

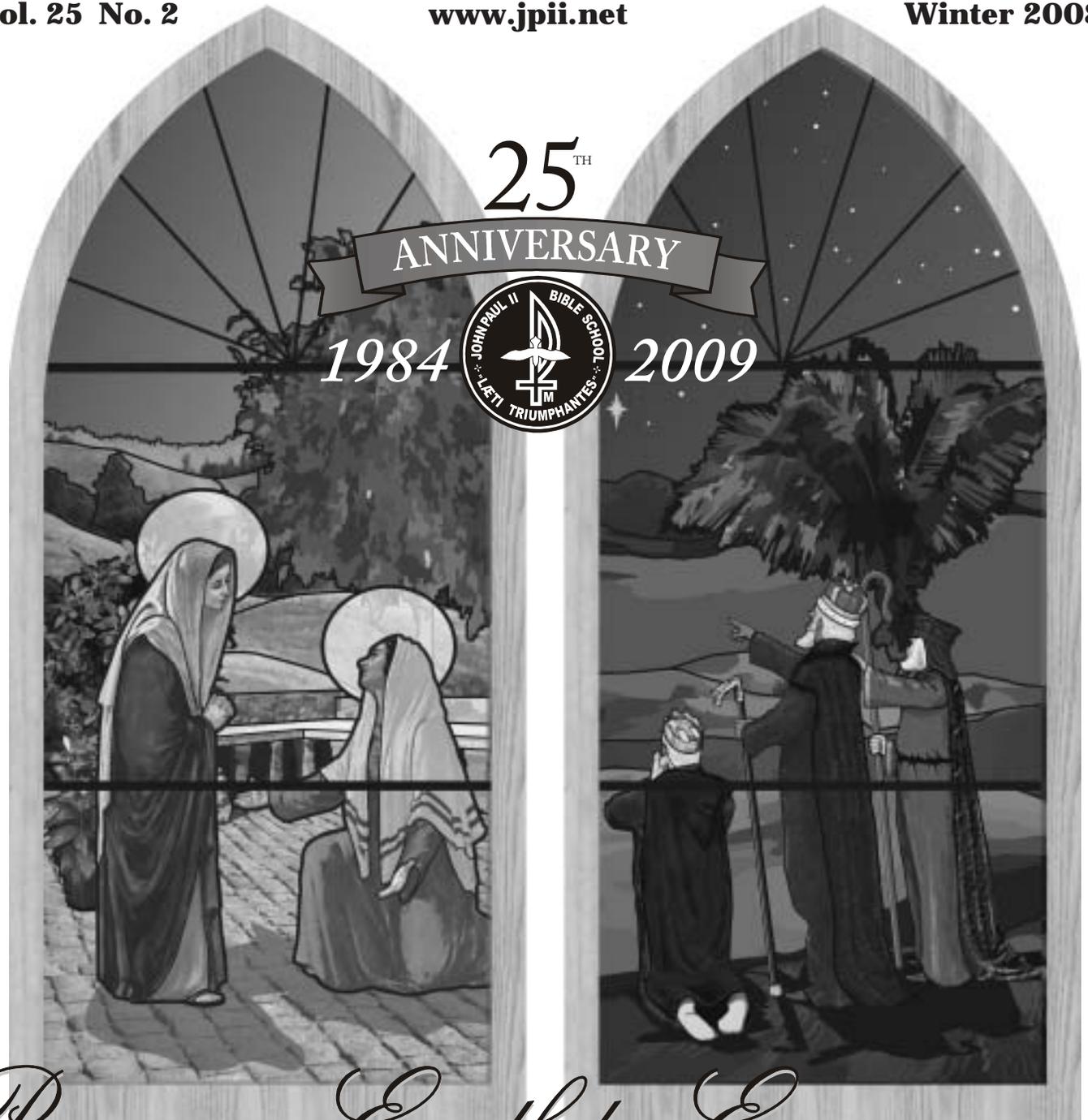
The Good News *MESSENGER*

A publication of the John Paul II Catholic Bible School

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Peace on Earth to Everyone!



Kilian O'Donovan
Director

Director's Message

Kilian O'Donovan, Director of JP II Bible School

Dearest Brothers & Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ:
Don't you just love this time of year? Christmas is a season so full of love, joy, peace, simplicity, beauty, and so many other expressions, that only a poet could possibly begin to dream the reality. How very much our God loves us to even think of being born a little baby; such incredible love! Jesus we appreciate all You did for us. Please consume us in Your love this Christmas. Make us more and more part of Your family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph take us into Your hearts where we will stay forever and without end.

