



# *The Divine Messenger*

*Divine Infant Parish, Orleans ON*

*Vol. 19 No. 3*

*December 2024*



*“Open wide your door to the one who comes. Open your soul, throw open the depths of your heart to see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the sweetness of grace. Open your heart and run to meet the Sun of eternal light that illuminates all men.”*

*~ St. Ambrose of Milan*



## A Message from Our Pastor

### Dear Friends in Christ,

As we approach the Jubilee Year of 2025, I'd like to share with you this four part article. First, is the short history of a Jubilee Year tradition; second, is Pope Francis' reflection on hope ("Pilgrims of Hope" is the main theme for this Jubilee Year); third, is the prayer composed by the Pope for the Jubilee Year 2025; lastly, is a brief summary of Pope's Bull "*Spes Non Confundit*", which presents a reflection on the Jubilee theme

**What is the Jubilee?** "Jubilee" is the name given to a particular year; the name comes from the instrument used to mark its launch. In this case, the instrument in question is the yobel, the ram's horn, used to proclaim the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This (Jewish) holiday occurs every year, but it takes on special significance when it marks the beginning of a Jubilee year. We can find an early indication of it in the Bible: a Jubilee year was to be marked every 50 years, since this would be an "extra" year, one which would happen every seven weeks of seven years, i.e., every 49 years (cf. Leviticus 25:8-13). Even though it wasn't easy to organise, it was intended to be marked as a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation, and involved the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and a fallow period for the fields. Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus' mission in this way: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus lives out these words in his daily life, in his encounters with others and in his relationships, all of which bring about liberation and conversion. In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, also known as a "Holy Year," since it is a time in which God's holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced the gap between Jubilees to every 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years. There have also been "extraordinary" Holy Years: for example, in 1933 Pope Pius XI chose to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the Redemption, and in 2015 Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Mercy as an extraordinary jubilee. The way in which Jubilee Years are marked has also changed through the centuries: originally the Holy Year consisted of a pilgrimage to the Roman Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, later other signs were added, such as the Holy Door. By participating in the Holy Year, one is granted a plenary indulgence.

### Pope's reflection on hope (Wednesday catechesis):

In the last catechesis we began to reflect on the theological virtues. There are three of them: faith, hope and charity. Last time, we reflected on faith. Now it is the turn of hope. "Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1817). These words confirm that hope is the answer offered to our heart, when the absolute question arises in us: "What will become of me? What is the purpose of the journey? What is the destiny of the world?"

We all realize that a negative answer to these questions causes sadness. If there is no meaning to life's journey, if there is nothing at the beginning and at the end, then we wonder why on earth we should walk: man's desperation, the sensation of the pointlessness of everything, arises from this. And many may rebel: "I strove to be virtuous, to be prudent, just, strong, temperate. I was a man or woman of faith... What was the use of my fight, if everything ends here?". If hope is lacking, all the other virtues run the risk of crumbling and turning into ashes. If there were no reliable tomorrow, no bright horizon, one would only have to conclude that virtue is a futile effort. "Only when the future is certain as a positive reality does it become possible to live the present as well", said Benedict XVI (Encyclical Letter *Spe salvi*, 2, 2).

Christians have hope not through their own merit. If they believe in the future, it is because Christ died and rose again and gave us his Spirit. "Redemption is offered to us in the sense that we have been given hope, trustworthy hope, by virtue of which we can face our present" (ibid., 1). In this sense, once again, we say that hope is a theological virtue: it does not emanate from us. It is not an obstinacy we want to convince ourselves of, but rather, a gift that comes directly from God.

The Apostle Paul presents the new logic of the Christian experience to the many doubting Christians who had not been completely reborn to hope: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied" (1 Cor 15:17-19). It is as if he had said: if you believe in the Resurrection of Christ, then you know with certainty that no defeat and no death is forever. But if you do not believe in the Resurrection of Christ, then everything becomes

hollow, even the preaching of the Apostles.

Hope is a virtue against which we often sin: in our bad nostalgia, in our melancholy, when we think that the happiness of the past is buried forever. We sin against hope when we become despondent over our sins, forgetting that God is merciful and greater than our heart. And let us not forget this, brothers and sisters: God forgives everything, God forgives always. We are the ones who tire of asking for forgiveness. But let us not forget this truth: God forgives everything, God always forgives. We sin against hope when we become despondent over our sins; we sin against hope when the autumn in us cancels out the spring; when God's love ceases to be an eternal fire and we do not have the courage to make decisions that commit us for a lifetime.

The world today is in great need of this Christian virtue! The world needs hope, just as it greatly needs patience, a virtue that journeys hand-in-hand with hope. Patient men are weavers of goodness. They stubbornly desire peace, and even if some of them are hasty and would like everything, straight away, patience is capable of waiting. Even when around us many have succumbed to disillusionment, those who are inspired by hope and are patient are able to get through the darkest of nights. Hope and patience go together.

Hope is the virtue of those who are young at heart; and here age does not matter because there are also elderly people whose eyes are filled with light, who live permanently striving towards the future. Think of the two great elderly people of the Gospel, Simeon and Anna: they never tired of waiting and they saw the last stretch of their earthly journey blessed by the encounter with the Messiah, whom they recognized in Jesus, brought to the Temple by his parents. What grace if it were like that for all of us! If after a long pilgrimage, setting down our saddlebags and staff, our heart were filled with a joy never before felt, and we too could exclaim: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel". (Lk 2:29-32).

