

Campus Ministry

Youth Ministry

Project Rachel

Refugee Ministries
(for Private Sponsorship
and Refugee Applicants
inside Canada)

Ministry to the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing

Pastoral Care
in Hospitals and Long-
Term Care Facilities

Migrant Workers Ministry



NEWSLETTER OF THE DIOCESE OF LONDON

Spring 2010 • Number 136

Elgin, Essex, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Norfolk, Oxford and Perth Counties

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What is Outreach Ministry?

...and what does it have to do with me?

By Andrew Bartley
Episcopal Director of Pastoral Leadership

Outreach ministry is the Church at work in God's name, stretching out to meet needs in the wider community. Our daily lives are filled with outreach ministry, whether or not we have a formal role in the Church. As Catholic Christians, we engage in outreach whenever we answer our baptismal call by serving the needs of others.

Parishes celebrate and support outreach ministry in as many different ways as they have people. While

examples such as youth ministry, St. Vincent de Paul and visiting the sick are familiar to many, the vast majority of Christian outreach is provided by parishioners in our daily lives. Work, school, home and community commitments provide endless opportunities to meet the needs of others.

In January 2008, Bishop Fabbro established eight diocesan Outreach Ministries to mobilize and inspire our capacity to serve. This was part of a sweeping reorganization undertaken to animate and support the pastoral life of our diocese. These Outreach Ministries include Campus

Ministry,
Ministry
to the Deaf
and Hard
of Hearing,
Migrant
Workers
Ministry,

Pastoral Care in Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities, Project Rachel, Refugee Ministries (for Private Sponsorship and Refugee Applicants inside Canada), and Youth Ministry. Each ministry fosters and complements the foundational and primary pastoral ministry offered in and by parishes.

These outreach ministries are part of the Pastoral Leadership Arm of the diocese, which also includes Care of Priests, Lay Ecclesial Ministry, Pastoral Planning, Permanent Deacons and Priest Personnel. They are funded almost entirely from your Sunday donations in parish offertories. This newsletter gives a glimpse of the dedicated work the Outreach Ministries provide and highlights from the past year.

On behalf of all in Pastoral Leadership, thank you for your generosity, support and prayer. If we can be of assistance or help you meet needs in your community, please contact us. It is our pleasure and privilege to serve.

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Youth Ministry

By Dan Moynihan

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Our Mandate

To assist parishes and schools as they engage young people ages 10–18 in the life, mission and ministry of the Church. Youth Ministry efforts are defined as being to, with, by and for young people.

Our Work (2009 – 2010)

Continued collaboration with the Diocesan Youth Ministry Advisory Board. Hosted Chrism Day Retreat for young people. Coordinated Catholic Christian Leadership Camp for young people entering Gr. 9 and looking forward to Camp for those entering Gr. 9 and 10 in July 2010. Collaborative efforts with other diocesan ministries and offices including the Festival of Faith during which senior secondary science students explored the relationship between faith and the sciences. Furthered the work of strengthening the school/church/home bonds in both the St Clair and Huron Perth Catholic District School Boards. Coordinated and expanded the National

Evangelization Team Ministries in Diocese of London from one week to four. Instituted Spirit Days in Woodstock and Chatham (2009, 2010) to assist with the preparation of young people for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Coordinated days of formation for newly Confirmed. Continued to support parish pastoral councils and youth commissions throughout the diocese.

Our Good News Stories

Ryan entered grade nine in September after attending Catholic Christian Leadership Camp last summer where he strengthened his leadership skills and deepened his faith. During camp, he was reminded to pass on the messages of hope and faith that he had learned. When Ryan returned home, he and a friend from camp decided that they would return to their elementary schools and teach the students what they had learned. Ryan has truly come to understand what it means to pass on the message of hope and faith.

Carolyn Vanroestel-Seward – Secondary Curriculum Consultant, SCCDSB - Thank you for the invitation allowing

our students to participate in the Festival of Faith event. The event was well organized and the speakers were outstanding. Our students and I were truly enlightened by Brother Guy Consolmagno's talk. He is well spoken, down to earth, exceptionally intelligent and a faith filled person. The students came away feeling grounded in their faith and clearer about some of the internal controversy's they had regarding their faith and their studies. My prayer is that every science student of faith is awarded an opportunity to hear Brother Guy. I hope that our students will pass along his message both at school and in their future careers as scientists.

Lucia – Sacred Heart, Parkhill: Thanks so much for Monday's day of recollection that you put on for the young people. It was really great to be able to meet a bunch of young people who are close to my age from all over our diocese. It was the first time I was able to attend the Mass of Chrism too and bring back the holy oils for our parish and it was such a beautiful experience! I really enjoyed the whole day!

