginning of the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Not one, but three Cenacles were formed at that first gathering on January 26th 2016! The three Cenacles are named for St. Faustina, St. John Paul II and St. Maximilian Kolbe.

Every Monday, after the evening mass, approximately 20 Cenacle members gather together in the church for songs of worship led by the Cenacle music ministry. Led by a facilitator, each of the three Cenacles then break off to read, discuss the lessons and recite the Divine Mercy Chaplet in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, the Vestry and near the statue of St. Joseph. Cenacle members are free to rotate to other Cenacles if they choose. The full group then reconvenes in the church for final song of worship. The Cenacle follows a weekly three-year format of guided study.

The Divine Mercy Cenacles are thriving at Divine Infant Parish! On Divine Mercy Sunday, April 3rd, a dozen Cenacle members were called to the altar by Fr. Waldemar to be consecrated as Apostles of Divine Mercy. The Holy Spirit has bestowed many graces on the members and there is a closeness and fellowship that exists like no other amongst this special group of people.

On behalf of the Divine Mercy Cenacles at Divine Infant Parish, we wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Waldemar, Fr. Tadeusz and Fr. Andrew for their continued prayers and support.

Shepherds of Good Hope

Allen Harvey, Leader

Summer of 2015 was another success regarding feeding the needy at Shepherds of Good Hope. Recruiting of volunteers was staged on the weekends of June 6/7 and June 20/21. We were blessed with good weather on both occasions and people were very generous with their intentions to help. Additional recruiting was done by e-mail and telephone. A total of 186 Divine Infant volunteers participated demonstrating a marked increase over the interest from the previous summer. We expect to improve on this number in 2016.

On the Sundays of July and August, food for hundreds of meals was prepared for cooking and serving throughout the summer. In addition, volunteers assembled thousands of sandwiches

to be handed out at the door. A total of 2316 wholesome meals were served. The number of meals eaten on a given Sunday in July or August ranged from 191 to 328.

Sign-up sheets for volunteering at this summer's soup kitchen will be at the back of the church on Saturday/Sunday, May 28/29 and then repeated on Saturday/Sunday, June 11/12. Please consider joining us on a Sunday this summer.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Anne Seath, Leader

The Divine Infant Prayer Shawl Ministry makes and provides prayer shawls for those in need of comfort – whether for illness, grieving, loneliness or any situation where a person will need spiritual comfort.

This ministry is running very smoothly. There are about 8 to 10 knitters and crocheters who attend our monthly meetings and many more who make shawls but do not attend the meetings.

New volunteers are always welcome. Donations of yarn, gift bags, tissue, white card stock paper and, of course, cash, are always welcome.

Since I will be away for the summer two team members will be able to provide shawls if requests come in. The parish office will be aware of who to contact in my absence.

Madonna Tuesday Tea

Marg Boeckler, Leader

Every Tuesday afternoon a group of volunteers from our parish visits the Madonna Nursing Home on St. Joseph Boulevard and holds a Tuesday Tea. Because we have thirty-two volunteers, we have enough to have two separate Teas, one in the large activity room on the main floor and a smaller one on the second floor for those unable to come to the main floor. We go to each room to invite the residents to come to the Teas and to have a short visit with them. If they wish to attend, we sign them out and take them to the parties.

Fortunately we have three piano players and three leading singers who direct the singing while the other volunteers serve tea, coffee, or juice to the residents. Volunteers and residents join in the singing as they follow along in the songbooks. A wide variety of songs are chosen from these songbooks to suit all musical tastes.

Some volunteers also go to help feed people at mealtime, some distribute communion at a mass on the third Friday of the month while others take communion to those who cannot attend the mass. A knitting club meets every Thursday morning and is a very peaceful and friendly time for the residents. As well as playing the piano every Tuesday, Bob Gordon plays every second Thursday afternoon for the residents in the foyer of Madonna.

After the tea is over, the residents are taken back to their rooms and the volunteers may have a short visit with them. Many of our volunteers have gotten to know the residents and some have become friends who visit them at other times. The Tuesday Teas are a rewarding experience for all.

Pro-Life Ministry

Gar Knutson, Leader

Definition – The Parish pro-life group is a combination prayer group, education group and lobby group which provides an outlet for parishioners who want to become involved in trying to foster a greater respect for human life of the unborn as well as the aged and infirmed, in our community.

Due to the nature of the issue the group struggles, although I understand we are more active than at many other churches. Not everyone is comfortable discussing abortion let alone becoming active on the issue. Consequently our numbers are modest. We have 6 to 12 active members.

More volunteers would be welcome. In particular we need people willing to take a shared leadership role within the group. Our members are extremely involved in other groups within the parish. We meet 4 times a year and sponsor 6 to 8 activities.

