

**PARISH ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**

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PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) welcomed three new members in 2023: Anthony Zoccoli, Grace Bruno, and Peter Brimacombe. We thanked Anne Marie Bazinet-Miller, Sue-Anne Hess, Cheryl Khoury, and Mary Dalipaj for their time on Pastoral Council.

In January, the PPC met with the chairs and team leaders for the committees and ministries of the parish to check in and to find out what is going well for them, what is a challenge, and how the PPC can offer support.

The PPC spent time this year discussing the Synodal process at the parish level. This included communicating with the Synod Committee and helping arrange a Lunch and Learn with parishioner, Dr. Cathy Clifford, who had attended the Synod meetings in Rome in October.

PPC's focus for the year was building community. A volunteer binder and a volunteer information card were created and can be found on the Welcome Table in the church foyer. Recognition of the 70th anniversary of the church building happened in December, with a table of special memorabilia at the back of the church and a special blessing and reception on Sunday, December 10th.

In June, the members of the PPC were commissioned at a Sunday Mass, and all the parish's volunteers were recognized. We also had a beautiful day for our Mass on the Grass celebration.

In November, Sue-Anne Hess resigned from PPC. We thank her for her time on PPC and we thank Peter Brimacombe for stepping in as interim chair.

In 2024, we look forward to networking with parish committees and ministries once again, having a retreat for PPC to discuss a pastoral council's role in a parish, and focusing on recognizing our volunteers, recruiting more volunteers and doing outreach in our local community.

Submitted by Heather Duggan, Administrative Assistant

Parish Pastoral Council members, 2023: Sue-Anne Hess, chair (resigned in November); Mary Dalipaj, vice-chair (resigned in October); Cheryl Khoury, secretary; Chad Glendinning; Anne Marie Bazinet-Miller (resigned in March); Grace Bruno; Anthony Zoccoli; and Peter Brimacombe, interim chair starting in December.

Our community respectfully acknowledges that we are situated on the unceded, ancestral lands and waters of the Algonquin people, on whose territory we live, pray, work, and grow in faith and understanding.

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FINANCE COUNCIL

This report contains a summary of the financial operations of the parish as well as a listing of major projects undertaken on behalf of the parish.

The financial report shows the final reviewed figures for 2023 compared to the reviewed amounts from 2022 as well as to the amounts that were budgeted by the Finance Council for 2023 and then for 2024. The 2024 budget offers a cautiously optimistic projection as we move further into a post-pandemic state, or a new normal. Our recovery and continuing operation, as always, are the direct results of our parishioners' generous and appreciated support. Pie charts for the receipts and disbursements are included at the end of this report.

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR CHURCH OPERATIONS				
	2024	2023	2023	2022
	Budget	Budget	Actual	Actual
RECEIPTS				
Collections	\$241,100	\$230,000	\$250,252	\$230,223
Marriages, Funerals, and Masses	3,500	3,000	4,063	2,965
One-time donations and bequests	20,000	20,000	21,693	24,461
Interest	22,900	22,600	22,462	21,910
Other revenue	13,800	13,000	13,895	13,930
	301,300	288,600	312,365	293,489
DISBURSEMENTS				
Salaries	152,000	145,000	147,352	135,419
Parish Centre and Church	92,300	85,200	76,133	81,153
Liturgical	14,500	14,500	11,862	8,969
Communal	3,000	3,500	1,635	1,696
Pastoral Council Outreach	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,150
Oblate Administration Tax	32,500	31,915	34,979	32,337
	300,300	286,115	277,962	265,725
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,485	\$ 34,403	\$ 27,764

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Our *total* outreach includes the amount in the summary above as Pastoral Council Outreach, but most outreach is funded directly by parishioners through their giving to special ordered collections including the Poor and Needy envelopes and donations to the Poor Box. The only portion that shows under the financial statements (as in the above) is that part which is funded by interest received from our investment funds and distributed to causes selected by the Parish Pastoral Council. The rest is included neither as revenue nor as disbursements for the Canadian Martyrs Parish financial operations.

OUTREACH		
(Poor & Needy Envelopes, Poor Box, and Reserve Funds)	2023	2022
Parishioners' Outreach	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Poor at the Door	2,992	2,761
St. Brigid's Camp		500
Shepherds of Good Hope	500	
Miriam Centre	500	
Youville Centre	500	500
Multifaith Housing Initiative	600	600
Centretown Churches Social Action Committee	500	
Immaculata Chaplain's Fund	1,000	
Immaculata Dream Team		500
Ottawa Mission	500	500
Centretown Community Food Centre	1,500	500
Development & Peace (Membership fee)		
Minwaashin Lodge – Indigenous Women's Support	500	500
	<u>\$ 7,561</u>	<u>\$ 8,963</u>

ORDERED COLLECTIONS		
(Envelopes and Special Collections)	2023	2022
Holy Land	\$ 964	\$ 564
Development and Peace	2,053	2,267
Indigenous Reconciliation Fund	5,185	14,708
Diocesan Missions	604	619
Campaign Life (Christmas cakes)	535	324
Oblate Vocations	978	604
Pastoral Works	739	539
Oblate Missions	2,179	2,810
Needs of Canadian Church	735	529
Evangelization of Nations	504	850
CCSAC Walk for the Centre	55	295
YAK Services (Land Acknowledgment Signs)		195
Share Life		300
	<u>\$ 14,531</u>	<u>\$ 24,603</u>