Dearest Benefactors, I want to assure you that you are never far from our thoughts, that you are always in our prayers. We love and thank you for all you do for us. May you have a glorious Christmas.

Blessings of John Paul II Bible School

by Rodney Stafford-Mayer

It was February 1988 and I was contemplating a major career change and had heard about the John Paul II Bible School and thought a week long retreat there might be just the ticket to help me make a decision. Father John Adamyk was the teacher that week, speaking on the councils of the Church. My week was like an oasis in the storm of life and left such an impression on me, I decided that sometime in the future when it was possible, I had to return.

My return to John Paul II happened in its 19th year (September 2002). I resigned from my job, my wife Rita and I packed our belongings, rented out our home in Olds and embarked on the journey of a lifetime as students immersed in the study of our faith. While we lived in a rented home off campus, we inserted ourselves fully into the community life of the school. Our year as students was followed by a year on staff, me in administration and my wife in prayer journey. I would have been quite content to spend the rest of my days at JP II but God had other plans.

In hindsight, our two years at the school were preparing us for a much larger challenge when we became guardians to three young grandchildren, at that time aged 2, 4 and 14. I returned to the full-time work force and Rita and I became full time parents as the temporary situation evolved into full time. Our two years at JP II were tremendous in preparing us for the road we are on now.

This past year has been the school's most challenging in its 25 year history. John Paul II is operating with the least number of students it has ever had, 9 full time and 2 part time.

(continued next page)



JP II Board Member,
Rod Stafford-Mayer



The Gouu News Messenger

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of the John Paul II Bible School**

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Our Prayers Go Out

We at the school are praying for the family of a 15th year student, Ken Kowalski. Ken is in Botswana, Africa and works for Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada. He is a pilot who flies supplies into missionaries in remote areas. He and his wife Cheryl have just suffered the loss of their 2 year old son who drowned.



**In loving memory of
Johnathan**

May we all keep them in our prayers.

Urgent Appeal

It is very difficult to meet the expenses of running the school when only 11 students have paid tuition fees and so we are asking God to provide for the school's needs through the generosity of our alumni and benefactors. As the Lord has blessed me in my return to full time work, I believe He is also calling on me to bless the school. I encourage you all to examine your giving these next few months and see if you can provide some extra support for John Paul II.

I believe the Lord wants to accomplish great things through this school but this year particularly, He needs our help.

Repentance and Forgiveness

by Paul Lee Wah

I felt that the talks and dramas [this week] were structured and organized. Where the lectures provided instruction, the dramas helped to illustrate the topic.

I found personally that the tape of David Brown's lecture on repentance and remorse to be particularly enlightening. This is a major breakthrough for me because I usually find it hard to stay focused on tapes and recorded lectures. Before I saw the tape, my understanding of remorse was shallow. I had no idea it was a perversion of repentance. I was unaware of the selfish aspect of remorse.

The talk on forgiveness and unforgiveness gave me a deeper understanding of the process of forgiveness. I realize now that forgiveness is not a one time occurrence after which everything is resolved, but something that takes time to accomplish; a work in progress.

Outreach Report

by Rebecca Bilodeau.

Okay, so we officially had our first Outreach Retreat. We headed out to Bonnyville, Alberta to do a Confirmation/ Communion Retreat for fifty Grade 3 students. Overall I think the retreat went very well, the kids were so well behaved, it could have been because their parents were there with them, but they were so willing to participate and to learn more about their faith. As a team we bonded well and worked together. The kids really clung to us. Paul's hair was definitely a hit. I was so nervous to give my talk to the kids, but once I got up there, it all went so smoothly, thanks to Divine intervention.

I am so thankful for this opportunity to minister to children and to act like a kid for a day. I can't wait to do more.



Keep an Eye Out!



Come One, Come All
Perogy Night in Radway,
Feb. or Mar., 2009.

Possible Dance also. Bring your Family or just come yourself for all you can eat perogies.

We are looking for a good Polka Band. We want to make this a fun family night.

Please call or email Debbie at the school

780-736-3833 or

Debbie@jpii.net with any questions.

John Paul II Bible School

25TH

REUNION

July 30-August 2, 2009

Radway Agricentre
Radway, Alberta



You won't want to miss this weekend!

Registration forms available at: www.jpii.net

We need your help to update our database of alumni addresses.

Please visit our website's 25th Anniversary Reunion Registration Form to send us your current mailing address.

You may also pass the information on to us by email: reunion09@jpii.net or phone: 780.736.3833.

