

The Pandemic Review

April 2021 - Mia Abate

Student life, both physical and virtual



He is Risen!

During the month of April our journey to the cross comes to an end. Jesus has been crucified, buried and resurrected by the Lord our God as a symbol of his love for us so that we may have eternal life with him in heaven. The month of April has also seen St. Patrick's 19th annual Cyclone Aid as well as a province wide transition to a virtual learning platform for what is currently an indefinite period of time.

Cyclone Aid

The St. Patrick's Fighting Irish are always committed to giving back to their community and one of the ways they like to do this is through their yearly can drive, Cyclone Aid. During the Easter season, St. Patrick's school partners with a local charity and food bank, The Inn of the Good Shepherd, to provide meals to local families. In a normal year, staff and students would canvas the city going door to door to collect cans and other non-perishable food items. This year however, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, this was not possible. Regardless of circumstances, the Fighting Irish were not going to let Covid stop them from being the hands and feet of Christ: instead, they launched their first ever virtual Cyclone Aid! Rather than collecting cans, they collected monetary donations that were then given to the Inn of the Good Shepherd, allowing them to



purchase whatever materials and supplies they may need. Myles Vanni, the Executive Director of the Inn of the Good Shepherd was quoted saying, “It’s tremendous that the students and staff of St. Pat’s are keen to carry on the tradition of CycloneAid, which is really more than just collecting food – it’s about learning to care for others.” It is important now more than ever to help local charities like The Inn of the Good Shepherd as many have seen an increase in need due to Covid. From last April to September, The Inn distributed over 6000 emergency food boxes. Additionally, in a normal, pre-Covid year, The Inn had 35 people in their shelter whereas now, they are feeding and sheltering more than 220 individuals. This year they managed to raise \$12,300 which will go a long way toward helping individuals throughout the community.



School Yard Clean Up

April 22nd marks Earth Day; a day for us to celebrate and protect the place that all 7.2 billion of us call home. In the spirit of Earth Day, Mrs. Ellis-Woodward and her grade 10 History class decided to demonstrate their stewardship by helping to clean up the school yard. Ms. Ellis-Woodward and her students went around the school grounds (that borders the Howard Watson Trail, a very popular

exercise path) and any litter they found, separated it into 3 separate bags: paper, plastic and garbage. Once they did this, they disposed of the materials properly, placing the paper and plastic into the proper recycling receptacles and disposing of the trash. It is very important that we help to care for our common home so we can preserve it for the next generation and many generations to come.

Lunch for Students in Need

Anyone who has ever tried to complete a task on an empty stomach will tell you the importance of a good meal. The importance of eating cannot be disputed: it helps the body grow, the brain focus and gives our cells the components necessary to



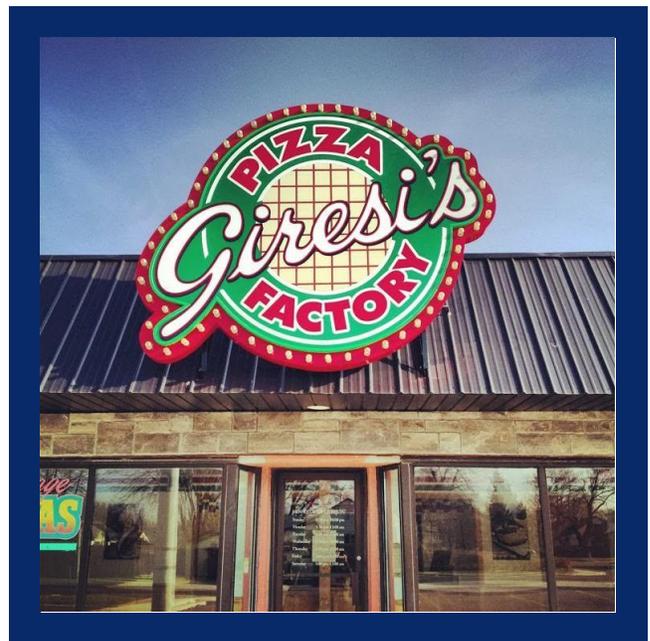
create energy. Recently, Ernie and Lise Shaw, Krystal Butler and Janet Doyle, retirees from the St. Clair Catholic District School Board have begun putting together bagged lunches consisting of a sandwich, a dessert, a snack, a piece of fruit and a juice box and donating these lunches to St. Patrick's. These lunches are available to students who have forgotten their lunch or do not otherwise have a lunch. This helps to ensure that students are fueled with enough energy to continue their learning throughout the day. The Fighting Irish are very thankful to Ernie, Lise, Krystal and Janet for their generosity and their commitment to doing the Lord's work by helping others.



Jersey Day and March Madness

They may not have been able to hold their yearly Cyclone Aid pep rally, but the staff and students of St. Patrick's still found a way to promote the event. This year there were two events held: Jersey Day and March Madness. On Jersey Day, students who made a \$2

donation were able to dress down by wearing a jersey and the class with the highest turnout would win a prize. The winners were Ms. Ellis-Woodward's grade 9 business class with 100% participation and they all received an individually packaged sweet treat. The other event held was a NCAA March Madness bracket. Students were sent a March Madness bracket through google spreadsheets and were able to submit their predictions with the top 5 winners winning a \$25 gift card to Giresi's Pizza Factory. The podium saw Mathew Saraiva in first, Matthew Gismondi in second and Nick Mitchell, Stuart Blunt and Victor Canto in third, fourth and fifth respectively. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to Giresi's for your all of you generosity!





E-Learning

One of the biggest changes during the month of April is the provincewide shift to virtual learning. With Ontario's numbers higher than where we'd like them to be, the province has now entered a 6 week lockdown period resulting in a shift to e-learning, much like the one we saw back in January. The transition to e-learning was very smooth for both staff and students with the school cafeteria being set up to deploy items such as chromebooks, textbooks and guitars. Students are able to

come to the school between 10 am and 4 pm and pick up the items essential to their learning from the cafeteria while following Covid safety protocols. While the Fighting Irish long for the day when they can be reunited in their school building, they are ready to continue their learning through this new platform.

Closing Thoughts

The Easter season is a time of waiting: we wait for the end of Lent, we wait to celebrate with family and most importantly, we wait for the resurrection of our Lord. This April has certainly been a month of waiting for all of us; not only have we been waiting for Easter and for the resurrection, but amidst recent lockdown orders, to those of us waiting to get our vaccines or for the pandemic to be over, times may be looking bleak. The Easter season reminds us to wait with patience and with hope in our hearts, but this is not an easy task. There is a saying, "patience is a virtue", but just because it is a virtue, doesn't mean it is easy to practice. Having patience when you are waiting is something that is very difficult to master, especially when the thing you're waiting for feels a million miles away. No matter what you are waiting for, be it big or small, allow this quote from Romans to provide you comfort in your waiting and remind you to be patient: "But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" Romans 8:25.

