

## A MESSAGE FROM BROTHER RICHARD



### We're all adapting to a new normal during this pandemic

As I write this message to you, we are in a stage of the pandemic where attitudes are lightening up but medical experts warn us that we need to remain vigilant. This pandemic is not over; while we are seeing fewer reported cases, as we've seen in the U.S., cases can spike overnight.

Coronavirus is affecting everyone, especially the most vulnerable people in our community. For many people, life has become much more difficult. In the last edition of our newsletter, we featured some of the heroes at Good Shepherd who worked the frontlines of the pandemic. Since then we have continued to adapt to the restrictions while providing critical services for people whose circumstance put them at extreme risk of contracting COVID-19.

Some of our own frontline heroes were exposed to the virus and tested positive for COVID-19. In April and early May, three Hospitaller Brothers and I were diagnosed with the disease. Our journey began when Brother Yvon Paquin complained of aches, pains and fever. I immediately made arrangements for him to be tested later that day. The next morning we learned he tested positive for the virus. We were all tested that day and our tests came back negative. The following Saturday the brothers were tested again and three more of us tested positive, including myself. The only one who tested negative was Brother Justin who immediately moved out of our house. In the next 14 days of quarantine the four of us experienced mild to moderate symptoms of the virus. I am happy to report that we are well – and a little more cautious.

During our quarantine, there were many moments of fear, anxiety, frustration and confusion. I reflected on the wisdom of renowned American author and researcher Margaret Wheatley. In particular, I thought of her quote: "Change always involves a dark night when everything falls apart. Yet if this period of dissolution is used to create new meaning, then chaos ends and new order emerges."

For many of us, 2020 has been one long, dark night. The worldwide chaos created by this virus is not easily controllable but, as Margaret Wheatley notes, we have the opportunity to give our lives new meaning. Darkness always precedes light and I am absolutely confident that we will emerge from this pandemic with a positive

sense of ourselves, our community and our world. Our priorities are shifting and we are assigning importance to individuals and tasks that, unfortunately, we took for granted just a few months ago.

None of us know what our "new order" – our "new normal" – will look like. We are all learning, changing and adapting. Visits with our family and friends, trips to grocery stores, and doctor's appointments look nothing like they did in February. I'll leave you with one more thought from Margaret Wheatley:

"Whatever your personal beliefs and experiences, I invite you to consider that we need a new worldview to navigate this chaotic time. We cannot hope to make sense using our old maps. It won't help to dust them off or reprint them in bold colors. The more we rely on them, the more disoriented we become. They cause us to focus on the wrong things and blind us to what's significant. Using them, we will journey only to greater chaos."

Let's work together to draw new maps of our lives as we navigate out of the pandemic. Focus on what is most important to ourselves and to others. When we take care of each other we will become a more healthy, resilient and just society.

...

Finally, every year we celebrate the academic accomplishments of at-risk youth who persevered and graduated from Good Shepherd's Notre Dame House School and Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre. Each June, we hold an emotional graduation celebration for the students who, despite life's challenges, have earned their diploma or accomplishment certificates. Some will use their education to move on to an independent life in the community while others will head to post-secondary school and a career. Sadly, this year, they're in the same situation as all Ontario students – because of COVID-19 restrictions, they can't celebrate with their classmates, friends and families. Regardless, the pandemic can't take away their considerable achievements; we all are proud of them and wish them the very best in the future.

The Hospitaller Brothers of St. John of God are praying for you and your families. Please stay safe and healthy.

Yours in Hospitality,

Brother Richard MacPhee, OH  
Chief Executive Officer

# Adapting to a New Normal

Good Shepherd's message of unity and compassion is on full display. Staff and volunteers are facing down the threat of COVID-19 and working towards a "new normal" in the way we deliver vital services to our neighbours at risk. As the largest provider of health, human and social services in the Greater Hamilton Area, Good Shepherd's work is based on a commitment to building healthy and resilient communities founded on the principal of social justice for all.

Good Shepherd is on the frontlines throughout this crisis. While health restrictions have temporarily shuttered programs that can't accommodate physical distancing or at-risk clients, most have been tweaked to allow for safe delivery of services. Here are some examples of how we're providing our services safely and efficiently:

## THE FAMILY CENTRE

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The Good Shepherd Family Centre is a housing-focused shelter for families experiencing homelessness. All of the Centre's services focus on helping families secure housing in a timely manner.

Staff help families with housing searches, take them to apartment viewings and guide them through the process of signing leases and legal documents. During the pandemic they have transitioned their work to phone meetings, virtual tours and electronic signing. The children's common playroom is closed to families and the regular activities for the kids is replaced with individual activity kits that staff have put together for each family.

Good Shepherd's Rapid Rehousing Team has been securing hotel rooms for people to stay in when the shelters are full. They have seen an increased need during the pandemic with people experiencing relationship breakdowns and unsafe living situations.

Despite all the challenges they've experienced during this time, Stephanie, a program manager, is proud that they have continued to house families throughout the pandemic.



"We're committed to helping families find housing, we are just learning to do that in different ways."

## SENIORS PROGRAMS

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Good Shepherd's Bishop Tonnos Seniors Apartment building is home to 94 seniors who are in self-isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Therapeutic Day Program, known as the SAM Program, in which more than 200 seniors and caregivers in the community participate, closed temporarily due to the crisis, causing this vulnerable population to be more isolated than ever before.

"What we are really noticing with these seniors who are facing increased isolation is that they are aging quicker," says Program Manager Chris Melata. "We are getting creative finding new ways to support them so they feel less alone."