Where Are They Now?

Ken and Maxine Haggarty

By Debbie Mitchell

Old friends and past students of the school Ken and Maxine stopped in for 11:30 Mass at the school while passing through Radway this month. They were on their way back home to Trochu from a Live-In, in Bonnyville. They were both 3rd year students in 1986-87, married at that time, with a family.

It had been 10 years since they walked through the doors of our school. They both said it was like walking into “home”. “We knew right where to go to find the chapel” they said. So many things were still the same: Mass, lunch and the famous Vanier reading, still goes on.

They have been blessed with 10 children and 15 grandchildren. They have been very involved in the Live-In Movement and active in their home parish in these past years. It was clear to see the love of Christ and the love of life exuded from them. I would say they had done the job they set out to do when they walked out these doors 21 years ago, to be true examples of Christ in this world. I have no doubt about that.

It was truly a pleasure to meet them and it felt like I was sitting down with family as we spoke. May God Bless them and their family.



Visiting JPII Alumni, Ken and Maxine Haggarty

Husky Rebate Program

Yes, we are still benefiting from the use of the Husky Community Rebate Program. Swiping the card at any Mohawk or Husky station when you fill up with gas, buy groceries and other convenience store items, get your car repaired, or enjoy a Husky House meal the John Paul II Bible School receives 2% of your purchase, at no extra cost to you. We thank and appreciate those of you who have been supporting us with this. This year we received \$1752.00 in funds.

If any of you would like this rebate card, not a credit card, please call us and we will mail you one.

**You can check out the details at:
www.huskyenergy.ca or call us at
780-736-3833.**



Transformation In Christ

by Nikki Howe

This past week was a really heavy week for me. The talks were really deep and they all touched me in different ways. The four basic laws of the universe made me realize how my actions really affect my life. Generational sin was interesting. I had no idea that it was possible. Hearts of stone was good. I felt like it was kind of relating to me in a way. Performance orientation was my favorite talk. I felt like that entire talk was about me. All my life and still to this day I find myself blaming myself for others problems. It really helped me to see that there are others who feel the same way! I also love listening to Miss Joan.

Burden bearing was a talk that really helped me. I've been a burden bearer for a while and to realize how stressful it actually is and to learn how to give it to God really helped. Walking in the new way was a good ending to a hard week. Loretta's testimony was really good. It made me realize that my life isn't that bad, and that what was bad in my life can be turned into good. I also loved the song that she sang.

All the skits this week were really good. “Sin bin” was an eye opener and showed how easy it is to get caught in sin. “Walls” was a skit that felt like my life. “Blind man” made me cry, but it was amazing at the same time. “Train man” was heartbreaking but made me realize just how hard it must have been for God to give His only Son. “Ragman” was a really good skit that showed me how, if I have burdens, I can just take them to God.

This whole week was really good. Even though a lot was hard, I learned a lot and I'm glad that we were able to go through all of this.

Our Teachers

by Thomas Llewellyn

Tony Shann

Tony's teaching was on the books of Wisdom in the Bible. Through his use of Praise in song and his tremendous ability to tell stories from the Bible, Mr. Shann brought to life the person of Jesus and inspired in us, the desire to know, love and feel Him as an awesome God. That is the heart of Wisdom taught all through Scripture, a mystery Tony has been unveiling all his life. We were so blessed to have him among us as we continued on our journey to attaining true Wisdom.



Co-founder and long time friend to the school, Tony Shann

Wade St. Onge

We were pleased to have Wade, a graduate from Stubenville, Ohio, come to teach us about John Paul II's revolutionary Theology of the Body using straight forward teaching methods. Wade clearly presented the need for us Christians to understand and fulfill the meaning of our sexual lives through Christ no matter what vocation we are called to. The classes themselves were based on interaction with plenty of time put aside for questions from the students. We even had a class debate on different modern day issues regarding sexuality and marriage. Most importantly, Wade's testimony which was given on Thursday night reinforced all that he had taught us, as his very life is a model of a Christian's struggle to find, accept and fulfill his vocation. Catholic youth everywhere could greatly benefit from having more role models such as Wade. We will look forward to seeing him through the year as he comes to visit the School.



