

We now enter the liturgical season of Ordinary Time. It is anything but ordinary! At our virtual Advent Retreat (held on Dec. 9th) the insight came to me that we call this season ordinary yet there is nothing ordinary about life when there is a baby to look after; it is simply a 'new normal' as common parlance would put it. There is much compromise, loss of sleep and an habitual selflessness for the sake of this new person and this new reality. The needs of a vulnerable child demands more attention and care than the self-realizing goals of our ego. Jesus is the game-changer that sets before us a new reality and mission that needs our attention and energy.

From the Vice President, cont'd.

This mission is our 'new normal' from which we emerge, having spent time with fellow parishioners and loved ones reflecting on the mystery of the Incarnation. It reminds me of that well-known quote by Howard Thurman.

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart

~Howard Thurman

We can do this, right? Of course we can, for we are not alone in this!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the newsletter. I want to thank our contributors Wydmarck Kwan and Dean Woodbeck.

Wydmarck, from Niagara CDSB, shares with us a reflection on the blessing it is to be a school Chaplain. Dean Woodbeck, our CSCO President, shares with us 5 songs on his playlist. (His suggestions became part of my own--thank you, Dean!) Thank you to everyone who reaches out with prayer intentions and suggestions for future editions. You will see an evolution of this newsletter from the previous one. Please give attention to the "Bulletin Board" page and if you are interested in any of the subcommittees, let Dean know. Over time, this newsletter will be more of what we want and need as we continue this wonderful, demanding, rewarding, joyful, holy work.

CSCO is more than the sum of our members. We are who we are as CSCO because you are living witnesses to the amazing grace and goodness of our God. Keep on keepin' on for "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him." (1 Cor. 2.9)

Yours in Christ, Adriana Rerecich

CSCO VP

Chaplaincy Leader @ Assumption CSS, Burlington



We are called to work in God's vineyard. (Matt. 20.1-16). We each have been doing this for various lengths of time. Each newsletter will feature one of our members sharing stories and perspective from their area of God's vineyard.

Conversations With An Uber Driver



by Wydmarck Kwan
Chaplaincy Leader
– Lakeshore Catholic
High School

About two weeks ago, I took an Uber ride from home to Lakeshore Catholic. Throughout the trip, I had a meaningful conversation with the driver. He inquired about my work at the school. I told him that I am a school chaplain. When he further asked – “What is a chaplain?” – I found myself grappling for words to explain in simple terms the profundity of what I do. I must have mumbled that I organize Catholic faith formation events for the school such as retreats or holy masses; and that I provide spiritual accompaniment to students and staff. My response was met with a quick blank stare and silence.

I realized that I communicated not clearly enough. To be honest, it was a question that caught me off-guard. One that I was not prepared to give a clear answer. Then, by God's grace, I felt a strong stirring in my heart to share my faith journey.



Lord, hear our prayer...

-Praying for those who are in mourning and for those dealing with illness, may they be touched by God's healing love and compassion...

-Please pray for Mary-Lou Halferty's health and for Brian and the Halferty family who are supporting and caring for her...

-Lorenzo's son, Ezra, is close to completing his 'big year' (2022). He's currently at 354 different species of birds identified in the province of Ontario...

-For my marriage, my relationship with my SIL

-For those dealing with bureaucracy or red tape or waiting lists or contract negotiations...

-For those who struggle with Christmas time and the aftermath of paying bills...for those struggling with winter and Seasonal Affective Disorder...

-In thanksgiving for the blessings we have...

-for the repose of the soul of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

For all the faithful departed:

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and the souls of all the Faithful departed, rest in peace.



Milestones

For those celebrating milestone birthdays this year..."For the Lord delights in you..." (Isaiah 62.4).

For those who had milestone birthdays during the pandemic and couldn't celebrate the way you wanted to...this year is the year to do a "repeat."

May our birthdays remind us what a blessing it is to be alive, to be a "someone" for those in our lives, to be part of God's awesome plan for all creation!

A special shoutout to Chaplains celebrating work anniversaries—from those who are new to those of us who have been in it for a while! Congratulations!



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(Cont'd from page 2)

I told him that I was born and raised in the Philippines. During senior high school retreat, I encountered Christ in a deeply personal way. The experience of God's unconditional love led me from parish youth ministry in college, to seven years of priesthood seminary formation, and then to campus ministry work for eight years. I moved to Canada in 2016. Yet somehow, God paved the way for me to practice Catholic lay ministry in the Canadian context. I obtained an MDiv degree from Regis College in 2021; and on that same year, I was hired as Chaplaincy leader.

I told him that at the heart of my calling is to draw young people to Christ: to make Jesus known and loved, and to help young people discover fullness of life through discerning one's path on how one can share in Christ's mission in our world today.

He thanked me for telling my life story. Somehow, I felt that he appreciated what I shared. I arrived at Lakeshore Catholic and thanked the Uber driver. I went straight to the Chapel and thanked the Lord for the grace of a renewed eyes of faith on the mission with which He entrusted me.

A little bit of this, a little bit of that...

Book Review:

***All I Am: A Catholic Devotional for
Discovering Who You Are in God*, by Caroline
Pignat (Zondervan, 2022). \$21.00 CDN**

Caroline Pignat has written a book that helps our young people discover another narrative that nurtures a healthier self-identity, a God-given identity. Each section has 6 days of reflections, followed by a "Digging Deeper" section where the young reader can journal and do intentional reflecting on who they are in God. Then the reader rests on the 7th day and looks back at the insights gained in the past week. Each section can be adapted into a curriculum lesson, a Chapel visit activity or part of a retreat.