Brothers and sisters, let us go ahead and ask for the grace to have hope, hope with patience. Always towards that definitive encounter; always thinking that the Lord is near us, that death will never ever be victorious. Let us go ahead and ask the Lord to give us this great virtue of hope, accompanied by patience.

### **The Jubilee Prayer**

Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us  
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of charity enkindled  
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us the blessed hope  
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us  
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.  
May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos  
in the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth,  
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,  
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread  
the joy and peace of our Redeemer  
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

**The Bull *Spes Non Confundit*** presents a reflection on the Jubilee theme for the Jubilee Pilgrims of Hope. Six sub-themes have been identified from the Bull from which the CCCB ad hoc Committee for the Preparation of the Jubilee Year has developed resources for use in dioceses, eparchies, parishes, Catholic schools, movements and associations and all people wishing to celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025. The themes are:

- A Universal Call to Jubilee: to be celebrated in Rome and worldwide
- Hope: Rooted in Baptism and enlivened by the Holy Spirit, faith, hope, love, and patience sustain us.
- A Journey of Hope: we are a pilgrim people
- Signs of Hope: the desire for peace and justice and the call to be signs of hope for the poor, imprisoned, sick and dying.
- Appeals for Hope: ensuring the fruits of the earth are available to everyone, the forgiveness of debt, and celebrating the 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicea emphasizing our call to be synodal and to evangelize
- Anchored in Hope: the death and resurrection of Jesus, the witness of the Mother of God, the saints and martyrs, the gift of indulgences and the importance.

Read *Spes Non Confundit, Hope Does Not Disappoint* here:

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509\\_spes-non-confundit\\_bolla-giubileo2025.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509_spes-non-confundit_bolla-giubileo2025.html)

In Christ,

*F. William Pollock*





## Portal to our Pilgrimage!

By Catherine Harvey

Reading the bulletin announcements before Mass last January, a seed was planted. A Pilgrimage, with Divine Infant's Pastor, Father Waldemar, was to take place in September 2024. Exploring our Faith, and Central Europe, a wonderful thought to consider at the start of the New Year! The sites to see would include Medjugorje, Croatia, Hungary and Poland. With an information session at the end of January, decisions and travel plans were underway by March. Our group of interested, faith-sharing "pilgrims" was beginning to take shape. In September, we met again. Once, for a video introduction, by Father Waldemar, to the special tour locations of Czestochowa, and the Salt Mines. Father further encouraged us to leave ourselves open to truly feel, as individuals, our experiences and thoughts at various shrines and churches. Then, a week and a half before our trip, a number of participants met for coffee, to get to know one another a little more, and where packing ideas and support for one another were shared! Poignant to see members from our parish together, with members from additional Ottawa area parishes. And still more to join our group along the way! One of our associates kindly organized communication among our members, as a shepherd watches their flock.

Hope I do justice in sharing, in this small way, the remarkable 12 days of enriching our faith, and knowledge of history, on this pilgrimage! Our adventure began Friday, Sept 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 with many of our "faith family" meeting at the Ottawa train station, to take the inter-city coach to Montreal's Pierre Elliot Trudeau airport. Here we were joined by more colleagues from Brockville, and Winnipeg. In Amsterdam "pilgrims" from Cambridge ON and England joined our troupe. Finally, we were off to Split, Croatia. Once our feet hit the ground, we boarded the bus for Medjugorje. For some this was their first pilgrimage, for others it was their third, fourth or more. An amazing note: one of our fellow travelers was 94 years of age. In total there were 31 participants, plus Father Waldemar, and the respective Travel Guide.

Arriving in Medjugorje late afternoon allowed for a visit to St. James Church (consecrated in 1969), the hotel incredibly located within walking distance. The Church is dedicated to St James the Greater, the patron saint of pilgrims! As more faithful began traveling to this special region in the 1980's, an exterior altar was built and surrounding area developed, in 1989, to accommodate up to 5000 or more pilgrims. Attending the Saturday outdoor Mass that evening, we truly did feel there were thousands present from around the world. On our second day, those who were able, undertook the difficult climb up Apparition Hill to the area of the reported apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, stopping at different levels to say the Rosary. We were lead by Father and a knowledgeable and fun Travel Guide, Vesna. It is difficult to describe the quiet moment of reflection and awe on arrival to the site of the statue dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the "pilgrims" that were also there, some of whom climbed the steep path of sharp, and multi-sized stones in sandals, flip flops, or bare feet. We descended the Hill to attend the English Mass that day at noon, again standing room only. Oh, and the remarkable number of priests in attendance to ensure the numerous faithful received communion. On the final day, there was a bus tour to Mostar and the Kravice Falls. Those who remained behind climbed the rising stone trail at Mt Krizevac, translating to "Mount of the Cross" (a concrete cross erected in 1934), with bronze reliefs representing the stations of the Way of the Cross. Embedded in the concrete cross is a piece from the relic of the "True Cross", a gift from Pope Pius XI.

We enjoyed daily Mass, with Father presiding. Breakfast and supper were at our hotels. Especially at our first lodging, one member noted, these occasions felt like large family meals. During these repasts, daily experiences, excitements, revelations were shared. Emotional at times, increasing knowledge, miraculous experiences and caring about one another among the group were revealed. In addition, we had the privilege of meeting pilgrims from different countries, with their own personal stories of why their visit to Medjugorje, stating "a thank you for blessings received", or "to place petitions for family, friends, or personal loss or challenges", "or a pilgrimage", etc. We were blessed to meet an amazing woman, now in her late 80's, who has been traveling every year from Quebec, for the past thirty years, to volunteer in Medjugorje! Her belief and faith in the Blessed Virgin and in St. Joseph was inspiring.

