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**THEOLOGY OF THE BODY CANCELLED**

Sister Helena Burns was to come and give an introduction to St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body but due to her mother Helena's illness she will not be able to come to us but is spending time with her mother.  
*Please pray for them both.*

**SOME REASONS NOT TO HAVE  
A CELEBRATION OF LIFE**

In just a few short years, like so many of the trends of the past decade or so, we have seen a major shift in moving from traditional Catholic funerals with a Mass and the body present to no Mass and no body replaced by a "celebration of life". Those who are in favour of this celebration might often cite the fact that they find funerals depressing and caskets and urns and burial morbid and funereal. I suppose we've all had experiences of funerals that weren't very inspiring and only led to prayer in us as we prayed this would soon be over. I would hold that we are really changing our focus of who the funeral is really all about.

**CATHOLIC FUNERALS ARE ALL ABOUT JESUS**

Catholic funerals focus on Jesus Christ who is the deceased person's hope of mercy, forgiveness and eternal life as He is the Resurrection itself. While we name the person who has died in prayer and in the homily and will most certainly share our memories and stories about them outside of the funeral itself, the focus at a Catholic Funeral Mass is celebrating Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection in light of His promises to those who believe – that we too will rise from death to life. And yes, celebrate, because we have every reason to revel in the fact that Jesus has won the greatest of all victories over sin, darkness and death. That's pretty amazing that our God doesn't simply offer some semblance of His own rising but shares it fully with us. He died, we also will die. He rose from death, we too will rise from death. He went to heaven and we will follow Him there. We receive the full portion of what Jesus did and where He went. So, the focus rightly is on the life and teaching of Jesus and our longing to be with Him in heaven forever.

Perhaps the last statement above is where the rubber meets the road. Perhaps some people actually don't want to be with Jesus, now in this life and in the life that is to come. Perhaps they'd rather rely on their own understanding of Jesus and their own part with Him. Jesus may have a place in all things but it's not an important place for them. Jesus merely gets a walk-on part in our play of life and death. He's an add-on to the death thing. But He's not! He singlehandedly destroyed death and made it possible for us to be able to taste the joys of heaven in the relationship we have with Him now.

I see the reality of a change of focus more and more as a priest, often called to preside over funeral home services instead of a funeral Mass in the church. I recall one funeral many years ago when, before I proclaimed the word of God and gave a homily, the grandson of a woman in her eighties was to give the eulogy. He began by saying, "I don't know if you believe in this God-stuff, but I don't. All I know is that my grandmother loved me, she spoiled me. She was a great cook and showed me great love in the things she did for me and I wish she were still here." And there I sat, dressed in a Roman collar looking like the village dummy, someone who obviously believes in this God-stuff. I also realized that this unfortunate individual was offering the hint that while he may have loved her, it was largely all about him and what his grandmother did for him and gave to him. I have no doubt that he loved her but that it was largely material.

**WHAT WE DO AT A CATHOLIC FUNERAL MASS  
that likely won't be considered at a Celebration of Life**

**Pray For The Deceased**

As the Church we have the privilege and gift to lift up those who have died before God. We, the living Church on earth, can intercede for the one who has died.

**Ask God's Forgiveness For Their Sins**

We ask God to forgive the sins of the person who has died, any sins they may have committed in the body. While our prayer is not an absolution we are asking God on their behalf to do that which may have been left undone.

**Pray For God's Mercy**

God's mercy is not automatic. Throughout our lives and in the liturgical life we so often pray, Lord, have mercy. It is found in the Gloria, the Confiteor and in the Eucharistic Prayers. The priest's words following the Confiteor so beautifully sums up what we always are asking of God and most especially when someone we love dies:

*May almighty God have **mercy** on us,  
**forgive** us our sins,  
and bring us to **everlasting life.***

**Uplift Those Who Mourn**

I can't tell you the number of times following a funeral I have heard comments from people saying how beautiful and uplifting it was. Sometimes they even find it strange that they would say this because we don't tend to think of funerals as being beautiful, like we would a wedding. Yet the funeral is the great sending, surrounding the deceased with our prayers and praying life with Jesus in heaven for them. It speaks to our own living and our own hope.

