

Nazareth Newsletter

Hello Nazareth families!

Once again many families were blessed to attend the Nazareth Family Retreats at Dominus Vobiscum this past summer. Week One was a full week, with families from far and wide. Fr. Terry Donahue from the Companions of the Cross and Fr. Robert Sharkey from Madonna House, Combermere blessed us with their wonderful, gentle, priestly ministry to us. Week Two for returning families was a smaller retreat that was nonetheless big on blessings. Fr. Roger Vandenakker, Moderator of the Companions of the Cross, took time out from his sabbatical to bless us with his presence and his ministry.

As usual, during Week One the adults viewed the Nazareth video tapes and listened to personal testimonies from couples. It was a powerful, joyous time as we shared the joys and struggles of living Catholic family life. Peggy and Keith Doucette blessed us with their culinary skills, providing us with a delicious lunch each day. For Week Two, the adult sessions were a bit different this year. Over the course of three mornings, the adults viewed a two-hour video summarizing Christopher West's exposition of Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. As well, one morning Danny Cere treated us to a presentation on marriage. Donna and Joe Verner blessed us with tasty lunches as well. Both weeks featured programs for the children and youth, during which time they had opportunities to grow in their faith and in their relationships with one another, under the direction of the senior teens and young adults. One of the highlights for many families this year was the creation of family banners. It was wonderful to see all the creative and unique expressions of family life hanging up in display around the dining hall. This year we had unbelievably beautiful weather, with only a couple of overcast days, adding to the sense of being blessed by God.

As members of the core team, we continue to be amazed at the unique and powerful ways in which God moves in the hearts and lives of each of the families that attend the Nazareth retreats. No two weeks are ever alike, yet families are always blessed in some way. God continues to show forth His goodness and His love to every family that attends.

- Paul and Sue Atkinson, David and Cheryl Darwent, Keith and Peggy Doucette, Mark and Joyce Reilander





Nazareth Family Day

On October 22nd, several families gathered to celebrate our faith and friendship with a Nazareth Family Day at Maryvale Academy in Ottawa. It was our first gathering using these facilities, and they proved to be ideal for our day. We began the day with the Holy Mass - celebrated by Fr. Yves Marchildon of the Companions of the Cross - in the school's lovely chapel. In his homily, Fr. Yves reminded us of the importance of repentance and of being right with God. Kyle Doucette and a number of the teens blessed us with their musical gifts at Mass.

Given that it had rained for many days before our gathering, we were particularly grateful that it didn't rain that day! After a vigorous football game and some park time for the little ones, we gathered again for a couple of skits to get us thinking about the upcoming feasts of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. The Darwent family presented a skit about St. Barnaby. (If you haven't ever read his story, it is a very touching one, and one to whom we can easily relate.) The Atkinson family shared a humorous skit reflecting the role that the saints have in their daily family life. After enjoying a tasty potluck dinner, the adults visited, the teens strolled through the local neighbourhood (!) and the younger children made their own personal holy cards of the saints and Our Lady. We ended the day with a decade of the rosary, bringing our intentions before our Blessed Mother. It was a lovely day, and we look forward to the next time that we can gather in faith and friendship.

Reflections on Nazareth

By Claudia Francis

This was our first year at Dominus Vobiscum Nazareth week. We had an absolutely wonderful week! One talk that left a real impact on me was one that a couple shared on loving one another's poverty. The other day I read a quote on the internet that made me think a lot about how we often try to hide our woundedness instead of sharing it with others. I think about how much I have learned and still am learning about that courageous couple's talk on loving another's poverty. It reminds me of Christ's love and the way that Mother Teresa loved everyone's poverty-physical, spiritual etc. Below is the quote by M. Scott Peck:

When We Share Woundedness

How strange that we should ordinarily feel compelled to hide our wounds when we are all wounded! Community requires the ability to expose our wounds and weaknesses to our fellow creatures. It also requires the ability to be affected by the wounds of others. But even more important is the love that arises among us when we share, both ways, our woundedness.