Our tour continued to Zagreb, capital of Croatia. We met our second Tour Guide, Christopher, a marvelous font of knowledge, enmeshing us in culture. We walked about the 1000 year old areas of Upper Town and Lower Town, visiting the Presidential Palace, the Croatian Parliament, and the Church of St Mark with its colorful roof tiles; laid out to represent the coat of arms of Zagreb and Triune Kingdom of Croatia.

Forging onward to Hungary, our first stop was for our Mass, held in a chapel of the Benedictine Monastery, the Tihany Abbey, on Balaton Lake. A breath-taking and charming area. We enjoyed a wonderful market and delicious lunch of Langos. On return to the bus we were on our way again, now to Budapest. Following our first overnight here, we enjoyed a tour to the Royal Castle, Hero's Square, the Fisherman's Bastion, the Shoes shrine and the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Matthias Church where our daily Mass took place in one of

the chapels. Free time in the afternoon allowed for exploration of and reflection in the wonderful St. Stephen's Basilica. St. Stephen is the patron saint of Hungary. The day finished with a Supper cruise on the Danube. Lights decorating stately buildings, theatres, shopping areas on the shore were all aglow. Smiles from our group looking on were almost as bright. The magnificent churches we visited were special and individual to each city, yet familiar to us, for as Father Waldemar noted, each house the gift of the Blessed Sacrament.

We carried on towards Poland, first stopping in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia for Mass, and a quick, delicious country lunch. Then, on to the picturesque town of Zakopane, in the beautiful Tatra mountains, where wooden houses, markets and food choices abound. A special opportunity for us was the visit to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima, built in the 1980's as a thanksgiving for saving the life of Pope John Paul II, further to the assassination attempt in 1981. This distinctive complex, which includes the church, Our Lady of Fatima, was consecrated by his Holiness in 1997.

Enroute to Krakow, we stopped to see the extraordinary Salt Mines in Wieliczka. It is an astonishing tribute to the historical industry. One cannot help but be touched by the strength of Faith here, viewing various well-known religious scenes and figures sculpted and preserved in salt.

Krakow was our last city on the tour, with so much to see and do. A special moment included meeting and sharing time with Father Waldemar's family and friends. We then participated in a visit of Czestochowa, and the astonishing shrine "Our Lady of Czestochowa, also known as the Black Madonna", and a setting for pilgrimages since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Our day concluded with a somber, and reflective afternoon at Auschwitz, the former Nazi concentration camp, where we toured the Martyrdom museum, and the cell where St Maximilian Kolbe died. Our final day in Krakow found us exploring the Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow's Old Town, and Market Square. We had the amazing chance to witness the daily opening of St Mary's Church Main Altar Piece, revealing the remarkable sculptures depicting the life of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin. And to hear the silver trumpet of the bugler from St Mary's tower was, indeed, a treat. Our day drew to a close on a special note in Lagiewniki, known for the "Divine Mercy Shrine", with the incredible chapels reflecting designs by artists from various countries! And with prayers and respect, as elsewhere, we visited the convent of St Faustina, her tomb and relics. We are blessed at Divine Infant Parish to have received, this Fall, a relic of St Faustina which was funded by our parish's Divine Mercy Cenacle members.

In closing, an incredible Pilgrimage enhancing and enriching our faith, our faith-family, and ourselves. It is believed by followers in Medjugorje, that the Blessed Virgin Mary told pilgrims, on an anniversary of the White Cross being erected, "you will receive blessings, strength and love, carry them into your families and into your homes". A fitting reflection, from our inspirational journey, to bring home and share.





## The Stone Garden Providing So Much Tenderness

By Diane Jemus, The Bereavement Ministry

It was an evening of tenderness that embraced the community starting with the gift of Angela's voice to her dear husband Robert. Angela joined the choir of angels in 2021.

Her voice was a part of our liturgical experience, her neighbourhood, part of her family home life. Robert wished he could hear her voice again, to have a recording. Deacon Steve Donoghue gave Robert a USB of her voice before the opening of the Memorial Stone Garden Mass. It was a tender moment between two adult men.

Ben H. tenderly held his wife's stone, inscribed with his own words "Rosa, with the angels in Heaven", so beautiful, he could not part with it. Perpetua, distraught because she could not find both her stones in the garden. Debbie, the artist on sight inscribed another one to be blessed and put in the garden, Perpetua glowed gently holding it. Tenderness again.

In the hall, where Bev picked up one of the testimonials - her journey with her husband Bruce, tears welled up, Lynne gave her a hug. She smiled and shed tears as she recalled that tender moment. Strangers and friends were part of the offertory procession including Rev. Mike of the United Church and Jason Swan of Kelly's carrying the trays of stones to be blessed. A gentle and tender time for all.

The solemn blessing of the garden led by Father Waldemar along with Rev. Mike and the congregation was a very reverent moment. Tenderness enveloped us and continued when the precious stones were placed in the garden. Inscriptions on the stones included: "Dad", simply a name, "Sean", "Always Remembered", "Loving Brother Dearly Missed", "Rest In Peace".

This event has been described as "therapeutic", "meaningful", "lovely". Together we came to honour our loved ones now in their eternal resting place remembering that Jesus overcame death, with the resurrection, we shall meet again. Until then we can comfort each other with the memories of those we miss by a touch, a kind word and a garden event. Prayer. Blowing bubbles toward the sky representing kisses, that's the Loretta way. When the bubbles return, it's a kiss returned from on high.



