

Reflections



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

A Newsletter from the Vocation Office

Spring 2005

The Sacraments: *Celebrating Who We Are*

The Catholic principle of "lex orandi lex credendi" declares that the way we worship is the way we believe.

In the sacraments of our faith, we have a window into our identity both as Christians and as a Church. The sacraments allow us to discover, express, and celebrate who we are. By reflecting on the ritual of each of the sacraments, we can learn much about what we as Catholics believe.

Pope John Paul II declared this the Year of the Eucharist. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we receive the body of Christ, and are called to be the body of Christ in the world. We share in Christ's sacrificial offering and discover our own call to make our lives a sacrificial offering – one that is rooted in a spirit of gratitude.

In this edition of *Reflections*, we will look at two particular sacraments. In the Sacrament of Baptism, we discover our identity as Christians. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, we see revealed some of the mystery of the identity of priests. Each of the sacraments is connected by the call to self-giving love. And in each of the sacraments, we can see that our lives are to be modeled on the life of Jesus, "who came to serve and not to be served."

As Catholics, we all share a vocation, or call from God, to make our lives a gift for others. The recently released vocation poster in our Diocese invites each of us to "Explore God's plan for you." I invite you to explore that plan and discover how God is calling you to become a gift for others.

Fr. Mark Gatto
Vocation Director, Diocese of Hamilton

**Tribute to
a Brother:**

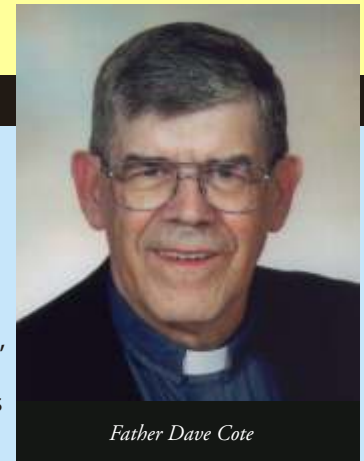
Remembering Fr. Dave Cote

He worked in all corners of the Diocese, touching people's hearts and strengthening their faith wherever he went. Fr. Dave Cote, always known as "Fr. Dave," died January 29, 2005 of pneumonia and other complications following heart surgery. He was 63.

Fr. Ron Cote, 74, remembers his kid brother as a man with a true gift for connecting with people of all ages, but particularly youth and seniors.

Shortly after his ordination in 1968, Fr. Dave introduced to the Diocese the COR weekend retreats for youth. He was also very involved with the Cursillo weekend retreats for adults – spiritual retreats to help people get below the surface of their faith.

His brother's own faith was as deep as the ocean, Fr. Cote says. "By mid-January, Fr. Dave knew his death was imminent and calmly made his funeral arrangements, from what vestments he wanted to wear, to the scripture readings and his choice of music." In his homily at the funeral, where hundreds of current and former parishioners packed the Church of Our Lady in Guelph, Fr. Cote noted that his brother was "not afraid of death, but trusted fully in Christ's promise of eternal life... to me he was a fine example of total confidence in God's goodness and love, no matter what."



Father Dave Cote

– continued on page 4 –

Celebration of Priesthood, Religious Life

The second annual *Celebration of Priesthood and Religious Life Dinner* will take place on Thursday, April 28, 2005. This event recognizes religious sisters, brothers and priests celebrating 50 years of religious life, Diocesan priests celebrating 50 years since ordination, and those to be ordained to the priesthood.

The expected attendance is 600, nearly double that of last year. "The feedback from last year's celebration was tremendous," says Noreen Hishon, president of the Serra Club of Kitchener-Waterloo. "This year we received requests for tickets before they were available."

Celebration of Priesthood and Religious Life Dinner

Thursday, April 28, 2005

The Serra Clubs of Hamilton and Kitchener-Waterloo organize the event, which will be held at Liuna Station in Hamilton.

