



GRATITUDE NEWS



Lent and Easter Season amid a Global Pandemic

The season of Lent is typically a 40 day journey beginning on Ash Wednesday and continues for six weeks ending on Easter Sunday. Lent is a time of preparation through prayer, repentance of sins and almsgiving. This year, amid the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Masses and other programs were cancelled as of March 16th within the Diocese of Hamilton. **In a letter on March 17th from Bishop Crosby to all the people of the Hamilton Diocese, he wrote:**

"This is quite a Lenten fast. We hunger for the food that satisfies the longing of our heart—the source and summit of the Christian life. We hunger because we care for the greater community – those whose lives are at risk if they catch the dreaded virus, those who already have it and don't yet know, and the children – born and unborn.



Yesterday I heard birds singing – a beautiful and refreshing sound after a winter without. The sound lifted my spirits! One bird, then another – harbingers of Spring – a promise of happier times ahead! Let us do the same – lift drooping spirits by kind words and thoughtful actions, by reaching out to neighbors alone in their homes, perhaps in need of assistance and care, certainly needing cheery voices, some good news, and a small break from the tedium of being at home alone.

Know that Priests of the Diocese are celebrating Masses – praying for parishioners, for the sick, for the dead – as we always do – now without the gathered assembly. The people are not forgotten – in fact, you are remembered now more than ever. Many years ago, when I was Bishop in Labrador, I was aware that parishioners in smaller more isolated villages did not have access to the Eucharist for several months at a time. It is still the reality there today. We can learn from them. Pray the Rosary – it is a powerful prayer and a reflection on mysteries of our faith. Read the daily Scripture readings. Watch the Pope's Mass from Casa Santa Marta – live-streamed every day – or watch one of the other televised Masses on local channels.

Lift up your hearts! We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and just! It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give You thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. We repeat that little dialogue at every Mass. It is precisely what we must do now. During this time of trial, give thanks for the blessings we experience – the love of family and friends, the courage of healthcare and public health professionals, the availability of necessities to help us remain healthy, the bravery of those who are in quarantine or self-isolating, the awareness that we will get to the other side of this test and gather once again to sing and pray our thanksgiving together!"

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Embracing Technology - Live Streaming of the Celebration of the Eucharist

By: Laurie Vescio

Sunday, March 22nd, was the 4th Sunday of Lent but it wasn't a typical Sunday mass. With the churches in the diocese closed due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, Father Ian Duffy used technology to bring mass into our homes by streaming "live" through the Basilica Facebook page.

These are unprecedented times where we are all required to self-isolate and practice physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 - Churches are closed, employers are requiring their employees to work remotely where possible; non-essential businesses are closed - and so as a result, we are all needing to adapt and be creative and open to new ways of doing things.

Live streaming of the Celebration of the Eucharist is one way that Father Ian is trying to adapt to these challenging times and gather everyone to celebrate virtually. In less than 24 hours, there were over 610 views of the mass from the Basilica Facebook Page—@shrinebool **Basilica—Shrine of Our Lady Immaculate**.



A huge thank you to Father Ian and his "camera crew" for making this possible.

Bishop Crosby with some of our RCIA candidates at the Rite of Election on February 23, 2020 at the Basilica



Knights of Columbus Breakfast



By: Denis Depratto

The Knights of Columbus of our Basilica would like to extend our sincere thanks to all our parishioners who came to support our Parish Breakfast, most recently held on Sunday March 1st. Your kind generosity was very appreciated, and enables us to continue supporting the needs both in and out of our parish community.

We look forward to your support once again at our upcoming Annual Parish BBQ on July 12th.

Vivat Jesus



Friday Devotions—The Way of the Cross

By: Kathy Gemin

.... from ashes to palms, to the Cross to the Resurrection our 40 day Journey to Easter is now complete. Here at the Basilica we were blessed to have many Lenten observances from which to choose prior to the impacts of COVID-19 closures.

One of these was Friday Devotions which included the Stations of the Cross. During the Stations of the Cross, parishioners were invited to walk with Father around the church to each Station or to remain in the pew. We all participated in the reading of the reflection on each Station which began with the traditional prayer.

"We adore you O Christ and we bless You because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world."

The Catholic tradition of praying the Stations of the Cross dates back to the 4th century when the faithful visited the Holy Land. For many Catholics today there is no better way to prepare for Easter than praying the Way of The Cross during Lent.

