



St. Joseph's Parish, Antigonish County

During 2018 we were very sorry to see our former parish priest Father Alphonsus leave us to take on his new parish in Ingonish, Cape Breton. After a wonderful send-off including local talent, many memorable stories being told and followed by a great lunch at the St. Joseph's Community Center we bid a fond adieu and wished him much happiness and success in his new posting. Although it was hard to see Father Alphonsus leave we are very happy to welcome Father Lazarus Guria to our parish and our catholic community of St. Joseph's, St. Patrick's and St. Paul's.

St. Joseph's Parish Community would like to welcome you to our Christmas celebrations. We are thrilled that so many have come to be with us and would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little about our Parish. We are one of three in a community of parishes which include St. Joseph's, St. Patrick's in Lochaber and St. Paul's in Sherbrooke. Weekly masses are held at St. Joseph's at 5:00 pm on Saturday evenings and at 8:30 every Sunday morning. Our weekly envelopes look after all aspects of the running of the parish and are available to any new families who would like to contribute.

Our Parish Council meets regularly and our members include Father Lazarus, Jerome Grant (President) (jeromegrant@ns.sympatico.ca), Henry Joosten (SJLCC representative), Bernie MacLean, Donnie Dewar (Treasurer), Florence MacLean (CWL representative) Theresa MacMullin, Carmie MacInnis, Adrian VanBerkel and Wilhelmina Stewart. The Parish Council looks after the general day to day operations of the parish with Jerome and Bernie constantly taking care of any building upkeep and emergencies and Donnie keeping us in line with finances. Many improvements have once again been undertaken in our church. This year the seven pillars on the outside of the church were replaced/repared. The lighting of the church has also been completely updated. The Parish Council offers two high school bursaries, one for a male and one for a female, in the amount of \$200.00 each. Parents must be members of the Parish, students must be enrolled and attending university or community college in September. A grad mass for thirteen high school graduates was held this past June with a pizza party and cake following the service. A Mission was also held this year in the parish and this was also finished with a luncheon catered to by members of the Parish Council. Our parish has supported various community charities such as Right to Life, Food Bank, The Friendship Corner, The Diabetic Association to mention but a few. Members of our community and parish in need are also supported through the Social Action Committee who welcome feedback from the parish community. All Parishioners are welcome to come to our monthly meetings and dates can be found in the weekly parish bulletin and on our web site.

The Catholic Women's League (CWL) is very active in our parish. They organize a rosary for the sick of the parish after the 5 pm mass on the first Saturday of each month, and after each mass during May. They acknowledge the sick and elderly of the parish during the Christmas season, and throughout the year, with prayers, cards, and gifts. Of great importance are the receptions organized by the CWL at the SJLCC after a funeral, memorial service, or special event, at which time parish members as well as the greater community are asked to donate food and to help serve and clean up. The CWL organize the cleaning of the church each month. This year the CWL celebrated their 85th anniversary of the signing of their membership charter. Membership fees are collected in the month of January in the amount of \$20. For more information please contact Jean Collins (jpcollins@eastlink.ca), President of the CWL; new members are always welcome!



Religious Education is held once a month during the school year. Meagan Kennedy has been spearheading this endeavor the last number of years. She meets with the students at the SJLCC giving instruction and preparing them for special occasions such as first communion, first confession and confirmation. If you would like to contact Meagan Kennedy re religion classes, please email meagan.kennedy@srsb.ca.

As we sit and wait for our Christmas Service to begin I am sure you are all enjoying the beauty of our church. We are very fortunate that during every season, holiday or special occasion we have the "Haverkort" ladies that turn our beautiful church into something magical. Thanks go out to Annie Duggan, Geraldine Delorey and Genevieve Haverkort for their time and effort! We are very thankful that at every Christmas Children's Mass we have the beautiful voices of Billy Murphy and his family and friends. We thank them very much for this and as well as the regular choir who grace us at the midnight mass and regular services. Anyone wishing to join us are welcome with open arms!

Our Hymn Sing was a wonderful success both financially and spiritually. It was an evening of coming together as a community and remembering our past loved ones. Funds of approximately \$10,000.00 was raised and will go towards the upkeep of the graveyard. St. Joseph's has been very busy with the Cemetery Improvement Project. All phases are now virtually complete with many headstones re-erected with new/ repaired footings. The total cost of the project to date is \$20,500.00 and is fully paid from funds raised for the Cemetery Fund. The parish has erected a memorial headstone in memory of the many children and young people who died from a diphtheria breakout during the period 1880-1910. Many died in the winter months and the majority have unmarked graves. We take this opportunity to thank all parishioners, former and present, for their generous support towards financing this worthy project. Every summer we have a graveyard day which is a time that everyone comes together and help with the upkeep of the cemetery eg. filling in of graves, planting grass, trimming trees and whatever else needs to be done and we always welcome more hands. We have a graveyard mass in July/August to honour friends and families gone before us. After this mass the CWL caters to a strawberry shortcake social at the SJLCC. Another mass is also held at the Keppoch cemetery every summer to honour the pioneers of the area. Mass dates are advertised in the Casket as well as our church bulletin.

Chase the Ace has become a huge fund-raiser for the Parish Renovation Fund. For example, the above-mentioned replacement of the 7 exterior pillars were funded entirely by Chase the Ace proceeds. The SJLCC and St. Joseph's Parish jointly sponsor Chase the Ace every Friday night and the profit is shared equally. Although attendance is down we hope to see you come out to support this event. The co-operation between the Community Center and the Parish has been the reason for this success and we couldn't do any of this if it wasn't for our many very faithful supporters. Come and join us when you can, Friday nights 7:00 - 9:00. A Christmas ticket raffle is held every year. This raffle contributes to the revenue for general upkeep of the parish church. A special thank you to all for supporting this cause either by selling or purchasing tickets. This year's draw was held on December 9th, congrats to the winners!

The first Saturday in August the John Arther Murphy Memorial Run was had for the 13th year. A huge success both financially and as a community function of gathering of friends and family. Funds made from this fund-raiser are shared equally between the SJLCC and the Parish. Breakfast immediately after at the Community Centre was also a great success.

We have a regular Sunday bulletin which can be read on line at www.saintjosephscatholicchurch.org. We express our appreciation to the local advertisers for a full page of bulletin ads attached to our weekly bulletin. These ads provide an important source of revenue for the parish. Any events which you might like to include in this bulletin can be sent to Jean Collins at jpcollins@eastlink.ca. If you have a family member or friend who is sick, disabled or in hospital, please contact Father Lazarus for a pastoral visit: Email: lazguria@gmail.com, Phone: 902-970-7640. Once again, thank you for joining us for this Holy Christmas mass and celebration. May your holiday season be blessed with much happiness and health in 2019!

