



## CSCO Christmas Newsletter

Here we are: the end of school for 2021.

It continues to be a different road that we're travelling on. Still wearing masks, sanitizing and maintaining social distance. No field trips, retreats in the classroom, no school Masses, virtual Liturgies.

Major changes though: sports and clubs are back on. And the vast majority of students are physically in school. Still not the same but we're getting there. The road continues to be bumpy but it will eventually smooth over.

We are 'companions on the journey' and our Lord is still leading the way! "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say rejoice!"

Thank you to the contributors for this issue of the Newsletter: Jolene Smith, Don Hall, Andrew Hall, Margaret Palmer, Mariana Worth, Ann Clarke, Jeff Gendron and Eileen McGowan.

*Lorenzo Campanelli  
CSCO Vice President  
Chaplaincy Leader of Holy Trinity C.S.S.*

### 2021-2022

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## HERALD

I wrote this piece on piano in 1999, during some of my scripture studies, while raising my 5 children (who were between 4 and 14 at the time). I have performed it a few times at Choir concerts, but I don't think I ever shared it with my fellow Chaplains, except for maybe Tomy (who was my mentor in ministry when I began working for the Archdiocese of Toronto in 2000. When I eventually get the nerve up, I plan to record it, but that may take some doing for me. (Haha....I'm a little camera shy).

My best to all of you wonderful Chaplains, doing God's work.

Advent Blessings,  
Eileen McGowan

*Herald*

*eileen mcg 99*

*Herald of wonderful tidings draw near  
Bearer of news we've been longing to hear  
Break through the silence and open our ears  
Sing us the dawn of our Saviour*

*Here in our world full of burdens and cares  
Bound to our duties we walk unaware  
God breathes among us as close as a prayer  
Come Herald, awake us to see*

*Shake us from comfort, toil, and fear  
Sing to our hearts what our ears fail to hear*

*Our God is among us  
fragile as we....  
broken...like you and like me.*

*Our God is among us  
fragile as we....  
Free us from bondage  
to see.*

*fragile as we....  
broken...like you and like  
me.*

*God is among us  
fragile as we....  
Free us from bondage  
to see*



*Herald Emmanuel, bringer of grace  
We are the people who yearn for God's face  
Here in our lives in this time and this place  
Waiting in hope for our Saviour*

*Herald the kingdom and herald its birth  
Herald eternity's child upon earth  
Herald the news of our measureless worth  
Beloved in the sight of our God*

*Loved, though we're broken, wounded, and blind  
Loved though we're angry and cruel and unkind*

*Our God is among us  
fragile as we....  
broken...like you and like me.  
God is among us  
fragile as we....  
Free us from bondage  
to see*



## UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL CSCO MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**A diamond is just a piece of charcoal that has handled stress exceptionally well. (not too sure who wrote this but i like it!). Enjoy this issue's spotlights!**

First up is **Marianna Worth**, who became a school Chaplain in September of 1996 and was hired by the Waterloo Catholic District Board. She began at Monsignor Doyle CSS in Cambridge, Ontario. She has been in chaplaincy for **25 years**.

*Favourite food?*  
**Shrimp Pad Thai**

*Favourite movie?*  
**When Harry Met Sally**

*What do you love most about school chaplaincy?*  
**Praying with people, supporting people, organizing events**

*What is your favourite memory of school chaplaincy?*  
**Co-teaching religion for Special Education Classes; seeing staff and students grow in faith.**

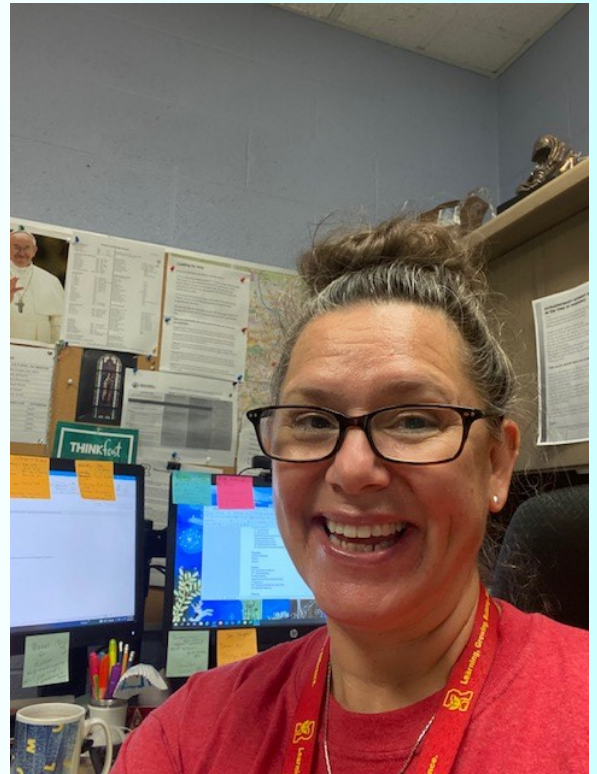
*What was your favourite trip/vacation?*  
**Netherlands with family; Dominican Republic with students**