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OUTREACH – From Investment Interest		
	2023	2022
FN Child & Family Caring Society	\$ 500	\$ 700
Jericho Road Ministries	500	500
Shepherds of Good Hope	500	500
Hospice Care Ottawa	500	500
Carty House	500	500
The Waupoos Foundation	500	500
Centretown Churches	500	500
Social Action Committee		
L'Arche Ottawa	500	500
Birthright of Ottawa	500	500
Miriam Centre for Mothers in Need	500	500
Multifaith Housing Initiative	500	500
Immaculata Chaplain's Fund	500	450
	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,150

	TOTAL OUTREACH	\$ 30,823	\$ 38,314
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In addition to managing parish finances, Finance Council is responsible for the maintenance and general upkeep of the church and Parish Centre building and grounds. As with any home, significant repairs and improvements need to be done through the course of the year.

Like the previous years, 2023 proved to be another year in which there were fewer notable projects undertaken and completed. The earlier difficulties in sourcing materials and labour have lessened somewhat but are still a challenge. As summarized below, none of these notable completed projects from 2023 were in response to unforeseen events, and only the flooring options project is one that has been under consideration for an overly extended time (as most of the projects considered for 2024 and beyond have been). Not having too many of either of these two 'extremes' is a good sign – like the earlier observation concerning our finances – of the continuing health of our parish home.

A description of notable projects completed in 2023 and a brief look at notable expected projects for 2024 and beyond round out the material included in this report.

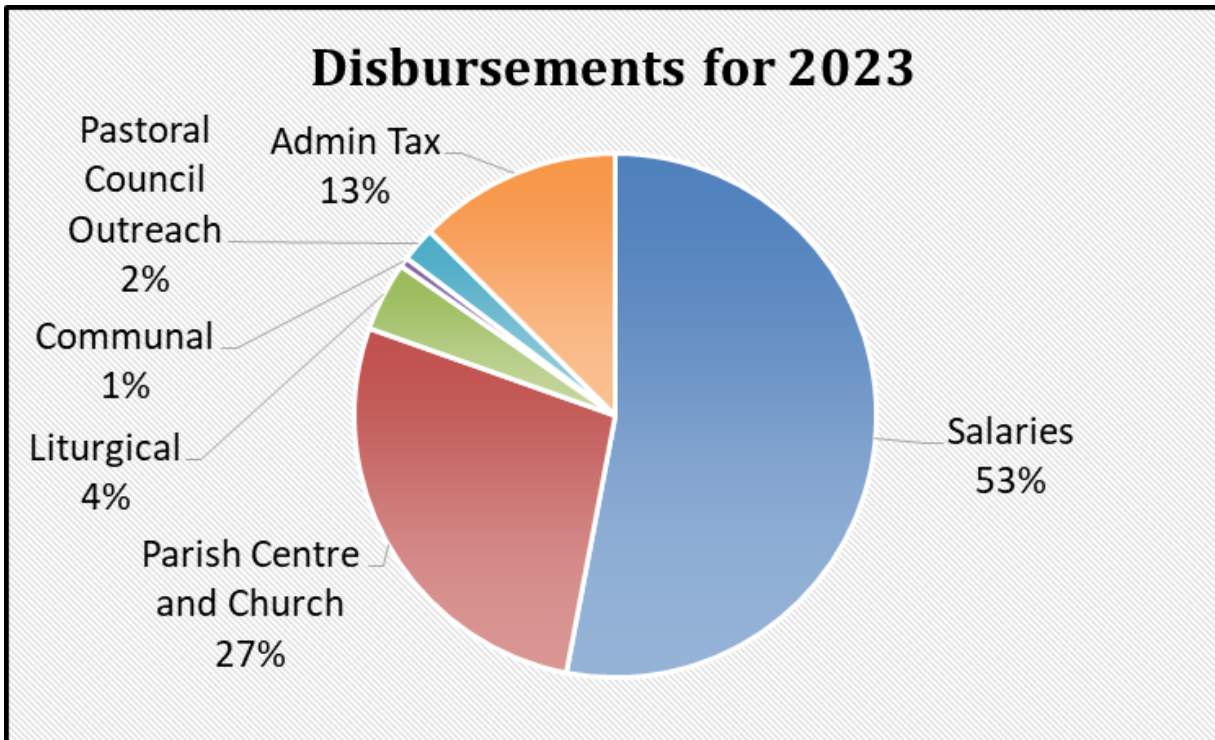
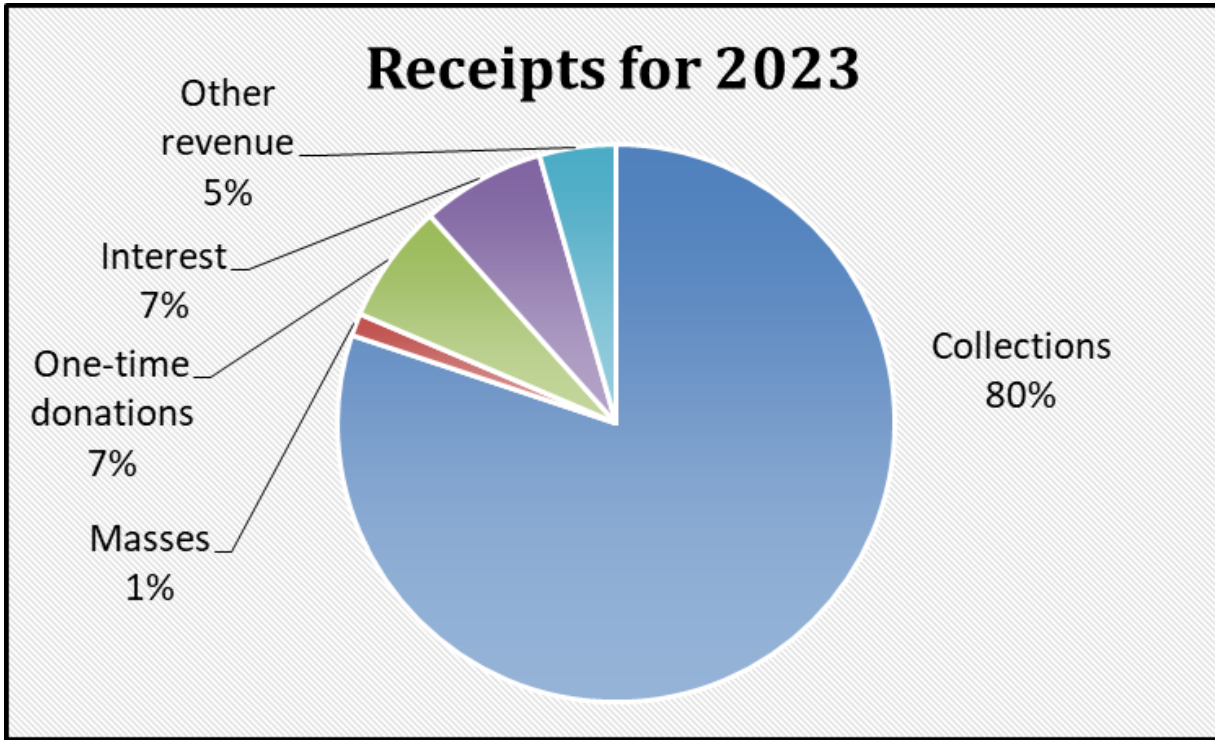
Notable Projects Completed in 2023