We get very good support from the priests and the office staff.

Mom's Morning Out

Amy Hall, Leader

Mom's Morning Out is a ministry that began over 6 years ago at Divine Infant Parish. We are a group of mothers who meet on Tuesday mornings for friendship and to support each other in growing in our faith. This year, as it is the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, we have been referencing the Magnificat Year of Mercy Companion in order to help direct our spiritual growth, reflections, prayer and conversations as we learn about and deepen our faith in a supportive environment. Our participants generally comprise both stay-at-home moms as well as mothers who are on a maternity leave. We always enjoy having new mothers join us! Throughout the summer months we park hop on Tuesday morning with our children while enjoying each other's company. One area where we are always seeking new volunteers is in the area of childcare. It is truly a blessing for us when someone is available to help care for our tots as they play while we are trying to discuss and pray. Beyond getting to know fellow parishioners and growing in faith one of the rewards enjoyed by us all is seeing our children develop friendships with other children from our parish community.

A general breakdown of Mass attendance: 9:30 am – 14 families; various Mass times – 2 families; other parishes or churches – 4 families. In addition, there are 10 other families who attend the 9:30 Mass where the mom has previously participated in Mom's Morning Out, has now returned to work but they still regularly participate in activities that are organized outside of our Tuesday morning gatherings (Christmas party, summer bbq, pilgrimages, etc).

As previously mentioned we are always looking for people who would be interested in helping to supervise the children who play alongside as we pray, read and discuss various scriptures and reflections. This line of volunteering could be done weekly, biweekly or at the volunteer's availability.

Last year we held our first family pilgrimage to Montreal to the Shrine of St. Kateri Tekakwitha and to St. Joseph's Oratory. We also hosted a successful Catholic Kids concert: CatChat. This June, we will be hosting our Second Pilgrimage to Montreal as well, we will plan a pilgrimage to the Door of Mercy at the Notre Dame Cathedral here in Ottawa. One of our greatest challenges is that there is so much that could be offered for families. We would love to continue to maintain the annual pilgrimage to Montreal, perhaps add in some family friendly adoration times, offer summer VBS programs, etc. and we would love to receive help from volunteers who would be interested in this type of young family ministry.

Library Services

Sylvie Bissonnette, Leader

The goal of this ministry is to support the spiritual growth of parishioners of all ages through lending books, DVDs and audio CDs. We collect, catalogue and prepare the material that is either donated to or bought or the Parish Library. At the moment, the Library is open after each regular weekend Mass, from September to June.

Numbers of volunteers vary but is usually about 20. There is a need for additional volunteers as the aim is to have 2-3 people assigned on rotation to each weekend Mass, plus a few replacements for when the need arises. Volunteers are trained as they join the team.

There are two basic types of functions: on-site services and project-based. The first is on-site services where parishioners are assisted in signing out material and locating wanted material from the library shelves. They also file loan records and reshelve returned material. Project-based volunteers process books by printing and affixing book and load card labels.

There are library web-pages on the parish website, which contain additional information.

Refugee Family Sponsorship

Jim Finter, Leader and Paulette Schatz, Co-leader

Pope Francis declared this year *A Jubilee Year of Mercy* and Divine Infant Parish is committed to living our Catholic faith by sponsoring a refugee family to come to Canada and give them an opportunity to rebuild their lives in a secure setting. Sponsorship means providing financial assistance and guidance for one year to help the family settle in Canada.

The Alhurira family (Sawsan - mother, Adham - father and four children Carol -16, Charbel - 12, Karen - 9 and Anji - 4) arrived from Syria on February 6, 2016 to Orleans Ontario. The parish Refugee Settlement Steering Committee has developed a plan to ensure the smooth transition of the family into Canadian life. The family is renting a townhouse near Divine

Infant Parish and attends mass regularly. They hope to be more involved with the parish in the fall especially with the children and youth activities.

We have worked with fifty-one volunteers from the Parish in a wide range of functions over the past three months. The majority of volunteers have signed the Archdiocese of Ottawa Code of Pastoral Conduct and have had a police records check.

Our financial summary to date:

- As of 31 March, contributions to the Alhurira Family Settlement Fund were \$54,940.
- In-kind contributions */pro bono* services \$17,475 made up of: Shelter - \$5,500, Education - \$325, Dental Services (Drs. Sara Syed and Rabia Syeda) - \$9,035 and gifts - \$2,615. As you will note, we have received significant in-kind support particularly from two local dentists.
- Summary: Amount Fundraised \$54,940, Amount Encumbered \$47,601, Percentage Encumbered 86.6.
- A number of applications have been approved regarding subsidies/grants for the Family: Federal and Provincial Canada Child Benefit, Universal Child Care Benefit, Healthy Smiles Ontario, Ontario Electricity Support Program, and the City of Ottawa daycare subsidy.

