Greetings

As the chair and on behalf of the Agapè Center Board of Directors, I would like to thank the staff and the many volunteers who see to it that the Centre is ready and runs on a day to day basis. We serve a vital role in the community providing food for those in need and it takes teamwork, co-ordination and commitment to make this happen.

The Cornwall and area community has been very supportive with their gifts of food and money donated to the soup kitchen and food bank. In addition, we also receive many donations of clothing, shoes and accessories which stock the Thrift Shop the result of which helps fund some of our programs and services. We are most grateful for the support we receive to continue this important mandate.

The Agapè Centre has had a successful year in 2013-2014. In addition to the ongoing program costs, this upcoming year will provide additional challenges because our building is in need of significant repairs. A Building Capital Campaign will be initiated in the fall of 2014 as we look to assure the future of the Agapè Centre for many years to come. – Jim Healey
A Message from the Executive Director

Changing the face of hunger one person at a time

When I first started at the Agapè Centre over three years ago, I was fairly unaware about the issues of hunger and poverty. There was a time when I avoided looking closely at the problem because I held an opinion that people in poverty just needed to work harder. That opinion worked for me until I saw the face of hunger.

A woman walked into our reception with her 6 year old son several years ago. She was deeply embarrassed as she explained she had been laid-off from her job and they were desperate for food. The little boy, however, was watching the volunteers unload the bags of food for them to take home. He checked the bags and when he saw the eggs and cereal, he excitedly pulled on his mother’s sleeve and said “Mommy, we can eat breakfast together tomorrow morning.” The mother quietly explained to the volunteer that she had not eaten breakfast in over two weeks.

We know that there is much more to do to keep fighting hunger in the community we serve. Our long range goal includes providing better, much healthier food items to people who don’t have adequate access to nutritious food. As we look to the next twenty years, with the help of our supporters, we can break the cycle of hunger and impact the lives of literally thousands of people each year. This investment into the lives of low-income children, families and older adults can bring about hope, health and productivity for them, as well as, our community.

On behalf of the Agapè Centre and those we serve, thank you for your support and strength. Working together, we can feed their future and change the face of hunger one person at a time. – Alyssa Blais
Dear Friends of the Agapé Centre, we are pleased to present a few messages from our staff as a way of introducing you to the people who work tirelessly behind the scenes, who’s contributions are very important to the inner workings of our organization. They are dedicated, compassionate and wonderful human beings.

Johanne Gauthier, Operations Manager

I started at Agapè in June 2013 as the Accounting Clerk. Right away I found that I enjoyed working for this organization. I am passionate about food security issues as well as the quality of the food we currently have in our food system. I am also an environmentalist at heart so being able to work for a Food Bank that gets its’ revenue from a Thrift Store makes me want to work as hard as I can to make a difference in peoples’ lives.
The best part of working here is the team of people I get to work with. Not only are my colleagues highly capable and hard-working, there is a spirit of camaraderie that I have not experienced anywhere else in my working life. I have a lot of gratitude for having the opportunity to come to work at the Agapè Centre every day.

Karen Duff, Sorting Manager

The changes that mean most to me in the seven years that I have worked here, are the positive changes that I have witnessed with some of our clients. I have seen clients go through many different challenges, and unfortunately, had to depend on the support of the Agapè’s services. Unfortunately, we live in a society that will judge the people that have to have access to our services, without even knowing the real reasons of why they had to depend on our services in the first place. We, with pride, provide a service that is needed and very important in our community. Our staff and volunteers are all working towards the same goal and that is, to provide a service with respect and compassion. We feel a simple hello and warm wishes go a long way with our clients and store customers. For some, that may be the only interaction they have had all day, and for some, it may just put a smile on their face.

What really warms my heart and puts a huge smile on my face, is when a past-client asks to speak to you specifically, just to tell you that they, after hard work, patience and determination had found a job, or purchased a car, and in some cases, purchased a home. It certainly puts into perspective, why I chose to work at the Agapè Centre in the first place. Seven years ago, during my interview, the last question I was asked was, Why did you choose to apply to work at the Agapè Centre?” My response was simple: "I just want to help!" Mission Accomplished!

Fundraising Spotlight

The Coldest Night of the Year is a fantastically fun, family-friendly walking fundraiser that raises money for the hungry, homeless and hurting across Canada. Agapè’s 5 km WALK was held on Saturday, February 22nd, 2014.
Pamela Mills Thompson, Store Manager

I feel it is an honor to make customers happy and help them feel special. I remember one incident in particular where a gentleman came in and it was important to him to feel like he was well dressed to a Thanksgiving party that he was invited to. He needed my assistance to help him find some clothes.