- Sacristy windows: The five windows in the back were replaced; there is a lot more natural light in the Sacristy now. The two windows in the hallway leading to the Sacristy (mostly behind the garden shed when viewed from outside) were also repaired.
- Church doors (north side off Main St.): These doors were scraped, caulked, and varnished.
- Church sump pumps: The main and backup pumps were both checked and prepared for switching roles – one for the other – in the near future to extend their lifespans.
- Pest control: The mouse situation is greatly improved in the Parish Centre. The same contractor identified and corrected two unscreened vents on the outside roof to eliminate the squirrel problem in the Sacristy ceiling.
- Parish centre flooring options: though not completed, this note is for the substantial work that was done during the year requesting quotes and developing different options.

Notable Projects Considered for 2024 and Beyond

- Replace flooring in the upstairs meeting rooms and offices of the Parish Centre.
- Replace one of the boilers in the church basement.
- Resurface and repair the parking lot.
- Improve illumination at the front of the church.
- Repair windows in the stairwells in the church.
- Continue the investigation of new lighting and ventilation for the church.

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Submitted by Joseph Duggan, chair, and Christina Ullett, accountant

Finance Council members, 2023: Joseph Duggan (chair), Pierre Beemans, John Bouchard, John McCauley, Gloria Sola (joined in October 2023), Christina Ullett, Chad Glendinning (Pastoral Council representative)

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CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Children's Liturgy of the Word started up again in the fall of 2023, as the children and youth of our Parish went back to school in a more normal (post-pandemic) environment. On the first, second and fourth Sunday of each month, we gather with children, ages 4 to 10, to read the liturgy and talk about what we heard and how it shows us how to live our lives now. We practice the Our Father and other prayers reflected in the readings. We also use the readings to talk to the younger children about the sacraments, and many of the practices in the church that they are aware of but do not yet fully understand.

We have found the children of our parish to be very "wise" about the goodness of many people in their lives. The children's liturgy books (*Sunday Book of Readings*, *The Lectionary Adapted for Children*) use language that is easy for them to understand and then take home to discuss with older siblings and parents. Sometimes, depending on the nature of the Gospel, we send the children home with a question for the dinner table!

Quite regularly in our group discussions, the expression "out of the mouths of babes" comes to my mind as our primary school-aged children explain very clearly how the villain in the story should have and could have done better! The children's ability to see the goodness in others comes through week after week and is quite heart-warming!