Stones and souls last forever. In biblical times, stones were placed on the grave site as a sign of permanence and to preserve the grave site. Christ and God are associated with rocks. "The Lord is my rock", Psalm 18:2.

We honour and remember our loved ones by placing a stone in the memorial garden where we can come and meditate. With our loved ones names on the stone, it has even greater significance providing much comfort.

## Highlights of 2024

Prepared by Diane Jemus, The Bereavement Ministry

### Only God Could Have Arranged Such a Connection A Testimony by Rosanne De Luca

I'm blessed to be pretty close with my family. We share a bond of faith in God, and our love for music. My son who is a Montreal based pianist and teacher often shares stories with me requiring faith filled intercession.

In February 2023 he told me a tragic story about Kim, one of his students. Kim had travelled with her parents down south. While waiting to board the cruise ship, her father suffered a cardiac arrest and died. My heart broke for this family. I immediately started praying for her and her family. From time to time, I would ask my son about Kim.

HUGUETTE

While preparing music for the November 2nd, 2023 *All Souls' Day* Mass and reception, I asked Diane to survey the bereavement group participants to collect song requests to play as "memorials" at the reception including the names of the participants grieving their loved ones. It was a beautiful experience for me to enter prayerfully into, and to offer these sweet songs to God, on behalf of the Bereavement group members. I studied the names with the song titles, and kept them all in my heart. Among the names was Huguette.



Rosanne & Huguette

At the reception for the closing of the Bereavement Memorial Garden in September 2024, a lovely woman approached as I played the piano, and lingered, enjoying the music. It was Huguette. We got chatting, and she shared how much she loved piano music. Her late husband Maurice and she used to listen with joy when their daughter played piano, but since his death, the piano was quieter now, and she missed hearing her daughter play, and the joy it brought their family. As a musician, I related to her story. When my own mother died and a dear friend, Angela Lavictoire, it affected my ability to play, My own piano was silent. I prayed this gift would return to Huguette and her family bringing joy and fond memories of her husband Maurice and for her daughter, Kim.

Huguette shared the details of her husband's death. Then, as I was thinking of Huguette and her daughter, I suddenly thought of my son and his adult piano student whose loss was months beforehand. I was completely taken a-back to realize their names were the same! I shook my head in disbelief as it occurred to me another similarity, that both losses happened around the same time of the year. *Could these two families actually be the same family? Had I been praying for and thinking of this ONE FAMILY all along? YES.* This lovely woman whom I connected with because of her love

for music and her longing for it, whom I met at the reception on the feast of All Souls, when we remember and pray for our beloved deceased, was the same woman I had prayed for nine months earlier, when her husband died!

Only God could have arranged such a connection! *If God places on your heart a name or names to pray for, PRAY FOR THEM! We may never meet them, but God knows who they are! And perhaps, like I had the great pleasure of, God will permit you to meet, if not in this lifetime, then in the next!*

*Such blessings, and I continue to pray for Huguette and for all of her family, and especially for the happy repose of her husband's soul. May he rest in peace, and may their family come to find joy again, and healing and peace, and discover the presence of God in the music all around them!*



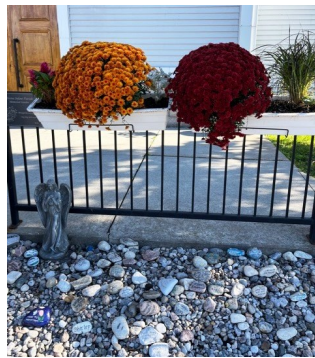
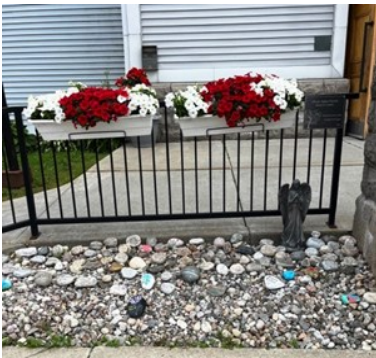
Attending the Bereavement session is a brave albeit uncomfortable experience especially on the first night. There is apprehension as they come toward the the door and on the way in the car, even walking into the room. Perpetua's warm smile and gentle, friendly demeanour provides a welcoming atmosphere as she greets them at the door.



#### Participants in the Winter Session.

Bottom row: Linda, Daphne, Lynne (Facilitator), Sue, Daphne, Louise  
Top row: Perpetua, Sandra (Facilitator), Ralph (Facilitator), Vickey, Mary, Louise, Bev





Louise in coordination with Jeff and Diane shopped, planted, weeded and watered the various areas on the grounds of the church including the Bereavement Memorial Garden. Others who have helped include Mary M., Faye, Norma D., Dave L., Sharon V, Many others have taken a moment to tend to the garden some known others unknown.



Participants in the Fall Session.  
Bottom row: Cheryl, Louise, Lynne ( Facilitator), Fallon, Jim, Andaleeb, Ruth,  
Top row: Sandra (Facilitator), John, Margaret, Darwin, Vickey, Huguette, Diane (Facilitator)

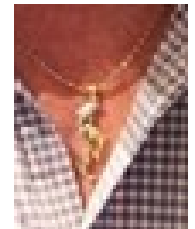


Margaret Seguss, our reader at the All Souls Day Mass, still mourning the death of her husband, Ron, thought it would be special to participate. She attended the fall bereavement group session.