"Theology of the Body" instructor, Wade St. Onge

Alanet and Murdo MacKinnon

Alanet and Murdo, a couple now married over 45 years have come to JP II Bible School to teach us about Prayer Ministry. Together they have been ministering to the Body of Christ through intercessory prayers, both organized and spontaneous and have much to teach us from their experience. Although there isn't a universal set of rules for those who wish to pray for someone, there is a handy set of guide lines from those who know what is needed in this ministry. We (the students) learned how to prepare any ordinary space, so that it can be used for praying with someone in need and how to bless and pray for each other as we minister to those asking for our prayers. There was a great stress placed on the importance of confidentiality and on using all of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that God chooses to use through us when we minister through prayer. All the students are aware of the great respect this loving couple has for God and each other. Their ability to work as one body is an inspiration to all of us, especially those discerning the married life as a vocation. We look forward to spending yet another week with them as they stay to teach us about the "seven deadly sins".



Alanet and Murdo MacKinnon



Father Clair Watrin

Staff and students are very fortunate to have Father Clair as our Chaplain and Spiritual Director. He has a fond spot in his heart for the Live-In Movement which he started in the 1970's.

He is a very energetic, alive presence in our school.



Father Clair Watrin, JP II Chaplain



Outreach

by Joan Perrott

The Lord calls people to the bible school, I believe this whole heartedly. I have discovered this year it is the same! As I get to know the students more I can see how their uniqueness and talents benefit us and why they are here. Here in Radway, we are in the process of forming a new community, the class of John Paul II Bible School 2009. Our community includes the staff, second year students and the teachers, who become part of our community while they are here.

The students are learning about the bible, about the truth and about themselves. We are blessed to have daily Mass; Fr. Clair Watrin teaches about the Christian life in his homilies. All of this helps prepare the students for when they go out on Outreach in the spring. One of the concepts that are taught here is to take what is learned and share it with others. The Outreach program that we offer during the Month of May is set up to do just that.

I really praise God for the work done here, in all our lives, and I look forward to watching His little miracles unfold as the year progresses. One of the miracles is the change from captivity to freedom; which may take a few years; but in seeking the truth will be free as we come to know Jesus and His purpose for our lives.

For Outreach bookings please contact me at: **780-736-3833** or retreats@jpil.net



Finding God's Love

by Marilyn Abrahamson

This week has been a great wealth of information and sharing from all presenting. I learned about the basic laws of the universe which helped me to understand my personal history and the involvement of my family. A large part pertaining to my life was the Scripture on forgiveness toward my parents. The heart being the seat of personality made me understand how inner vows affect us. From the teaching on performance orientation, I learned to appreciate and understand my own past. Struggling to overcome past weakness without sufficient knowledge is difficult.

The information given in this class was a key for unlocking the past. I discovered some roots that prevented healthy growth. To transform these roots is important. Allowing God to change our heart and mind through repentance and restitution brings down His blessing and wisdom, a gift of His grace. I could see how important forgiveness is to growing in God's love. Burden bearing showed me how to properly carry a brother or sister's burden – we are all part of the one body of Jesus. Walking in the new way held promise of it being there, as we allow Jesus to take hold of us. Loretta's personal testimony was one of many great miracles on how God chooses to use one's pain and suffering for a greater good.

The skits demonstrated the power of God's love and forgiveness for all. Pain, from whatever source, is redeemed in God's love. "The Trainman" sacrificing his son for many other lives showed the intensity of God's pain and love for His people. The "Ragman" also portrayed the greatness of God's healing.

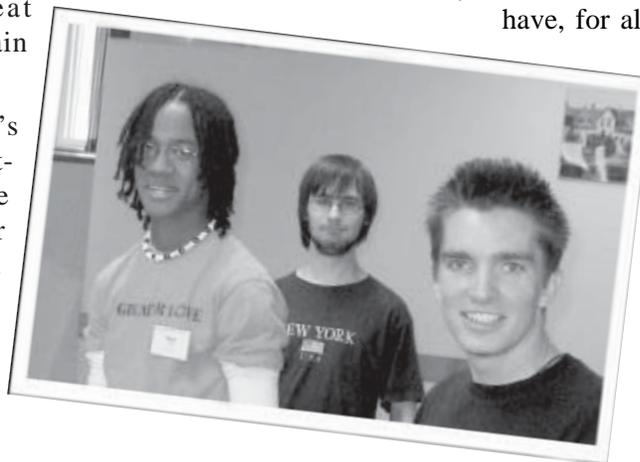
Visit to Care Centre

by Jonathan Ancil

Coming to Bible School has been a time of building and tearing down, as my character and faith grow while my image, my self-delusions have been eroding. This in turn has led to too much self-dismay.