Once I did that for him, he tried them on. He was beaming from ear to ear and called us his angels. Weeks afterward, he would come to the store occasionally with his special clothes on. We all feel great when we wear something we like. So it feels great to be able to help people on a daily basis. What I enjoy the most about my work is interacting with the customers on a daily basis.

Joy Morin, Client Services Manager

Joy has been the Client Services Manager for 15 years. Her job is to assess the client’s financial situation and then provide them with our services. Our clients come from all walks of life, many different countries, have a variety of religions, speak many different languages, and have varying financial hardships.

They could be your neighbor, relative, sibling, friend or even your parent or grandparent. I consider it an honor and privilege to work at the Agapè Center assisting our clients in any way possible.

Hunger is real.
Helping is easy.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:
613.938.9297
WWW.AGAPECENTRE.CA

“I want you to know how much I enjoyed the meals in the soup kitchen. Compared to my own cooking, you get an A+! – Soup Kitchen client”
100 GRAPE VINES AND 100 FRUIT TREES WERE PLANTED AT FOUNTAINGATE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

VOLUNTEER! WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW PEOPLE
Hello, my name is Margaret Malyon and I have been hired on to develop and facilitate two grant programs provided by Food Banks Canada. The programs will run over the course of the summer and early fall, where families and children are welcome.

The first program is “Curious Chefs: Cooking Club for Kids”, which is based on healthy eating on a budget. We will be focusing on the four major food groups, kitchen safety, healthy school snacks and lunches, portion size, food labels, a grocery store tour and of course, lots of cooking and eating. Children between the ages of 7-11 will be able to participate FREE of charge and also receive an excellent starter kit to take home at the end of the 6 weeks. The program also offers many creative activities and learning opportunities and a little “Fear Factor” each week.

Our second program is “Around the Table: Healthy eating on a budget”. This program is designed to get the entire family planning and cooking together, while focusing on creating healthy meals at a low cost. Some of the areas in which we will touch on are: Basic foods on the shelf, budget friendly items in each food group, how to read a recipe, planning with the family, healthy tips to eliminate sugar/salt from your diet, how to talk to children about healthy eating, how to save money on your groceries, and finish with a grocery store tour and challenge. Again this program is FREE of charge for the entire family and they too will also go home with a starter kit at the end of the 5 weeks.

I can’t wait to get these programs started and am really excited to be a part of the Agape Centre Family. Thank you so much for this opportunity and Healthy Eating!!!
Thank you to everyone who supported our direct mail Christmas Campaign. With your help, we were able to provide over 400 families with Christmas baskets this year.

**Frank Burelle, Resource Developer**

As someone leading a fairly privileged life, the Agapè Centre was never on my radar. I never needed it or its services, so I happily lived my life thinking I knew what the Agapè Centre did and who its clients were. The past year working for the centre has been a learning experience to say the least.

The Agapè Centre is now on my social radar. But more importantly, so are the people who use its services. The single moms, the working poor, the injured workers, those suffering from mental illness, hungry children...the list goes on.

A society can be judged by how it treats its less fortunate. The Agapè clients are all fighting their own battles. The Agapè Centre is a big part of helping them survive the fight. I’m honored to have been a small part of that.

**Jayne Robbins, Head Cook**

I have been with the Agapè Centre for 3 years with 30 years of cooking and medical background. My focus at the Centre is to provide a delicious meal with the focus on nutrition and to provide a safe and welcoming environment to those in our community who otherwise may not be able to meet their dietary needs. I have been awed by the generosity of our community.

“Local people helping local people.”

**Kendra Smith, Volunteer Coordinator**

I’m the Volunteer Coordinator at the Agapè Centre, and I absolutely love my job! Two years ago, I left a “really good job” in a big and exciting city, because I felt it was unfulfilling. I happily wound up back here in my hometown and working for an organization that helps people most in need, in a very tangible way.

It takes almost 100 active volunteers to keep the Agapè Centre running. My role is to coordinate, recruit, train, retain and appreciate our volunteers and placement students. I also assist with fundraising events and special projects. I love the people I work with. I get to work with some of the most generous, compassionate, energetic, and caring volunteers. I also get to work with strong female leaders who have become my mentors, inspire me to dream big, and make it happen. And I love the people I work for: our clients. During my time here I’ve learned that everyone has a story, and for the most part people don’t want to have to rely on our services. All of our clients have unique circumstances and personalities. The Agapè Centre really is its own little community, and I’m happy to be a part of it.