By Phill Perron

The eternal bond that God has graced us with flourished during that time of love. Families grew closer and the desire to be with Christ blossomed more than before. His almighty power changed: Hatred into Passion, Anger into Love, and Despair into Hope. Christ saved Nazareth as well as the whole world. Now He saves us again by giving us His Nazareth so that we can grow spiritually as a family. Day by day our love for Christ grows and our love for our family embellishes until we are fully devoted to our God and our family. Jesus sets into our minds that no matter what happens to us, our family, our friends, or the world, that He is always there for us. There is always hope through Him and there is always a light at the end of the darkness. There will always be a ladder for us to climb to get out of the pit and always a set of wings to get off the ground. Yet another gift that God has graced us with in our sorrowful world.

"Perseverance" (by Paul Atkinson)

Poverty, presence, purity, patience, and perseverance – these are the five “Ps” of Nazareth family life. Jokingly, I like to add a sixth – pizza. There are other virtues central to family life, but these are the five we try to focus on during our summer retreats. Each is borne of a child-like heart of charity.

David Darwent blessed us with his reflections on presence two issues back. I’d like to offer a few thoughts about perseverance and its application to family life. My intention is to offer what the Lord has taught me as a husband, a father, and a child of God.

What is perseverance? Perseverance is a virtue which counters our destructive human tendency towards discouragement, despair, and unbelief. It’s a skill and a decision, not a gift. It takes practice and grace-given hard work. It is long-suffering, staying “with the program” and seeing things through to the end.

Nothing has taught me more about perseverance than my life-long struggle with depression. It has yielded a harvest which has made me a better father and husband. Whenever those familiar negative thoughts and feelings return, I am tempted to despair. It goes something like this, “Oh no, not again. I thought I was over this. I thought I had beaten this. What is this doing back again? What have I done wrong this time? Where are you, Lord? How long is this going to take?” Rather, I’ve learned to choose hope, I’ve learned to rely on Jesus; I’ve learned that “if God is for us, who can be against?” I’ve learned not to rely on myself, or upon my inner resources. I’ve learned to stand and hurt in Christ until His promised consolation comes. I may never get it right, although at times I almost do. I will always depend on my Saviour.

Let’s look at what Jesus had to say about perseverance: “As for the part in the rich soil, this is people with a noble and generous heart who have heard the word and take it to themselves and yield a harvest *through their perseverance*” (Luke 8:15) (italics mine). Notice the three conditions of spiritual growth: a noble and generous heart, hearing and responding to the word of God, and perseverance. There is also the gospel parable of the persistent widow. Jesus used this story to teach us the importance of persevering in prayer.

St. Paul referred to suffering as a path to patience, perseverance, and hope: “Sufferings bring patience, as we know, and patience brings perseverance, and perseverance brings hope, and this hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts...” (Romans 5:4-5). Notice how perseverance brings hope, not despair.

How does all this apply to family life? Certainly, we must persevere with others at least as well as we persevere with ourselves. We are called to bear with one another in love. In the words of Catherine Doherty, we are to “love, love, love, never counting the cost.” Perseverance practised, lived out in the day-to-day, is in keeping with charity, humility, and the service of others. To not persevere is to invite despair, impatience, and a host of other negative and sinful practices into our relating with those dearest to us.

May we always choose the narrow path by persevering in our weaknesses and the weaknesses of those we love, and continuing in the path of holiness. For love “takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes” (1 Cor. 13:6).

New Web Site

Check out the Nazareth Family Apostolate website: www.nazarethfamily.com. The website is being updated, and will include a registration form for 2006. Current and past issues of the "Nazareth Newsletter", photos and more are found on this great site. Many thanks to Ray Doré for generously setting up and maintaining this great site.

Prayer for the Family

Heavenly Father, you have given us a model of life in the Holy Family of Nazareth. Help us, O loving Father, to make our family another Nazareth where love, peace, and joy reign. May it be deeply contemplative, intensely Eucharistic and vibrant with joy.

Help us to stay together in joy and sorrow through family prayer. Teach us to see Jesus in the members of our family, especially in their distressing disguise. May the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus make our hearts meek and humble like His, and help us to carry out our family duties in a holy way.

May we love one another as God loves each one of us, more and more each day, and forgive each other's faults as you forgive our sins. Help us, O loving Father, to take whatever you give and to give whatever you take with a big smile.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, cause of our joy, pray for us. St. Joseph, pray for us. Holy Guardian Angels, be always with us, guide and protect us.