Designation of the Basilica as a Marian Shrine

By: Father Ian Duffy and Agnese Nagy

The REGINA CAELI SHRINE was formerly known as the “Seasonal Shrine”. Here you will find a new statue of Our Lady Queen of Heaven (Regina Caeli in Latin). The statue, an image of Our Lady under her title “Queen of Heaven,” is what gives the shrine its new name. The name comes from the opening lines of an ancient Easter antiphon “Regina Caeli Laetare”, which means “Queen of Heaven rejoice.” The antiphon is sung during the Easter season, and calls to mind the great joy of Our Lady at the Resurrection of her Son. The new statue was blessed by His Excellency, Bishop Crosby, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, when he officially declared the Basilica to be the Diocesan Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This beautiful statue is rich in symbolism. The crowns on the heads of Jesus and Mary indicate their royal role as King and Queen of Heaven and Earth. The jewels on the band of Our Lady’s crown represent all the peoples of the earth. In her hand is a sceptre calling to mind the authority vested in her by Christ, and the Cross at the top of the sceptre reminds us that Our Lady herself is subject to Christ, and that even her Immaculate Conception was brought about by the merits of the Cross. The blue and red, which also feature prominently in the nave windows, tell us that Mary is both Virgin and Mother, and that she shares most intimately in the Passion of her Son, while the gold reminds us that she also shares fully in the glory of His resurrection. As in the nave windows Our Lady is close to Jesus, but not possessive of Him. It is customary in ancient and medieval iconography that Our Lady does not hold Jesus in towards her, but holds him out towards us. She fulfils her role of bringing Our Lord to His people, and bringing us to Him.

The statue was made at the Demetz sculpture company high in the Italian Alps. It stands four feet tall, and is made of fiberglass, as it has to be light enough to be carried in the processions which will soon become a feature of our new designation as a Marian Shrine.

Additional images of Our Lady as Sovereign abound in the Basilica. The most prominent image can be found in the Sanctuary. The centre window of seven, (see photo #1), referenced in the New Testament Book of Revelations, depicts Mary being crowned Queen of Heaven with a crown of twelve stars upon her head. These windows were made by the F. Mayer and Company of Munich, Germany and were installed around 1915.

Directly opposite this window, centered in the “Catherine-Wheel” Rose Window (see photo #2) above the organ is another depiction of Mary with a crown of twelve stars. An identical image can be found in the south tower entrance above the exterior church door. Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, haloed and crowned with a border setting of twelve stars. To the right of the Sanctuary, above the Baptistry area is the “Jesus” window (see photo #3). This window shows a large group of saints of the Jesuit Order with the prominent A M D G motto. This stands for “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam” - “For the Greater Glory of God”. In this window, the image of Mary bears a crown.

In the Nave, the fifth of the large windows on the North side located near the entrance to the choir loft, is dedicated to Mary and depicts the Assumption of Mary, (see photo #4). The natural consequence of Mary’s Assumption is her crowning. If you look up to the circular portion of this window, you will see the Trinity - God, the Father on the right, God, the Son on the left and God, the Holy Spirit represented by a dove, above them. They are holding a crown, ready to crown Mary as Queen of Heaven. These are beautiful visual examples in our Basilica of the fourth and fifth Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.

In the blue ceiling panels above these windows and the side pews of the church you will notice several monograms (see photo #5). Some of the monograms represent titles of Mary as found in the prayer, the Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary or the Litany of Loreto. However, one monogram (the letters MR with a crown above) is repeated - Maria Regina (Queen).

In the ambulatory or chevette, that wraps around behind the sanctuary, you will find a shrine to Our Lady of Perpetual Help or Our Mother of Perpetual Help (see photo #6). It is a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary given by Pope Pius IX. In this shrine is an image of Our Lady, a copy of the celebrated Byzantine icon of the same name dating from the 15th century. The original is located in Rome. In this image, Mary bears a crown. There are additional images of crowns and Mary with a crown. Next time you are in the church, see if you can find them!

Prayer to Mary, Queen of Heaven

Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia. The Son whom you were privileged to bear, Alleluia, has risen as he said, Alleluia. Pray to God for us, Alleluia. Rejoice and be glad, Virgin Mary, Alleluia. For the Lord has truly risen, Alleluia.