*What is the most important thing for you on your goal/bucket list?* **Go to Italy; climb Machu Pichu; Got to Rome .**

*Have you ever met a celebrity?*  
**Nope.**

*What is a unique thing about you that you would love other people to know?*  
**I am both terrified and fascinated (almost obsessed) with tornadoes and weather events.**

*What would you like to tell others about your family?*  
**I have been married for 28 years, have 2 adult children and an adult dependent sister-in-law. I love my family and am so proud of how we have grown through challenges.**



*What is your background?*  
**Born in Nova Scotia, half Dutch.**

*Hey CSCO!*

*I have been extremely busy setting up my clubs, and have included a new lunch club for our struggling and isolated students called Cafe 229. We had our very first live-streamed Liturgy of the Word using Microsoft Teams and broadcasted it to the entire school and it worked so well! And so, we are looking forward to many more opportunities to pray together working within current restrictions. While most of my ministry has been full with supporting students with anxiety and depression so far this year, it has been lovely being face 2 face again, running events, clubs and supporting staff and students, building faith, respect, inclusion, justice and peace!*

*-Marianna*

Next up is **Ann Clarke**, who became a school chaplain in September 2007, when she was hired by the London CDSB to be the chaplain at St.Mary's in Woodstock.

Some things to know about Ann:

*How many years have you been involved in school chaplaincy?* 15

*Favourite food?*  
Chocolate

*Favourite movie?*  
Not sure I have one.

*What do you love most about school chaplaincy?*

How much I learn about life and love and the opportunity to share it with others .

*What is your favourite memory of school chaplaincy?*

National March for Life trips to Ottawa with many students (and fellow chaps) over 10 years.

*What was your favourite trip/vacation?*

Ireland with my family and Costa Rica with my sister.

*What is the most important thing for you on your goal/bucket list?*

To make it to heaven .

*Have you ever met a celebrity?*

I don't think so..

*What is a unique thing about you that you would love other people to know?*

I'm a recovering math geek and I love to take pictures of nature (especially birds)

*What would you like to tell others about your family?*

I am so blessed. My husband Don and I have three adult children who are all on this journey of life with us. My family of origin is a source of love and strength with three brothers and a sister which creates a big bunch of people for family gatherings.

*What is your background?*

After a Bachelor of Mathematics I worked in Information Technology and Market Research fields. I then returned to school for a Bachelor of Education. I taught very briefly at an Adult High School and then stayed home for 14 years to raise my children. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, I was asked to fill in for a school chaplain for three week. And the rest, as they say, is history.





*Jolene Smith's weekend view!*







Donald Hall builds houses for disadvantaged communities in the Dominican Republic.



invisible rising air currents, thermal to thermal, sometimes for hours and thousands of metres aloft. That's been the real joy of flight for me."

#### DONALD HALL, OCT, BUILDING FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Donald Hall has been teaching for more than 30 years, but he's also been making a special trip nearly every year for the past 17 years, since he became the chaplaincy leader at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School in Hamilton, Ont. He travels to San José de Ocoa in the Dominican Republic annually to help make the dreams of locals a reality. And while he's outside of the classroom during these exciting, passionate trips, he's still making an impact on the students and colleagues who join him.

The DREAMS (Dominican Republic Education and Medical Support) program started 20 years ago in a religion class at St. Mary's. The students initially wanted to help the poor and were inspired to make a difference in the Caribbean. Since the program's inception, thousands of students—often accompanied by Hall—have built a school, a teacher's residence and 60 homes in the San José de Ocoa region.

It was back in the summer of 2004 when Hall interviewed for the chaplaincy position at St. Mary when he first heard about the DREAMS program. He had never been to the Dominican Republic. A year later,

two groups left for San José de Ocoa. Hall was excited for his first journey.

"The day before our group was scheduled to depart, the airline went bankrupt," he recalls. "Finding 18 seats on a plane going to the Dominican Republic during the March break was a huge challenge." Still, the groups made it to their destination.

