

## Prayer to Mary, Refuge of Sinner

Prayer to Mary, refuge of Sinners, refuge meaning shelter.

O most holy and pure virgin! You who are the mother of my Lord, the queen of the work, the advocate and refuge of sinners!

My ladies of Peterborough Diocesan once again went above and beyond of what is expected of them showing their caring ways and giving with all their hearts

We gave financial support to local shelters and food banks, made milk mats, stuffed back packs, served hot lunches during the winter months.

Had guest speakers attend our meetings and talk about the youth homelessness. Handed out Tim cards.

Included the homeless prayers not just at our meeting, but also in our daily prayers.

Collecting items for homeless during annual potlucks and special events. Donated seasonal clothing, blankets, sleeping bags and pillows.

Every two years in Ontario a homeless count takes place, the reason being are we increasing or decreasing the number of people that are homeless. Are the ages getting younger or remaining the same?

On a wet and cool April night when the count took place, each group was given an area to walk where we were to search under bridges, in the bushes and wooded areas. The evening will be forever etched in your heart, hearing their stories and seeing where home is for them.

Sit back now and close your eyes as you hear the words of a homeless person.

**Hi my name is Trish, my mom had been threatening to kick me out for a couple of years, the first time I was locked out I was 15. I would stay at my friend's house. My mom became unbearable. She was constantly yelling at me and smashing things. I thought she was going to kill me, so I went to my school counsellor and they said, 'they knew of a place I could get into'. My mom kicked me out once she found out I spoke to my school counsellor. 15 and all alone with only the clothes on my back.**

**Most youth who become homeless aren't well prepared to take care of themselves. As a youth, your housing should be provided for you so that can have friends, study, and do what you are supposed to do.**

**I like to be independent and not have anyone controlling my life. I'm really busy trying to be an adult. I'm aiming to get into college and I'm taking smart serve course so I can get into waitressing. Trish.**

In closing remember when you drop of items, take time to talk with the homeless, or where ever you see them give a smile and a nod. Just don't walk by, show them they do matter.

Respectfully submitted

Peterborough Diocesan Paddy Fitzgerald~Nolan