The Seniors Program staff are delivering home-cooked meals to people living in the building. Staff from the Therapeutic Adult Program are keeping in touch with clients with daily phone calls, virtual coffee dates and by delivering activity packages to keep their minds active while at home.

## COMMUNITY MEALS

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When the coronavirus began spreading into Canada, Good Shepherd was well into preparations and were ready to implement plans on a moment's notice.

"It was March 11 when we got the call that everything was changing," says Matthew, lead hand at The Good Shepherd Centre kitchen. "I told everyone that we would keep going because we have too many people who rely on us."

The kitchen staff make meals for up to 600 people a day during normal times. The dining room at The Good Shepherd Centre is spacious but is inadequate when guests must be accommodated while maintaining a two-metre distance. Now, community lunches are handed out in prepared packages that contain nutritious meals.



The community also saw the dilemma faced by social service agencies and their clients, and stepped up. Small businesses and corporations have been particularly generous despite the fact that they are also reeling from the effects of the pandemic.

“We have had an onslaught of food donations, which helped us out so much,” says Matthew. “When the pandemic first started, I think we had every restaurant in the city come to us with their food. We could barely get anything else into our fridge,” says Matthew, who remains astounded by the continuing displays of generosity.

## TRANSITIONAL BEDS PROGRAM

Restrictions to stop the spread of the coronavirus pandemic has left many of us feeling isolated and bored. For residents at Good Shepherd’s Transitional Beds program, encouraging them to decide how to lessen the effects of the monotony of quarantine is having a positive effect on their emotional health.



The program, located at The Good Shepherd Centre on Mary Street, provides medical care to residents while they transition into the community. The residents, upon discharge from hospital, could be homeless, precariously housed or have limited ability to access to health and community services. Due to their circumstances, some may have extended stays at the Centre.

Adjusting to the “new normal” can be difficult for people who are accustomed to routines, according to Kaley, nurse manager at the Transitional Beds Program. The staff work to lessen the tedium of not being able to leave the Centre due to the pandemic. Televisions

were installed in bedrooms and movie nights were planned, but staff wanted the residents to direct more of their own recreational activities. They surveyed the residents and received some surprising activity suggestions.

“It’s rewarding because we have more time to engage with them; we get to know people on a social level,” says Kaley. “We do these things to show them that we care. We don’t do them for the thank you’s.”

## THE MARKETPLACE

The Good Shepherd Marketplace has been on the cutting edge of providing emergency food and clothing to people who need it. During the pandemic, we continue to provide our services while adhering to appropriate distancing measures.

In April and May, the Marketplace served 10,530 individuals and welcomed 281 new households .

“Our staff and volunteers have been vital in keeping the Marketplace running smoothly,” says Mark, the Marketplace’s supervisor. “We’re doing our best to make sure people keep safe and that their families don’t go hungry. We’ve made some changes to the program in order to keep everyone physically distanced while they are here.”

To read more, visit [goodshepherdcentres.ca/blogs](https://goodshepherdcentres.ca/blogs)

A MESSAGE FROM

**CATHY WELLWOOD**

## Living & working with uncertainty in 2020

When we last talked, who would have thought that this pandemic would still be causing havoc in late July? Whether it was optimism or naiveté, so many of us – myself included – were certain that by now we would be close to living our lives as we had before.

I'm exhausted and frustrated. I want this pandemic to end. When I last wrote my message to you, I told you that I was excited to see everyone at our Harvest Dinner on October 15. Unfortunately, that won't be the case this year. Like all of our events, the uncertainty of the pandemic has forced us to cancel our signature event for the first time ever.

To make up for the loss of our annual events, we have come up with a variety of great ideas to have some fun while accommodating physical distancing.

Our *Stay at Home Cocktail Party in Support of Good Shepherd* on September 17. The "party" includes a live-streamed illusionist show, a charcuterie board, sweet treats and a DIY cocktail kit with all the supplies for your choice of eight cocktails/mocktails. The cost \$100 per couple or \$60 per person. Your party ingredients can be picked up from Carmens Banquet Centre on event day or they can be delivered in the Hamilton area for an additional fee. Please watch your mailbox or online for more information about the party.

One of the most popular features of Harvest Dinner is our auction. Although we can't be together this year, we're putting our auction items online from October 1-15. Don't worry, our selection will be just as exciting as in previous year. Stay tuned for more information.

These events will support services that help our community's most vulnerable people, as well as vital room upgrades to facilities at Good Shepherd's Family Centre and Women's Services. If you're interested in helping, please give me a call at 905.528.6565 x3338.

My wish is for all of our lives to be back to normal so I can sit down with you to thank you for supporting us. But for now we must face reality. We'll be stuck in this situation for a while and even though I'm tired of the term "the new normal", that is exactly what we're living in. I'm praying every day for this to end soon!

Stay safe and God Bless,



Cathy Wellwood  
Chief Development Officer



**HELP US PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY'S MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE DURING THE PANDEMIC.  
CALL 905.572.6435 OR VISIT [GOODSHEPHERDCENTRES.CA/DONATE](https://goodshepherdcentres.ca/donate)**

### GOOD SHEPHERD'S COMMITMENT TO YOU



Hospitaller Order of  
Saint John of God  
*Province of the Good Shepherd in North America*

The Shepherd Newsletter is published three times a year. It is our way of sharing Good Shepherd news and events. You will also receive greetings from the Brothers and Staff of Good Shepherd at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Each Good Shepherd mailing is accompanied by a reply card and a return envelope for your convenience. Although your support is vital, we understand that not everyone can make a donation in response to each mailing.

If you prefer fewer mailings, or none at all, let us know. We also invite you to use the reply envelope enclosed to communicate with us. Please tell us how we're doing and inform us of changes in your mailing information.

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