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wonderful
volunteers
for friendly
visiting."
Helen



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2014 Parish Campaign
Next Sunday, June 1, 2014
is the third ShareLife Collection

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An Old House



This Friday May 23rd will mark the closing of the sale of my parents' house – always called “our house”. My parents bought the house when they were eight years married, already had four children and my father was working hard as a truck driver hauling sand and gravel. I had been born just months before when my mom and dad and us kids moved into that house. Looking back now that house is all I remember and has been the solid, tangible rock of my life and past called home. In the subsequent years my mother would be pregnant with four more children, though one of them, between Mark and David, would die at birth but would ever be remembered in our family's reminiscing as Michael. Little Michael is buried in St. John's Cemetery in Whitby, not far from the plot of ground that will one day be the resting place of my mother and father.

That old house, though I am hesitant to call it that since we are both the same age, is the house the Forget family was raised in. Some of us were babies in that house, taking our first steps, saying our first words, bumping and bruising our knees and doing what all large, growing families do – fight with one another. Most of the times it was a fight of words over a disagreement or someone touching our “stuff” but other times it would get into a rolling on the floor fight. They never lasted very long and there were no winners, save perhaps the one who wasn't crying as much. The Referee's would inevitably come along and break it up making it clear there was no victor.

Our street had plenty of other kids to play with and over the years each of us have our own gang we'd hang around. Birthdays, Baptisms and First Communions were always celebrated afterward, not by renting some restaurant but by returning home for cake and simpler pleasures. Eating out wasn't something we did a lot of considering the cost, even then, of taking a large family out to a restaurant. Most events therefore were marked by at-home celebrations.

I think of all of the Christmases lived in that house. When we were younger we would take such delight in getting and decorating a tree. Several times it would get tipped over by little exploring fingers and often my dad would have to anchor the tree to the baseboards. Christmas Eve was always magical in that house as our minds would dream of forthcoming pleasures, toys and the smell of the Christmas turkey. We would

sometimes sneak downstairs in the still dark and early hours to see if Christmas had happened around the tree yet. Presents would be quietly taken from under the tree to the light coming through the blinds at the back door to see if our name was on the tag. Christmas morning would find us going to Mass first thing and upon our return home not a single present was to be opened until we had breakfast – torture for an expectant child who couldn't wait to see what he got.

As my dad was a truck driver and all of us grew up with an appreciation for cars, our driveway and the street out front always had a truck, tricycles, bicycles and cars parked. As we all grew older that old house was where dates were brought home in order to somehow pass parental and sibling approval. Some did, some didn't and some eventually got married.

As we all grew past our teens and into our 20's, one by one we moved away from home. I left home in the mid-80's to go first to Serra House in Toronto for two years where I was in pre-formation for the priesthood and then on to the years spent at the St. Augustine Seminary. I would always return home and to my familiar room each summer and though only one or two of my siblings were still living there, it still felt like the same familiar house we had always lived in because mom and dad were still there following the same routine they had had for years. There is great taken-for-granted comfort in the familiar.

Eventually, I was ordained a priest in 1993 and left home, though throughout the years it was the place I returned to for my day off and holidays. Perhaps of all my siblings the loss of our family home will impact me just a little bit more as all of them have houses of their own that they call home, but home has always been for me these past 55 years – 904 Bayview Avenue in Whitby.

Over the last two decades dad and mom lived alone in the house and with my mother's onset of Dementia some fifteen years ago, my father was her sole caregiver. I am grateful that my mother was able to live at home for as long as she did because of my dad's care for her as it gave her the comfort of the walls and rooms of the house she had always known. They say we never forget the things we feel and I'm sure my mother felt at home. Eventually, the decision had to be made for my mother to enter a nursing home as my father felt he could no longer take care of her. And so, on a warm day in July of 2010, my mother would leave that home she had lovingly made a home for all of us those many years. She left her husband and the house behind to go to a place called a home, though it really wasn't. These past four years she has often talked about home, asking “Are we going home now?”, or, “Are the kids upstairs?” In her mind, she is still “at home” when we are with her and our faces cause her to recall what has always been.

In the last year my father's health has been failing, though up until this time he has been living freely and independently at home. He's got a weak heart which has made him recently leave the house behind and move to Fairview Lodge Nursing Home in Whitby where my mother is. It was only a matter of time for that old house, which had become empty with the eventual leaving of its every occupant, to become the new home for someone else. Over the past few months my siblings and I sorted and sifted

through the memories and things of my parents in the house, finding old school report cards, pictures taken over the years, and packing up the things that had now become precious to us yet left behind by our parents. While it is true that all things must come to an end, the memories thankfully don't. For each of us there is a flood of memories from that house which held and sheltered and stood as our home, centered always on my mom and dad who made that dwelling place our home and the place where God was always the silent but present Guest. The story of each of our lives is yet to be completed but saying farewell to that house now leaves us with a somewhat painful but reminiscent sense that a chapter has just ended and yet, we all know where our true Home is. (Fr. Charles)

"Few are born to do the great work of the world, but the work that all can do is to make a small home circle brighter and better." George Eliot

"Where does the family start? It starts with a young man falling in love with a girl – no superior alternative has yet been found."

