

CSCO EASTER NEWSLETTER (ISSUE #11)



“Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” (from *Easter Sunday’s Gospel reading, John 20.1-18*)

What a totally different year it's turned out to be! No one would've imagined that all publicly funded schools in Ontario would be closed until the end of April! We haven't been at school with our students and staff members since before the March Break. And now that we're back in school, virtually, it seems so surreal. How do we minister to our students? How do we minister to our staff members? Life has changed.

With all of the bad news of 2020, Easter is almost here, and this means: joy, joy, joy! Nothing but good news, the best news: Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He conquered sin and death, once and for all: thanks be to God!

What a remarkable time, even though we're in self-isolation!

The Easter Season has arrived and we can't go to church and school but we continue to share the Good News with our students and staff members and neighbours!

Our Lord and Saviour is so good, and he has made us rockin' good chaplains! lorenzo

Thank you to our contributors for this edition: Eileen McGowan with a family update, Don Hall's spiritual quotes, Betty-Anne Pickett's students' art work, Don Hall's 'The Value of Catholic Education', Marie O'Connell's prayer of discernment and St. Therese of Lisieux's prayer, Murray Watson's prayer on Jean Vanier, Andrew Hall's song for his twin boys, Gillian Federico's prayer intentions, Andrew Hall's Covid-19 resources, Gillian Federico's Covid-19 resources, Divina Feliciano's Covid-19 resources, Maureen Dufour's photos of her grandchildren, Sharon Boase's Easter reflection, Don Hall's grandchildren's photo, one of Mary Defayette's Covid-19 reflections, Adriana Rerecich's article from Dr. Moira McQueen, Andrea Taylor's article from the Mercy newsletter, a poem from Joanne Belanger, one of Brian Halferty's poems, Laurie Young's song choice, Ivan Canjar's lawn sign and Andrew Hall's students' Holy Thursday video. Enjoy!

FAMILY UPDATE

I was blessed with one of my best Christmas Youth Choirs ever in music ministry this year, my family able to gather, and the joy and wonder of little ones in our family. Today as I have a quiet moment to reflect, I think one of the best foundations and fruits of ministry is the strong commitment to daily personal prayer and scripture study that have carried me through. I can't imagine living life without that now, especially in retirement, being back in the domestic day to day with grandbabies.

We have two [grandchildren]. Roisin is 10 and Albert is 14 months old, brother and sister. I am with them every school day afternoon. Big commitment, but a wonderful investment of time and energy. It's a huge blessing to be able to have the choice to do this.

Blessings,
Eileen

Eileen McGowan is a retired chaplain with the DCDSB.

SPIRITUAL QUOTES

-from p. 1 of Don Hall's spiritual quotes:

"If you want God to hear your prayers, hear the voice of the poor."
St. Thomas of Villanova

"May the sun bring your new energy by day,
May the moon softly restore you by night,
May the rain wash away your worries,
May the breeze blow new strength into your being.
May you walk gently through the world
and know its beauty all the days of your life."
Apache wedding blessing

"Followers of the crucified Jesus should see only new possibilities opening up whenever they meet failure. He encourages us to follow his example, trusting in the Lord to guide us."

"St. Maria Goretti and St. Agnes are symbols that holiness does not depend on length of years, experience or human effort. It is a gift God offers to all."

"Christ did not promise the kind of peace we would love to have—no problems, no opposition, no pain. In one way or another, holiness is always the way of the cross."
Unknown

"God's joy in giving is greater than ours in receiving. So let us not be apathetic in our asking, nor set too narrow bounds to our requests; nor ask for frivolous things unworthy of God's greatness."
St. Gregory Nazianzen

“Most Holy Name of Jesus, glorious name, gracious name, name of love and of power! Through you sins are forgiven, through you enemies are vanquished, through you the sick are freed from their illness, through you those suffering in trials are made strong and cheerful. You bring honor to those who believe, you teach those who preach, you give strength to the toiler, you sustain the weary.” St. Bernardine of Siena

"If you have too much to do, with God's help you will find time to do it all."
St. Peter Canisius

“The needs of the times will teach you what to do.”
Blessed Adolph Kolping

“The first thing that a person finds in life and the last to which he holds out his hand, and the most precious that he possess, even if he does not realize it, is family life.”
Blessed Adolph Kolping

Don Hall is a chaplain with the HWCDSB.

STUDENT ARTWORK

The Good Shepherd image below appeared on the cover of the February 2020 issue of Living with Christ. Students of St. Francis Xavier School in Mississauga created it. Betty-Anne submitted it to Living with Christ and it is shared with permission in this Newsletter. It may not be reproduced.

Betty-Anne Pickett is a chaplain with the DPCDSB.



THE VALUE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

At the 23rd Annual Catholic School Council Breakfast, St. Mary's DREAMS alumni, Sarah Rotella shared two beautiful insights: "we don't need to have everything to be happy" and "Catholic Education helped shape me into the person I am."