When I allow myself to just be myself, I am amazed at how God rewards me. Just yesterday while returning from visiting the grave site, I saw one of the members of the Radway Continuing Care Centre outside. I love people and being with and talking with them is one of my fondest pastimes so I swerved and went over to give him a hug and speak with him. Before long I found myself inside with the rest of the members of the Centre. It was so touching and moving that words fail me. One man was Polish, another had a hearing problem. Then a woman I met couldn't seem to talk, another couldn't pronounce her words properly. But beneath all this there was love. We cherished each other and in our eyes was something so deep and tender, a million words couldn't voice. I went there to meet them to give them something. Instead it was they who gave me more than I will ever realize.

When people speak of love, it is usually between their family or boy friend/girl friend. But as for me, I know where my heart lies – with not just all these, but with the people that have, for all intents and purposes, been forgotten. Pray for them.





John Paul II Bible School

Built on 2000 years of Catholic Tradition

The board of Directors, staff and students would like to send a big

Thank You

out to all who have supported us in
the Wine Tasting, Live and Silent Auction Fundraiser
Held at St. Albert, October 24, 2008.

Thank you for the generous donations of cash and auction items.
The donors listed below have helped us to raise just under \$10,000.00.

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May God Bless you for your kindness and generosity!



Called to Serve

by Loretta O'Donovan

About a year ago, I felt the Lord telling me "next year I want you to be in charge of Prayer Journey". I don't always find change easy, so I argued and wrestled with God - even right up to the end of the second semester. All the same, I felt a change was coming. During the summer, I spent a lot of time in prayer. I was praying and I felt the Lord asking me to get on my knees. Then the Holy Spirit came upon me in power. I knew beyond a doubt, that I was to accept God's will.

When we say "yes" to Jesus, He always comes through for us. I have changed and grown so much this year, that I almost feel as if I am getting acquainted with myself. In Christ, I have learned that I am more than a conqueror. I walk in victory, I walk in His grace, in His truth, only by the power of God. All I have is my own weakness, but in Him, I am made strong. I feel more confidence than I've ever felt before. I'm so grateful. I really feel in touch with my own interior authority and often feel encompassed by the mystery of God. I pray more and God is so present to me on a daily basis. Glory be to Him, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to Him from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, forever and ever. Amen.

Who Is Debbie Mitchell?

I have been working at John Paul II Bible School since February of this year. I do Fundraising and Promotions and am Office Manager. I am a local Albertan, who has lived in the Morinville, area just north of Edmonton for most of my life.

I have spoken with some of the Alumni by now, and plan on speaking with all of you at one point. A few questions are always asked of me so let me clarify things.

My Bible School Year: I attended the Bible School in Auckland, New Zealand. February 2007 to November 2007. Fr. Neil Vaney, from New Zealand made two visits to John Paul II Bible School on behalf of the Diocese of Auckland. Through years of prayer the first Catholic Bible School in New Zealand was realized with the whole hearted support of Bishop Pat and private donors.

My Call To Bible School: My sister Ruth Schafers who is an Alumni and worked at JP II in the area of prayer journey, was hired on as Ministry Coordinator and part of the team to start up the new school. It is called The Catholic Discipleship College. The school was fashioned in many ways after JP II, with a Kiwi twist. I tagged along as the first student registered. I was headed down under. It was time to slow my fast paced life down and try to find peace and learn how to pray, I thought. Well, I did not know the emotional rollercoaster ride I was in for. What an amazing experience it was for me. My fellow classmates, acquaintances of the school and the staff hold a special spot in my heart today. I believe at this point there is not much more to say that any other Alumni need to hear. You were there!

The Mission: To do the job I am assigned, the best I can, but mainly to rekindle the connection of the Alumni with our school - to give the support to the students of the future. Look at all the good that has come from our past students. I have just recently been exposed to all this and it never ceases to amaze me — the things I see and hear about the Alumni. The JP II Alumni are living in countries scattered all around this wonderful world and doing amazing things. Just think of the wonderful example you all are! May the Lord be able to continue His work through John Paul II Bible School for years to come.



**Debbie Mitchell,
Director of Development
and Office Manager**

The Staff and Students of John Paul II Bible School Wish you a Blessed and Holy Christmas.



GOD'S FINGERPRINTS

by Nikki Howe

A gentle wind blows through the trees
The sun glows its yellow rays
The birds, the wind, the tame, the bees
Adore the Lord in their many ways.

A baby's laughter flows through the air
A mother's smile fills the room
A father's voice is raised in prayer
As God's love is in full bloom.

God sent His Son upon the earth
To die to bring us life
His death brought us new birth
And saved us from lots of strife.

So thank God for all He's done
For all He's going to do
Because He's only just begun
And He's doing it all for you!