Campus Ministry, King's University College

By Rev. Michael Bechard

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Our Mandate

To seek to nurture and challenge students, staff, faculty and the wider community in order to bring all into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ; to provide programs and services in the areas of advocacy, catechesis, evangelization, community life, prayer and worship, justice and peace, leadership development and spiritual and pastoral counseling; to promote ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and prayer; to serve the People of God and the entire human family. Fr. Béchard serves as Director of King's University College Campus Ministry Team, whose four lay personnel are funded by the College.

Our Work (2009-2010)

Work is undertaken with and for the larger university community, comprised of almost 3,500 full-time faculty and staff at King's, working to meet the diverse needs of over 30,000 students of various faith backgrounds at UWO. Provision of Catholic

education and training is offered in conjunction with the administration of King's University College, to chaplains at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Sacramental formation is available year-round to members of our parish and the wider university community through the RCIA process and Scripturally-based faith formation. Work continues with the administration of the College toward the full realization of Ex Corde Ecclesiae. Sunday Eucharist is celebrated, along with weekday Masses, lay-led Liturgy of the Word and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The annual Religious Life Lecture Series is free and open to the public. Collaborative work continues with other faith-based organizations creating meaningful dialogue between Catholics, Jews and Muslims; and UWO Chaplains' Association, supporting interdenominational services throughout the wider UWO community.

Our Good News Stories

Andres and Maria came to us seeking the completion of their

initiation into the Catholic faith through Confirmation, both student refugees to Canada with little to no support in the community. They were received into the Church at the Easter Vigil. Upon finding themselves pregnant, they continued to come to us for spiritual direction and support. When Maria delivered Gabriella early and there were complications which resulted in her hospitalization and fear for her life, both Maria and Andres were devastated and once again turned to our faith community for support. Although they were committed to celebrating Gabriella's baptism with family and friends in a large Church ceremony, but after much prayer and discussion with our chaplains they felt the movement of the Spirit and requested an emergency baptism in the hospital's critical care unit. Gabriella was baptized and has since started on the road to recovery and her parents have grown in love for and practice of their faith. Gabriella is now home with Mom and Dad and is growing healthier every day.

The Newsletter of the Diocese of London, established in 1980, is published quarterly in March, June, September and December with more than 14,000 copies distributed to Roman Catholics throughout nine counties in Southwestern Ontario: Elgin, Essex, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Norfolk, Oxford and Perth.



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Refugee Applicants Inside Canada

By Sr. Helen Petrimoulx

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Our Mandate

To provide guidance, assistance and protection of rights for refugee claimants who arrive in Canada; serve refugee claimants as they go through the process of refugee determination by the Immigration and Refugee Board, and with immigration processes afterward, as well as family reunification; assist and advocates for those refugees with strong, critical cases who are denied status; and, assist with practical help to settle in Canada.

Our Work (2009-2010)

Do you remember the large waves of Mexicans, pursued by US Immigration enforcement in southernmost states, who fled north to our borders about a year and a half ago? They made refugee claims in Canada. Many of these paid for false information about Canada's refugee system. Consequently, Canada Immigration established a fast track for deciding Mexican claims and for their removal from Canada. Caught in this fast track were some genuine Mexican refugees who had fled Mexico fearing for their lives. Only in the past six months has worldwide media been broadly exposing the kidnapping and extortion

of the middle class and the murdering of policemen by the powerful, expanding drug cartels in Mexico. Our ministry office has assisted four Mexican families targeted by this violence but refused at their refugee hearings, to be accepted by Immigration Canada under Humanitarian & Compassionate Applications. The work of our Diocesan Office for Refugee Claimants actually helps to save lives!

In the weeks after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, as Haitian refugees continued to receive tragic news about family members injured or killed, they were excused from English classes and made their way to our office where they mourned within community, consoled one another and asked us to join their circle of prayer. Their courage and strong trust in God is remarkable and a powerful inspiration for us! The Diocese of London sign that marks our doors often attracts refugees who know they are welcomed to talk freely about their spiritual needs, no matter what religious beliefs or lack of religion they may have.

Our Good News Stories

When refugees have to flee their homeland, they often do not have the time or funds to bring their spouse and dependent children with them to Canada.

Following a positive answer at their Immigration Hearing, these refugees at last feel free of worry for their own safety but face the daunting Immigration process of family reunification. Their worries about these family members left behind are present constantly until this long process is completed and they experience the intensely emotional arrival of their spouse/dependent children in Canada. An essential part of our Diocesan Ministry to Refugee Claimants is advocacy with Canadian Embassies and assisting the successful convention refugee in Canada and their family members to understand and complete the requirements of family reunification.