Darwin is a participant. Notice the dolphin on the chain around his neck. When he went to choose an urn box, his eyes caught sight of the one with a dolphin on it. He easily ordered this urn box. Then he went home opened the “give away” memorabilia, took out the dolphin charm and put it on

his own chain around his neck. Dolphins in real life and a charm gave his wife pleasure. Now, they give Darwin comfort. His wife liked dolphins seeing them for the first time on a holiday with him. It became their holiday destination enticed by the dolphins.



Gathering in Brockville’s railway tunnel are: Ralph, Elda, Linda, Mercy, Mark and Don and others.



With separation from a loved one, loneliness becomes a companion. Ralph and Don became friends to help fill the void Chatting, going for walks, eating together etc., (mealtime is hard). Two has become twenty eight going out to eat, day trips and even traveling to far away places. These six travellers have recently returned from Spain. From left to right are Linda, Don, Elda, Ralph, Susan and Mercy.



Elda, Linda, Mercy, Therese, Janice, Ralph and Cynthia enjoyed visiting Vankleel Hill



## Kelly Funeral Home's Milestone 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

By Diane Jemus, The Bereavement Ministry



It was in 1954 that Lorne Kelly opened the first funeral home in a converted grocery store on Wellington Street. In 1994, due to health issues, Mr. Kelly sold the company, comprised of six chapels to Arbor Memorial. Today there are seven chapels. When Mr. Kelly died, he was remembered for his integrity and efforts to help countless families through the difficulties of losing a loved one. Fifty one of the fifty two employees remained. It was said at the time “any of the compassion would not be lost, the same people would be doing the same things”. The clergy at the time of the sale including Msgr. Martineau of St. Anthony’s parish and Father McKeon of St. Patrick’s Basilica agreed. The same can be said of the staff today. Specifically, Margaret Burnside has been instrumental in helping develop the Bereavement Ministry sharing vital insights, materials and contacts such as Dr. Bill Webster. Today they are partnered with Dr. Webster developing training programs for bereavement facilitators as well as new educational tools. Jason Swan is Divine Infant Parish’s

current local contact along with Margaret Burnside helping us to provide quality care to those who are grieving. With such capable caring staff, Kelly Funeral Homes will continue to service the community well with the same dedication as its founder, Lorne Kelly. Congratulations. Thank you for your service.

## Christmas Challenges ~ The First Christmas Wasn’t Perfect

By Diane Jemus, The Bereavement Ministry

“A Not So Jolly Christmas” is the title of a pamphlet by Dr. Bill Webster who is someone who is familiar with grief having mourned both his young wife and his adult son, Steven. He has spent a lifetime dedicated to helping the world grieving community cope with death and all the difficulties facing those left behind including the parishioners of Divine Infant Parish. He is the “pro” in the room, albeit by video during our bereavement sessions.

The Christmas music, festivities, decorations, the food preparation, and spiritual side can be a hardship for those who mourn. Those grieving might like to cancel Christmas.....even ignore it.....yet, those we mourn delighted in Christmas.....and the story goes. Anticipating Christmas is hard, the day itself goes by rather quickly, many experts tell us.....also those in the group who have experienced first Christmas concur.

In this past fall session, one of the participants said she was not celebrating Christmas. No tree. Nothing. Her children did not understand her grief. She was a daughter grieving her mother. She missed her mother. Yet, she did have her own children who did not understand the depth of her loss. Despite her sorrow and anguish, she did decorate the house, a surprise even to herself! She said nothing to anyone. When her son came in, his face lit up, with a great big smile he said “we are going to have Christmas”. It was a life giving moment despite the sorrow. As Dr. Webster would say “Life goes on”. Deb, another encouraging participant shared her experience of the first Christmas after her husband died, “it’s not the same but it was good anyway”.

With that in mind, please all of you reading this article say a prayer for those who are grieving. When speaking to a grieving friend or relative, mention the deceased person, say his/her name, share a story, etc., Those grieving want to hear the names, stories of their loved ones. It is a comfort. Tears are a comfort, a healthy release of emotion. To quote Father Lunney, “to love much is to grieve much, one begets the other”.

Please join us in prayer for those who are grieving and for the souls of their dearly beloved departed. Moms, Dads, Sons, Daughters, Aunts, Uncles, Husbands, Wives, Cousins, Friends, Coworkers, Neighbours, just to mention a few of the many meaningful relationships, gone but not forgotten. Grief help is available through the parish Bereavement Team.





## The Divine Infant Catholic Women's League Year-end Fundraisers

By Cindy Kearns-O'Hara & Linda Epton, Divine Infant Parish, Catholic Women's League

The Catholic Women's League, or the CWL, has been extremely busy over the past several months! Some highlights are, the launching of our Beatitude Mission, *"Living the Beatitudes, Love in Action"* in September, our Membership Drive in October, the Apple Pie Extravaganza in November and our very successful Christmas Bake Sale in December.

We have now completed the first two Beatitudes, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"* and *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted"*, in partnership with the Legion of Mary and the Agape Bible Study Group, respectively. We wish to express our deep appreciation to both these ministries who were instrumental in leading parishioners through the seven weeks of reflection and challenges to Live each Beatitude and in turn, show Love in Action. The third Beatitude, *"Blessed are the Meek for they shall inherit the earth"*, begins January 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and we look forward to supporting the Music Ministry as the lead ministry.



