

Good News Monthly Bonnes Nouvelles Mensuelles

OUR LADY OF MERCY JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE SITE





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RENDER UNTO CAESAR A FINANCIAL COLUMN

Welcome to the May edition of your Family of Parishes financial update. This month we have invited Mike Tanner to reflect on his experience as the St Benedict representative on the Finance Council. An interesting read for those who wonder as to what the Wizard looks like behind the curtain. The Council is composed of representatives, from each of our Parishes, that freely contribute of their time and expertise. They are a great group of financial and business leaders committed to their Church community and their faith.

Mike's pulpit appeal, at St Benedict, is starting to bear fruit. We received numerous requests from parishioners to increase their level of donation. This appeal followed Fred Oliver 's challenges to Sacred Heart parishioners. These two large churches are witnessing changes in demographics and financial challenges that were highlighted by Mike and Fred, as told by Mike in his reflection.



RENDER UNTO CAESAR A FINANCIAL COLUMN

Where the Money Goes

Business Manager Louis Guimond invited me, a newbie on the Finance Council representing St Benedict, to give this month's financial perspective. I will share what has surprised me over the past year.

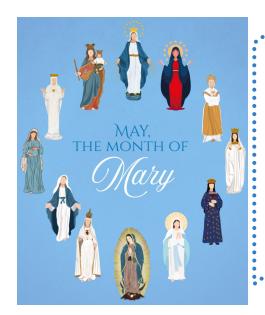
The Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes is one of 31 Families in the Diocese and with seven churches, the largest. We are called to be in the world- legally and physically but not of the world- functionally and spiritually. We maintain seven older buildings in service seven days a week; the utility bills alone are \$165k, and insurance is \$58k. Even though we operate as a 'Family,' each of the six Parishes (Our Lady of Mercy and St. Joseph are considered one) must stand alone financially. Our 'shared' expenses, such as priests, administration, and ministry, are allocated by Louis and his bookkeeping staff, Lisa and Cathy, according to need, ability, and fairness.

We are an employer beholden to the Laws of Ontario, so we must follow the Human Rights Code, Health and Safety regulations, and other statutory obligations. Fortunately, the Diocesan office provides support in terms of Human Resources, Financial Management and reporting, accounting and legal in addition to Spiritual and Liturgical guidance, hiring priests, managing cemeteries and the Seminary. This comes at a cost, \$306k. They recently rolled out new Health and Safety software for all employees, and separate accounting package, as the older version was no longer supported. As usual these come with a steep 'learning curve', and our team has been tasked with taking a lead roll in the implementation, speaking highly of their dedication and ability.

The annual budget of \$1.9m seems a huge sum, but it is spread thin over the numerous properties and services which the Catholic family provides. The actual business of the church, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, caring for His people, and reaching out to the lost sheep is fairly small in comparison. Seeing where the money goes has been eye-opening. We have been faithful in meeting our current obligations, but the challenge is to plan for the years ahead.

Mike Tanner Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes Finance Council

MARIAN CULTURAL FEAST



You are invited to a multi-cultural celebration to honour of our Blessed Mother Mary on Friday, May 30th, 7pm at Sacred Heart Church.

This multi-cultural celebration includes a Candlelight Procession, Crowning of our Lady and Mass followed by a reception in the parish hall.

JENN'S MONTHLY HAPPENINGS



As our quiet hearts from the Lenten season are awakened with renewal and love during this Easter season, I pray that you are blessed abundantly.

April was another busy month with school visits, discussing Lent and Easter, as well as promoting the Steubenville Youth Conference coming up at the end of June. There seems to be some excitement and interest in the trip this year, and I am hopeful that we are able to gather some Grade 8 to 12 students who would like to experience Christ through an experience no one but Steubenville can offer.

The children and youth participating in the Sacramental Preparation Programs for First Holy Communion and Confirmation are growing in their faith as they get closer to receiving their Sacrament. Please keep them all in your prayers.

The Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes Faith-Leadership Muskoka Woods trip is coming quickly! Plans are falling into place as the youth, leaders, and chaperones are gaining excitement! The generous support and donations from the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Women's League, and the Dames de Ste Anne, as well as the meals purchased from the PastaFest fundraiser are all being put to good use supporting the youth who are attending the trip in May.

Fr. Michael & Leonia handing out PastaFest meals.