Two persons donated cars to the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. We were able to provide two single mom families with a car to meet the pressing demands of drop-offs to daycare centers and arrivals at their places of employment, not to mention grocery shopping, trips to Laundromats, etc. What a stress buster for single moms and a broadening of employment possibilities for many refugees these donations provide!

Private Sponsorship for Refugees

By Gilbert Iyamuremye

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Our Mandate

Promote and provide guidance and assistance to refugees overseas, and to faith communities in the diocese. The Private Sponsorship Program for Refugees is animated and managed in accordance with the

agreement signed by the Diocese of London and the Government department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada; and in line with the diocesan mission statement and policies. Duties include the assisting in the application processes for permanent residence in Canada for eligible refugees; assisting sponsored refugees

with settlement related needs; counseling about immigration processes, integration related matters and others; advocating for refugees' protection and assistance at local, regional, national and international levels; and educating faith communities, with a view to promoting private sponsorship of refugees and compassion towards the plight of

refugees.

Our Work (2009-2010)

The Diocese of London, on an annual basis, sponsors an average of 85 refugees from a variety of troubled countries. In 2009 we continued to respond to the crisis in Iraq by sponsoring 75 Iraqi Christian refugees out of a total of the 93 sponsored refugees. Taking the lead on Christian Iraqi refugees with other engaged (arch)dioceses led to a tremendous amount of work at the national level (advocacy, working groups) and at the local level (number of Iraqi sponsored refugees by our Diocese in 2009 was 70%).

Our Good News Stories

An Iraqi refugee writes, "My wife, children and I were living as ordinary citizens in Baghdad, Iraq, until the fall of the former regime and the American intervention. My extended family was living a decent life as well. Then, things turned up side down. My older brother received threats and phone calls from terrorist groups, according to which, my brother had to leave Christianity (stop attending church, wife and girls

to wear hijabs, etc.) and close down his business of selling drinks. Following these threats, he was kidnapped, along with my uncle who has working with him, and the whole family spent weeks without knowing their whereabouts. We had notified the police the second day of their disappearance. The police finally called us and notified us that my older brother's body parts were found floating on the river and my uncle's body was found on the outskirts of Baghdad with some parts of my brother's body.

"I managed to leave my house and went into hiding at a friend's house. My friend helped me to get a passport and cross the boarder into Syria by night.

"I spent nights full of nightmares from 2006 until my arrival in Canada in April 2009. I never felt peace until after I spent a few weeks in Canada. When I heard that some people are sponsoring my family and me to come to Canada, I was relieved but I could not imagine it could be true. I have slowly come to believe that I am safe in Canada. I am so grateful to all those who brought me to life again. I have no words to express my gratitude. May our Just, God Almighty bless them."



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DIOCESE OF LONDON *IN ACTION* OUTREACH MINISTRIES

<<<< from left to right, top to bottom: Father Greg Blonde, Andrew Bartley, Dan Moynihan, Peter Buckley, Gilbert Iyamuremye, Bishop Fabbro, Father Graham Keep, Sister Helen Petrimoulx, Marie Carter and Colleen Pickering.

Father Michael Bechard, missing from the photo, is pictured below with his team from King's University College





Migrant Workers Ministry

By Marie Carter

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Our Mandate

To provide support and resources to parish and deanery outreach initiatives to migrant workers who are our parishioners in the Diocese of London; to collaborate with community groups in reaching workers who are not part of our parish communities; to engage in research; lobbying and education that raises awareness of systemic issues of migration and facilitates better care and concern for the estimated 20,000 migrant workers in our diocese.

Our Work (2009-2010)

Extended the care and concern of the church through parish-based outreach in Leamington, Kingsville, Oxley, Pelee Island, Exeter, Bothwell/Thamesville, Blenheim and all of Ingersoll Deanery. Offered sacramental and pastoral care to Catholic migrant workers, including Mass in Spanish at eight locations. After mass socials and cultural gatherings such as Mexican Independence Day celebrations. While still mainly a rural outreach, we are beginning to assist workers employed in urban, non-agricultural work. While engaged primarily with Hispanic

outreach, Thai and Filipino migrant workers receive some outreach through community partnerships. Individual parish outreach sites provide services as diverse as Hispanic AA groups, bicycle safety programs, transportation services, on-farm prayer groups, translation services, ESL classes, informational fairs and more. We also engage in education, advocacy and lobbying to address gaps in programs and services that put workers at risk as well as with a community coalition at Chatham-Kent to educate government representatives on migrant issues. The ministry also includes community partnerships with employers, other faiths and community service agencies that provide additional services or us with organizing outreach events.

