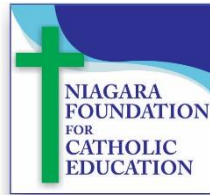


FLYING FATHERS TO LAND IN NIAGARA NOVEMBER 21 and 22



On several occasions the original Flying Fathers (including Father Les Costello who, before entering the seminary, was a member of the 1948 Toronto Maple Leafs Stanley Cup winning team) brought their hockey skills and comedy show to the Niagara area. One of those visits was to Niagara Falls exactly 50 years ago and so it will be somewhat of a special anniversary celebration when the resurrected Flying Fathers team hits the ice at the Gale Centre on Monday, November 21. They will face off against a local team including Niagara Catholic District School Board hockey all-star students, teachers, and board employees for the first of two games scheduled in Niagara. The second game on Tuesday, November 22, the Flying Fathers will skate against the Thorold Mounts (Oldtimers Association) at the Frank Doherty arena in Thorold. Proceeds from the two games will benefit students in need and local charities.

For 45 years the Flying Fathers were known as the Harlem Globetrotters of Hockey touring North America and Europe and raising millions of dollars for various charities while keeping fans laughing with as many outrageous stunts as they could get away with on the ice. Their story was a good news story, a story of fun loving priests with exceptional hockey skills telling the world they were playing and praying for a better world with a burning desire to assist people in need through charity fundraising hockey games. Financial help was given to breadwinners seeking employment, homeless people, families having difficulty paying the rent or putting food on the table, families facing health and medical issues but lacking the financial resources to pay the bills. Eventually the fame of the fun-filled, talented group of hockey playing priests had reached Hollywood with the possibilities of a featured movie. Wayne Gretzky auditioned for a starring role, famed movie director Francis Ford Coppola's studios were involved, but things didn't work out. The Flying Fathers wanted a true and factual story, not one that was Hollywood embellished. Team representatives returned home and back to a life of reality.

After the team's 25th anniversary in 1980 a number of the originals retired while others played until 2009. In 2018, Father John Perdue, vocations director of Peterborough Diocese, decided to resurrect the team with a new group of priests who have met with tremendous success and are now receiving calls from all across Canada as they are eager to continue the legacy and reach new audiences. There are high hopes that the team's resurrection will not only raise substantial funds to assist a variety of charitable causes, but also result in an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and also show that fun and religion can go together.

The Flying Fathers were in Niagara three years ago for two games, local fans were anxious to have them return the following year, but scheduled games were cancelled because of COVID-19. Now, the Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education, Knights of Columbus council 1652 and the Thorold Mounts are involved in arranging the November 21 and 22 games.

The Niagara Falls and Thorold games will feature enjoyable hockey and all of the traditional Flying Fathers' antics such as pies in the face, Sister Mary Shooter, the hockey playing nun, Smitty the Clown, the Flying Monk and much more in slapstick surprises. Those attending either game can be assured of an evening of good, clean, amusing, family-fun and entertainment, something sadly lacking in our world today. They will also leave the arena with a good feeling, knowing that that their support will assist students in need and other local charities.

Tickets priced at \$10 each will be available at soon to be announced locations. Meanwhile to pre-order CONTACT:

GAME #1 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21 IN NIAGARA FALLS,

- Eddie Wright, (905) 650-2328, email: eddiewrightster@gmail.com
- Gerry Sergenese, 289-296-4704 email: gsergenese@gmail.com
- Jim Marino, (905) 735-0247 ext. 210 email: jim.marino@nfce.org

GAME #2, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22 IN THOROLD

- John Kenny, (905) 328-3359, email: jonblu2@hotmail.com
- Brian Weir, (905) 980-0764 email: weirzy26@gmail.com
- Jim Marino, (905) 735-0247 ext. 210 email: jim.marino@nfce.org