Blessed Mother Teresa (Year of the Holy Family, 1994)

Nazareth Family Retreats - 2006

It isn't too early to start thinking about next summer's Nazareth Family Camps at Dominus Vobiscum. (It never seems too soon to think about summer, especially with winter knocking on our doors!) Once again, there will be two weeks of Nazareth Family Retreats.

Week One, for families attending for the first time, will be held July 30th – August 5th, 2006, and Week Two, for families who have previously attended a Nazareth Family Retreat, will be held August 6th – August 12th, 2006. We have yet to confirm the priests for those weeks, so please keep that intention in your prayers.

Please encourage your friends and loved ones to attend a Nazareth Family Retreat if they have never done so. We all know of the tremendous blessings given to us by the Lord on these weeks. If you have previously attended a family retreat, please consider attending Week Two. It is a great opportunity to meet and pray with other Catholic families, and to grow deeper in Catholic family life.

Novena in Honour of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, Protector of the Unborn

Feast Day: December 12

First Day

Dearest Lady of Guadalupe, fruitful Mother of holiness, teach me your ways of gentleness and strength. Hear my humble prayer offered with heartfelt confidence to beg this favor.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Second Day

O Mary, conceived without sin, I come to your throne of grace to share the fervent devotion of your faithful Mexican children who call to you under the glorious Aztec title of Guadalupe. Obtain for me a lively faith to do your Son's holy will always: May His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Third Day

O Mary, whose Immaculate Heart was pierced by seven swords of grief, help me to walk valiantly amid the sharp thorns strewn across my pathway. Obtain for me the strength to be a true imitator of you. This I ask you, my dear Mother..... Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Fourth Day

Dearest Mother of Guadalupe, I beg you for a fortified will to imitate your divine Son's charity, to always seek the good of others in need. Grant me this, I humbly ask of you..... Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Fifth Day

O most holy Mother, I beg you to obtain for me pardon of all my sins, abundant graces to serve your Son more faithfully from now on, and lastly, the grace to praise Him with you forever in heaven.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Sixth Day

Mary, Mother of vocations, multiply priestly vocations and fill the earth with religious houses which will be light and warmth for the world, safety in stormy nights. Beg your Son to send us many priests and religious. This we ask of you, O Mother.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Seventh Day

O Lady of Guadalupe, we beg you that parents live a holy life and educate their children in a Christian manner; that children obey and follow the directions of their parents; that all members of the family pray and worship together. This we ask of you, O Mother.... Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Eighth Day

With my heart full of the most sincere veneration, I prostrate myself before you, O Mother, to ask you to obtain for me the grace to fulfill the duties of my state in life with faithfulness and constancy.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

Ninth Day

O God, You have been pleased to bestow upon us unceasing favors by having placed us under the special protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. Grant us, your humble servants, who rejoice in honoring her today upon earth, the happiness of seeing her face to face in heaven.....Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory.

(Taken from www.domestic-church.com Please visit this website for excellent resources for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany)

New Catholic School (by Ann McDougall)

Have you heard? There's a brand new private Catholic school that opened its doors for the first time on Sept. 6, 2005. The name of the school is Maryvale Academy and it is located at 1000 Brookfield Rd. East in Ottawa.

The school is currently teaching grades 1 – 8 with plans to expand this to grade 12 in the future. There are 41 children attending the school this year. Maryvale Academy has a wonderful staff, a wonderful program and a philosophy that aims to provide our children with an excellent education while at the same time developing their faith and spiritual growth in an environment that provides authentic Catholic values and ideals.

The school has also worked very hard to keep the costs considerably lower than most private schools so that families like yours and mine might have the opportunity to attend. It is a very exciting venture and I am happy to be on board. In case my enthusiasm has led you to believe that I am a staff member (perhaps Sales/Marketing!), I'm not. I'm simply a parent who followed the prompting on our hearts to enroll our 2 daughters and we have no regrets. The blessings have been abundant!

An added bonus to this school is the connections between Maryvale Academy and our Nazareth families beginning with the fact that our most recent Nazareth day was held at their facilities. The Director of the school, Gerry Kupferschmidt (whose family is a Nazareth family) graciously offered the facilities for this reunion.