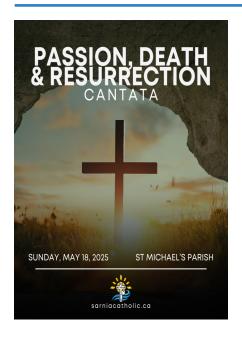
With the sad news of the Holy Father, Pope Francis's passing, the Family event celebrating the Canonization of the Blessed Carlo Acutis was postponed. Once there is a rescheduled date to canonize Carlo Acutis, we will continue with our Family of Parishes event.

Please follow the Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes website at <u>sarniacatholic.ca</u>, our Facebook page and Instagram accounts for updates on all things happening in our Family of Parishes.

I pray for consistent Spring weather, and Easter blessing to you all!

Yours in Christ,

Jenn Sacramental Catechist



FR. JOSEPH and FILM TRIUMPHANT CANADA

present a

LENT & EASTER CANTATA
SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2025
ST. MICHAEL CHURCH
2PM-4PM

A Free-will offering will be taken to offset the costs associated with producing this event.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MISSIONS

Truth & Reconciliation



Red Dress Day May 5



Red Dress Day honours the memory and lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2-Spirit+ people across Canada and the US.

Started in 2010 by Métis artist Jaime Black, the day has grown into a movement to educate and create awareness and calls to action for systemic change.

THE TRUTH:

- Indigenous women and girls are five times more likely to experience violence than any other population in Canada and this violence tends to result in more serious harm.
- Indigenous women make up 16% of all female homicide victims, and 11% of missing women, even though Indigenous people only make up 4.3% of the population of Canada.
- Violence against Indigenous women and girls is systemic and a national crisis that requires urgent, informed and collaborative action.
- Current public data on MMIWG2S (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2-Spirit+ people) oversimplifies and underrepresents the scale of the issue, yet still demonstrates a complex and pervasive pattern of violence against Indigenous women and girls who are often targeted because of their gender and Indigenous identity.

From 2001 to 2014 the average rate of homicides involving Indigenous female victims was four times higher than that of homicides involving non-Indigenous female victims.

(Source: *The Assembly of First Nations*)

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MISSIONS

Moose Hide Campaign

The Moose Hide Campaign is an Indigenous-led grassroots movement of men and boys – and all Canadians – who are standing up against violence towards women and children. On **May 3-4**th weekend in our Family of Parishes, Moose Hide Campaign cards with a piece of moose hide attached will be available for men and boys to pick up following mass in each of our 7 churches. **Wearing the moose hide signifies your commitment to honour, respect, and protect women and children in your life and to work together to end violence against women and children, and all those along the gender continuum.** For more information visit MOOSEHIDECAMPAIGN.CA.

Understanding First Nations Cultural Identity

Indigenous people are on many different paths and stages of their journey in staying connected to and reclaiming their culture. This includes traditional values, beliefs, clan systems, spirit names and traditional territories. Many indigenous people are revitalizing their culture by learning their languages and participating in ceremonies. They are discovering more about traditional foods, music, dance, clothing and diet. With all of this, they are learning about a way of living called "Mino Bimaadiziwin" which means 'Living in a good Way". This is endeavouring to follow the Seven Grandfather Teachings in every part of one's life. The seventh-generation concept urges the current generation to live and work for the benefit of seven generations into the future. This principle is shared by many Indigenous people around the world. Today, this principle can apply to decisions made with regard to the natural resources we use. This ensures that those decisions are sustainable for seven generations into the future.

Also important to the way that the <u>Seventh Generation Principle</u> can apply to relationships – in particular, those between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This long-term perspective can keep relationships strong for many generations to come.

The <u>Seven Grandfather Teachings</u> contain traditional knowledge given to the Anishinaabe people by God the Creator. They are used together in ceremony and by each individual in daily life. They are principles to live by and are essential for living a good and healthy life. The principles are:

Respect – Respect all of creation, including Elders and all other people

Love – Love yourself, all others and all of creation

Truth – Be truthful with yourself and with others. Consider your own walk before judging another's.

Bravery – Believe what your heart tells you is right. Stand strong no matter what the outcome may look like.

Wisdom – Gather knowledge from life. To have balance in these principles is to have wisdom in body, mind and spirit.

Generosity – Share what you have with others. To do this in a good way is to be generous.

Humility – To be humble is to know yourself as an equal part of creation.

For more information/details search 'Indigenous' at www.chatham-kent.ca.

Pikangikum Partnership



God with us!

"Truly, Truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

~John 1:51

News from Missionary Nicholas Backlund..."As I wake up every morning here in Pikangikum the great hope I have engraved in my heart is that of what Jacob says "God you are here with me. How awesome to know you are here with me!" I see youth desire to know and want to have the God who says abide in me!