Photo credit: Angelica Tarli





Don Hall is a chaplain with the HWCDSB.

A COUPLE OF PRAYERS

Prayer of Discernment

Spirit of Guidance, I see before me numerous choices and a decision to be made.

There is division in my heart. Sometimes I want none of what I find. Sometimes I want it all. Sometimes I want to give up making decisions and wish that the future would go away.

I entrust my decision-making into your hands, ready to do my part but also knowing that I cannot do this without your help.

Lead me through all the unsure, unclear, doubtful, hesitant and questioning moments that are mine as I search to find the right way in which to go.

Grant me the grace to choose freely, without being attached to the outcome. I trust that you will be with me as I make my decision prayerfully and with faith.

Assure me that your peace will rest deep within me as I make the decision that seems best for me at this time. I may continue to experience feelings of turmoil and confusion, but deep within I know that I can return to that settled place in me where you always dwell.

Guide and Director of my life, I place my life in your hands. Lead me to the path that will deepen and strengthen my relationship with you.

Amen.

(Joyce Rupp)

May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing that you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise, and love.

It is there for each and every one of us

(St. Therese of Lisieux, Story of a Soul)

Marie O'Connell is a chaplain with the HCDSB.

PRAYER ON THE NEWS OF JEAN VANIER

"A draft of a prayer I've put together for our community meeting at Jean Vanier high school in Collingwood.

SOOOO heart-breaking,"

Murray

[February 22, 2020]

God of tenderness, ever close to the broken-hearted and the poor,
we come before you today in sorrow, shock and anger.

We are stunned by the news that has been revealed in recent days
about the dark side of Jean Vanier, a man we admired and thought we knew.

We weep for the victims of his actions, whose lives have been so damaged,
and we feel the pain of so many millions of people

for whom the L'Arche movement has been a source of inspiration and hope.
We pray for the members of L'Arche communities,
here in Canada and around the world,
who faithfully model inclusion, respect, welcome and love.
In this time of darkness, confusion and pain,
we ask your gentle presence to walk with us, in our questions and our doubts,
and to pour healing on all those who are suffering because of these terrible revelations.
Strengthen us to live out our Christian calling with integrity,
and to defend all those who are vulnerable.
May the hope of Jesus' resurrection bring us comfort and reassurance,
and may we support each other in the days, weeks and months ahead.
Glory to you, our Healer, our Consoler and our Strength,
now and forever.
Amen.

Murray Watson is the Adult Faith Formation Animator of the SMCDSB.

A SONG FOR THE TWINS

My wife, Katie, and I did a live performance video of the song we wrote our twins. Our two friends, Dan and Aaron helped us out on guitar <https://youtu.be/E66Jnflq7kg>

Andrew Hall is a chaplain with the BHNCD SB.

LAETARE SUNDAY

Gillian sent the following e-mail message to the HCDSB chaplains and pastoral animators on March 22:



Dear friends:

Peace be with you on this Laetare Sunday!

Although I didn't grow up as a Catholic, my Presbyterian grandparents were quite insistent that Sundays be a different day and certainly embraced the traditional concept of Sabbath. We might visit family, but whatever we did, we did together; as our home had no electricity, we might even sit around the (battery-powered!) radio and listen to a programme or two on the BBC. Walks on the beach at Limekilns or the Bill o' Ness on a blustery day – or even through the cemetery to admire the flowers – were quite common, and the people of Dunfermline where I lived were blessed by the beautiful public Pittencrief Park, deeded to the town by its famous son, Andrew Carnegie, who became the Pittsburg steel magnate. (You'll see Carnegie libraries still in many small towns as literacy was one of his causes.)

Parts of Scotland – my country of origin, still hold true to this as do many other parts of the world. When my family was camping near Drumnadrochit (I challenge you to find out where that is, and "Outlander" fans may have an advantage) a number of years ago, we experienced a very wet night which left sleeping bags and much of our kit very wet. I approached a gentleman in the small community nearby and asked if he might know where we could find a laundromat

to dry our stuff. He drew himself up to his full five and a half feet (I still think in imperial measure) and looking at me with scorn, said,

“Ye’ll no’ be findin’ onything like that open here on a Sunday; we keep the Sabbath here, ye ken!”

Luckily for us, the Lord took pity on us and the clouds split to allow a warm sun to break through. We spread all our stuff over some hedges and it dried in about an hour. It was a pretty object lesson in managing without some of the things we take for granted. And I have to say that I think sun-dried laundry still smells better than anything you can get with “Bounce”!

Looking for blessings and silver linings where we can, this may be an opportunity to reclaim some of the family experience of Sabbath which we have lost through so many Sunday activities like sports practices and shopping. We’ve dusted off some old board games and discovered we still enjoy the challenge of Scrabble. Not to mention all the old video tapes we’ve rediscovered – although I wish my husband didn’t want to watch so many of the “end of the world” ones!

