



London North Central Catholic Family of Parishes

Spring Spotlight

Jubilee 2025 - Pilgrims of Hope

Pope Francis has declared 2025 to be a Jubilee Year for the entire Church, carrying on the tradition of a Jubilee year every 25 years dating back to the 1300's. The theme for this Jubilee, Pilgrims of Hope, invites us to experience in a profound way the transforming power of God's mercy and forgiveness and a renewal of our faith and commitment to love God and our neighbour as God has first loved us.

In our Diocese, the year officially began on the weekend of December 27th - 28th with Bishop Fabbro celebrating the Rite of Opening of the Jubilee Year at St. Peter's Cathedral. The Jubilee Prayer, written by Pope Francis is being prayed by individuals and our parish groups, and the official Jubilee Hymn is being frequently sung in our Family of Parishes at our weekend masses. The profession of the Nicene Creed, which celebrates its 1700th anniversary since it was written, is being prayed on a more frequent basis at our masses.

With every Jubilee, there is a formal papal document released, a papal bull that announces the coming Jubilee. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has created a faith sharing series that explores the six sub-themes of the bull: The Jubilee Year, Hope, Pilgrims of Hope on a Synodal Path, Signs of the Times, Appeals for Hope, and Anchored in Hope. Our Family of Parishes will be launching this experience on six consecutive Thursdays beginning **May 1st** in the Parish Hall at St. Michael's. To register, please contact Teresa Ford at tford4000@gmail.com or 519-282-9442.

The Jubilee Year also encourages us to a deeper sense of prayer and prayer experiences. Upcoming on **Saturday, May 3rd** at 1:00pm, there will be a public Rosary Rally held at the Grotto of our Lady at St. Peter's Seminary. We gather to ask our Lady to intercede with her Son for us and bring peace to our very troubled world.

Part of the Jubilee experience is to make a pilgrimage to sacred places. Bishop Fabbro has designated seven churches throughout our Diocese and the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in Merlin as pilgrim sites. You are invited to make a pilgrimage to these sites for times of prayer, activities, tours, and other events. St. Peter's Cathedral has been designated as one of the eight sites and will be welcoming pilgrims on the weekend of **June 27th - 29th** which coincides with the 140th anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral on June 28th. Bishop Fabbro will be presiding at all masses that weekend, the church will be open for times of prayer and tours, and we will conclude our weekend with an ecumenical Evening Prayer Service on Sunday. More specific details on the events of the weekend will be available after Easter as well as the locations and dates of the other pilgrim sites.

May the gift of this Jubilee Year renew each of us in our faith to become beacons of hope to all we encounter on our earthly pilgrimage.



National Volunteer Week - April 27th to May 3rd

Thank You to our Volunteers!

For the many hours you put towards our parish community;

For the role you play;

For the people you impact;

For everything you do for our family of parishes.



For the intentions of volunteers masses will be offered on **Tuesday, April 29th:**

St. Peter's: 12:00 pm



St. Michael's: 7:00 pm

Celebrating Our Casavant Organs

In 2026 our Casavant Organs will celebrate significant milestones. Incredibly, St. Peter's Cathedral organ will mark 100 years in service and St. Michael's organ will reach 55 years. These organs are visual and architectural showpieces that have contributed to our many Masses, sacraments, concerts and Diocesan celebrations. As we reflect and celebrate these upcoming anniversaries, we can be proud of how our Pastors, music ministry, volunteers, staff and parishioners have lovingly cared for and appreciated these unique instruments.

St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica

The history of the present Casavant organ dates to 1923 when the Right Reverend J. F. Stanley was supervising the interior decor of the Cathedral. St. Peter's organist, Dr. Louis Balogh, proposed a large three manual instrument from the Casavant Organ Company in Ste. Hyacinthe, Quebec, to replace the two-manual instrument built in 1886.

The contract for the new organ was signed in September 1925 and played at its first Mass to open the Catholic Centennial Week on September 26, 1926. A Jubilee Souvenir program was printed for this event, containing the music for "Missa S. Michaelis Archangeli" composed by Dr. Balogh, along with photographs of the cathedral choirs, the organ console, and a list of its specifications.

This magnificent organ has 60 stops and 4,000 pipes, 3 keyboards and a pedal board. The divisions of the organ, each with its own set of stops, are called Swell, Choir, Great and Pedal. Each stop has 61 pipes for each note on the keyboard. There are only 32 notes in the Pedal division so each note has 32 pipes. Powered by two blowers at different wind pressures, the higher wind pressure is for the reed stops (Trumpet, Posaune, Clairon, Bombarde) and larger diapason pipes. The lower wind pressure is for the remaining stops. The organ also has coupling mechanisms so all stops can be played on different keyboards. The Vox humana stop and the Cor anglais stop are unique to this organ. The former is a reed stop with a half-length pipe and imitates the human voice. The latter has the haunting voice of an oboe, except lower in register and colour. This organ has a full rich sound because of the many 8' pipes that reinforce the melody line of our liturgical music.



The organ sounds much today as it did in 1926 even though its mechanical parts have been modernized. The original console was replaced in 1970 with a modern electric console. In 1987-1991, a major restoration took place where both blower motors were replaced, and the organ pipes cleaned and reed pipes restored to their original condition. In 2005 a new solid state electronic capture system was installed with another recent upgrade that has a larger capture system. Most recently the leather pouches were replaced allowing air into the pipes.

The replacement value today would exceed \$1,000,000.

St. Michael's Parish

In February 1970 the agreement between Casavant Freres Limitee, of St. Hyacinthe, Quebec and St. Michael's Parish was signed to construct and install a new Casavant organ. The custom-build instrument was completed in 1971 at a cost of \$33,770.

Casavant Freres designed and built the organ to assure free egress of tone and easy access for regulating and tuning. The all-electric console, considered the control center of the organ, contains the keyboards (manuals), sound controls (stops), couplers (which combine the sound from another manual), combination pistons, a pedal board and swell pedals that open and close the swell box. The organist plays on the various keyboards (manuals), depending on the sound required in addition to using feet for the pedal board. The organist can control various tone colours and volume by pulling out various stops as needed, changing couplers, adjusting the crescendo pedal and opening the swell box.

This organ has 2 manuals, the Great and the Swell, plus the pedal board. The Great has 7 stops, including the Trompette. The Swell has 8 stops containing 3 different flute sounds, plus a Krummhorn. Various stops can access these relative feet dimensions: 8, 4, 2, and 1 1/3. The pedal board has 6 stops, 2 that are 16 feet. The higher the number of feet, the deeper the sound. Each stop is connected to several pipes which amplify the sound. For example an 8-foot stop, which reflects the same relative pitch as the piano or voice, has 61 pipes connected to it. Other stops are connected to 32, 54, 128, 183, and 244 pipes respectively.

The organ was completely built and assembled in the Casavant Freres factory. It was carefully inspected by their trained specialists and played before it was disassembled for shipment to St. Michael's parish.

When this striking organ was installed Reverend Monsignor J. A. Feeney and the parishioners of St. Michael's dedicated it as a memorial in memory of members of the Armed Forces who lost their lives in service. Today, a plate bearing the inscription, "To the Glory of God and in memory of the Men and Women of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in the service of our Country," can be found on the front left corner of the wood casement.