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MISSIONS

This past week we were reading about Jesus being the Lamb of God in Christian Ed. and I had a boy scream to top of his lungs with excitement that we were about to read the story of Jesus' Baptism. **That stuff gets me fired up with passion to see their desire to know Him more!**"





I have had many wonderful times this past month being in Pikangikum! I want to share with you some of my favorite moments and doors God has begun to open. One of my favorite moments is with my brother in faith Ajay Owens. He is a young man who is a part of our guys' Bible Study on Saturday. Ajay is just one glimpse of what God has for me to do here in Pikangikum. Doing life with people and being an example of Christ to young people. I pray that through my presence and past experiences, I can touch young lives here in Pikangikum. And I pray that His presence would also be seen in their lives as well."

"Some of the latest news this past month in Pikangikum... We have been doing Junior High Youth Group since we came back from Winter break and it's been good. We have had a small group coming out but continue to pray for momentum to build as we continue to create relationships with young people in. There is a hunger for Jesus but pray for God to show this more to young people. In Colleen's absence on her recovery from surgeries, I am now taking on teaching for grade 1-8. This past month, we had Rosedale Bible College Students come up with Living Hope Native Ministries for the Cross-Cultural trip here in Pikangikum."







Rosedale Bible College students

Ajay, Nick & Mark

Best Bike Guy in Pik

"I am grateful for all the things God is orchestrating here in Pikangikum First Nation. Thank you to all those who have come alongside in giving financially to the ministry and praying as we sow seed day to day.

Your faithfulness is greatly appreciated."

Pikangikum Visit. Theresa van Keoverden, Social Justice & Missions Team member and the Pikangikum Christmas Gift Project Leader is taking a trip to Pikangikum in June. We pray that God will grant Theresa a safe and fruitful exposure trip to our partnership of 15+ years. If you would like to send cards with messages of love and solidarity to the people in Pikangkum, please contact Theresa at https://mptto.org/hm

"We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked, and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest poverty." MOTHER TERESA



St. Benedict Knights of Columbus Council # 11164

May 2025 NEWSLETTER

All information about the St. Benedict's Knights of Columbus activities can be found on the Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes web page at St. Benedict KofC Follow us on Facebook at Knights of Columbus St. Benedict Council 11164 Sarnia

Join Us Today

Become an online Knights of Columbus member for free. Visit <u>KofC.org/joinus</u>. Enter code **BLESSEDMCGIVNEY** for a FREE one-year membership.

Roses for Life



On Mother's Day weekend, May 10th & 11th, members of the Knights of Columbus will once again be standing at the church entrances after Mass offering *Roses for Life* lapel roses in support of the Right to Life movement. Just so you know, the red rose signifies our opposition to abortion, while the white rose is in opposition to euthanasia. A minimum donation of \$2 is requested. All proceeds go towards Lambton Right to Life.

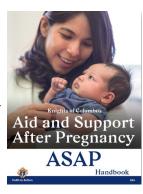
KofC Meat Bingos



Come and join us every 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at OLM hall (corner of Christina St. & London Rd.). Bingos start at 7 PM, but come early to buy your cards and get set up. Food and refreshments are available. Please bring canned goods in support of our local food banks. All proceeds help support Knights of Columbus charities.

Knights of Columbus Baby Shower Drive

The four Knights of Columbus Councils in Sarnia and Brights Grove would like to thank everyone within the Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes and the meat bingo patrons for their caring and generous support of The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre project. Over 100 needed baby items were transported to the Pregnancy Centre. The Centre also received monetary and gift card donations. The total amount is still being calculated and will be reported in the next newsletter. Those who donated directly to the pregnancy centre will receive tax receipt early in 2026. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.





Over 100 needed baby items that were generously donated by parishioners were transported to the Pregnancy Options & Support Centre in Sarnia. Workers at the pregnancy centre were very appreciative of the number of items donated as their shelves were running low.

Representatives from the four Knights of Columbus Councils presented Stephanie Curtney of The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre with monetary and Walmart gift card donations. Stephanie stated that the financial support comes at a very timely manner as their donations seem to be slow this year.



SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

The Ontario Regional Council Assembly met in Sarnia, April 4th and 5th. The following is the presentation that Linda Kensley, the President of the Particular Council (Board of Directors) for the Sarnia Deanery, made to the 60 plus Vincentians from around Ontario concerning the activities in our local conferences.

Our Sarnia Particular Counsel, PC, meets once a month to discuss the happenings of our five St Vincent de Paul thrift stores, our warehouse and our food bank and help center. A tour was made of the foodbank as shown in the photo. Seminars were also held.