For those who enjoy the preaching and teaching of Bishop Robert Barron, you may also enjoy his daily Masses and other presentations at www.wordonfire.org

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

For some insight on the rose vestments some clergy will be wearing today, check

<https://cruxnow.com/commentary/2019/03/rose-color-on-laetare-Sunday-recalls-real-meaning-of-tradition/>

Thanks to Murray Watson for this link.

Ephesians 1:16-18 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know

him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints.

Sending you all a virtual hug (at the appropriate social distance, of course!)

With every blessing,

Gillian

...that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine./...pour que nous recevions ensemble un encouragement, moi par votre foi et vous par la mienne. Rom 1:12

Gillian Federico is the system chaplain and faith formation lead with the HCDSB.

MONDAY MARCH 23rd FAITH RESOURCES

Andrew sent the following to his staff:

Hello Staff!

I would like to share some more faith resources with you. The first is attached and is called "Emergency Contact Numbers Taken From God's Yellow Pages." With everything going in our world right now, I'm sure that we have all felt many different things such as worry, sorrow, and the feeling of needing guidance. The attached resource has a Bible verse for emotions we might be feeling. As we continue in these times, let us remember that we are still on our Lenten journey and although it may look different this year, the joy of Easter. As one of the articles below reminds us "Christ is the light that brightens our darkness." As Easter begins to draw near, this is something to remember. Please see below for some faith resources.

St.Pius X / Fr. John Redmond has begun posting daily readings and reflection videos. They have just posted their first one on March 21st which you can check out here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38OwPf9h14I> . You can also listen to a recording Fr.

John's Sunday Homily called "Seeing Clearly In Uncertain Times" here

<https://stpius.ca/sermons/seeing-clearly-in-uncertain-times/>

Pope Francis: Covid-19 teaches us that we are one human community

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/pope-coronavirus-teaches-one-human-community.html>

Parish Collection Short Falls - This article speaks to how without Masses, churches are not receiving collections. Please pray for our churches at this time.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/03/20/masses-suspended-parishes-face-collection-shortfalls-and-perilous-finances?fbclid=IwAR2sYU-JOI5QxCjAR2bNaqGnLkSolxGDgTajm7W4-cJrzNdNGZamGSR6Jg>

Pope Francis Prays for families facing financial struggles

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta/2020-03/pope-homily-families-prayer-faith-perseverance-courage.html>

Christ is the light that brightens our darkness

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/pope-angelus-christ-light-brightens-darkness.html>

Lastly, with not being able to attend Mass currently and receive the Eucharist, below is a prayer for spiritual communion

My Jesus,

I believe that You

are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things,

and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment

receive You sacramentally,

come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

Emergency Phone Numbers taken from: God's Yellow Pages

In Sorrow.....call

John 14.

If you want to be fruitful.....call John

15.

When you have sinned.....call

Psalms 51.

When you worry.....call

Matthew 6:19-34.

When you are in danger.....call

Psalms 91.

When God seems far away.....call

Psalms 139.

When your faith needs stirring.....call

Hebrews 11.

When you are lonely and fearful.....call Psalms

23.

For Paul's secret to happiness.....call

Colossians 3:12-17.

When friends fail you.....call Luke

17:3-4.

When you feel down and out.....call

Romans 8:31.

When you want peace and rest.....call
Matthew 11:25-30.

When the world seems bigger than God.....call Psalm
90.

When you leave home for travel.....call Psalm
121.

When your prayers are selfish.....call
Psalm 67.

When you want courage for a task.....call
Joshua 1.

For how to get along with others.....call
Romans 12.

If you are depressed.....call
Psalm 27.

If you are losing confidence in people.....call 1
Corinthians 13.

If people seem unkind.....call John
15.

If discouraged about your work.....call
Psalm 126.

When you need guidance.....call
Proverbs 3:5-6.

When you are suffering.....call 2
Corinthians 12:9-10.

Alternate Numbers-

For dealing with fear.....call
Psalm 34:7.

For security.....call
Psalm 121:3.

For assurance.....call
Mark 8:35.

For reassurance.....call
Psalm 145:18

Andrew Hall is a chaplain with the BHNCD SB.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

Gillian sent the following to the chaplains and pastoral animators of the HCDSB
March 9:

Dear All:

I noticed in our parish bulletin this week that Wednesday's prayer intention is for all Lay Pastoral Workers in the Diocese. In recognition of the wonderful work which you and your parish counterparts do for our communities in faith, let's join together to pray for each other in a special way this Wednesday.

There are some prayers attached which may give inspiration.