Submitted by McE Galbreath, Christine Andress, Clara Hamory

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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee's aim is to help the various ministries spread the word to parishioners and the broader community about what is happening in the parish. Connections to the pastoral plan include these:

- Bringing our Faith into the World: to share the good news of our faith in God's love with our neighbours.
- Stewardship and Leadership: fostering communication – weekly bulletin, articles in *The Epistle*, parish website.

Here is a summary of what was done in 2023:

1. *The Epistle*

We published four issues in 2023 (for Lent, Pentecost, September and Advent), featuring a wide range of articles by members of the parish and other contributors. A link to each issue was sent by email to parishioners, and a few printed copies were available at the church. A small number of copies were printed for the Pastoral Care ministry to give to parishioners living in retirement homes and long-term care, which they greatly appreciated.

2. Parish website

Heather Duggan updated the content on the website periodically. Heather continues to review the website and revise it as needed.

3. *The Mainstreeter* newspaper

The parish advertised in *The Mainstreeter* to let our neighbours know we are here and to invite them to join us.

The committee would like to thank Heather Duggan once again for her support and creative help in the area of communications.

Submitted by Anne Louise Mahoney, co-chair

Committee members, 2023: Sheila Foy Connolly and Anne Louise Mahoney (co-chairs), Karen Webber

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DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE – CARITAS CANADA

In June of 2022, members, partners, and friends of Development & Peace – Caritas Canada gathered at the Orientation Assembly to discern the guiding theme for the next five years. Inspired by Pope Francis and our partners in the Global South, “CREATE HOPE” was chosen as the theme. Now, in its first year, the focus has been to “STAND FOR THE LAND” in solidarity with the land defenders in the Global South who risk their lives to protect their land, water, environment, and human life. As the official international development and humanitarian organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, D&P supports our partners through education, action, and fundraising. Through bulletin announcements, parishioners were regularly informed and invited to take an active role. These are the highlights for 2023:

- Feb. 18: Canadian Martyrs hosted the Share Lent Workshop for the Ottawa-Cornwall Diocese.
- Feb. 25: National Launch Webinar for the Stand for the Land Share Lent Campaign. The focus was on Colombia and Honduras. Currently, D&P is supporting 73 projects in 36 countries.
- Mar. 26: Solidarity Sunday Share Lent Collection.
- Apr. 1: Create Hope – National Way of the Cross.
- May 19-21: Ottawa-Cornwall Council hosted the Ontario Regional Assembly at St. Basil’s Church.
- June 13: AGM for the Ottawa-Cornwall D&P Council was hosted at Canadian Martyrs Parish.
- Sept. 9: All-day retreat, “Unearthing Justice: Catholic Social Teaching and Mining Justice,” organized by Janyce Elser-Ethier, Chair of D&P Council and members, hosted at St. Basil’s Church.
- Sept. 16: National Launch Webinar for the Stand for the Land Fall Education/Action campaign.
- Oct. 22-24: Meetings with our Solidarity visitor, Elvin Hernández, Honduran human rights investigator, at Notre Dame Cathedral, Saint Paul University, and the Canadian Labour Congress.
- Oct. 28: Fall Education/Action Campaign Workshop for Ottawa-Cornwall hosted by St. Joseph’s Church.
- Nov. 11-12: Anna and Susana each spoke at Mass about the Fall Campaign, with a special focus on the plight of the water and land defenders in Honduras. Parishioners were asked to sign a letter to the Honduran Ambassador asking that the government protect the constitutional rights to life and dignity of Honduran land and environmental defenders. Susana contacted Leanne Davis, Chaplain at Immaculata High School, to encourage student participation and spoke to the students herself.
- Nov.-Jan.: parishioners and friends signed the letter. (By March 2024, 46,315 signatures were collected from across Canada!)
- Nov. 28: Janyce Elser-Ethier, as Chair of the Ottawa-Cornwall D&P Council, wrote a letter to MP Yasir Naqvi asking him to urge the federal government to call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza and to ensure that humanitarian aid can be safely delivered.

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- Dec. 16: Cardinal Pizzabella, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and Aston Asfar and Secretary General of our Partner Caritas Jerusalem, spoke to us in an online seminar entitled “Gaza: The Call to Peace.” Very moving. “Please pray for peace!”

Our committee sincerely thanks Heather Duggan, Fr. Tim Coonen, OMI and you, the parishioners of Holy Canadian Martyrs, for standing in solidarity with our partners in the Global South. Please pray for them. They pray for us. Get to know them through their stories and videos at devp.org and be inspired by their courage. Let's CREATE HOPE together.

Submitted by Anna Dorner and the D&P Committee: Peter Tobin, Angela Davis, Susana Sandoz, Sr. Matilda Owolagba, Joe Korka Waadah, Sylvie Richer, Matthew Iwueze, Janyce Elser-Ethier

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FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE

The Faith Formation Committee involves the Pastoral Team and volunteers who have taken an interest in the formation of the faith of the parish community. The members of the Faith Formation Committee plan and prepare activities that are related to faith and social issues in the church and in society.