O God, it was by the Resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that you brought joy to the world. Grant that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, his Mother, we may attain the joy of eternal life. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

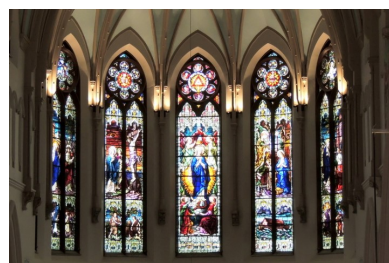


Photo #1

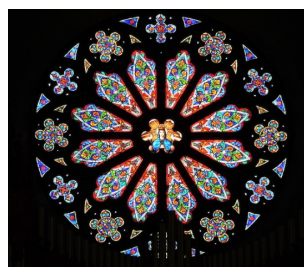


Photo #2

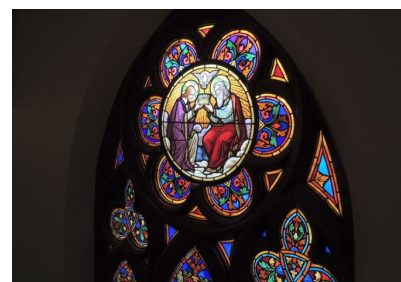


Photo #4

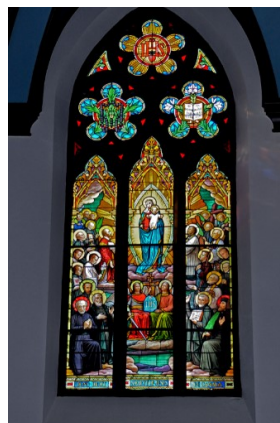


Photo #3



Photo #5



Photo #6

10th Annual Basilica Golf Tournament

By: Steve Nagy

What a lovely time of year—the daffodils sprout their yellow reminders of the end of winter, the crocuses announce the lengthening daylight, and from the basement, one can hear the quiet murmurs of “the grass is getting green, we need to hit a ball, please, please, take us out to the golf course!”

Yes, you and your golf clubs do not have too long to wait—the 10th Annual Basilica of our Lady Golf Tournament will be held on Sunday, October 4th at the Victoria Valley Golf Course. Prices will be the same as last year. So, mark that date in your calendar and hopefully you’ll be able to warm up your swings - it’s always a good time and remember, it never rains on a golf course (we’ll have to remind Father Ian of his responsibility to ensure a beautiful day!).



Donut Sunday and Ministry Fair

On Sunday January 19th, the Stewardship Committee hosted a Donut Sunday as well as the Annual Ministry Fair.

The Annual Ministry Fair this year saw 13 Parish Ministries and representatives from each participate. The intent behind the Fair is to create awareness and showcase the great work that each ministry does within the Parish, but also to answer questions from parishioners. It is also a great opportunity for parishioners to learn more about how to get involved and give back to the Parish community.

A special thanks to all who participated in helping to make this event a great success.



Annual Pasta Supper

The Annual Pasta Supper held on Sunday, February 9th, was a great evening of food and fellowship!



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Gratitude News is brought to you by the Stewardship Committee, and published three times a year to keep Parishioners informed and connected.

Upcoming Events*:

- ◆ Donut Sunday—April 19
- ◆ Cupcake Sunday—May 31
- ◆ Marian Day Celebration—June 6
- ◆ Donut Sunday—June 14
- ◆ Marian Day Celebration—July 4
- ◆ Annual K&C Parish BBQ and CWL Bake Sale —July 12th
- ◆ Marian Day Celebration—August 1
- ◆ Marian Day Celebration—September 5
- ◆ 14th Annual Parish Picnic—September 13
- ◆ Marian Day Celebration—October 3
- ◆ Annual Golf Tournament —October 4

*Please note that all events are subject to change due to Diocese/Government/Community guidelines pertaining to COVID-19. Check the Parish website for current details closer to the date.

For more details about upcoming events, visit the Events section of our website at www.basilicaofourlady.com

Did you know...

You can follow the Basilica through social media—Instagram and Facebook:



Instagram: @shrinebool
(Basilica Shrine Guelph)



Facebook: @shrinebool
(Basilica—Shrine of Our Lady Immaculate)



Facebook: @boolchoir (Music at the Basilica of Our Lady)