Lord, we pray to you to send a spirit of encouragement to all our Lay Pastoral Workers so that they might walk in a manner worthy of the role to which they have been called; lead them to walk with humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for those around them in love, and that they may be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ([Ephesians 4:1-3](#))

Lord God, in your loving kindness you sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide. Continue to send workers into your vineyard to sustain and direct your people. Bless all those who offer Pastoral Ministry in your name. Let your Spirit uphold them always as they work among the people of our faith communities. We ask this through Christ our Lord. R. Amen

And one for ourselves.... I realise this is primarily for visitors to the sick but feel it can easily be adapted to the needs of each one of us. And I am mindful that each one of us is a "Wounded Healer".

Caregivers' Prayer

Here I am, Lord.

I seek your vision and strength.

I call upon your steadfast love.

For you are with me in my desire
To care for and comfort your people.
Open my eyes to see sorrow.
Open my ears to hear distress.
Open my heart to love patiently
Open my lips to speak kindly.
Walk with me Lord, and guide me.
Renew my spirit and bless my work.
Strengthen me to care for the ill.
Inspire me to see new horizons.
Fill my heart with hope.
You have heard my prayer.

Sandra Lucas Humility of Mary Health Partners
The National Association of Catholic Chaplains

With every blessing,

Gillian

Gillian Federico is the system chaplain and faith formation lead with the HCDSB.

SHARING SOME RESOURCES

Some Apps that are downloadable for free

Living with Christ (Daily Mass Readings)
SOD (Saint of the Day- By the Franciscans)
iBreviary (Liturgy of the Hours)
Catholic Study Bible App (Bible- Jesuits)

Sacred Space (Jesuits)

Pray As You Go (Jesuits)

Holy Mass

Salt and Light TV (Various Times)

Archdiocese of Toronto with Cardinal Collins (live at 7:30 AM with Angelus and Rosary)

<https://www.stmichaelscathedral.com/live/>

Casa Santa Marta presided by Pope Francis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sslRVK_zkg

Wednesday- March 25 at noon

Pope Francis has called all Christians to pray the Our Father for the end of the Corona Virus.

Friday - March 27 6:00PM Rome time

Pope Francis will give an extraordinary blessing Urbi et orbi to Rome and the whole world. It will include the opportunity for Catholics to receive a plenary indulgence.

The blessing will be given at 6pm Rome time.

Psalm 91

Assurance of God's Protection (for reflection)

Spiritual Communion Prayer

Spiritual Communion

What is it?

Spiritual Communion is a way to be united with Christ when we cannot physically receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. It can be made at home or in church, in front of the Blessed Sacrament or not.

How do I do it?

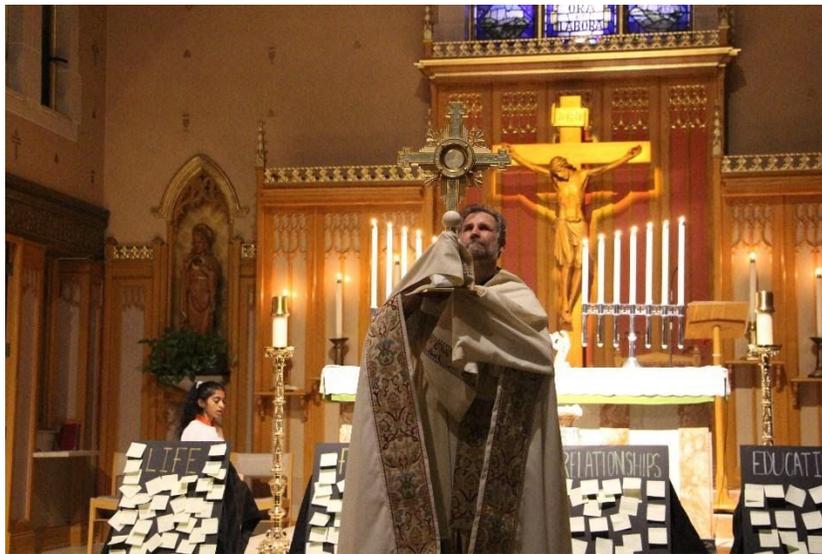
There is no set formula for making a Spiritual Communion, but the following tips will hopefully help those who want to do it:

Start with the sign of the cross and prayer
Read and reflect on the readings from Mass that day
Have a real desire to be united with Christ
Acknowledge your sins and ask for pardon/forgiveness
Receive Christ in your soul and pray an Act of Spiritual Communion (see below)
Offer thanksgiving

Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

(St. Alphonsus Liguori)



You are all in my prayers and Praised be Jesus Christ,

Divina

**"Let the soul of Mary be in each of us to magnify the Lord,
and the spirit of Mary be in each of us to rejoice in God."**

Divina Feliciano-Clark

"Heart Speaks to Heart"

Divina Feliciano-Clark is a chaplain with the TCDSB.

FAMILY PHOTOS

From Maureen:

'We are all healthy and trying to stay that way as we have a new baby granddaughter we are spending time with.