The committee works with various committees in the parish to organize and prepare presentations for our Sunday Lunch and Learn program. The committee invites speakers, both from within and from outside of the parish, to present talks to enrich and edify the members of parish.

The following programs were presented in 2023:

- Viewing of the movie, “The Letter” and discussion on Pope Francis’ encyclical letter, “*Laudato Si*” led by members of the Pastoral Team
- A talk on affordable housing in Ottawa and the Dream Lebreton Flats project by Sahada Alolo (Multifaith Housing Initiative) and Corry Wink (Society of St. Vincent de Paul)
- A presentation on methods of green/natural burial by Mary Nash (Ottawa Green Burial Society)
- A talk on the Synod and synodality by Dr. Catherine Clifford (Saint Paul University)

Submitted by Sr. Matilda Owolagba

Members of the Faith Formation Committee: Fr. Tim Coonen, OMI, Pat Laviolette, Adele Casuga Lalonde, Matthew Iwueze and Matilda Owolagba

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507 SANDWICH CLUB

The 507 Sandwich Club has undergone some changes this year. The club administrator, Adele Casuga Lalonde, stepped away from the organizational role; Grace Bruno graciously stepped in, sending the weekly have and making sure that each week there are enough people signed up to make sandwiches. Grace and Lorenzo Bruno continue to give of their time each week, doing the grocery shopping and deliveries. Mary Cavanaugh and Craig and Michael Turner continue to generously give of their time, picking up the sandwiches and delivering them to Centre 507.

The club continues its operation, making about approximately 200 sandwiches per week. The club began operation in September with the at-home/delivery model but transitioned to the in-person model in November. The club continues to do the grocery delivery and in-home sandwich making on the first week of each month. This allows the sandwich group at Villagia to continue to participate, as many of their members are unable to come to the church to make sandwiches. The rest of the month, sandwich making is done on Thursdays at the church. Club members sign up to make sandwiches either during the afternoon (1:30 p.m.) or in the evening (7 p.m.).

The sandwiches are delivered to Centre 507 at 507 Bank St. on Friday morning and served on Sundays at lunchtime.

With the implementation of in-person sandwich making at the church, the club has welcomed six new members, while retaining the in-person group, who are able to do sign-up once a month.

In September 2023, Centre 507 unfortunately announced that they were unable to continue subsidizing our grocery expenses. The Sandwich Club relies solely on the donations from parishioners of Canadian Martyrs Parish and were very fortunate to receive a large donation from one (anonymous) community member.

Grocery prices continue to rise due to inflation, with a monthly bill of approximately \$1,300. We are grateful for the continued support of the members of the Canadian Martyrs Parish community.

Submitted by Adele Casuga Lalonde

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LAUDATO SI' 7-YEAR PLAN

As many are aware, the Archdiocese of Ottawa-Cornwall has continued their work on the mission put forward by Pope Francis a few years ago in *Laudato Si'*, On Care for Our Common Home. Their request is that each parish in the archdiocese work on a Care for Creation 7-Year Plan as a concrete response to *Laudato Si'*.

The Pope asks each of us, as stewards of creation, to respond concretely to the challenges of our earth and our humanity. There are eight objectives for the *Laudato Si'* mission that the Pope has set out for us both personally and for our parish.

Canadian Martyrs Parish is a relatively small parish with energetic and multi-talented volunteers. For this reason, we wish to incorporate our existing parish ministries and committees and their work in the *Laudato Si'* plan moving forward. In fact, our concept is one where *Laudato Si'* becomes an umbrella, reaching over and contributed to by our parish ministries and committees, both in the present and in the future, through the activities/initiatives that they are presently undertaking.

The following identifies the eight aspects of the *Laudato Si'* mission and suggests which of the current Canadian Martyrs ministries/committees we feel could be instrumental in moving us forward:

- Response to the Cry of the Earth: Development & Peace Committee
- Response to the Cry of the Poor: Development & Peace Committee, Pastoral Care Team, and Refugee Settlement Committee
- Simple Lifestyles: Development & Peace Committee
- Ecological Education: Youth Group
- Ecological Economics: Faith Formation Committee (education, Lunch and Learn)
- Ecological Spirituality: Liturgy Committee and Faith Formation (education, Lunch and Learn)
- Reconciliation: Truth & Reconciliation Committee, related resources (e.g., [Listening to Indigenous Voices](#))
- Community Engagement and Participatory Action: Synod Committee and Parish Pastoral Council

This first year of the 7-year plan has been the development of this umbrella approach, where we see how our current ministries and committees are already focused on the objectives cited in Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* mission. We have six years ahead of us to make a difference in our lives and in our parish.

We have work to do in each of these areas: to determine our objectives, our activities/study/research to achieve our objectives; how best to communicate this activity to keep it current and to entice others to join in; and, finally, forecasting when and how we might reach our end results, whatever they may be. To undertake this work, we are meeting with the ministries in large discussion circles three times per year, starting in January 2024. This year we hope to identify our objectives and to show the results of some of our ministry work during the Season of Creation this fall.

