



MANRESA



2325 LIVERPOOL RD. PICKERING. ONTARIO, CANADA L1X1V4 | (905) 839-2864

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Our Charismatic Prayer group meets each Monday night from 7:00 to 9:30. They pray as a community and try to inculcate Christ's prayer at the Last Supper, "Father may they be one as you father in me, and I in you." No judgment or criticism is made about those who join the group for prayer. The invitation is come as you are.

The Charismatic group traditionally have opened our Retreat season each year, by booking the first weekend of the season. We had 62 men and women attending the retreat. Although it was described as a Charismatic Retreat rather than an Ignatian one, Fr. Bob Poole constantly referred to Ignatian themes.

They were filled with the Spirit and it was a good experience.



The first retreat was hardly over, when our Housekeeping staff of Marion Graham, Christopher Boessler and Jayne Rubins started getting ready for the Oblates of Mary Immaculate from LaCombe Province in Ottawa. They were 29 in all and were directed by a young Oblate from South Africa, Fr. Bonga Thamsanqa Majola, omi. He proved to be a dynamic priest, filled with the Spirit. He was very gentle and kind with the older retreatants. He was persuasive rather than trying to micromanage them. Perhaps, as he said, this was due to spending a year with the Jesuits near Aix in France.



Another on going enterprise is being conducted by Sr. Jeanine Glute of the Loretto Sisters. Last year, she helped five of us in the spirituality of the Exercises and some of the guidelines for discernment. This year she is conducting the 19th Annotation with one of the captains of the weekend retreat. Hopefully this will carry on a much needed ministry on this side of Ontario.



Auf Wiedersehen!

The new season misses Eva-Maria in housekeeping. She retired after two decades of faithful service.

She had worked for over 20 years under the Directors: the late Fr. Jack O'Brien, Fr. Bill Wilson, Fr. Jack O'Brien (second term), Fr. Scott Lewis and the present Director. We were spoilt by Eva-Maria's housekeeping. She was a self-starter and was willing to put her hand to all eventualities. She repaired dripping taps, leaking toilet tanks, seeping toilets. She discarded stained towels or linens. She changed burnt out bulbs and repaired light fixtures. She was even a barber for a certain staff member whose name shall not be mentioned. Her attitude and work ethic left the Director with a few less decisions to make. She is already missed.

She is the only one who has a record of having to seek compensation from WSIB. She broke her hand. We will not go into details. However, even though she is in good health and very active, she wants to do something more creative. She had her fill of changing pillow cases and bed sheets. She is now very active in the Pickering and surrounding community. She and her husband Herb can be seen regularly helping at the Soup Kitchen each week. We wish her all the best in her new ventures.





Manor House

An amazing amount of organization goes on behind the windows of our front office. Fiona and Louise went on their planned leave this summer in the down time, though Louise came in sporadically to get the books ready for the auditors, helped by Fr. Alex Kirsten even though he has been undergoing chemotherapy. Fr. Alex continues to be a very bright light that shines when we need him, providing his long experience towards improvements like the cooling system.



Our kitchen staff of Olive, Doris and Mary Rose had a well earned rest, while Kim spent a few days disposing of the leftovers and preparing the inventory for the new season.

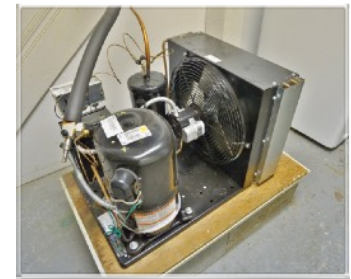
Warm floors, cool fridges

The only one who seemed to work hard in August was Bob Finlay. He organized the sanding and refurbishing of the floor in Fleming Hall. He managed the vacuuming and shampooing of all the carpets.



Finally, and most importantly, the walk-in-cooler is now being run by a compressor, and not on the water-cooling system. Fr. Kirsten calculated it was using half a million gallons of water a year. That's a lot of \$\$\$.

We had been using the water-cooling system because we had our own well. But when we plugged into the Pickering Water system, it was not economical. Hence we decided on the change. After all it is the donations of the "ordinary" retreatants that keep Manresa running. One has to be a responsible steward of the hard earned donations given to this ministry.



BREAKING NEWS! As this letter goes online, we just heard the good news that Fr. Alex has been doing very well with the bone marrow transplant. He hopes to be back in a week. However PLEASE keep him in prayers, because infection sets in so easily.



The Manor House Floor

Like Fleming Hall, the Manor house is of equally old vintage. The Scarborough Foreign Missions have been good friends of Manresa. They gave a sizeable donation for retreat work.



We have a few private retreatants that stay at the Manor House. We have Fr. Mike Hawkins and Fr. Philip Shano who have proved valuable in these three to five days – or sometimes a single day retreat. We were happy to place the private retreatants on the second floor.

These are in comfortable and clean condition. They are also spacious. However, the rooms on the third floor have been in a shabby state for a long time. The carpets were over 20 years old and had an horrible orange colour, not original! Through the

contact of another Board member, Mr Wilberth Vallon, we engaged Edmond from carpentry and flooring company: EIBIL. This work took a little longer. Over two weeks, the carpets were removed and a new laminate floor has been installed.

A good friend, Mr Frank D'Amelio of St. Isaac Jogues Parish single-handedly removed all the carpets and disposed of them. He not only did the manual work pro bono, but also was the animating spirit to make sure the job was done well and as quietly as possible. There were three private retreatants during the period the work was done.



Observing Silence on Retreat

...As quietly as possible...



Fleming Hall Improvements

Since Manresa is over seventy years old, the rooms at Fleming Hall are under a weekly check up. Lately they have been following "Murphy's law" – If anything can go wrong, it will.