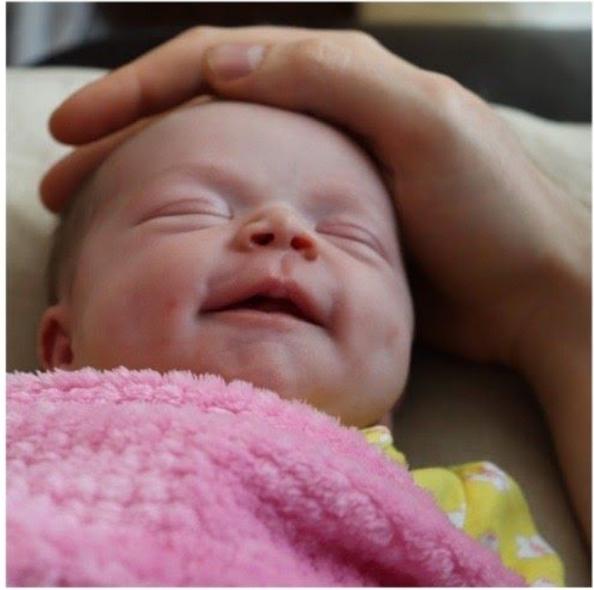
I am attaching a photo or two for you as she will just make you smile ...

Blessings on this day for you and those with whom you are in contact.

Peace,

Maureen'

"It takes so little for me to make others feel better,
that it would be unthinkable not to make the effort." (Ted Kennedy Jr.)





Maureen Dufour is a chaplain with the OCDSB.

EASTER SUNDAY

Despite life as we know it having been hijacked by COVID-19, I especially look forward to Easter Sunday this year. Now more than ever, we need to align our thinking toward hope and the promise of eternal life in the Lord. April 12 also happens to be my birthday and my Mom (God rest her soul) always told me it would be a very special year when Easter fell on my birthday. The last time it did (2009), my now-husband had popped the question on Holy Saturday so it was a very celebratory Easter that year. I look forward to the surprises the Lord has in store for me this year.

Sharon Boase is a chaplain with the HWCDSB.

FAMILY PHOTO

This photo of David & Zach [Andrew and Katie Hall's twin boys] was taken yesterday [March 31].



Don Hall is a chaplain with the HWCDSB.

REFLECTION

- just to note that the particular image [below] was something I pulled off a friend's page- I am not sure who is the owner of the image.