Submitted by McE Galbreath

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LITURGY COMMITTEE

The Liturgy Committee meets several times throughout the year to plan and prepare celebrations for key liturgical seasons and feasts to support the spiritual life of the parish. The committee works to promote active participation of the parish in the experience of the liturgy. The impacts of Covid-19 are diminishing, however some services, and aspects of services, were still modified to protect parishioners.

Highlights of the Work of the Committee: Representatives from several ministries, including Music, Liturgical Environment, Children's Liturgy, and other groups, gather to prepare and coordinate the many aspects of celebrations, feasts, and events. The focus of our work strives to support a deeper understanding of liturgical messages and active expressions of faith. The committee assesses the format, cohesiveness, atmosphere, and potential for improvement of the flow and clarity of celebrations based on feedback and suggestions by parishioners and other ministries or groups.

Bridging Communities: Several groups have been formed in the parish over the past few years. These include Truth and Reconciliation, Synodality, *Laudato Si*, Faith Formation, Zoom Liturgy, and others. Collaboration with these groups has enriched the life of the parish and increased the perspectives we incorporate in celebrations.

The Work of the Committee:

- Celebration of Lent and Lenten Reconciliation Service 2023:

In January, the committee meets to plan the preparation of the liturgical themes to be highlighted throughout Lent with resources, environment, music, and youth/children's participation. The contemplative focus of worship during Lent often emphasizes "less". For example, the children retire the percussion instruments during the season of Lent until Easter. Lent provides an opportunity to reflect more actively on reconciliation and drawing closer to God. The Reconciliation Service provides this encounter. The committee works with Development & Peace materials during Lent to identify themes and develop opportunities to motivate the giving spirit in events such as food drives, charitable collections, and the Lenten fair.

- Celebrating the Triduum 2023:

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday:

These services require much preparation and include the re-enactment of Christ's washing of the disciples' feet on Holy Thursday; the Passion and death of Christ and veneration of the Cross; and the Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday, which celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

- Other Events and Celebrations:

Baptisms, First Communion, Enrollment/Rite of Sending for children celebrating Confirmation, Solidarity Sunday, Pentecost, Healing Masses, Memorial Masses, and Mass on the Grass represent other celebrations that the Liturgy Committee plans. These celebrations are unique and require preparation due to special circumstances not reflected in regular Masses. The themes, prayer of the faithful, music, and timing of procedures reflect the relevance of and connections to unique events. Coordinating with other ministries for these special celebrations is key.

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- Feast of Canadian Martyrs 2023:

It was decided to celebrate the Feast of the Canadian Martyrs on the calendar date of the Feast on Tuesday, September 26, rather than during the weekend Masses. The Feast was more solemn and introspective but well received.

- Advent 2023:

Enhancements in the liturgical environment, lighting of the Advent candles, and verses of a hymn appropriate for Advent and performed by the children's choir were highlights of the anticipatory themes of Advent.

- Christmas 2023:

The choir and musicians treated parishioners to a Christmas carol session before Mass that covered a lot of the hymns that had not been sung, or heard, for a long time. Participation was amazing and enjoyed by the whole church.

- Links to Pastoral Plan Objectives:

The work of the committee focuses on the activity of celebrating our faith. We promote and draw attention to the themes and messages of the liturgy specific to special feasts and celebrations. Enriching the spiritual participation of the parish is the goal.

- The resources we use and develop provide liturgical guidance by connecting to the objective of supporting a greater understanding of our faith.
- Collaborating and coordinating with related groups and ministries extends our commitment to inclusion of aspects pertinent to building our community.
- The committee is dedicated to bringing the liturgy alive for the community and supporting worship through expressing our faith in diverse ways.

Submitted by Clara Hamory and the Liturgy Committee: McE Galbreath, Brian Cano, Teresa Garipey, Jane Staples, Sr. Matilda Owolagba, Heather Duggan, Fr. Tim Coonen, OMI

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MINISTRY OF MASS COORDINATOR

Mass coordinators are a group of volunteers who give generous service in preparing the church for celebration of the Holy Mass. Mass coordination is a ministry of presence which involves setting up for Mass and coordinating some activities before, during, and after the celebrations of Mass. The current team of Mass Coordinators is made up of selfless parishioners who are outstanding in their roles in the parish.

The setting up before Mass and other activities carried out at Mass make the celebration go smoothly. The coordinators render great assistance in the celebrations of Mass, and some of them also assist in other liturgical ceremonies like funeral liturgies and reconciliation services. Most of them work as teams to support one another. Those who are more experienced among them also mentor others in preparing the church for Mass.

Mass coordinators for weekdays are McE Galbreath, Yvonne Bennett, Grace Bruno, Jane Staples, and Matilda Owolagba (coordinator).

Mass coordinators for weekends are Gloria Sola, Pat LaViolette, Jane Staples, Yvonne Bennett, Grace Bruno, and John and Debra Bouchard.

Submitted by Sr. Matilda Owolagba

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PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

The Pastoral Care ministry is made up of dedicated volunteers from the parish. This ministry provides access to the sacraments, spiritual support, and visits. It also includes the sending of greeting cards for special occasions and needs. The ministry is conducted in the following locations: Villagia in the Glebe Retirement Home, Greystone Village Retirement, Windsor Park Retirement Residence, private homes, Ottawa hospitals, and others.

