

ST BASIL'S PASTORAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Saint Basil's is a very busy and active parish. Your Pastoral Council decided to give parishioners an overview of some of the highlights of activities with this Annual Report. Thank you to all who contributed in so many ways to the Pastoral work of St. Basils.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM PASTORAL COUNCIL

Imagine St Basil's... Pastoral Council supported a major parishioner initiative to prepare for the future of Saint Basil's. A process of Appreciative Inquiry called Imagine St. Basil's... was launched early in 2016. We are now in the third of four phases. The process is under the guidance of Raphael Amato. It is well received by parishioners who participate in it.

Coordination of Children's Ministries Activities: In the past few years the programs for children and young families have greatly expanded. Since these involve ministries in different Commissions Alison Elliott of Pastoral Council agreed to act as a liaison among these ministries. This has resulted in better coordination of the various activities.

Mercy Posters: To mark the Year of Divine Mercy Pastoral Council purchased a poster of the official logo of the Year of Mercy and mounted it alongside the Divine Mercy poster in the Narthex with an explanatory panel between them.

Candle Stand: Council agreed to the request to have a candle stand holding 20 candles in non-flammable sleeves installed at the back of the Church near the statue of Mary. The stand was purchased by and is being maintained by parishioners who requested the stand.

Other: In November Pastoral Council held a reflection day for its members, a revised Pastoral Council Manual was distributed and a brunch recognizing the important work of our many volunteers was held in June. Throughout the year the Council discussed and monitored several issues, many of which are ongoing. These include a youth choir, reinstallation of the original crucifix, forms of spirituality within the parish and renovations to the church.

COMMUNICATIONS is an ongoing challenge. Below are some areas we have been able to focus on:

- **New Website:** A major spin-off of the Imagine St. Basil's... program has been the development and launch of a new website which is easy to navigate and maintain. Parishioners have remarked positively to its look and feel. Thanks go to our webmaster Aaron Ludmer for his diligent leadership and to Gerard Lewis for his support.
- **Bulletin Boards in the Narthex:** There are a growing number of notices to be posted resulting in a growing number of easels. To deal with this and expand the space available for coffee hours and other gatherings in the narthex two large bulletin boards will be mounted on the wall in the Narthex. Space will be allotted to ministries that require it.
- **Publicizing the Ministries:** In an effort to increase awareness among parishioners of the many active ministries within the Commissions at St. Basil's we have had bulletin inserts describing ministries. We hope that as parishioners become more aware of the ministries they will be attracted to participate in one or more of them.
- **Revision of Welcome to New Parishioners Form:** This is available both online and in print form. It has been simplified with follow up contact planned to obtain more information as needed.

- **Availability of Pastoral Council Members:** Once a month a member is available after all the masses for parishioners. Other forms of communication such as letters, emails etc. are discussed at meetings and responded to by members.
- **Posting of Monthly Parish Council Minutes:** Print copies are available in the narthex.
- **Annual Report:** This is intended to summarize the work of the Pastoral Council and ministries in the last year.

FUNCTIONING OF PASTORAL COUNCIL

In September we welcomed two new **members:** Margery Livingstone and Ellis-Lynn Duschenes, long term members of St. Basils. Randy Golanowski resigned from the council in November because of other commitments. Alison Elliott replaced him in January of this year and quickly assumed her new duties. Kathleen Kelly volunteered to record the minutes of our meetings.

Our **day of reflection** took place on Saturday November 14. The main focus of the meeting was how to become a more effective Council. Recommendations were made concerning communications with our parishioners, being more visible, accessible and fostering better relations with all the ministries.

The **budget process** was streamlined to ensure that input from the Ministries regarding their budgets left time for by P C prior to submission to the Finance Council.

The Pastoral Council successfully **liaised with the Finance Council.** We attended all their meetings. Issues regarding the annual parish budget and funding for “Imagine St Basils...” were amicably resolved. We also participated on the FC Fund Raising Committee for the on-going and extensive Church renovations.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MINISTRIES

The many ministries of St. Basil’s Parish have been very active during the year. In order to keep this report to a reasonable length only the highlights of their activities during this year are reported here. Complete reports are published on our website www.stbasilsparish.ca

Worship Commission

- A major step forward this year was the recruitment and training of young altar servers.
- The launch of the Jubilee Year of Mercy was initiated during the month December with the Jubilee prayer being recited to open the Worship Commission meetings. “Lord in your mercy” was included to close each Prayer of Intercession during the Sunday Masses
- A liturgical workshop, “*Eyes, Hands and Hearts*” facilitated by Heather Reid was held with a good number of participants present. The workshop focused on the theology and spirituality of “*why we do what we do*”. After this participants were invited to break into their specific ministries for discussion and feedback. A booklet was prepared for the hospitality/usher ministry and lectors were presented with a handout on the responsibilities for commentators and lectors. The reorganization of the responsibilities of the trustee and lector was also clarified. It was agreed that more of these workshops should be held in the future.