Hoping you are well

Blessings

mary

March 25

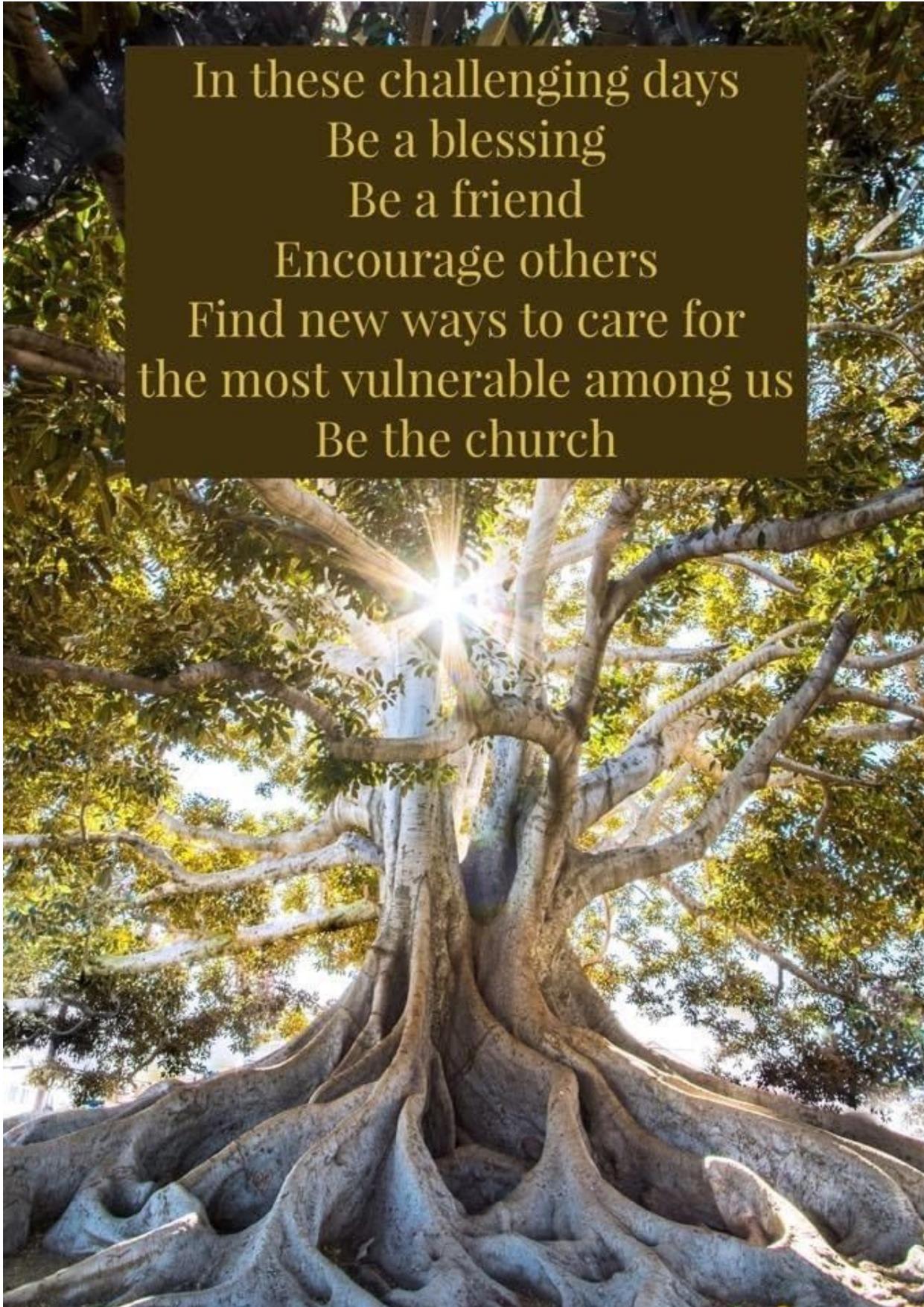
Luke 10:29

“But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”

These last number of days I have walked the road- seeing not a person, not a car. Today was different. First, I was late getting out of the house- my early morning walk missed, I headed out just after noon. Second, not one, but three cars passed me along the way. The first passed, with the driver waving (as is customary in the country) to me. I didn't recognize him and he, no doubt, had no idea who I was- but still, a wave of acknowledgement. The third car whizzed by me at breakneck speed- rather dangerously, given it is a dirt road and there are many potholes. I waved, but nothing in return except some dust-

It was the second car that was most notable. I could hear the car coming so I moved way over to the side and then lifted my hand in a wave. This car stopped. The driver rolled down his window (hmmm, is that still the nomenclature?). He asked if the road was a dead end. No, said I- this road will take you back around to the county road- or, if you want, you can turn right and head over the railroad tracks on an equally dirt filled road and continue on your way on back roads. In a short time I learned much about Doug. Doug, it seems, had moved from Toronto to Brockville two years ago. He sold his townhouse in Toronto for \$950,000, and had purchased a similar sized townhouse in Brockville for \$154,000. I learned that he had retired but that his friends were right and that he had become quickly bored and so was still working- something with sales I thought he said. Everything had come to a complete halt due to this Covid 19 thing- he supposed I didn't need or want a ride- and anyway it was necessary to maintain distance. I learned that his brother had been a beekeeper in Aurora - and that the one hive on his brother's front porch was enough to keep him from visiting. I learned that the traffic in Brockville was getting to him until he realized that it used to take him hours to get around Toronto. He learned my name, that my husband and I lived in the stone farmhouse he had passed a kilometre down the road. That my husband had decided to become a beekeeper in retirement and was happily busy all the time. The interaction was perhaps 5 minutes.

It occurred to me, as he drove away, that Doug, like many of us, was yearning for human connection. These are challenging days- we are couped up at home. Some of you are alone, others have a spouse or partner to keep you company, still others have your children with you. As we journey through each day, let's try to take a moment to remember the folks along the road that are yearning for connection.



In these challenging days
Be a blessing
Be a friend
Encourage others
Find new ways to care for
the most vulnerable among us
Be the church

Mary Defayette is a chaplain with the OCDSB.

ARTICLE FROM THE CANADIAN CATHOLIC BIOETHICS INSTITUTE

Adriana shares the following article:

Decision-Making in Light of COVID-19

Moira McQueen, LLB, MDiv, PhD

Now that matters are developing and more cases of COVID-19 are appearing in Canada, the reality is dawning that there is the possibility that many of us could fall seriously ill at the same time, and that resources will not be adequate for everyone's needs. We have to hope and pray that the 'curve will be flattened' by our collective efforts, and that the Government will be successful in its push to obtain equipment, including respirators and ventilators.

The hope is that time can be bought to have some effect on the spreading of the virus, time that will be valuable to buy and make more equipment.

Some nurses are reporting that they do not have access to proper masks, since those are being kept for staff who are working with people being tested or who have tested positively for the virus. If it is difficult to provide the required amount of masks and protective clothing, how much more difficult it must be to provide sufficient numbers of respirators and ventilators. It is practically impossible to be adequately prepared for a pandemic.

Given the shortage of respirators and ventilators for intensive care, we will soon be facing the question of who should receive treatment when supplies are scarce. Catholic teaching provides some general guidelines for this type of question, but naturally cannot provide 100% clear answers, depending on situations that occur.

