

Other new groups funded this year include **St. Francis de Sales's Wednesday Lunch Program** in Smith Falls, the ecumenical **Friendship Lunch Program** in Kemptville, **St. Michael's Senior's Luncheon** in Belleville, **St. Gregory's St. Vincent de Paul Committee** in Picton, **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul**, **St. Peter Conference** in Trenton, **Morningstar Mission** in Napanee, **QueenCare** in Brockville, The **San Damiano Foundation** with locations in Madoc, Trenton, and Tweed, and the **Help our Students Program**.



The Friendship Lunch Program is held weekly at St. John's United Church in Kemptville, serving the community of North Grenville by providing a nourishing meal and fellowship.

Agencies that have received donations from the Lenten Collection in the past were also included in this year's list, as they continue to do invaluable work addressing the pressing needs of our community. These agencies include **Grace Inn Shelter** in Belleville, **St. Mary of Egypt Refuge** in Queensborough, **Birthright** in Belleville and Kingston, **Society of St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store** in Belleville, **St. Vincent De Paul Society** of Kingston, **Anchor of Hope** in Madoc, and **Pregnancy and Family Care of Quinte West** in Trenton. Two parish-based food programs, **Holy Cross Knights of Columbus Council 5333 Food Bank** in Kemptville and **St. Mary's Drop-In Centre & Veronica's Veil Overnight Shelter** in Kingston, also received donations. Finally, two groups with long-standing connections to

the Archdiocese were granted funds: **the Natural Family Planning Association – Ontario** and **the missions of the Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph** in Peru, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic.



Seniors Days at St. Mary of Egypt Refuge enable urban and rural seniors to enjoy a retreat to nature, companionship, working with youth volunteers as well as a beautiful lunch from our organic garden.

It is a privilege to work alongside Archbishop Mulhall and the Young Adults Social Justice Committee each year to help steward the generous giving of our faithful. Thank you to all our parishioners for their continued support of our vulnerable brothers and sisters.

***Note:** Parishes and parishioners may anticipate this pattern of giving as the new normal for the Lenten Collection moving forward. The Lenten Collection will begin on Ash Wednesday, and parishioners will have the entirety of the Lenten season to contribute.

Celebrating Fr. Rod McNeil and 45 Years of His Priestly Ministry

By Kathleen Henry

On Sunday, September 7, 2025, Fr. Rod McNeil concelebrated Holy Mass with Fr. Tim Harrison and Fr. Tim Shea at St. Joseph's Church, Belleville. This Holy Mass was offered in celebration of the 45th anniversary of Fr. Rod's ordination. Following Mass, the parish held an Open House to honour Fr. Rod at St. Joseph Catholic School, where hundreds attended from all over southern Ontario. Entertainment was provided by Mike Kelly and his band, as well as students from The Kelly's School of Irish Dance, directed by Caitlyn Callaghan, Fr. Rod's cousin. Many visitors from Father's current and past parishes as well as fellow priests, were there to offer him good wishes.

In his 45 years as a priest, Fr. Rod has served many parish communities in the Archdiocese of Kingston, including in Trenton, Belleville, Gananoque, Toledo, Athens, Stirling, Frankford, Batawa, Smith Falls, and Rockport. He returned to Belleville in 2021 and now calls St. Joseph parish home. As Father Rod stated, he has 'come full circle.'

Happy 45th anniversary Fr. Rod McNeil.



Fr. Rod McNeil thanks St. Joseph parish