



Joint Educational Parent Advisory Group

34 Sandy Drive, Stoney Creek, ON L8E 4X5

Visit us at www.jepag.ca

2010/2011 Executive

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MINUTES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Advent Retreat: An Early Christmas Gift Special Thanks to our Guest Speaker, Anne Jamieson

1) Meeting called to order by co-chair Luisa Conti and all were welcomed.

2) **Advent Retreat: "An Early Christmas Gift" with
Anne Jamieson, Family Ministry Office for the Hamilton Diocese**

Anne led us in our Opening Prayer, "Voices of Advent"

Feast of St. Nicholas – December 6 – related legends associated with St. Nicholas - Pope Benedict is concerned we are losing a great deal by not relating the stories of the great saints

Christmas is a great gift from God. It helps us to experience Joy, Love, Gift, and Community.

What is being asked of us in return? "We come to celebrate the outrageous possibility that God is calling forth our gifts in ways that have already changed the world."

We don't have to put Christ back in to Christmas...He's already there, it's us we have to put back in.

What can be brought to life through you? reflection - "Breath of Heaven" by Amy Grant

Your existence in this world and the way you are living your life, have a profound effect on everyone in our world. Either people will see God in you, or they won't. God needs the world to see Him in our world today more than ever before.

What about our Catholic faith? Is it just about attending church on Sunday? Our Church says, No! It is related to every sphere of our lives, including work, whether that work be in the home or community or both.

St. Theresa of Avila says: "Christ has no body on earth but ours. No hands but ours, no feet but ours. Ours are the eyes through which to witness Christ's compassion to the world. Ours are the feet on which He is to go about doing good. Ours are the hands with which He is to bless people now."

How do we give what we do not have? Think – how can we give: Service to Self, to Family and to Others?

Service to Self – *we are called to love our neighbours as ourselves. Look at the big picture, and how all of the different parts of yourself interact. A holistic approach includes: your body, mind, emotions, and Spirit. Wellness in Body – What does your body need to be healthy? Good nutrition, exercise, proper rest, time for self/relaxation*

Serving Family – *From our high energy children to those who need more care (e.g. elderly parents). We feel pulled in too many directions, tired, guilty, sometimes, even resentful. Then: Let it Go...and Balance your stress... Try using Psalm 136 “His steadfast love endures forever.”*

Balancing Stress – much of our response to the world is designed to keep stress at a minimal level because stress causes cortisol to be released into the blood. For women – “Tend and befriend” (related to care-giving) will lower your cortisol level. For men, “protect and connect” (relates to feeling successful.)

Serving Others – we serve when we witness. We visited You Tube’s “Christmas Food Court” Hallelujah food court flash mob.

- Random acts of kindness – speak kindly to a weary mother. Even, especially, if her children are misbehaving.
- Compliment a stranger.
- Give encouragement to a store clerk.
- And then...just tell them why...just say it! “Well, it is Christmas after all. WE are meant to be kind.” OR “It’s what it’s all about, right? Hope and love coming into the world...I believe it you know.” Imagine how belief can change the world!!!

We shared excerpts from Maya Angelou’s Amazing Peace:

“Into this climate of fear and apprehension, Christmas enters, Streaming lights of joy, ringing bells of hope. And singing carols of forgiveness high up in the bright air. It is the Glad Season. Hope is born again in the faces of children and In our joy...Peace, My Brother. Peace, My Sister. Peace, My Soul.”

And we offered each other a sign of Christ’s peace.

- 3) **OAPCE Update** – Helen attended the Halton Catholic Board Parent Conference:
Report read by Angel

“I was very pleased to see so many participants (approx. 200) out for this, their 3rd annual conference. The CPIC in charge were very visible in their monogrammed shirts and very helpful. I noticed a very strong presence of men in attendance which is very refreshing to see as it’s usually women that come out to such functions. Perhaps this is due to the fact that there are a lot of men involved with the Halton Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Coming from the HWCDSB, I was there because of their featured guest speaker, a Catholic youth minister from Denver, CO. Chris Stefanick.

I had first heard of him when I was at a CPIC meeting in Burlington; they briefly showed some clips from a video they took when he was speaking at a Gr. 8 retreat in Oakville. The retreat was called "Being on Fire for God". I was so moved by his inspirational discussions and how well he connected with the youth that I was compelled to find out more about him and hopefully be able to arrange for this man to come and speak at our board.

The topic of discussion was "How to raise pure kids". He was captivating, funny, knew his statistics and really touched a lot of the people in the audience...at times there wasn't a dry eye in the place.

We are truly fortunate to have such a venue available to us as parents, all for free."

Additional information for reference:

OFHSA – Ontario Federation of Home and School Association – Bill 5
Bill of Rights for Pupils with Diabetes. To view the bill visit
http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&Intranet=&BillID=2280

4) Housekeeping Issues

A. Uniform Committee update – discussion about surveying the parents.

- Board put the initiative to the Trustees that all elementary schools would go to mandatory embroidered cresting.
- This created an outcry among a very small group who spoke to the Board.
- The Board then repealed the requirement for mandatory embroidered cresting.
- When it came up to the 5 year review, they put to the Trustees to become mandatory due to PCRUP saying that there was no parent consultation.
- Have had 2 meetings.
- Survey to go home to every family in the Board with a child in the Elementary system.
- Survey should be out in late January or early February.

B. Food & Beverage committee update

All schools need to establish a committee to establish where we are in relation to compliance – e.g. fundraising from the various clubs. Committee is sending out a basic survey to see where the schools are.

C. Questions for Superintendents and Trustees

Please send questions to Luisa at lconti@cogeco.ca or Ed at edpecyna@mountaincable.net no later than January 20, 2011

D. If anyone is interested in having a Social Media presentation, contact Karen Cumming at 905-745-7575 or visit on line at www.karencumming.com See attached for more information.

5) **Meeting closed with Prayer**

Next Meeting:
Thursday February 3, 2011
Discussion with our Superintendent's

Reminder to all parents & guardians of our MAY meeting:

JEPAG presents DR. JEAN CLINTON

Thursday, May 5th, 2011

Tickets are \$5.00 each