Two thumbs up!

Eg. Digging deeper (page 3):

***Finish each sentence
with a few describing words.***

My best friend says I am _____

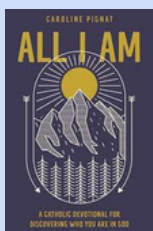
My siblings say I am _____

My parents say I am _____

But I say I am _____

***2. How have others shaped
how you see yourself?***

***3. God deeply loves you, just as you are.
How does that make you feel?***



Available from Joseph's
Inspirational. He will ship directly
to you!

**On my playlist
(by Dean Woodbeck):**

You Say
(Lauren Daigle)

21 Years
(Toby Mac)

Bless the Broken Road
(Rascal Flatts)

This Is Me
(The Greatest Showman)

For Good
(Wicked)



Scan the QR code if you would like to offer
prayer intentions, milestone news, suggestions,
or to contribute to the CSCO Newsletter!



Reimagining Ministry

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." – Matthew 18:20

CSCO Chaplain's Conference 2023 Update

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is looking forward to seeing everyone in person in the spring for our annual CSCO conference and AGM. **Set in the heart of the beautiful 1000 Islands in Gananoque please join us at the Glen House Resort from April 12-14th, 2023.** Our theme is this year is: Reimagining Ministry which is linked to the biblical text: "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." – Matthew 18:20

This conference will include our annual AGM along with our keynote speaker Dr. Bernardine Ketelaars who is the Director of Lay and Pastoral Formation at St. Peter's Seminary in London and lecturer in mission and ministry, catechesis, and theological reflection.

Various workshops will be held including one for new Chaplains, time for reflection and the celebration of the Eucharistic to name a few.

Mark your calendars as registration will be opening soon!

Peace to all!

Gordie Van Putten, Chaplaincy Leader of St. Joseph's CSS in Cornwall, ON and Planning Committee Chair.



Bulletin Board

CSCO Subcommittees looking for volunteers!
Contact Dean Woodbeck if you are interested in any or all of these!

Performance Appraisals: are you interested in helping shape the process of our performance appraisals? This subcommittee will use the 2009 Bishop's document on Chaplaincy as a guiding light.

Time to start thinking about who you'd like to nominate for the Brian Halferty Award! Nomination form/info on our website!

Conference Planning Guide Subcommittee: the guide is being updated. If you are interested in being part of this process, the committee would love to have you!

Executive Positions up for election this year:
President, Treasurer, Membership & Marketing, Members-at-large 1 and 2.

If you are new to Chaplaincy, please contact Adriana (cscovp@gmail.com) and/or Margaret (cscocomember.al@gmail.com). Professional Development and mentorship opportunities will arrive soon for those new to Chaplaincy!



*Are you retiring??? Please let us know!
Contact Adriana @ cscovp@gmail.com.*

Monthly Mass will be said for CSCO members on the following dates: (more to come!)

Friday, January 20, 2023 @ 1 p.m. - Holy Redeemer Parish, Sudbury

Thursday, February 16, 2023 @ 12 Noon - Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton

Saturday, March 11, 2023 @ 5 p.m. - St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Kingston

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 @ 9:30 a.m. - Notre Dame L'Assomption Cathedral, Hearst

Sunday, September 10, 2023 @ 11 a.m. - Holy Redeemer Parish, Sudbury, Ontario.



Christ is born. Alleluia!



Professional Development Opportunities

Free Online events



*Not-so-free (yet affordable-ish)
Online events*

The Crusades:
Are We Prisoners of Our
Interreligious History?

ICJS
COURSE

TUESDAYS
JANUARY 17, 24, 31 &
FEBRUARY 7, 2023
7:00–8:30 PM EST VIA ZOOM

With ICJS scholars Ben Sax and Matthew D. Taylor
and visiting scholar Halla Attallah

Free—Register Today!



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Awareness and prevention presentations:
Covenant House school presentations teach the next generation about homelessness and sex trafficking. Our facilitators can help teachers and students recognize and understand the issues. To book a presentation: [click here](#)



Feb. 20: Family Day
Feb. 22: Ash Wednesday
TBD: CSCO Virtual Lent Retreat
Mar. 13-17: March Break!
Apr. 2: Palm Sunday/Holy Week
Apr. 6: Holy Thursday
Apr. 7: Good Friday
April 9: Easter Sunday!
April 12-14: CSCO Conference!

As we begin a new year calendar year and leave Bethlehem to bring Christ in the world in our own settings and in our own ways, here is a beautiful, profound, modern way of hearing what it might mean for us to be a neighbour.
Ann Garrido preaching on the Gospel of the The Good Samaritan



DRENCHED IN HOLINESS: PRAYER FOR A NEW YEAR

*New Year
New Me*

Dear God,
On this day I ask You to grant this request,
May I know who I am and what I am,
Every moment of every day.
May I be a catalyst for light and love,
And bring inspiration to those whose eyes I meet.
May I have the strength to stand tall in the face of conflict,
And the courage to speak my voice, even when I'm scared.
May I have the humility to follow my heart,
And the passion to live my soul's desires.
May I seek to know the highest truth
And dismiss the gravitational pull of my lower self.
May I embrace and love the totality of myself,
My darkness as well as my light.
May I be brave enough to hear my heart,
To let it soften so that I may gracefully
Choose faith over fear.
Today is my day to surrender anything that stands
Between the sacredness of my humanity and my divinity.
May I be drenched in my Holiness
And engulfed by Your love.
May all else melt away.
And so it is.



- Debbie Ford
(This prayer and others
can be found at [this link](#).)

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