Our Good News Stories

A visiting worker from Barbados recently became stranded in London after a catastrophic illness prevented his return home. Tied to weekly treatments at a London hospital, his work visa, and health coverage had lapsed, and he had no way to pay for his treatments or even food. Once alerted to the workers' predicament, we were able to mobilize assistance from the local parish and wider community. A Barbadian

immigrant from the local parish visited and reassured the man, and the local St. Vincent de Paul offered assistance

while representatives of the farming community worked with authorities to plan for medical treatment that would allow the worker's return home.

In evaluating a pilot project in Thamesville, a Mexican worker who had been coming to the community for over eight years was asked "What has having a prayer team come to the farm meant to you? Does it make any difference to your life?" The worker replied: "In the eight years that I've been coming here, this is the first time I've felt welcomed. I feel people really want me here (attending the local church)."

At the recent Thai Songkran festival, a worker who had benefitted from Migrant Workers Ministry's sponsorship of Thai Outreach ESL work, beamed proudly as he was able, for the first time, to speak to us fluently in English. "Thank you for welcoming us here in your beautiful country and for caring about us."

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Project Rachel

By Peter Buckley

519-872-4772, projectrachel@dol.ca

Our Mandate

Post-abortion help for women and men, who are still hurting as a result of a past abortion experience.

Our Work (2009-2010)

Men or women may call the private and confidential help line at 1-888-355-1110 or at 519-646-2950 to connect with a volunteer. They are offered an opportunity to meet one to one with a clergy member or a counsellor in their area. Women are also offered an opportunity to attend one of the semi-annual Project Rachel Retreat weekends. Presentations on post-abortion trauma, Project Rachel and the healing process are offered to students in high school and to leaders throughout the diocese.

Our Good News Stories

It had been 41 years since Caroline was 18 years old, and her sister had taken her to the United States for her abortion. Her

family, especially her father, did not like her boyfriend, and would never have tolerated her pregnancy. After their return, she and her mother never spoke of the incident again. 41 years later, for the first time in her life, she was able to share her story with others. She finally was given the grace to grieve the loss of her unborn child, and to forgive those by whom she felt abandoned in her hour of greatest need. Eight months later, Caroline ended her chemotherapy, and died in peace, with her husband and adult children at her side. They said she knew she would see her child again in heaven, where she would wait for them as well.

Carlos was serving in the forces when a telephone call from his new wife changed his world forever. High school sweethearts, they had been married a year. She had become pregnant just prior to his leaving on his current assignment. Faced with the unforeseeable future

of raising a child alone on an army base, she consulted a local centre that assisted women in planning for parenthood. They strongly recommended she have an abortion to terminate the pregnancy, and then wait for her husband's return to have a child. Stressed and alone, she agreed. The pregnancy that was terminated was a little girl. Carlos fell apart. After a time of drinking through his pain, Carlos was arrested for assaulting a fellow soldier and

discharged from the army. Three failed relationships led him to a conversation with a counselor years later, who told him he needed to deal with the abortion of his first child. In calling Project Rachel, Carlos connected with a priest who not only shared with him how much God so loved his daughter, but loved him as well. Continuing with counseling, Carlos is learning to trust again, and to risk loving others.

Protect Our Children

In order to protect children, anyone who knows of any acts of sexual abuse or any perpetrator of abuse, whether priest or lay person, whether historical abuse or current, is obliged to report the abuse to the Children's Aid Society at 1-888-661-6167 and the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122.

Diocese of London Investment Committee Seeks New Members

The Committee works with Diocesan administration and our investment advisors in the oversight of Diocesan investments. These investments include our provincially mandated cemetery trust funds, Pentecost 2000 endowment funds and the Parish Deposit & Loan Fund. If interested please email Dave Savel at dsavel@dol.ca with your contact information and a brief background on yourself.

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Pastoral Care in Hospitals & Long-Term Care Facilities

By Rev. Greg Blonde
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Our Mandate

To oversee and support qualified chaplains for the giving of pastoral care in the hospitals: to provide material for the screening and supervision of volunteers in this area of ministry; and, to develop healthy working relationships and collaborate with parish pastoral care teams, St. Joseph Health Care Society, parish nurses, deacons, volunteers, and chaplains working in the various health care facilities throughout the Diocese.

Our Work (2009-20010)

We worked collaboratively with 29 hospitals and 94 long-term care facilities with more than 14,000 beds. Solidified chaplain teams in both Windsor and London. We met with the deaneries to address hospital and long-term care issues, distribute brochures and to introduce a series of workshops for the training of pastoral care visitors for hospitals and LTCs. Developed and distributed 100,000

new brochures for the spiritual care for the elderly, sick or dying in our hospitals and long-term care facilities.