Jubilarians to be honoured are: Sr. Lorraine Collins, SSND; Sr. Pauline Girodat, SSND; Sr. Mary Guth, SSND; Sr. Audrey McCarville, SSND; Sr. Rita Villani, CSJ; Sr. Lucy Straus, CSJ; Sr. Dympna Cunningham, CSJ; Sr. Rose Gabriel, CSJ; Fr. Vern Brunning, CR; Fr. Clair Girodat, CR; Fr. Raymond Reitzel, CR, PP; Br. Harry Chisholm, CR; Fr. Philip Sherratt; Fr. Harry Schmuck; Fr. Gerald Mulhall; Fr. Michael Sullivan; Fr. Stephen Stinson; and Fr. Ronald J. Cote.

Ordinandi to be honoured are: Tim Hingston, Wojciech Kuzma, Jeff Bergsma and Mariusz Durbajlo. (See *On the Calendar* for information about forthcoming ordinations.)

Sr. Lorraine Collins, SSND
Honoured Jubilarian



Sister Lorraine Collins fulfilled her girlhood dream of being a teacher, but after 50 years of service to School Sisters of Notre Dame, she says she is just as much a learner.

After many years as a classroom teacher, a principal, and in the administration of her religious community, Sr. Lorraine now works full time as a pastoral assistant at St. Clement, a large parish in Cambridge, where a major part of her role is working with adults converting to Catholicism.

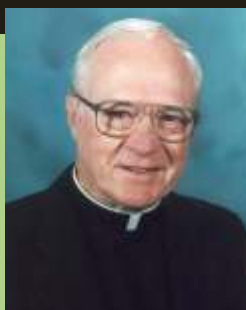
"It's enriching to me to see the spiritual life of people I come into contact with," Sr. Lorraine says. "I'm always learning from them. It's so interesting to see what prompts people to seek out the Catholic faith – it might

be someone who has never had any religion in their life, or someone from another faith. Usually they just feel a certain restlessness, a sense that something's missing from their lives."

It's a feeling Sr. Lorraine is well acquainted with, having felt it strongly herself at the age of 18 when she graduated from high school. "Being a sister was always there at the back of my mind and I kept pushing it back – until it got to the point where I thought, I have to go and at least try it. Something was missing from my life – just like the candidates I work with today.

"I tell my candidates today that it's the hound of heaven – the Lord keeps nipping at their heels, and finally people are compelled to stop and pay attention to it."

Fr. Harry Schmuck
Honoured Jubilarian



The year 1955 saw the biggest ordination class ever at St. Augustine's Seminary – 53 men in total, and 11 of them from the Diocese of Hamilton. Among them was Fr. Harry Schmuck – at 30, he was considered the "old guy" of the group.

He'd served Canada as an air gunner in World War II, flying in bombers over enemy territory. On returning home in 1946, the priesthood wasn't in the picture at all. "I had a good job at Bell Canada, was dating a good-looking gal, and had money in the bank," he recalls with a chuckle. "But then a young associate priest in my home parish challenged me – had I ever thought of the priesthood? Well, I hadn't, but once it got in my head

I really couldn't get it out. I entered seminary the next year."

Fr. Schmuck relishes the many and varied opportunities he's had over 50 years as a Diocesan priest in 11 different parishes from serving as chaplain to men in prison, to teaching sociology at the St. Joseph School of Nursing, to being a school board trustee. "I was tempted to put on my election brochure, 'Get lucky with Schmucky.'"

His advice to today's young priests is to arrive early in order to prepare properly for celebrating Mass, spend half an hour in silent prayer every morning, and remember to pray the divine office – a series of prayers on the psalms, scriptures and readings from the saints – every day.

Sr. Rose Gabriel, CSJ
Honoured Jubilarian



Sister Rose Gabriel's overwhelming feeling is that it can't possibly be five decades since she made her entrance to the congregation as a Sister of St. Joseph. "It seems more like five or 10 years at the most!" she insists.

Sr. Rose worked at St. Mary's Hospital in Kitchener for many years, beginning at the youthful age of 29 as director of Finance. But northern Ontario was in her blood, having spent her first six years of life in Kenora, and when the chance arose to work in a northern Ontario mission, she jumped at it.

