

# MARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER

## A Heart-warming Eulogy of Michael Wilson



My connection with Michael is that Lora and I, Legion of Mary members at St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church, took Michael for a walk and coffee almost every week. He was a sweet gentle soul and like all of you gathered here today, Lora and I are deeply saddened at his passing. I'm sure, like us, you're remembering the happier times you spent in his company. It seems only right, somehow, that Michael died on the feast of All Saints Day, for most certainly that dear innocent is in heaven. Fortunately, Lora and I did get to say goodbye. We visited Michael in the CCU of the hospital and were permitted a short visit. We held his hand, spoke to him, soothed him, and from his reaction it was obvious that he knew who we were.

Yesterday I made a visit to Shrine of St. Theresa of the Little Flower Church. I was all alone praying and I made an offering and lit a candle for Michael, which symbolized for me that my prayers were being carried heavenward. The little flickering flame, the tiny spark in the darkened church reminded me of the song "This little light of mine, I'm gonna' let it shine..." which is what Michael did for our lives – he lit them up, but it also called to mind lines of scripture from the Book of Wisdom, Chapter 3:1-9. A few excerpts...

"But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them...Afflicted in few things, in many they shall be well rewarded, because God hath tried them, and found them worthy of himself...The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds."

I should mention that Carol Chung said to me on the telephone yesterday that our outings with Michael added quality to his life and brought him happiness, but it must be said that Michael added to the quality of our lives too. I'm affectionate toward people, but not, in a "touchy, feely" sort of way. Well, Michael changed all that. I just could not help brushing back his hair, stroking his cheek, holding his hand, or rubbing his back when speaking to him, and, I should add, it was the same for Lora – he was just was such a sweet man that you couldn't help but love him and want to hug him. Whenever I said goodbye to him I always

*"Celebrating Developmental Challenges"*

always planted a kiss on his forehead.

Michael was a happy fellow and I'm sure that was due to the loving care he received from the staff at Mary Centre's Whitecap home, who held him in great affection. They are a pleasant bunch and though there were occasional changes in staff as they moved to different locations, some of those we've become friends with are: Valrie, Manu, Pat, Sophia, Debbie, Sharon, Susan and Sonja and others whose names I can't at the moment recollect. They always gave us a hearty greeting and had Michael all dressed and ready to go on his outing.

Michael brought sunshine into the lives of strangers too. Whenever we took him for a walk, usually along Guildwood Parkway around 10:00 a.m. in the morning, there might be just one person at the bus stop, and if it was a woman he would stop and wave. "I'd usually say "he likes you" and their faces would just light up. I guess it made their day. I'm sure it made them feel very special just as we feel for the privilege of having known Michael. Thank you Lord for bringing Michael into our lives. The fond, loving memories we have of him will last us a lifetime. I'd like to end with a poem I'm very fond of, written by Lucy Larcom. It seems to speak of death as freeing us from earthly concerns, of being reunited with loved ones and of the final destiny and happiness for which God intends us. Michael was a friend to all of us, so...

***"The best friend is horizon, too, Lifting  
unseen things into view.  
And widening every petty claim, Till lost in  
some sublimer aim.  
Blending all barriers in the great, Infinities  
that round us wait.  
Friendship is an eternity, Where soul with  
soul walks, heavenly free."***

***By Jean Witherspoon***

## Celebrating Thanksgiving at Home!

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the blessings we have been given. At Mary Centre the residents all celebrate in their individual homes. The celebration at Greenbriar included a feast prepared by staff which consisted of turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, cranberry sauce, stuffing, vegetables and pumpkin pie for dessert.

They are thankful for the sumptuous and delicious meal but more so they are thankful for the many wonderful blessings in their lives at Mary Centre. They enjoy many recreational activities in the community like baseball, bowling, hockey, and concerts in the park.

Residents are thankful for;

- ✓ their families and for going home to visit
- ✓ the friendships with their roommates and for the many volunteers and friends who spend time visiting with them;
- ✓ staff who are there every day to help and support them with their daily needs;
- ✓ the place they call home where they are free to be themselves, where they can feel safe, respected and have dignity in their lives. Residents thank all those who support Mary Centre to make all this possible.

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the blessings we have been given.

***by Saudi Mohammed, Residential Counsellor***



***"Celebrating Developmental Challenges"***

## Famous People Players 9th Annual Fundraiser

All of us at Mary Centre would like to thank our supporters who helped us raise \$32,000 to enhance our Parish Outreach Program and Toronto Respite Programs. By supporting this event, you made a difference in the lives of our residents.

### ➤ **PARISH OUTREACH**

A valuable and special program; for those residents that choose, we make a connection with a local faith community... (be it Catholic, Protestant, or Muslim) to enable our residents to be part of a prayerful connection;

### ➤ **RESPITE CARE IN TORONTO**

For those caregivers that are aging, or simply overwhelmed with the challenges of caring for their adult child with a developmental disability..... we offer a program of respite (or rest) where their family member is able to spend time with us in a caring, safe environment....



*The Troupe Cooking the Meal*



*Patrick Kelly, President*



*Dominic Conforti, Executive Director*



*Ray Kahnert, Past President saying Grace*

*“Celebrating Developmental Challenges”*

## Count Our Blessings!

On my trip to Ghana, I supported some kids with disabilities who need a lot of help and support. Unfortunately, these kids do not get any form of support from the government or social services, which can improve their quality of life. The whole burden of supporting these kids is solely the responsibility of the poor parents. Because the parents devote all their time and energy to support these kids, they have no time to do any active work to earn a living. Hence the families live in extreme poverty and hardship, and the helpless kids suffer the most.

The picture below shows the hospital receiving the goods I collected from Mary Centre and brought to the village in Ghana.

I am therefore appealing to you for help. Anything of less value here is precious over there.. Any form of help which will improve their daily activities of living and well being will be appreciated.

James Berko , Respite Care Worker, Mary Centre



### Newsletter Committee

Julie Belanger  
 Carol Chung  
 Darlene Dowling  
 Saudi Mohammed  
 Bruce McCallum  
 Fathima Nisar  
 Marion Patterson  
 Manu Verma

### Desktop Publisher

Marion Patterson

### Printing

Paragon Reproductions

### Volunteers

Janis Edwards  
 Mary Fotia  
 Alan Liss  
 Arline Middup  
 TuLang Hua  
 Alexandria Ashbourne  
 Ted Swinton  
 Honey Graham  
 Stephen May  
 Hang-Ann

**Supported by;  
 Catholic Charities  
 ShareLife**

**Province of Ontario**



Mary Centre of the Archdiocese of Toronto  
 530 Wilson Avenue, Suite 210, Toronto, ON M3H 5Y9  
**Phone (416) 630-5533, Charitable Registration No.12892 3737 RR0001**

If you would like more information about Mary Centre and/or would like to make a Charitable Tax Deductible Donation, clip out and return this form or visit our website ([www.marycentre.com](http://www.marycentre.com)) for online donations

- I would like more information about the agency
- I would like information on becoming a volunteer
- I enclose a cheque in the amount of: \_\_\_\_\_ or charge to my Credit Card  
 Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_/\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_
- I wish to remain an anonymous donor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_