A pastoral care team visits Villagia in the Glebe Retirement Home weekly to celebrate Mass with Fr. Nicholas Penje, SJ, and occasionally by Fathers Elphege, Eugene, Simon, and Tim. There is not a week that goes by without expressions of gratitude from the residents and team members for the graces shared. The team provides missalettes, parish bulletins, and *The Epistle* newsletter to share the spirit of Canadian Martyrs. Several of the residents at Villagia are decades-long parishioners of Canadian Martyrs. We are grateful for the support of Villagia staff.

Individual communion visitation occurs weekly at Greystone Village Retirement, which is deeply appreciated by the residents and their families. Fr. Tim celebrates Mass at the Greystone once a month with patients and staff. Fathers John Renken and Eugene Whyte have assisted to celebrate Mass and other sacraments. Other pastoral activities are conducted at the request of patients, their families, and the facility, including the sacraments of reconciliation and of the sick.

Also, a pastoral care team visits Windsor Park Retirement Residence monthly for the celebration of the Eucharist. A resident who is a parishioner at Canadian Martyrs has been instrumental in bringing the team to Windsor Park.

Communion is brought to some parishioners in their homes, including members of the former St. Margaret Mary Parish. The Pastoral Care ministry also responds to the call of *Laudato Si'* by complementing the work of other parish committees.

In most cases, a team of two volunteers visits in homes. Volunteers are needed and most welcome. A pastoral care course is offered twice a year (spring and fall) by [Ottawa Pastoral Care](#). A notification of the upcoming courses is put in the bulletin.

Committee members, 2023: Fr. Tim Coonen, OMI, Jane Staples, Rosemarie Hoey, Anne Marie Bazinet-Miller, Yvonne Bennett, Sheila Connolly, Grace Bruno, and Sr. Matilda Owolagba

Submitted by Sr. Matilda Owolagba, Jane Staples, and Yvonne Bennett

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SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism preparation was done with the parents in one-on-one sessions with Adele Casuga Lalonde (eight baptisms). Baptisms were celebrated at weekend Masses.

Preparation for First Communion and First Reconciliation was facilitated by Adele Casuga Lalonde (Director of Religious Education), and volunteer catechists Brian Cano, Magda Kubasiewicz, Mede McAtee, and Theresa Nieminen. Youth Leaders were Gabriel and Miriam Zdunich.

Children celebrated their First Reconciliation at an evening service on May 2.

Children celebrated their First Communion at regular Sunday Masses. A dedicated Mass for all candidates to attend at the same time was not scheduled; instead, families scheduled their attendance over several Sundays.

Confirmation preparation was done in person in the fall. Adele Casuga Lalonde (Director of Religious Education) facilitated sessions along with volunteer catechists Brian Cano, Magda Kubasiewicz, Mede McAtee, and Theresa Nieminen, with Lily Carroll as the Youth Leader. The group also included one young person (age 15) who was preparing for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Her preparation was done in 2023, and the sacraments of initiation were completed in 2024.

Archbishop Terrence Prendergast presided at the Mass for the Confirmation of candidates on November 26, 2023.

Sacraments celebrated in 2023:

- Baptism: 8 children
- First Communion: 9 children
- Confirmation: 22 young people

Resources used:

- *Come Join Us at the Table*, by Muriel Loftus and Lawrence DeMong, OSB
- *God Has Forgiven You! Go in Peace!* Adapted from the Ottawa Catholic School Board resource by Adele Casuga Lalonde
- *Alive in the Spirit*, by Catherine Ecker and Margaret Bick

Submitted by Adele Casuga Lalonde, Director of Religious Education

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REFUGEE SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE

This year was a light one for the Refugee Settlement Committee, as we did not have a sponsorship ongoing or in the works.

We continued to be in contact with previously sponsored families for minor help and friendship. The family we sponsored in 2021/22 is doing well and now living fully independently in our community.

We put feelers out to our contact at the Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) in Ottawa to see what the current refugee sponsorship possibilities in the archdiocese are. In November, Julie from CCI put us in contact with a family of three who had recently arrived in Ottawa as refugee claimants. They were experiencing difficulties (no food, no winter clothing, no means of support, living in emergency shelter); Julie asked if we could help them with some of their immediate needs. Over the next few months, we solicited donations from parishioners to supply them with various foodstuffs, winter clothing, boots, a cell phone, a stroller, and gift cards for groceries and cell-phone plans. We escorted them on a shopping trip to purchase long underwear and warm socks. We also provided occasional transportation to appointments with government agencies and helped with resumé writing (once they gained legal status to work in Canada while their refugee claim is processed).

Submitted by Christine Andress and David Gilmour

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SYNOD COMMITTEE

Synodality is a fresh and renewed way of understanding ourselves as the Church – an understanding that is rooted in Vatican Council II. This self-identity of the Church is evident in New Testament communities and, as Pope Francis prophesies, God is calling the Church to renewed synodality at the beginning of this third millennium.

The Synod Committee members are committed to ongoing study, research, and reflection about synodality. The committee intends to share insights and valuable information regularly with the parish through various means.