There are many other Nazareth families who have children attending this school including the president and founder of the school, Cyril Dowling. The fact that so many Nazareth families have joined this school is affirmation that the same Catholic values and ideals that unite us at Nazareth are also being taught and upheld at Maryvale Academy.

The Companions of the Cross who have been very supportive at our Nazareth weeks also have been very supportive at Maryvale Academy. They have a real presence in our school and several of their priests (as well as some Diocesan priests) have made themselves available for Mass each Thursday morning and the Sacrament of Reconciliation once a month. Fr. Bob has blessed us further by coming in once per week to teach the grade 7 and 8 students Latin.

And the "Blessing of all Blessings" recently was granted to us. The Archbishop has given us permission to have the Blessed Sacrament in our beautiful chapel. Plans are in the works right now to prepare our chapel to receive our Lord. How awesome is that!!! God is good ...all the time!

I hope at the least, I have peaked your interest. The school has had open houses in the past and will continue to have them periodically throughout the year. Please check out the website at www.maryvaleacademy.ca for further information and for details on when the next open house is. I hope you will come and see the school and all it has to offer. Who knows, perhaps the Spirit will place a prompting on your heart too!

Great Catholic Reading

The Bread of Life Magazine

Looking for some good reading to help you grow in your faith? *The Bread of Life* magazine is a Catholic Charismatic magazine, published bi-monthly and designed to encourage spiritual growth in area of renewal in the Catholic Church today. Testimonies, articles on Church teaching, and reflections on living the Gospel are only some of what you will find in this excellent periodical. Rev. Dr. Peter Coughlin from Oakville, Ontario is the editor, and Christine Labrosse is the managing editor. Regular contributors include Fr. Bob Bedard, Fr. Rick Jawaorski, Fr. Frank Pavone, Deacon Marc Gauthier, Sue Atkinson, and newcomer Phillip Perron.

Membership to the Catholic Charismatic Services Bread of Life Renewal centre includes a subscription to *The Bread of Life Magazine*, and costs \$30.00.

For more information, contact:
C.C.S.O Bread of Life Renewal Centre
P.O. box 395
Hamilton, ON
L8N 3H8
Phone (905) 529-4496

Restoration

If you would like to read more about Madonna House spirituality, upon which the spirituality of the Nazareth Family Apostolate is based, *Restoration*, an eight-page newspaper is a gem of a publication. This paper includes reflections by and about Catherine Doherty – whose cause for canonization has been opened, stories from daily life at Madonna House Combermere, reports from field houses around the world, and inspiring articles on “living the Gospel without compromise”.

For more information, contact:
Restoration,
Madonna House,
Combermere, ON
KOJ 1L0
www.madonnahouse.org

DOMINUS VOBISCUM

Retreat Centre Registration Form - (please print) – Nazareth Family Camp

PARENTS

FAMILY NAME _____ GIVEN NAME _____

FAMILY NAME _____ GIVEN NAME _____

ADDRESS _____
(NO.) (STREET) (APT. #)

CITY _____ PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

TELEPHONE (_____) _____ EMAIL _____

NAME OF HOME PARISH _____

CHILDREN

GIVEN NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____
(D/M/Y)

GIVEN NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____
(D/M/Y)

GIVEN NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____
(D/M/Y)

GIVEN NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____
(D/M/Y)

(Please add page if listing more than four children.)

Registration Fees:

Registration is required by May 1st, 2006 and must be accompanied with full registration fee. The sooner the application arrives, the more likely a spot will be available.

Please make cheques payable to Cheryl Darwent and write "Dominus Vobiscum" on the back of the cheque. Send the completed registration form and cheque to:

Cheryl Darwent,
271 Agathe St.,
Rockland, ON,
K4K 1K7

Please indicate the week you would like to attend Nazareth at Dominus Vobiscum.

Nazareth Week \$350.00 (includes lunch Mon. – Fri.)
(July 30th – August 5th, 2006)

Follow-up Week \$350.00 (includes lunch Mon. – Fri.)
(August 6th – August 12th, 2006)

Do you have personal liability coverage? (e.g. Home or tenants insurance) ____yes____no

Name of insurance company _____

I HAVE READ, AGREE AND COMPLY WITH THE RETREAT CENTRE POLICIES OUTLINED IN THE LITERATURE I RECEIVED WITH THIS REGISTRATION FORM.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

DAY/MONTH/YEAR