Due to higher than anticipated health and dental care costs, we are in the process of reviewing the needs of the family in order to determine if there is a requirement for additional fundraising support.

The fact that the family is primarily Arabic speaking is a challenge for the Committee and we have recruited interpreters to help with many meetings. We meet with the family regularly to assist in their family finance and budgeting, discussing the four children's school progress, helping with house maintenance, shopping for clothing and food and helping the family deal with problems and challenges. Translation services were used for the Letter of Agreement signed by Father Waldemar and Adham and Sawsan to ensure the parish and family are clear about their responsibilities. It is important we respect the family's right to privacy so we have agreed that all pictures and write-ups about the family are approved by them before distributed outside the Parish.

We provided the parents and teenagers with English lessons before they were accepted into schools. Carol (Grade 10) and Charbel (Grade 7) are now attending Lester B. Pearson High School. Karen (Grade 3) is at Divine Infant Catholic School and Anji is attending daycare from May to August before she starts kindergarten in September at the same school as Karen. The parents are attending English lessons through the OCDSC (Ottawa Carleton District School Board) five times a week. The Committee continues to provide homework support as well as French tutoring.

Adham and Sawsan had a meeting with a career development/employment program officer at the YMCA - YWCA Power of Trades. We are presently researching the requirements for the GED test to assist the parents to earn an Ontario High School Equivalency Certificate as well

checking for the availability of career aptitude tests available in Arabic. Based on Adham's request we are organizing part time work for him in an English speaking environment.

The first three months have been busy with dentist and family physician appointments. This included catching up on immunizations for the children, check-ups and follow ups with specialists, and ensuring the family receives the required health and dental care.

Planning for spring and summer activities is underway. Charbel and Karen start soccer after the long weekend in May. Carol will attend English as a Second Language ESL camp all of July and Charbel is excited about going to St. Brigid's summer camp. The family will start swimming lessons and with their bikes take advantage of the beautiful bike trails in Orleans.

The Family is participating with the Steering Committee and together we are actively planning and implementing activities, as they strive to be independent by the end of the sponsorship year.

We are looking for volunteers who would be interested in taking the family on bike rides, camping, attending Canada Day and similar functions, as well as assisting during the summer in ongoing English lessons, swimming lessons and sports. We also need volunteers to transport the family to appointments and assist the Health Team.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you want a copy of the *Divine Infant Parish Syrian Refugee Project Settlement Plan 2015 to 2017 Updated April 2016*. Jim Finter Chair 613-834-3187 and Paulette Schatz Co-chair 613-716-8077.

Religious Articles Sale Ministry

Monique Sutherland, Leader

Religious articles are usually made available for sale at the back of the church on special occasions, such as First Communion, Confirmation and Christmas. The proceeds go to support the missions. Special requests can also be made to the Ministry Leader.

Mary Michel and I assumed the Religious Articles Sale Ministry in early 2016. It has been a fruitful and enjoyable experience, learning how to implement and improve this ministry. By May, we will have completed 3 sales events, and by September we hope to have sales every two months.

We would like to thank Father Waldemar, Victoria, and Richard for their assistance in making our tasks easier. We now have two display cabinets in the foyer and a better understanding of the process of managing sales and inventory.

Currently, Mary and I are the only full time volunteers. However, we depend heavily on other volunteers to help with the weekend sales.

Divine Infant Bridge League

Mary Goodale, Leader

The Divine Infant Parish Bridge League, while not a ministry, is a long standing parish activity in which members socialize with other parish bridge players.

This year we had twenty-four parishioners participating. We play bridge in each other's homes, six to nine games from October to May. Two suppers are held in the parish hall and bridge is played afterwards. A good time is had by all.

If you have any questions concerning this activity or wish to participate, please contact me at the number in the parish bulletin.

Welcome Committee

Renee Lockert, Leader

The committee is responsible for contacting new parishioners who have registered at the parish office. We make a phone call of welcome and ask if they have gotten involved in any ministries. We make sure they are aware of pancake breakfasts and other parish events, and by looking at their age/occupation indicated on the form, we offer suggestions for things they might like to be involved with – i.e. young women with small children – Mom's Morning Out, Knights of Columbus for the husband. We mention Children's Liturgy for their kids, for retired women – the Prayer Shawl Group or the Catholic Women's League. We ask if there is anything we can do to help them feel at home at Divine Infant. We have five people who make these calls.

The Welcome Committee expanded to include greeting people before Mass, this was started this year by a handful of parishioners. The goal is to make the parish more inviting and warm when people arrive at Mass. So far only the 9:30 am Sunday Mass has welcomers. We hope to expand to the other Mass times and need more volunteers (about eight families or volunteers for each Mass is ideal so that once every two months they would be scheduled to greet). During the summer months there is no schedule for greeters.