Our membership drive took place October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. We welcome the many new members who have joined us and those who have renewed their commitment. We are currently at 5%, and our prayerful goal is to have 25% of the registered women parishioners join over the coming two years. We pray to Our Holy Mother to guide the hearts of our parish sisters so we can grow together both in number and in spiritual strength! Membership applications are on the CWL webpage [WWW.DIVINEINFANT.ON.CA/CWL.HTML](http://WWW.DIVINEINFANT.ON.CA/CWL.HTML) and on the bulletin board in the foyer. You can also contact any member of the CWL Executive. You can now easily identify members of the CWL by the nametags worn at Mass and parish functions.

The Divine Infant Catholic Women's League events ended 2024 with two great fundraisers. The long-awaited return of the Apple Pie Sale was held in November, and the Annual Christmas Bake Sale was held in December.

After many years, the CWL decided to resume our delicious apple pie fundraiser. This past November a wonderful group of women prepared and sold approximately 200 apple pies. We are so thankful to all the volunteers from the CWL, parishioners and their daughters, as well as, the St. Matthew High School students for their participation.

It was with these wonderful groups of helpers, who devoted their time and skills, that we succeeded in our fundraising endeavours. We were able to make enough profit from this fundraiser to cover all the costs of our 2 year Beatitude Mission. Next year, it is our hope to have the apple pie fundraiser at the end of September so we can partner with local apple farms.

This is the second year since COVID that our parish CWL held a Christmas Bake Sale. This year-end fundraiser was in December. The generosity of the CWL members was evident again with all the goodies and crafts on the tables. We look forward to next year's sale!





We end this year thankful for all the CWL volunteers and parishioners who supported all our annual events . Your participation has given us the opportunity to aid many worthy charities this year and your generosity is greatly appreciated.

The CWL supports the following:

- **Gifts for First Communion** - The CWL provides gifts for all the parish children celebrating their First Communion.
- **Gifts for Confirmation** - The CWL provides gifts to all those who are confirmed at Divine Infant.
- **Miriam Centre** - Miriam Centre opened its doors July 1, 1988. The Centre was born from the desire of a group of concerned people wanting to offer life affirming options to all who find the circumstances surrounding their pregnancy difficult. The Miriam Centre is currently located on St. Joseph Boulevard in Orleans. Website: <https://miriamcentre.ca/>
- **Action for Life / March for Life** - Organization that promotes the sanctity of life and promotes the pro-life agenda. Website: <https://www.actionlife.org/>
- **Catholic Missions of Canada (Esk – omi)** - Supports remote parishes in Canada’s far North. *Catholic Missions* exists to advance and sustain the Catholic faith in remote and poor mission communities across Canada. Website: <https://cmic.info>
- **Chalice** - Via Chalice, the Divine Infant CWL sponsors a child overseas and helps to improve the living conditions of her family. Website: <https://chalice.ca>
- **Divine Infant Parish** - We provide donations for the various appeals that our parish is undertaking, (e.g., cupola repairs, etc)

We wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas. As we close out 2024 and journey into 2025, the Jubilee Year, may Our Lady of Good Counsel pray for use and guide us, and may the Holy Spirit embolden us, to be steadfast Pilgrims of Hope.

*O Father, in your Truth (that is to say, in your Son, humbled, needy and homeless) you have humbled me. He was humbled in the womb of the Virgin, needy in the manger of the sheep, and homeless on the wood of the Cross. Nothing so humbles the proud sinner as the humility of Jesus Christ’s humanity.*  
~ St. Anthony of Padua

## Cenacle Messenger Article ...Nov 2024

### Divine Mercy Cenacles at Divine Infant Parish

A Divine Mercy Cenacle is a small Faith Community which meets weekly for song, prayer, and a study session integrating the Diary of St. Faustina along with Sacred Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The revelations given to St. Faustina are excellent for spiritual growth and also give a deeper understanding of God's greatest attribute, His Infinite Mercy, of which we are all in great need. We follow a specific Formation Manual and the sessions often include stimulating discussions where members express how the study material is incorporated into the concrete situations of their lives. Each session concludes with the communal recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, which is prayed for the intentions submitted in a prayer box, and a Cenacle Challenge, issued by either Deacon Gerry Panes or Deacon Phil Richards, the purpose of which is to help members retain and apply some aspect of the study material during the following week.

Our Cenacle also engages in activities following the Liturgical cycle. For example, we engage in Works of Mercy by raising funds to help needy families during the Advent and Lenten seasons. We encourage the 'O Antiphon' prayers the week leading up to Christmas, and during Lent Cenacle members lead the Stations of the Cross on a specific Friday. The main celebration which our Cenacle organizes takes place in the afternoon of Divine Mercy Sunday (the Second Sunday of Easter). This is a special Devotion to help all participants take advantage of the incredible graces Our Lord has promised on that day when **"the divine floodgates...are opened"** (St. Faustina Diary 699). Our Parish is very blessed in that Fr. Waldemar has always promoted this devotion by having priests available for confession all that afternoon. The Devotion itself includes the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Praise and Worship music and the chanting of the Divine Mercy Chaplet. In this year's devotion we added a procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the aisles of the Church, accompanied by the Divine Mercy Image and relics carried by Cenacle members. (see attached pictures).

There are now two weekly Monday Divine Mercy Cenacle gatherings to choose from: the traditional Evening Cenacle following the 7pm Mass, and a new Daytime Cenacle between 1 and 3 pm in the Parish Hall. The Daytime Cenacle was established to accommodate those who find it difficult to travel during the night hours. Both Cenacles follow the same schedule, and we are blessed to have Deacon Phil Richards available at the Daytime Cenacle, and Deacon Gerry Panes at the Evening gathering to provide spiritual guidance.