After a year of native studies in Sudbury, she joined a contingent of Catholic clergy in Red Lake, Ontario – a small town located near the end of the TransCanada

Highway. From 1982 to 1987 she was a co-administrator of St. John Parish. After a few years back in southern Ontario, she once again felt the tug of the north and returned to Red Lake for another seven years as administrator of the parish.

Now turning 71, Sr. Rose is officially retired but keeps busy volunteering at St. Mary's Hospital and visiting parishioners who appreciate some company. And she still follows the Canadian Football League finals and the Grey Cup, although her interest in football isn't as keen as in the days when her brother Tony played for the CFL.

"My years of service have been very happy and fulfilling. I'm delighted to have been a sister for this many years, and to have had the opportunities that came my way."

Sacrament of Baptism Shared by all Catholics

Celebrating who we are in Jesus

By Mary Edmondstone, Parish Minister,
St. Matthew Parish, Oakville

I have spent most of my adult life uncovering and reclaiming what it means to be a baptized person. As a child, I learned that baptism washes away original sin, and it seemed to me that it was a one-time event which had little impact on daily life.

As an adult, I 'hid' my faith from others, never talking about it nor letting on that I belonged to a parish community. My husband challenged me, attempting to make me see that it was impossible to practice my faith privately and that my faith was certainly NOT something to hide.

All that changed when our first child was born. I remember believing with my whole being that our son Tom was a child of God and at his baptism, I celebrated this, rejoicing that he was being welcomed into the church community. Suddenly, the beliefs and values I grew up with became a foundation of my faith, and it became important for me to put them into practice.

Since then, I've been given wonderful opportunities to deepen my understanding of how my baptism shaped who I am. The Diocesan Formation for Ministry Program helped me 're-learn' the fundamentals of my Catholic faith. When I discovered baptism

is more than a dying of original sin, but also a new birth in which we are anointed Priest, Prophet and King so that we can live always as members of Christ's body, the sacrament came alive for me: All baptized people are called to holiness and this call is a lifelong journey.

I began to understand what this lifelong vocation to holiness might entail when I became a member of my parish RCIA team. It was such a privilege to walk with people as they struggled to open themselves to God's grace and to make commitments because of their growing faith in God's love for them.

My experience inspired me to study at Regis College, graduating six years later with my Master of Divinity. I was offered a job as parish minister at St. Matthew Parish, where I find that celebrating God's grace in people's lives constantly reminds me that in baptism, we become children of God, called to holiness.



Mary Edmondstone at her son's baptism

Sacrament of Holy Orders Reflects Mystery of the Priesthood

By Fr. Mark Gatto

The priest is connected to Christ as priest, teacher and shepherd. He is a representative and instrument of Christ. The identity of the priest is dependent on this intimate relationship with Christ – it is a call from Christ for the Church, and for service of the people of God.

The Rite of Ordination gives us a glimpse into the identity of the priest and the mystery of the priesthood:

Excerpts From the Instruction in the Rite of Ordination:

"Meditate on the law of God, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and put into practice what you teach."

"Let the doctrine you teach be true nourishment for the people of God. Let the example of your life attract the followers of Christ, so that by word and action you may build up the house which is God's Church."

"It is true that God has made his entire people a royal priesthood in Christ. But our High Priest, Jesus Christ, also chose some of his followers to carry out publicly in the Church a priestly ministry in his name on behalf of mankind."

"Know what you are doing and imitate the mystery you celebrate. In the memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection, make every effort to die to sin and to walk in the new life of Christ."

"When you baptize, you will bring men and women into the people of God. In the sacrament of penance, you will forgive sins in the name of Christ and the Church. With holy oil you will relieve and console the sick. You will celebrate the liturgy and offer thanks and praise to God throughout the day, praying not only for the people of God but for the whole world."

"Always remember the example of the Good Shepherd who came not to be served but to serve, and to seek out and rescue those who were lost."

"... conscious of sharing in the work of Christ, the Head and Shepherd of the Church, and united with the bishop and subject to him, seek to bring the faithful together..."