I would like to rename the ministry to Hospitality Ministry, and expand to offer coffee and cookies after Mass on the days there is no pancake breakfast. This would entail another group of volunteers to make coffee, buy juice and cookies and clean up afterwards. Ideally a rotation of once every two months is preferred. Ideally the greeters at the beginning of Mass would invite people to join them after Mass in the hall for coffee and cookies. The aim is to build a sense of community and to encourage one another, and as relationships develop this can be a place to invite those who are not evangelized to join some parish program (i.e. "Alpha, or a retreat) so to bring them to a deeper knowledge and love of Christ.

Catholic Women's League of Canada

Teresa Mouchet, President

The objects of the Catholic Women League shall be to unite Catholic women of Canada:

1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development
2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic church
3. to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life
4. to protect the sanctity of human life
5. to enhance the role of women in church and society
6. to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere
7. to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world
8. to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice peace and harmony

Overall are ministry is going well. The women of our Divine Infant CWL are actively involved in parish ministries and the community and truly are a reflection of Catholic Women's League Values.

The need for promoting spiritual growth and friendship within our council seems great and is something that I would love to see develop. The general meeting seems to be just a meeting to get things organized, lists are passed around for sign up for various activities, although this is important, there is a need to figure out how to make the meetings about fellowship and spiritual growth and a little more laughter. No one wants to come out to just a meeting. The attendance at the general meeting is low and the women are saying they want more to the meetings.

At each meeting our spiritual chair representatives provided a CD of reflection and prayer and afterwards, members were then invited to share on what they had just listened to. The ladies were invited to help put together a poster reflecting the Corporal and Spiritual works of mercy that they are involved in. In other words put a piece of themselves on the board. It provided interaction and an appreciation for what each and every one of them are doing. This board was displayed at the Diocesan Convention. We are actively trying to let are members know of all activities within the Diocesan Council that they are invited to. That way they can witness the bigger part of who we are.

There are approximately 89 paid members to date. I do not have Mass times that our members are involved in, but these are the ministries in which they are involved: Ushers, Pastoral Care, Music, Music Adult Choir Ministry, Ministers of Communion, Readers Greeters/Ushers, Pastoral Care, Bereavement,

We would love to see our council grow, so it would be wonderful to have more members to help volunteer within the parish and community. Our meetings are every fourth Tuesday of the month starting with Mass at 7pm followed by the general meeting.

No additional parish support is required at this time as we truly are blessed to have the support of our parish behind the CWL.

Knights of Columbus

Réal Thibault, Grand Knight

The Divine Infant Parish Knights of Columbus has completed another very busy year. The Knights have continued the tradition of serving parish breakfasts and introduced a number of new opportunities for families to grow in our parish community. Two International Dinners were held, first a Polish dinner to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Salvadorian Order, followed by an African dinner to say thank you to Father Andrew. Both were very successful and many thanks go out to the parish community for their support. Further, on the months with a fifth Sunday the Knights lead the praying of the rosary with the parish.

The Knights supported many parish activities throughout the year including the annual parish outdoor mass, parish BBQ, the outdoor nativity scene and Christmas decorations in our church.

The Knights have also been active in the local community with a Keep Christ in Christmas float in the Orleans Parade of Lights and hosting an annual golf tournament for pro-life charity. The Knights continue to be a strong voice for pro-life by supporting the Youville and Miriam Centres, and participating in the March for Life in May on Parliament Hill.

The Knights also support the Special Olympics through a province wide raffle that included winners from our parish. In all the Divine Infant Knights of Columbus have donate over \$8,000 to local charities and bursaries for the two Catholic High Schools in our parish community.

The Knights of Columbus encourage Catholic men to consider joining us in support of our parish and to help grow our Christian faith through prayer and charitable service.

Through the generous support of parishioners the Knights sold gift cards to local stores with the proceeds going to local charities and back to our parish. The Knights of Columbus even held a parish garage sale to raise funds to help renovate the parish hall and washrooms.

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St. Maria Faustina Kowalska

A Powerful Prayer

In a vision to St. Maria Faustina Kowalska in 1935 the Lord revealed a powerful prayer that He wanted everyone to say - the Chaplet of The Divine Mercy - and he promised extraordinary graces to those who would recite it:

“Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death ... Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy ... I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mer-cy ... (Diary, 687)

“Encourage souls to say the chaplet which I have given you ... When they say this chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between My Father and the dying per-son, not as the just Judge but as the Merciful Savior ... (1541)

“Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will. (1731)”

Please say this prayer frequently that St. Faustina will implore God to continue to bless our parish and all its members.