OBJECTIVE MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

We are told that older people are more likely to succumb to COVID-19, based on medical statistics. But not *all* old people will fall ill if they contract the virus, although, statistically, it seems those with underlying medical conditions are more likely to develop serious health problems. A major question in light of this fact is whether a person's age should be a factor in deciding who receives intensive care treatment? I would give a qualified 'yes' to that question, but in situations where age is only *one* of the factors in an objective medical assessment.

The main criterion of any assessment should be whether or not the treatment has a good, statistical chance of success. That will depend on the individual circumstances of the patient,

including his or her medical history, overall health and the presence or absence of any complicating factors. So, a younger person's overall health could be poor because of lack of care or because of existing health issues, and therefore could be considered less likely to benefit from treatment. Age alone is not a criterion, and should not be used as such.

Ageist views already exist in society, presenting a danger for older people in many fields, whether in employment or in health matters. A recent article in the British *Daily Telegraph* said there could be an interesting benefit from the coronavirus: "Not to put too fine a point on it, from an entirely disinterested economic perspective, the COVID-19 might even prove mildly beneficial in the long term by disproportionately culling elderly dependents." There is no fine point there at all: the opinion is extremely blunt and objectionable, as is using the word 'cull,' as if the elderly are a breed that needs to be cut back to protect the rest of the herd. Economics do factor in moral decisions, as, for example, in our present situation we do lack equipment and may have to make decisions that otherwise would be unnecessary. The suggestion, however, that some good might come of older people dying from lack of treatment is morally reprehensible, and is patently ageist and discriminatory.

GUIDELINES, ALLOCATION OF HEALTH RESOURCES, OBJECTIVE DECISION-MAKING

There is no doubt that the situation in Italy has spiralled out of control, and accounts and photographs of piled-up coffins awaiting burial testify to the high death rate, and there is also no doubt that most of the dead are elderly. The Italian College of Anesthesia, Analgesia, Resuscitation and Intensive Care has issued guidelines that doctors and nurses should follow, and, among other things, the guidelines compare the moral choices doctors might have to make to types of wartime triage. It may be necessary to follow "the most widely shared criteria regarding distributive justice and the appropriate allocation of limited health resources." This sounds reasonable and the document recommends that patients with the highest chance of therapeutic success should be treated. Doctors are advised to take a patient's age and general state of health into account in treatment decisions, knowing that patients with existing health issues are more likely to die.

So far, so good. The guidelines, however, go on to say: "What might be a relatively short treatment course in healthier people could be longer and more resource-consuming in the case of older or more fragile patients," and this is followed by a startling statement: "It may become necessary to establish an age limit for access to intensive care."

These two statements do not follow, morally or logically. Assessing a person's benefit from treatment in his or her particular situation is an objective, medical opinion. Deciding on treatment because of age alone is, as explained above, not a moral criterion, *per se*. This reflects the same approach as that given in the *Daily Telegraph* article, that non-treatment of people, just because they are old, would result in some sort of benefit to society. This type of immoral,

utilitarian stance must be strongly resisted. It represents a ruthless disregard for the elderly, seeing them as a means to an end instead of as dignified 'ends' in themselves, as Catholic teaching reminds us, with the same rights and claims on life as everyone else in society.

If such a guideline were to be followed, and the elderly were seen as expendable, there could be further risk to those whose quality of life is viewed negatively in society. If someone with a disability, physical or mental, were to contract COVID-19 and were in need of intensive care, would doctors start to think in terms of dismissing them in favour of patients with similar needs but without those disabilities? We should never allow decision-making which relies on subjective assumptions about disabilities or quality of life at any stage. We must insist that decisions be made on an objective basis, meaning that any person with COVID-19 should be treated if the prognosis for recovery is favourable. Age, disability and 'quality of life' judgments should not enter the equation.

Society has had similar discussions about transplants. It is unfortunate that these, too, count as scarce resources, but it means that decisions have to be made about recipients. Again, it is the objective situation of the person needing a transplant that is assessed, on the basis of possible benefit. For example, what happens when there is only one kidney available, but two candidates? The first is a 40 year old, long-term smoker with obesity issues, and the second is a 72 year old who still runs competitively. The physical condition of each person would be assessed here, not only their age and their projected 'life years.' Making the decision on age alone is unacceptable, since the older person here could easily be assessed as being more likely to benefit, given his lifestyle. Condition, not their age, should be key to decision-making.

CATHOLIC TEACHING

Since it upholds life and the equal dignity of every person, Catholic teaching also takes seriously the notion of the common good and the notion of solidarity. While we can be sure that we are making a good moral choice in opting for treatment if our situation shows it is likely to be successful, we should remember that it is possible that some older people (and even some younger) will take the view that, if there are competing claims for resources, they might decide to forgo their opportunity in favour of someone younger or in favour of any other person. That would be a praiseworthy work of charity, perhaps even heroic, but we must also remember that our teaching is clear that no one is morally obligated to act in this manner. It must be the person's free choice, made out of an abundance of concern for other people, and, of course, no one should ever be pressured to make such a choice.