The foodbank does great work with its wonderful staff and ambitious volunteers that keep it running so smoothly. Not only providing food, but also rent, utilities and compassionate hearts to listen and help those in need.

Our PC consists of 8 conferences at the moment: St Philip, Petrolia, St. Joseph, Corunna, St. Christopher Forest, St Benedict and St Joseph, Our Lady of Mercy, St. Thomas Aquinas, Sacred Heart and St Michael conference in Bright's Grove.

The Petrolia Conference supports the Community refrigerator which anyone can access to get fresh and frozen food at any time and it supports the Petrolia area Foodbank. They also provide rent and utilities assistance. Some conference members help out in the Petrolia SSVP thrift store setting up displays. They also support the St Joseph Society of St. Vincent de Paul conference in Inuvik and financially contribute to St Andrew Presbyterian Church program in Petrolia offering a free hot dog lunch for high school students.

The Corunna conference helps those in need of rent and utilities and food. They help with cleaning of the SSVP thrift store area.

The Forest Conference bring foods from local farms to their local Foodbank and to the Sarnia Foodbank. They help support the Migrant Workers ministry program serving food and social activities during the summer months. They provide rent and utilities assistance when needed. They take part in the Forest town yard sale selling tools.

The St. Benedicts/St Joseph conference provides opportunities for several children to go to summer camps. Financial contributions are made to those in need through the Foodbank and Help Centre. It has a food donation box in the church and some members help out at our Foodbank each week. It sends money to the Save a Child program.

The St. Thomas Aquinas conference collects money at Christmas time to supply food/gift cards to families. It also coordinates activities with the school children such as to making Christmas cards for seniors. The Sacred Heart conference generously provides financial assistance to the food and help centre at Christmas time and throughout the year.

St. Michael Conference delivers food to the Bright's Grove and Camlachie area. We get calls from our parish office or from the foodbank. St. Michael Church has a small food pantry with parish donated food. If we need other items, we get it from the foodbank. Many members help out at the foodbank sorting and doing maintenance. We are very connected with our St. Michael School which is just across our parking lot. At Christmas, we have a candy drive to hand out with Christmas gift cards.

The students have helped with food drives when asked. Our conference just did an Easter Activity Bag night at our last meeting to give to the foodbank to hand out to families with children. 70 bags with books, chocolate and some play dough for the younger ones. We are looking forward to doing this again for a year-end conference activity. Our Bright's Grove Foodland grocery store is a huge supporter of SSVP.

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Every 2 weeks, SSVP collects prebagged groceries purchased by the Foodland patrons. Sometimes up to 70 bags or more. This food is brought to the SSVP Foodbank. We combine our conference meetings with social time. Food sharing always brings more people out to help.

Thank you and God bless.

Linda Kensley

President of the St. Michael Conference.

lkensley5@gmail.com

Many of the conferences could use more volunteers to do various activities such as food drives at the schools, collecting donations on Sunday at the entrance to the churches, helping at the food bank, collecting good used clothing for sale in the thrift stores to support the food bank and help centre.

Please contact Linda if you would like to help out.



St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank & Help Centre

228 Davis Street, Sarnia, ON N7T 1B3 www. https://www.ssvpsarnialambton.ca/



Food Bank-Office Hours

Tuesday to Friday 10:00 to 5:00 Accept monetary and food donations

Food Bank Hours

Wednesday 11:00-3:00 Thursday and Friday 12:30-3:00 Please remember ID for everyone in the household, Income Statement and grocery bags. Thank you Gregory A Hogan Catholic School for your large contribution to St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank & Help Centre

The students of Gregory A Hogan planned a donation drive, hoping to collect 300 cans. They managed to collect 3000 cans.

Such an overwhelming response, we are very grateful.

Please consider donating. Your monetary donations can be used for purchasing fresh produce, other food needs, or towards our rent and utility program that offer's financial assistance to our clients.

In need of toilet paper, cereal, pasta sauce and kids school snacks.

MEMORABLE MOMENTS AT THE FOODBANK

SSVDP Food bank & Help centre contributed Financially with a dental bill for a Mom who experienced many dental complications, she was hopeful to reclaim her smile. With tears in her eyes, she explained her gratitude. A confidant smile restored.