"Some of my most memorable moments include working in the mountains and building new homes for families in need," he says, adding his adventures have opened his eyes in other ways. "I'm reminded that we are poverty-stricken in ways that the Dominicans are not. They are blessed with joy, love of life, a strong sense of community and a deep, abiding faith in God. We have so much to learn from the people we meet in the Dominican Republic."

Hall says it's the culmination of his experiences that continues to take him back to the Caribbean. "What draws me back is the love of the Dominican people and the passion and teamwork of our students and staff, and our wonderful DREAMS families. While a Dominican family receives a new house, we receive a new perspective on life."

Hall and his colleagues are currently exploring the possibilities of doing similar work with Indigenous communities in Ontario. "DREAMS is continually evolving, and we look forward to reaching out closer to home in the near future." **PS**

## The Lunch Lady

While some parents detest the mere thought of lunch preparation, Lindsay Pruss, OCT, has turned this task into a thriving Instagram account with more than 33,000 followers. The now-social-media influencer known as [@lunches\\_by\\_lindsay](#), who's also a teacher at St. Louis Separate School in Mississauga, Ont., has made packing kids' lunches fun.

"When my daughter was about to start JK, I found a bento lunchbox I liked and noticed people had posted photos online of what they filled them with. I thought it was a great way to keep track of what I was sending and thought it would be fun to make her lunch cute using different shapes and accessories," Pruss says. "So, I started taking photos, and in 2017, I decided to start an Instagram account just for pictures of what I was packing. If people wanted to follow me, I would hopefully inspire them when it came to fun, healthy lunches. I had good ideas and tips to share."

Pruss says she's found a love of lunch-packing. She's a big crafter, and this is just another outlet for her to get creative. Her biggest lunch hits online have been "anything on a stick" and waffle pizzas. "Right now, I'm working on holiday lunches like the Rudolph sandwich for Christmas. I just want to show people that it's easy to feed your kids healthy foods, and it really doesn't take much time to prepare. My ideas are simple, and you can do them yourself. Just keep it fun and easy."



# Christmas Condolences

**To my CSCO colleagues who are grieving,  
be assured of my prayers**

Mary's expectation  
is more poignant to us  
because we know of her sorrow;  
our own Christmas this year  
will have added meaning  
because of our own sorrows.

The holidays as we knew them  
will forever be changed  
because we have loved  
and lost someone dear to us.

The empty place at the table  
will always point to the love  
that still remains,  
however dearly missed.

But Christmas will come  
despite our losses,  
perhaps with less enthusiasm,  
requiring more effort to trim the tree.

But there is grace in the truth  
that Christmas will come;  
time will beckon us  
into a new experience  
of the holy day,  
flavoured by the absence  
of one so loved.

So. . .  
With the tears, numbness, anger  
and all expressions of grief,  
we will hold on to memories  
as though life depended on it.

With the bustle and busy-ness,  
we will pray for space and stillness  
to sense the love  
that reaches beyond death  
and expands our understanding  
of both Heaven and Earth.

With Advent candles and Christmas feasts  
we will pray for each other  
to know that we are not alone



in our grief and  
in our yearning for glimpses of Joy.

***God bless us all this Christmas.  
My sincere condolences,***

***Margaret***



## **PREPARING FOR THE LIGHT**

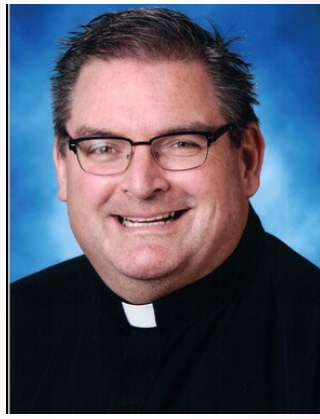
We look to you, O God  
as the light of Salvation dawns upon us.  
The colours shine so brightly and show us the way.  
We look to you, O God  
as we hear the angels singing.  
Their song of joy, opening our hearts to your love.  
We look to you, O God  
as we kneel before the stable.  
Its humility invites us to serve in Your Name.  
We look to you, O God  
as peace surrounds us.  
Those who are present and those who now rest with you.