**Commend The Soul To God**

'Return to Sender' is the Church's cry when someone has died. The soul is not just sent anywhere but sent to the Lord of Life Himself, Jesus Christ. In prayer we place the one who has died in the loving, strong and comforting hands of Jesus, not to a 'better life' but to JESUS CHRIST. (Fr. Charles)

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 a.m. Intentions of the Nowak Family

**Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 p.m. Intentions of Father Charles

**Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 a.m. † Frances Piazza

**Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

4:30 p.m. Intentions of Catholic Mothers Group

**Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 a.m. † Carmelita Buggie

11:00 a.m. Intentions of all mothers of the parish

**There will be no Daily Mass on Thursday.**

**SVDP - Employment Positions**

The St. Vincent de Paul Value Store in Bowmanville is recruiting 2 paid positions as Truck Driver (Hourly \$16.00) & Helper (Hourly \$14.00). These positions will work each Saturday delivering mattresses, beds & furniture to homes in the Durham Region & picking up donated furniture. For more job information, contact the store at [svdpbowmanville@gmail.com](mailto:svdpbowmanville@gmail.com) or phone 905-623-7941.

**YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATES**

**Calling all high school students! Impact** is up and running! What is Impact? ! It's a place to spend time with friends, share about faith, play games, and eat snacks! What could be better on a Tuesday night? All are welcome, so bring all of your friends! **Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m., in the St. Leo the Great Parish Hall.**

**Edge** is on for grade 6-8 students on **Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** Come play games, share about your faith and enjoy delicious snacks!

**Parish Pot Luck - May 18**

We will be saying our good-byes and thank-yous to our lovely **NET Team**. If you are planning to attend please sign-up on the poster at the back of the church. Please keep in mind that this will be a no tables/ stand up to eat, event. We will be asking for finger foods and hors d'oeuvres. Suggestions can be found on the poster at the back of the church. Items can be dropped off at the church between 1 pm and 4:15 pm on the 18th. Please use disposable platters or put your name on them and be sure to take them home that evening. We look forward to seeing many families attend.

**BEREAVEMENT RETREAT**

Keynote Speakers: Paul Miki & Christine Rybka-Miki  
Light refreshments will be served during the retreat.  
Location: St. Isaac Jogues Parish, 1148 Finch Ave, Pickering  
Date & Time: **Saturday, May 25 from 9 am to 1 pm**  
**Register Online** at: [sijc.cwl.events@gmail.com](mailto:sijc.cwl.events@gmail.com) or contact Rose James, phone # 905-420-3264, email: [clayrose@sympatico.ca](mailto:clayrose@sympatico.ca)

**Living the Gospel  
with Justice and Love**

“ShareLife represents a reliable signpost on the course mapped out by our Pastoral Plan—namely, its core direction of 'Catholic Outreach in Justice and Love.' The work of our agencies, and your generosity towards them, serve as a pathway through which acts of justice and love are realized, and the witness of the Catholic faith is strengthened.” — *Cardinal Thomas Collins*

**Today is ShareLife Sunday. Thank you for your generosity.**



**Upcoming Giant Garage Sale/Flea Market**

**Saturday May 11** organized by the CWL, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul and Mom's Group. This is a Parish wide fundraiser to support the Youth Ministry at St. Leo's. As you spring clean please set aside sporting goods, books, pottery, toys, art work, plants, knick knacks, china and other useful items to donate for sale. Any parishioners who would like to volunteer in any capacity including children's games and baking please call 905 493 4677. Drop off of goods will be Thursday May 9 and Friday May 10.

**CALLING ALL CATHOLIC MOMS!**

Join our Mother's Ministry! Mothers of all ages are invited to join us on **Wed May 8 at 8pm in the Quiet Room**. Also, this Mother's Day we are hosting a special baby shower after both Masses on May 12 in support of Pregnancy Help of Durham and Rose of Durham. Please consider bringing brand-new newborn layette and bath items such as receiving blankets, bedding, baby outfits, baby wash and baby wipes. Gently used items and gift cards are also welcome. Contact [annalisa@catholicmomsgroup.com](mailto:annalisa@catholicmomsgroup.com) or visit [www.catholicmomsgroup.com](http://www.catholicmomsgroup.com) for more information. New members are always welcome!

**St. Leo Knights of Columbus** will be distributing stick on **Roses for Life** before and after Masses on May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in support of Rose of Durham and young Mothers. Your generous donations would be greatly appreciated and thank you.

**The Little Mermaid Musical**

TCDSB Staff Arts, which features current and former Board teachers and staff, is presenting the Walt Disney musical "The Little Mermaid" May 31, June 1, 6, 7, & 8 at Cardinal Carter Academy. See the Poster in the Vestibule for details and go to: [www.TCDSB.org/StaffArts](http://www.TCDSB.org/StaffArts)




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