Thank You Donors

William E. Prentice Council 1429

393 Christina St. N

Samia, ON N7T 5V9

OUR LADY OF MERCY

SACRED HEART

ST. JOSEPH

ST. GEORGE [Ukrainian]

COUNCIL NEWS

- One of our members, Sean Jesso, was knighted in the 4th degree
- Family of the Month Haizel and Jimmy Austin and family
 - * Previously recognized: the MacAdam, Stecca-Monteiro and Verhayden families.
- Youth pilgrimage to the Vatican Jubilee Year
 - * Julia Stecca, pictured below, will share her Vatican experience at the Spring Dinner Dance
- Muskoka Woods support \$3k monetary donation by council
- Donated items / money to the Sarnia Pregnancy Options Centre.

Thanks to you all for helping us support those most in need. Coming up:

- May 03, Saturday Dinner Dance
 - * In support of youth, SSVP & KofC activities
- June 27, Friday Sacred Heart Feast
 - * After Mass social by council.
- Family of the Month celebrations
- Altar Servers recognition

Spring Dinner Dance Saturday, 03 May 2025 5:30 pm to 11 pm **Our Lady of Mercy Church Hall** \$60 per ticket \$525 \$55 early bird table for 10 till Apr 20 Tickets: 519-542-7528 GK1429@OntarioKofC.ca Live Entertainment 5 course CYNTHIA FAY Italian dinner **Spot Prizes** STEPHEN HALSEY 50-50 Gift Basket Raffle ATTIRE : Semi - Formal Proceeds to Youth Ministry, SSVP, KofC charities



"Join the Knights (Click here)"

For 'preferred council number 'enter '1429'.

For 'member referral number' enter your sponsor's membership number or leave it blank

MEETINGS: 1ST Tuesday

6:15 pm - Officers meeting (members welcome)

7 pm – Membership

8 pm - Social hour

GK1429@ontariokofc.ca

Norman Monteiro 519-542-7528

Web-page at Parish





DONATE

LES DAMES DE STE ANNE









OUR LADY OF MERCY JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE SITE

Our Lady of Mercy Church has been designated as a Jubilee Pilgrimage Site welcoming pilgrims during this Jubilee year.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 17, 18, 19, Our Lady of Mercy will open it's doors all day to offer visitors times of Adoration, Reconciliation, Prayer and Mass.

The Jubilee year offers the faithful an opportunity to obtain Plenary Indulgences. Indulgences can be obtained by pilgrimages, pious visits to sacred places, and works of mercy and penance.

The Jubilee Indulgence is a plenary indulgence that, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those who have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy. It may also be sought for oneself. It is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy. During a Jubilee Year, which normally happens every 25 years, all other indulgences previously granted remain in force and may be obtained by the faithful.

The Jubilee Indulgence is obtained in the same manner as any plenary indulgence. One who is truly repentant and free from any attachment to or desire for sin, moved by a spirit of charity, must perform a prescribed act to be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence. The person must also go to Confession (within several days before or after the prescribed act), receive Holy Communion and pray for the intentions of the Pope (specifically praying 1 Our Father and 1 Hail Mary). The Jubilee Indulgence may be applied in suffrage to the souls in Purgatory, being the most commendable act of mercy itself.

Look for complete details in upcoming Family of Parishes bulletins.

Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic
Family of Parishes
2025 Vacation Bible School
The Great Journey with Jesus.





Monday, August 4th to
Friday, August 8th from 9am-12pm
<u>St. Benedict Church &</u>
Holy Trinity Catholic School

For children entering Grades 1 to 5 & Grades 6 to 8 in September of 2025

Registration forms and complete details are available at

www.sarniacatholic.ca

Student & Adult Volunteers Needed

Enthusiastic and reliable volunteers are needed for our VBS program this summer.

Details and registrations can be found **HERE**

HAPPENING S & EVENTS

MAY

- ♦ KofC Council 1429 Dinner Dance May 3rd
- Dames de Ste Anne BeeBop Café May 17th
- ♦ Fr. Joseph Easter Canata May 18th
- ♦ Muskoga Woods Youth Experience May 23rd-25th
- ♦ Marian Cultural Feast—May 30th

JUNE

- Feast of St. Jean Baptiste June 21st-22nd
- ♦ Corpus Christi June 22nd
- ♦ Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus June 27th

JULY

Jubilee Pilgrimage Site: Our Lady of Mercy Church July 17th, 18th, 19th

AUGUST

- ♦ Vacation Bible School August 4th-8th
- ♦ Outdoor Family Movie—to be announced

OCTOBER

- Jubilee Bus Trip Martyr's Shrine ─ October 4th
- ♦ Feast of Our Lady Aparecida October 12th
- ♦ Trunk or Treat October 26th





\$70 Bus & Admission



Jubilee PIGRIMAGE

Martyrs' Shrine, Midland Ontario SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2025 Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi







Reserve today **519-336-2653** www.sarniacatholic.ca