Our Good News Stories

A deacon writes, “My involvement in ministry at Met Hospital in Windsor has developed from wondering what I am doing here to having a difficult time leaving because of people stopping me and wanting to talk. This covers a variety of subjects, from a belief in God to prayer requests. The most satisfying part of this ministry is the look on the face of the people when they recognize me and make the connection to our parish and the people of God. One man told me it was great to see someone he knew from the parish (he died about two weeks later). The physical presence in the hospitals is a sign that Church life goes beyond the doors of the building in which we worship, and into the lives of people. It is particularly important in times of crisis, such as when death is imminent, for both the patient and their family.”

Brenda was admitted with respiratory distress. She had always attended church with her family, but as an outsider. Over her extended stay at the hospital she requested Baptism, then Holy Communion and Confirmation. She was also able to talk freely about her impending death and its effect on her family. Brenda died at home one week after her release from Victoria Hospital in full communion with her church and at peace with her God and her family.

Joe had been admitted with extensive trauma to the lower half of his body following a tragic industrial accident. We journeyed with the family every step of the way and were with them the night he died. Thirteen months later his widow came across the business card of one of our chaplains and sought grief

counseling.

Gordon was admitted and clearly indicated that he was a non-practicing Catholic. When his surgery was delayed, we continued to visit with Gordon and his wife, building a good relationship. We never pushed prayer on them. As Christmas approached, he began to ask for a prayer at the end of each visit. On the Friday after Christmas he and his wife attended Mass in the chapel. When surgery came he was well prepared and recuperated quickly.

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Ministry to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

By Colleen Pickering
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Our Mandate

To provide faith based services and outreach for the deaf and hard of hearing community within the Diocese of London through education, training and interpretation so that the Good News of Jesus Christ is available to all God's people.

Our Work (2009 - 2010)

Trained interpreters for liturgical celebrations and communication with deaf and hard of hearing persons. Provided interpreters for major diocesan liturgical events. Organized social and religious events for deaf and hard of hearing persons. Offered sacramental support, including preparation for the reception of the sacraments. Set standards for services across the diocese and developed supports for specialized retreats and spiritual support. Worked with other established deaf organizations to provide outreach to deaf children/youth in the diocese. Currently, St. Agnes Parish in Chatham, Sacred Heart Parish in Ingersoll, Mary Immaculate Parish in London and St. Theresa Parish in Windsor all offer American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted Masses on a weekly basis.

Our Good News Stories

We were invited to participate

in an initiative to provide outreach to children/youth in our diocese to share the gospel using ASL with young people who might not otherwise have the opportunity. Our deaf ministry team has responded impressively to the need presented in our community. A lot of hard work and dedication has resulted in the “Light of Life” Deaf Club, which currently meets once a month at Roberts School for the Deaf.

Support for deaf and hard of hearing in our diocese is developing. Over the past year we have added interpreted masses on a weekly basis in Ingersoll. RCIA has been interpreted in ASL in Kingsville. In addition, we have begun to interpret mass at Parkwood Hospital. ASL classes with a religious foundation continue to be central to our ministry with beginner, intermediate and mass interpreter offerings. Several deaf individuals have assisted deaf ministry by providing ASL instruction to hearing individuals. Consequently, many participants have been able to communicate with the deaf and hard of hearing for a variety of purposes in religious and other settings including churches, hospitals, daycares, schools and legal offices.

We have had the opportunity over the past year to participate

in some valuable networking initiatives to meet with religious (priests, sisters, deacons, lay persons), interpreters, deaf and hard of hearing working in deaf ministry from various locations in Ontario, throughout Canada and the United States. In essence, we have been able to join forces to pool resources in order to provide support for deaf, hard of hearing and deaf ministry teams for exceptional Catholic events such as mini retreats in specific parishes, a weekend retreat in Ancaster, Ontario and a full day rally in Toronto, Ontario.

Deaf ministry has provided an avenue for deaf and hard of hearing parishioners in the diocese to participate in Masses, RCIA, retreats, conferences, sacraments and additional Catholic events. Deaf in our diocese are signing the readings and gospel in ASL during Mass, serving as Eucharistic ministers, taking part in ASL choirs for Christmas and Easter Masses, teaching ASL, attending social events and retreats, evangelizing to their families and friends and contributing to the life of the Church in many ways. We pray that our ministry will continue to grow to improve access to God's Word, the Body of Christ in the Eucharist and the Sacraments for our deaf and hard of hearing brothers and sisters.

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