J. Gendron, 2021  
Catholic Central - Windsor, ON

In loving memory of CCH Students : Ahmed Debdub and Yazan Hamza  
May their light shine always upon us.



photo credit:  
Jolene Smith



Rev. Father Matthew George

1968 - 2021

Rev. Fr. Matthew George formerly of Delhi passed away suddenly in Exeter on Monday, November 15, 2021 in his 53rd year. Fr. Matt, as he was affectionately known, served as a pastor and friend to many since his Ordination to Holy Orders on April 27, 1996. We are in thankful remembrance of his 25 years in the Priesthood. From Ontario to Manitoba to the Yukon, he served as: Associate Pastor, Chaplain, Spiritual Director, Pastor and Administrator. For the past number of years, Fr. Matt served as Pastor of St. Peter, St. Joseph and St. Boniface, Zurich and then as Associate Pastor of the Lake Huron Catholic Family of Parishes which includes parishes: Immaculate Heart of Mary, Grand Bend; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mount Carmel; Precious Blood, Exeter; St. Boniface, Zurich; St. Peter, St. Joseph and St. Peter, Goderich. Also a Faithful Member & Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus.

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"Fr. Matt" as he was affectionately known, was also a great supporter of the CSCO and was the Main Celebrant at the Celebration of Eucharist for our 2016 Conference. Fr. Matt was well known in the Windsor-Essex area. Here are some shared memories from a few of the Campus Ministers from the WECD SB.

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Fr. Matthew George was a 'larger than life' presence in our area and everywhere he went... physically, spiritually and of course, in personality!

He was a faith-filled, kind, funny, inquisitive, intelligent, generous and devoted priest that everyone knew simply as Fr. Matt. His heartfelt desire to witness to the love of God in every area of life had him reaching out and participating in anything and everything that would connect him to his people. From knitting baptismal sweaters for newborns and their families, playing in local baseball tournaments with the KofC, attending the CSCO Conference with us, his love of a good procession and his daily practice of faith, he immersed himself in the life of the church and its people.

We have been forever blessed by his faithful presence in our lives and we will never forget his love, his joy for life and his laugh. He will be so dearly missed and we say with grieving hearts, "Well done, good and faithful servant"

Renee Fuerth, Campus Minister - Ste. Anne Catholic Secondary School



I had the amazing pleasure of working with Fr Matt George in my first year of Campus Ministry at St. Thomas of Villanova 20 years ago. My fond memory of him... My very first Mass, for the Kiss of Peace: He picked me up and swung me around in front of the entire school and said: "Congratulations on a job well done!" He came every Wednesday that school year. We shared a space. Whether we were hanging out with students, he would love to be part of all conversations. Or sometimes he would just listen. He supported everything I did! He will be missed. His smile. His hearty laugh. RIP wonderful servant: Fr Matt. Thank you for showing me the way.

Kathy Verardi, Campus Minister - St Thomas of Villanova Catholic Secondary School

Over the years, I always admired Fr. Matt for his quiet and gentle presence. When I worked for the Diocese of London, he was always known as the "knitting priest." He had a great talent for knitting scarves, gloves and hats, which he would then donate to families in need. He was also a great man of faith who was not afraid to speak up for our Catholic Faith. He was a great Servant of the Lord.

Jeff Gendron, Campus Minister - Catholic Central Secondary School

## Saint in the making-role model for our students!



"Our goal must be the infinite and not the finite. The Infinity is our homeland.  
We are always expected in Heaven."

~ Blessed Carlo Acutis-

*Photo: Associazione Amica di Carlo Acutis*

Dear God,

Thank you for the WONDERFUL opportunity to play our first home football game of the season! Fill us with energy and passion as we push ourselves to do well. Help us all to compete with fairness on and off the field.

Protect both our visiting Bishop Ryan Celtics and St. Mary's Crusaders as they throw, kick, block, tackle and run this afternoon. Watch over all those present, our amazing coaches, managers, all the football players, the officials, our loyal fans and our families. May this football game be one where we leave it all on the field. Amen.

St. Mary, pray for us!

Don Hall, Chaplaincy Leader  
St. Mary Catholic Secondary School

The SJC Junior Worship Band has written an original worship song called "Rebuild, Restore, Renew."



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3-f3STHoq8>



The senior worship band at my high school wrote an original worship song.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-tkQouAZVo&t=32s>



Andrew Hall  
Chaplaincy Leader  
St. John's College

Thanks to Jolene, Don,  
Andrew, Jeff, Margaret, Marianna, Ann and Eileen for  
their contributions.



**Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed and merry Christmas, and a happy New Year! Hope, peace, joy, and love to you!  
Have an awesome break!**

**Next Issue: Easter 2022**

Please consider submitting any news, prayers, poems, songs, art work, stories, reflections, or insights by  
March 23, 2022 for the next newsletter.

Send it to Lorenzo at [csc.vp@gmail.com](mailto:csc.vp@gmail.com). Include a photo or image.

**Newsletter Team:** Deidre Pereira, Nick Ali, Lorenzo  
Campanelli