If you are seeking to grow in your faith or if you are looking to join a small group within our large parish community where you will experience a more personal connection to community and be supported in your personal life through the prayers of other cenacle members, why not consider joining us on Mondays? All are welcome to come to try out one of the sessions.

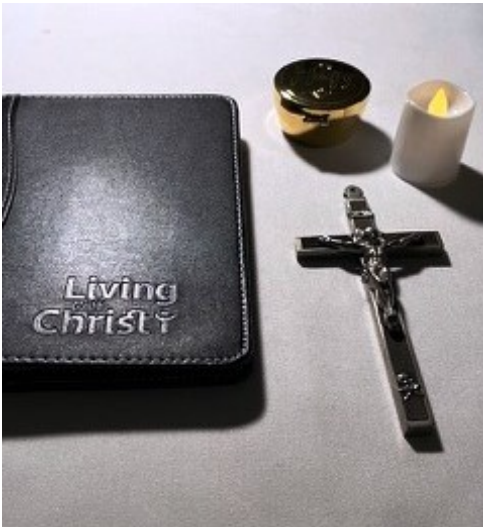
For further info, send an email to David Langedock (Daytime Cenacle), or Stan Siok (Evening Cenacle) at [divineinfantcenacle@gmail.com](mailto:divineinfantcenacle@gmail.com).



## Pastoral Care

by Dolores Cyr

Pastoral Care is a ministry of presence, empathy and compassion. It is through these visits Pastoral Care ministers continue the experience of community with those unable to attend the Sunday liturgy.



We are blessed to have a group of dedicated members that visit the home bound on a weekly basis bringing them the Eucharist and sharing the word of God plus those who visit at seniors residences to lead and pray the Rosary on a regular basis. Whether we are journeying with those who are dealing with terminal illness or someone healing from an injury, we witness first hand how much they appreciate being able to receive the Eucharist and praying together as a community once again.

We will help facilitate Anointing of the Sick with one of the priests anytime a client makes that request or we see they may be in a weakened state and at the end of life.

Pastoral Care at Divine Infant Parish also includes our Priests by celebrating Mass and hearing confessions and the Deacons by celebrating the Liturgy of the Word and Communion at a few of the seniors residences in our community. This has brought comfort to many who are isolated and can no longer participate in Mass at church.

Orleans is a fast growing community and we can see with the building of new facilities for seniors that the demand for Pastoral Care may increase, therefore, it will be incumbent upon us to respond to those who reach out to our ministry.

We can only serve our parish community with the commitment of our volunteers and we welcome new volunteers who have a heart to bring Jesus Christ, son of the Living God, through His Word and in the Eucharist to DI parishioners who are in need of this ministry, so please contact us at [di.pastoralcare@gmail.com](mailto:di.pastoralcare@gmail.com) and we will set up a time to meet.

As 2024 draws to a close we have been blessed with the gift of service to those in our faith community and pray for all those we serve and have served and may we continue to grow as a ministry at Divine Infant.

## The Agape Bible Study Group

By Lucille Surette, Facilitator

This September, the Agape Bible Study Group met to start studying the History of Salvation.

*“Beginning with the opening chapters of the book of Genesis and continuing to the book of Revelation, God the Father reveals His plan of salvation and His loving desire to re-establish the broken relationship between Himself and man. The promise and the beginning of the fulfillment of that plan is manifested in the Incarnation of Jesus the Messiah. The Bible is, in fact, focused on Jesus our Redeemer from Genesis to Revelation.”*

Every Wednesday after Adoration, the group, with their Bible and Catechism in hand, gathers in the Pastoral Room to read and ponder the 28 Orthodox lessons provided by the [Agape Bible Study](#), with the commentary of the verse-by-verse Scripture.

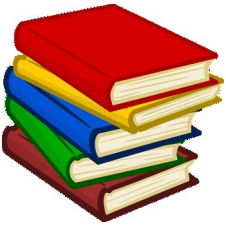
The one-hour sessions are not enough to go over the topic of each lesson. Its rich content allows each participant an opportunity to share their experience, questions, and observations at each gathering. This means that the Study is most likely to last longer than 28 weeks.

There is never a better time to start studying the Bible than when you are ready. I am at your disposal to discuss your needs and schedule to select the best way to satiate your hunger for the Word of God.



# Happy 2025 Liturgical & Jubilee year!

By Nina Regimbald, Library Services



Discover your **Divine Infant Parish Library** in the foyer open after weekend masses featuring numerous new and pre-loved books and DVDs. Shelves filled with a wide variety of topics supporting your faith journey towards bringing you closer to Jesus Christ. Helpful resources for your Catholic Prayers and Reflections for Eucharistic Adoration, Spiritual Healing, Meditation, Holy Trinity, and the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus, Mary, Rosary, and The Bible. You'll also find publications on the Church Fathers, Popes, great Saints and Mystics, Healing, Sacraments, Doctrines, Traditions, Social Concerns and so much more. All content is aimed to help learn and grow in knowledge of the Catholic faith and in the history of the Holy Church. Come by to browse, borrow or buy.

## Visit your Parish Library

- all year round and especially in preparation during this Holy Advent season for your personal or family daily devotional and/or weekly readings on hope, peace, joy and love.
- choose your complimentary books, magazines, prayer cards or leaflets available in the 'Free' section.
- select from the specials in the 'Book Sale' section for a nominal contribution to our Church needs.

Be sure to view over 1500 + titles and authors at the "Parish Library" link from the main website.