Sir Winston Churchill

PARISH WEEKLY COLLECTION UPDATE:

LAST SUNDAY'S OFFERTORY COLLECTION

- Envelopes, Loose bills and change - \$3631
 - Pre-Authorized Giving (PAP) - \$1987 (April)
- ➔ TOTAL COLLECTION LAST WEEK: \$5618

MASS INTENTIONS

- Tues., May 27 – 8:30 am – In honour of the Divine Mercy
Req. by the Figuracion Family
- Wed., May 28 – 7:00 pm – Tulio Caprio+ Req. by the Caprio Family
- Thurs., May 29 – 8:30 am – For the intentions of the Quittenton Family
Req. by Madge St. Denis
- Fri., May 30 – 8:30 am – Annette Ameloot+ Req. by Madelaine Vonk & Valerie Hotner
- Sat., May 31 – 5:00 pm – Victor Paul+ Req. by the Athaide Family
- Sun., June 1 - 9:00 am – Joseph & Nora Karam+
Req. by the Karam Family
- Sun., June 2 – 11:00 am – Delores Driscoll+ Req. by Urban & Audrey Wassell

***Defeating Satan's Deadly Weapon Against Men *– Jeff Cavins**

Pornography has become pervasive in our culture - a true plague that has disastrously affected the lives of millions as demonstrated in sexual addictions, meaningless relationships, ruined marriages, and broken families. Due to the growth of the internet, pornography is more readily available than ever before. What is heartbreaking is that people believe in the illusion of anonymity that comes with easy access. What is more heartbreaking is that our youth have obtained access to these web sites. The average age of first internet pornography exposure is 11 years. It begins at a young age and that hunger increases. In fact, the largest consumer of internet pornography is the 35-49 age category. What's the cure? What can be done to fight this? *Defeating Satan's Deadly Weapon Against Men* is an excellent practical resource for overcoming the lure of pornography. With humour, insight and compassion, Jeff Cavins explores the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relationship consequences that pornography generates. He also provides the

listener with valuable strategies and tools to use in breaking free from pornography's grasp. I really enjoyed listening to Jeff speak about his personal struggles with this issue, and how he clearly unpacks Holy Scripture to explain the lessons God provides us to escape idolatry. If you know of anyone who is controlled by pornography, or is struggling to escape from it, I strongly recommend this CD. Francesco, parishioner

St. Leo Knights of Columbus Breakfast – June 8, 2014 following the 9 and 11 am Masses. Everyone is invited to enjoy another full breakfast of eggs, sausages, baked beans, pancakes, biscuits, coffee, tea and juice in the Church hall. Prices are Adults - \$5, Children (4-13) - \$3 and Children under 4 – free.

CATECHIST CORNER

Why do we often think of Mary as a Queen? Isn't that from a pagan religion?

Answer: We think of her that way because she is a Queen. In the Old Testament the mother of the Davidic King was crowned Queen, and was given the distinct title of *Queen Mother* as can be seen for example in Jeremiah 13:18. As Queen Mother, it was her right to receive honour, even from the King himself (1 Kings 2:19-20). Jesus of course, is the new and everlasting Davidic King, ruler of heaven and earth. And so any ancient Jew would have understood that Mary, Jesus' mother, must be given the honour due to such a Queen. This is why St. John described her as such in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 12), the Bible's last book. There, Mary is described in heaven as wearing a crown of 12 stars, and having the moon under her feet. Mary is Queen of heaven and earth because of who her son is.

Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 25, 2014

Working wonders for the elderly...

Carolyn retired from nursing and social work before she started with Society of Sharing. She initially became involved in friendly visiting and then moved on to coordinate their volunteers. "There are so many isolated seniors on a fixed income who can't afford to move." says Carolyn, "We can make such a positive difference in their lives with friendly visits, shopping, transportation to medical appointments and social outings." Last year ShareLife supported agencies met the needs of over 3,400 seniors with outreach service programs.

**Next Sunday is ShareLife Sunday – June 1, 2014
Please give generously. You can work wonders!**

Totus Tuus is coming!

The children and youth of the parish are invited to join us for Totus Tuus (Latin for Totally Yours) this summer from July 20th to July 25th. Totus Tuus is an Archdiocesan program whereby seminarians and college students travel to different parishes, spreading the Good News of our Lord through catechetical instruction, Mass, confession, songs and games! The grade school program, for children entering grades 1-6, runs Monday-Friday from 9 am - 2:30 pm. The Intermediate/High School program for grades 7-12 runs Sunday-Thursday from 7 pm - 9 pm. **The cost is only \$50 per person for the entire week.** To register or for more information, please contact Carly Thistel (Totus Tuus Co-ordinator) at carlythistel@gmail.com

More information about the program is also available at www.totustuustoronto.ca


ATTENTION ALL GARDENERS – It's that time of the year when we need to start organizing our parish gardens. Volunteers are needed to weed and feed these gardens. All those interested whether new or last year's volunteers, please contact Joan Barker (905) 655-2062.




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