On checking the first two rooms in the East Wing on the ground floor, we found that water had seeped through. Consequently without the help of even the gardener, some "mushrooms" started sprouting up.

Immediately, Br. Bob and the Housekeeping staff sprang into action. They thought it could be handled by a handyman. However, a \$1000 later, we had to bring in professionals. Thanks to Kathy Dempsey, the Chairperson of the Manresa Board, we found the Daglaris Brothers of Finishing Touch. It was soon evident that we would have to rip up the carpets and remove the tiles from the toilets.

We decided at that point to make two rooms wheelchair accessible. The Daglaris Brothers did a splendid job. They had hardly finished the job, when one of the retreatants phoned in to say that she could not come. She had fallen down. Her leg was in a cast. She could only move in a wheelchair. In our main office, Fiona Bertok smiled. "Come as you are. We have just refurbished two rooms precisely for retreatants with either a wheelchair or a walker.

God works in mysterious ways, - sometimes through mushrooms.

P.S. The following weekend, the Director spoke about refurbishing the rooms and asked whether anyone wanted to sponsor the repairs. One generous retreatant promptly accepted the challenge. He put up the price of the entire cost of one room. Now we await a second sponsor.



Reasons for making a retreat





A Bang Up Job

At Our Lady of Lourdes school, the teacher was telling class the story of Lot and the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Lot and his family fled from the burning towns. They were given strict orders not to turn and look back. Lot's wife did, and she turned into a pillar of salt." "Oh, that's nothing", said little Johnny, "my mother was driving and she looked back and turned into a telephone pole."



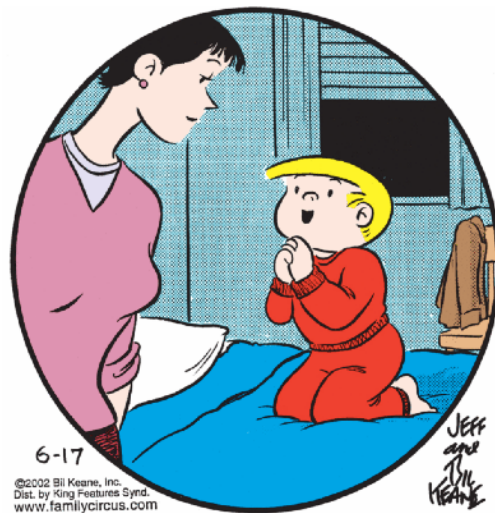
In a sadly similar fashion, it seems many a person under the influence who loves to drive in the early hours of the morning, *also* loves to turn into Manresa. This is the second time in the last two years, that the right post of the Manresa Gates has been knocked down. On the 28th September, at 1:15 in the morning, the Director heard a loud crash and the crunching of metal. Another car crash! A second time the gate post has borne the brunt of the impact. The car was a write off, the driver hauled into jail and the insurance agents were called. Three weeks later, and \$25,000 in damages (so we learnt) we are back to where we began. But for how long, O Lord, how long.

More Modern Meetings, Less Carbon...

Meanwhile work goes on ahead trying to bring Manresa into the age of the internet and the myriad other electronic devices.

Among the new initiatives is the installing of a new Ethernet cable in the Brebeuf conference hall. This will enable our conferences to have hard-wired Skype. Hopefully, this will help to lighten our eco-footprints. We do not need to fly from one end of Canada to the other, or from Canada to points in the States. This was done, even though it seems to gravitate against the "silence" and away from the business of the secular world that Manresa seeks to promote.

We continue to get requests for eight day, 30 day and annotation 19 retreats. But as they say in Spain, Veremos or Speramos. We shall see or we do hope. We did have a very animated and promising meeting of interested Jesuits in "where is Manresa heading?" conference. But sadly even after wonderful ideas, now it is only a vague memory. Still these ideas tend to percolate. Last year we talked about modern media, and this year we're getting it, as it enables better communication.



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JEFF
and
TOM
KEANE

"Sayin' 'Amen' is like pressing the 'SEND' button for your prayers."





Michael Terry Mahoney

On a sad note, we lost two of our captains in two months.

Mr Terry Mahoney was a captain each year for the Men's Ignatian retreat in May. He had been coming for well over 50 years. He was a captain with Al Bodoogh. He died with his boots on as they say. In August, Manresa is closed for repairs and clean-up. The answering machine is checked periodically. There was a garbled message that Mr Mahoney was in hospital. Where and When – we did not know. Besides there was no contacting phone number. He passed away in October.

Mr Terry Mahoney was always concerned about the well-being of the retreatants he invited. Two years ago, we had the young Jesuit Scholastics presenting the Weekend retreat. Mr Mahoney was not pleased. These Jesuits are young enough to be my grandchildren. So we pleaded with him, "Give them a chance. If they do not get a taste for giving retreats, they never will." The retreat was coordinated by Jesuit Scholastic Raj Vijaykumar. He did such a good job, that before the retreat ended, Mr Mahoney was demanding that we bring them back again next year for "his" retreat. It was very edifying. Terry Mahoney was very firm about what he wanted on the retreat – but he was open to new experiences. God does work in mysterious ways. May Terry Mahoney rest in peace.



David Steele

Mr. David Steele was another former captain. He was buried on Remembrance Day 11th November at St. Isaac Jogues church. He was known as a friendly captain who exuded joy and optimism even though he was in considerable physical pain. He relinquished the job of being a captain about four years ago. He passed away after 13 years of being crippled with multiple sclerosis. Fr. Paul Dobson, the pastor preached a touching and personalised homily, which brought comfort and consolation to Mrs. Steele and their daughters.