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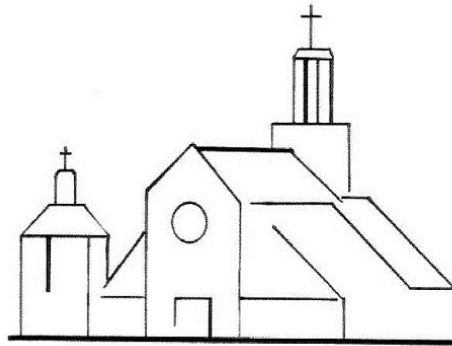
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\*\*\*\*\*Browse\*\*\*Borrow\*\*\*Buy\*\*\*\*\*

## Divine Infant Church Schedules

### Regular Mass Times:

Monday	7:00 pm*
Tuesday	7:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am
Thursday	9:00 am
Friday	9:00 am
Saturday	5:00 pm*
Sunday	8:00 am
	9:30 am
	11:15 am
	5:00 pm



**Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction:** Every Wednesday after the 9:00 am Mass

**\*NOTE:** On **statutory or civic holidays** Mondays, Mass is at 9:00 am. There is no 7:00 pm Mass on that day.

**There is a Mass on Saturday morning at 9:00 am for**

- First Saturdays of the month
- Solemnities & Feast days, and Marian Feast days which are on a Saturday, and
- During Advent or Lent

Please visit our parish website ([www.divineinfant.on.ca](http://www.divineinfant.on.ca)) to read the latest updates and to read the parish bulletin for upcoming special events and information on ministries or associations.

*"No human tongue can enumerate the favors that trace back to the Sacrifice of the Mass. The sinner is reconciled with God; the just man becomes more upright; sins are wiped away; vices are uprooted; virtue and merit increases; and the devil's schemes are frustrated." ~ St. Lawrence Justinian*



## AN ADVENT STORY

In the quiet before dawn one Advent morning, a conversation between two angels was overheard. The elder angel, Sera, and a new little angel, Cheru, were on their way to choir practice. Cheru would be joining the great celestial choirs for the very first time, to sing heavenly hymns at the upcoming glorious celebration, commemorating the Birth of Jesus on Earth over two thousand years ago.

Sera asked, "Is there something troubling you Cheru? You seem a little...preoccupied."

"Thank you for your concern, Sera," answered Cheru. "Yes indeed, there is something that perplexes me which I have been pondering and wondering about for a few days now. I've heard a chorus of voices echoing through the universe which seems to be coming from Earth. That chorus has increased in volume with each passing day but I can't quite make out what is being said nor can I understand what it all means."

"Oh," explained Sera, "I know exactly what you are speaking of! This is the time of Advent and God's children on Earth are inviting Jesus to COME, to bring His Light and His Love more deeply into their hearts this Christmas and into the hearts of men and women everywhere."

"Well, I know some of those places are very dark," replied Cheru. "Wouldn't it be better if they were to invite the Lord only to those places where His Light already shines?"

Sera gave a little chuckle and responded with great kindness, "My sweet little Cheru, you have much to discover about the Great and Mighty Lord that we serve! I was there among the multitude of Angels on that glorious night those many years ago when we sang "Glory to God in the Highest" as we heralded the birth of The Saviour. The Lord Jesus, the Great King of the Universe, not only humbled Himself by becoming man and living among sinful humanity, He also chose to be born in a dark, cold and, dare I say, smelly stable!"

Cheru was astonished! "Why would He *choose* to do that?"

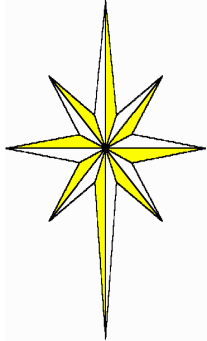
With great wisdom Sera replied, "So that mankind would not just invite Him into places of Light, but that they would have the courage and humility to invite Him into the "dark, cold and smelly" places of their hearts and lives too. These places in particular are where He greatly desires to go, in order to shed the warmth and light of His Grace there, transforming hearts and lives through His Mercy and Love into places of Joy and Peace ...through Him, and with Him, and in Him! Although He waits to be invited, He NEVER refuses an invitation to COME!! And that invitation is often issued by God's children not only for themselves, but also on behalf of others. As the days of Christmas approach their voices swell from a small tinkling into a great chorus of 'COME, O COME EMMANUEL!'"

"Yes," said Cheru excitedly, "I could hear their voices more loudly and clearly with each passing day!! In fact, at this very moment, the invitation to the Lord to COME is loud and insistent from one place in particular on Earth. Do you hear it too? Do you know where it comes from?"

"Why yes," said Sera as she bent over a cloud to gaze upon the Earth. "It's coming from God's children in a place called... Orleans! They are inviting the Lord to COME into their hearts and into the hearts of many, many others...in fact their prayers of invitation, to the delight of the Christ Child, have covered the whole of mankind! Let us pray, my sweet Cheru, that His Love and Mercy shine in their hearts and homes in a special way this Christmas and in the hearts and homes of all those for whom they have prayed

'COME, O COME EMMANUEL!'"





# **CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE**

## **CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Tuesday, December 24**

3:30 pm  
5:30 pm  
7:30 pm  
9:30 pm  
12:00 Midnight

## **CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Wednesday, December 25**

8:00 am  
9:30 am  
11:15 am  
2:00 pm

## **MARY, HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**

**Vigil Mass – Tuesday, December 31**

5:00 pm

**Adoration & Benediction (No Mass)**

11:45 pm

*“in thanksgiving for graces received in 2024  
and for all needed blessings in 2025”*

**Wednesday, January 1**

8:00 am  
9:30 am  
11:15 am





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