Education Commission

- There have been 14 baptisms since September with a further 5 scheduled during the summer.
- The celebration of First Communion on April 3rd welcomed 29 children to the table of the Eucharist for the first time.

- On April 17th Archbishop Prendergast confirmed 8 youth at St. Basils.
- On the feast of Pentecost, May 15th, one adult was confirmed at Notre Dame Cathedral after preparation in the RCIA program.
- The marriage ministry has worked with 5 couples preparing for the sacrament of marriage.

Christian Services Commission

Refugee Committee:

- The Parish welcomed the Al Dabei family this year. With the support of a very active refugee committee the family has settled into the city and begun the process of adjusting to school and life in Ottawa.
- The committee will continue support for the Al Dabei family while applying to sponsor another family.

Mission and Social Justice:

- The committee focused on Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment *Laudato Si*.
- We joined the Global Catholic Climate movement and participated in the Global Climate March in November.
- We held study sessions on *Laudato Si* for adults and joined the Children's Liturgy group to raise awareness of the environment.
- Various members of the committee represent St. Basils with different organizations: Peace and Development, Multi-faith Housing, Right Relations (aboriginal issues), Ancoura (mental health).

The Caring Ministries:

- The prayer shawl ministry has supported 16 people who were going through difficult times with prayers and shawls.
- Discussions are underway to ensure that we are able to offer regular masses to the residents of Medex.

Social Action:

- The food cupboard program made deliveries to approximately 12 clients per month.
- One hundred thirty-six individuals including 52 children received assistance via our Christmas Hamper campaign.
- The Carlington Community Chaplaincy's Rainbow Weavers Women's group held a craft and bake sale at St Basils in October.

Community Life Commission

Activities Coordinator: This year the social activities coordinator organized the roast beef dinner, reception for vets and receptions following the Easter Vigil, First Communion & Confirmation.

Catholic Women's League:

Members provided a Guard of Honour at the funeral of Gisele Csombok, a long-time member.

Three members of the Diocesan CWL executive were guests at the request of the President to offer suggestions and comments about how to proceed in the future.

CWL co-sponsored with Mission and Social Justice a discussion on Euthanasia and Assisted Dying.

The President spoke about the issue of palliative care and presented the petition from CWL National level. The petition asks that palliative care be identified as a “defined medical service” under the Canada Health Act, so that provincial and territorial governments will be entitled to funds under the Canada Health Transfer system to be used to provide accessible and available hospice palliative care for all residents of Canada in their respective provinces and territories.

St. Basil’s Ladies Bridge:

In 2016 there were 26 members (13 teams of 2) with 3 or 4 past members playing as spares. The Club had another successful year which included an opening lunch, closing banquet and a memorial mass for deceased members of the Club.

OTHER

Children’s Liturgy

The children’s ministry of St. Basil’s Parish has grown both in numbers and activities over the last year.

- Children’s Liturgy of the Word is celebrated 3 Sundays per month during the 9 o’clock Mass from September to June.
- On the last Sunday of the month a Family Mass is celebrated with children taking on a range of duties such as greeting, ushering, reading scriptures and intercessions and handing out bulletins.
- A range of family focussed activities have been offered during the Family Mass. Events have included: Backpack Blessing, Advent Brunch and Wreath making, St. Nicholas gifts, Epiphany Party, Candlemas candle-making, Lenten Brunch, Good Shepherd crafts, Easter Basket Blessing, Support for the Food Cupboard and Community Garden, Mother’s Day notes, Pentecost Party and Family Games & Picnic.

Community Garden

There is a vegetable garden at St. Basil’s again for the second year. This initiative will involve parishioner volunteers and will be an educational experience for the children. Produce will be available to volunteer gardeners and will be donated to local charities such as the Boys and Girls Club and The Shepherds of Good Hope.

LOOKING AHEAD

PC Membership: Peter Newlands and Elizabeth Elliot will be leaving Pastoral Council having completed their 3 year terms. Gerard Lewis, a life-long member of St. Basil’s has agreed to serve on the Council. We are looking for a second new member.

Imagine St. Basil’s.... A major focus of the work on Pastoral Council in the up-coming year will be the continuing work with this initiative. All ministries in the Parish will be involved in finding ways to make to identified possibilities actually happen. Many of them will directly involve the Pastoral Council and require its support.

Other Priorities: We will also be continuing to work on coordinating the children’s liturgy and sacramental preparation given the growing number of children attending; increasing use of online communication; considering the sponsorship of another refugee family; exploring the possibility of wifi access in the Church and encouraging volunteer participation.