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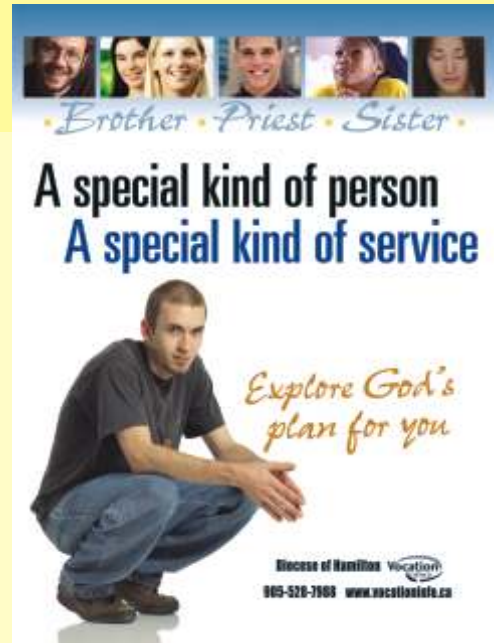
New Poster Campaign



Sacrament of Holy Orders – continued from page 3

Examination of the Candidate:

1. Are you resolved, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to discharge without fail the office of priesthood in the presbyteral order as a conscientious fellow worker with the bishops in caring for the Lord's flock?
2. Are you resolved to celebrate the mysteries of Christ faithfully and religiously as the Church has handed them down to us, for the glory of God and the sanctification of Christ's people?
3. Are you resolved to exercise the ministry of the word worthily and wisely, preaching the Gospel and explaining the Catholic faith?
4. Are you resolved to consecrate your life to God for the salvation of his people, and to unite yourself more closely every day to Christ the High Priest, who offered himself for us to the Father as a perfect sacrifice?



A new poster campaign aimed at encouraging vocations within the Church has just been launched in Catholic secondary schools and parishes throughout the Diocese of Hamilton. Produced by the Vocation Office of the Diocese, the posters carry the headline: "A special kind of person, a special kind of service" to reflect the unique contribution that people in religious life or the diocesan priesthood can make to their Church.

"Our last poster campaign, launched in 2001, asked men to consider the priesthood," says vocation director Fr. Mark Gatto. "With the new poster we are encouraging all Catholics to explore God's plan for their lives, including those among us who are considering a call to the religious life or the priesthood."

Detailed information about vocations is available at the Vocation Office web site, www.vocationinfo.ca.

On the Calendar

Four Ordinations This Year

Four men from the Diocese of Hamilton will be ordained to the priesthood at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 7, 2005 at Cathedral of Christ the King in Hamilton. Everyone is welcome to attend and celebrate the ordinations of Tim Hingston, Wojciech Kuzma, Jeff Bergsma and Mariusz Durbajlo.

World Youth Day 2005

August 16 to 21, 2005

This year, World Youth Day celebrates its 20th anniversary with a weeklong event in Cologne, Germany. Young people of all faiths between the ages of 16 and 30 are invited to attend. World Youth Day's motto, "We have come to worship Him," reflects the pilgrimage of faith for hundreds of thousands of people from over 120 countries worldwide.

A group of young people from our own Diocese, as well as several other groups, will travel to Cologne for the celebration.

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Tribute to a Brother – continued from page 1

Fr. Dave served as assistant pastor at St. Mary in Brantford, St. Anne in Kitchener and St. Dominic in Oakville. He then served as pastor at Holy Cross in Georgetown, Holy Family in Hanover and was just settling into his new post at St. Mary in Elora when his health began to suffer.

Fr. Ron Cote, who retired from Burlington's Holy Rosary parish last June, stepped into the breach and has assisted at St. Mary in Elora since September. He was touched by the overwhelming response of current and former parishioners to his brother's illness and death. In Fr. Cote's funeral homily, he noted that Fr. Dave's "gentle, humble message rang true in the minds and hearts of his parishioners... (he) had an amazing impact on all who knew him."