On December 27, 2023, the Synod Committee hosted a Lunch and Learn with Dr. Cathy Clifford. She was invited to participate in the Synod of Synodality in Rome in October 2023. She shared her exciting experience with the parishioners, inspiring us to weave synodality into the regular life of our parish. Dr. Clifford has been very generous in sharing her experience and knowledge, and we are grateful to support her as she continues to interact in the synod process this year. Dr. Clifford (and Dr. Renken) provided introductory webinars for parishioners in early 2022. These workshops explained the vision of Pope Francis that synodality is a “constitutive dimension of the Church” with roots back to the time of the Apostles.

In 2024, members of the Synod Committee will meet with Parish Pastoral Council and discuss various means to continue to raise consciousness of synodality in the parish. Ongoing conversations with the Pastoral Council will enhance continued formation among parishioners. Also, in collaboration with the Pastoral Council and other parish groups, the Synod Committee hopes to occasion “sharing circles” on various pastoral issues.

Through all this, we are responding to the invitation of Pope Francis to accompany each other as a synodal people on the journey of life. We are developing the “art” of synodality. Synodality is a way of life – a fresh way to be the Church. It offers a new vision of the way that the gifted People of God share blessings that inspire and enable one another to be the living sign of God’s presence in the world. It is a “blossoming” of the vision of the Church put forth by Vatican Council II. All are precious. All are worthy. All are welcome.

Submitted by John Renken and Pamela Dixon

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TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

The Truth and Reconciliation Committee continues to engage with Call to Action #59 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Final Report:

We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.

The committee meets around once a month (usually online) from September to June to discuss and develop opportunities to advance truth and reconciliation in our parish and the broader community. In April 2023, the committee met to review its mandate and the related activities to see where progress was being made and where gaps exist.

Engagement

- Oblate leadership: The committee wrote to Fr. Ken Thorson, Provincial Superior of OMI Lacombe Canada, on August 22, 2023, as a follow-up to our meeting with him and Fr. Richard Beaudette, OMI, in April 2022. The purpose of the letter was to ask the Oblate leadership to engage more intentionally with and communicate with the laity in Oblate parishes across Canada so we can all better understand the work the Oblates are doing and what remains to be done. The letter added, "Our vision is for a network of parishioners both working locally and connected nationally to share stories, to learn, to grieve and to build a better future together." This work is ongoing.
- Truth & Reconciliation Network: A member of the committee is part of this network of five Ottawa-area parishes that are actively engaged in reconciliation.

Activities

Prayer and liturgy

- September 30/October 1, 2023: Weekend liturgies on the theme of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30): Peter Bisson, SJ, was the guest presider and preacher. A more in-depth land acknowledgment was offered, and prayers of the faithful on the theme of Indigenous reconciliation were composed. The committee worked with the Liturgy Committee on these weekend liturgies.

Presence in the community

- The Survivors' Flag was flown for the months of May, June, and September outside the church as a sign of solidarity with survivors and their families.
- Orange ribbons were tied in bushes outside the church as a reminder of children sent to residential schools and the ongoing generational trauma of this experience.

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Presentations

- “The Shadow of Wardship,” facilitated by Donna Naughton of Kateri Native Ministry and Gerry Kelly of Galilee Centre (September 9, 2023)
- “Walking Together”: panel presentation sponsored by the Archdiocese, Saint Paul University, and the T&R Network of five local parishes (October 14, 2023): committee members helped promote the event and served as volunteers on the day.

Parish resources

- Truth & Reconciliation table at the back of the church as a place to share information and engage in conversation with parishioners.
- Ongoing group study sessions using the Jesuit Forum resource, *Listening to Indigenous Voices*
- Lending library of books by Indigenous authors for parishioners to continue learning.
- Articles in each issue of the parish newsletter, *The Epistle*
- Announcements in the weekly bulletin on events, activities, and information related to truth and reconciliation.

Submitted by Anne Louise Mahoney, chair

Committee members, 2023: Anne Louise Mahoney (chair), Grace Bruno (until August), Angela Burton, George Cameron, Janice Cameron, Maureen Cerroni, Angela Davis, Nora McKnight, Sr. Matilda Owolagba (until June), Sylvie Richer (starting in September), Nicola Whitehouse, Anthony Zoccoli (starting in June)

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YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group was back to meeting each month in 2023, exploring concepts and practices in our Church and building an understanding of what is meant, how, and why!

In Fall 2023, we focused on prayer: Who wrote it and why, what does it say, how does it make me feel, should I carry it forward with me to bring me back to this place in my heart? In addition, we explored saints and others who have inspired us as we moved through Confirmation and then gradually into young adult life.

Laudato Si' continues to be an important part of our monthly meetings. We explored the “Stand for the Land” initiative from Development & Peace and the environmental degradation caused by mining companies in Honduras that make the Indigenous peoples’ lands unable to supply them with food or water. We hope to undertake projects on the care for creation in 2024 that we can present during the Season of Creation 2024.

Submitted by McE Galbreath, with the generous support of Corry and Richard Wink