The practice of the virtue of solidarity with our fellow human beings is another area where some people might choose to forgo treatment, regardless of their age or other factors, but purely from a sense of charity. These responses do happen and should not be discounted. People, however, should not be persuaded in this direction, since a free moral decision is needed.

Finally, we depend on our health care workers, and we know that many of them are putting their lives at risk for the rest of us. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude. We also pray they will maintain objective standards as the guiding light in their approach to this pandemic. The Catholic Church supports this approach, which in any event has been the longstanding approach of the ethical goals of medicine in treating disease.

Adriana Rerecich is a chaplain with the HCDSB.

ARTICLE FROM MERCY NEWSLETTER

Andrea shares the following link to a very good article:

https://medium.com/@emilyscott_89364/your-brain-wont-work-as-well-tips-for-spiritual-leaders-during-covid-19-30aa71576dc5

Andrea Taylor is a chaplain with the HCDSB.

POEM

'...a poem that I wrote about my mom...

Just as I could say that I am going through a tough time with all this COVID-19 stuff, my mom also went through a tough time as outlined in the poem! The fire took place in 1945 just after my parents and siblings relocated after the war. Mom had just spent four years single parenting while my dad was in the Navy - four years with 4 kids under the age of 10 - no Social Media!

Enjoy!

Halo

by Joanne Belanger

Her hair turned grey

quickly at 27

after the fire where

they lost everything.

Starting over

with four kids

rebuilding the business first,

then the house.

Winter spent in one room

at the neighbors.

No insurance.

Just folks that trusted

dad would pay them back.

She wound motors

beside him.

And worked

nights at the canning factory

so they could buy a piano

for my sister.

She trusted the dog

Rex, the watchful shepherd

to babysit.

Her hair grey – no

not grey.

but silver

a radiance

round her head.

She earned them all

through hard work

faith

and

perseverance.

My mom,

the angel

with a silver halo.



Joanne's parents during the war.

Cheers,

Jo

Joanne Belanger is a chaplain with the ALCDSB.

SONG

Laurie shares the following song choice:

'This song is good for the current circumstances.'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7Qz_0x-lnk

Laurie Young is a chaplain with the Wellington CDSB.

LAWN SIGN

Ivan posted this in front of his house:



Ivan Canjar is a chaplain at Humber College.

POEM

Brian shares one of his poems:

The High Priest's Servant

By Brian Halferty

As we moved through the dark,
crowding together at the garden entrance,
I felt a thrill of fear,
my excited heart beating rapidly,
my mouth and throat pulling at the night air.

We had come prepared:
torches to light our way,
swords and armour to force submission
from those who might oppose.
We came under orders
and with authority on our side.
Yet still there was uncertainty
and fear.

It happened quickly, too quickly.
A voice asking a question,
a shouted response,
and then the searing pain,
the side of my head burning,
blood covering my face;
and my own voice –
I heard my own voice –
screaming and crying.

As I look back on that moment of terror,
I cannot tell you all that happened
or the order of events.
All I remember is that
the man we came to arrest
stood suddenly in front of me.
Bending over me
as I lay on the ground,

he reached out
and held my head in his hands.

Our eyes connected for a moment.
It was as if I knew him
and he knew me.
Then he stood,
and with a guard holding him by each arm
he quietly walked away.

It was only then I realized
the flow of blood had stopped,
the pain was gone,
and with it my fear of death.

I had gone to the garden
in obedience to my master, Caiaphas,
knowing little about Jesus of Nazareth,
save what I overheard
in others' conversation.
Leaving the garden,
I still knew little of him,
but I carried the memory
of his gentle touch
and of his eyes.

Brian Halferty is a retired chaplain with the TCDSB.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HOLY THURSDAY VIRTUAL PRAYER SERVICE

Andrew sent the following video to his staff April 9:

Just wanted to share some positive chaplaincy news. I know my staff is missing our students so I asked some of our Campus Ministry students at St. John's College to read from a Holy Thursday prayer service and film themselves, creating a Holy Thursday Surprise that I could send to staff this morning, allowing them to begin their day with a Holy Thursday virtual prayer service lead by students. Our students came through and through their video clips together. I sent this to staff this morning and they are really appreciating it.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=409&v=Y-STAN5BDzo&feature=emb_title

Andrew Hall is a chaplain with the BHNCDSB.

Thanks again to Eileen, Don, Betty-Anne, Marie, Murray, Andrew, Gillian, Divina, Maureen, Sharon, Mary, Adriana, Andrea, Joanne, Laurie, Ivan and Brian and for their contributions. The Year-end Newsletter will be issued at the end of the school year. Please consider submitting any news, prayers, stories, reflections, insights, songs, works of art or videos by June 21. Send them to Lorenzo at cscovp@gmail.com. Include a photo or image with your submission.

***Wishing you and your families a blessed and holy
Easter Season!***

Jesus is Risen!

Truly, He is Risen!

