



### **The Gary Vanselow Memorial Scholarship**

Gary Vanselow was an avid fisherman and a wonderful man. Both he and his wife, Teresa, were great supporters of our Catholic Schools and played an integral part in their success. Both their children Katie ('94) and Kyle ('04) are Lourdes graduates.

Gary passed away very suddenly and prematurely on February 19, 2005. His passing devastated the Vanselow and Rochester Catholic School families.

Skip forward seven months later. Teresa was attending Mass at Pax Christi church; it was a mass for Gary. Fathers Joe Keefe and Caesar Dralega had a whopper of a surprise for parishioners on this weekend! To play out Jesus' parable of using one's talents and not hiding them, the priests asked for 25 volunteers. Teresa felt moved to volunteer and stepped forward. Each of the 25 volunteers who stepped up was surprised to receive \$100.00 from the priests. The only condition they had was they were to consider that this money belonged to God and they should realize their talents and passions and extend God's Kingdom in the way they spent the money. They were given 90 days to pray, reflect and act.

Teresa's first thought was to use the money to honor Gary's memory and contribute to the Lourdes Foundation by establishing a named scholarship in his memory. With the help of family and many friends, they put their ideas together. The staff at Holy Spirit elementary school, where Teresa was a secretary, worked together and decided to help Teresa raise money for the scholarship. They would have a *Chili Cook Off* during Catholic Schools Week. Since Gary's love of fishing was so important to him, it was decided to have a fishing theme as well. A casting contest along with several other fishing games proved to be just the right fit. Each student paid \$1.00 to participate in all the activities. Teresa's \$100.00 "seed money" was used to buy prizes for the students. By the end of the week, the students had raised over \$3000.00!

The outpouring of enthusiasm and love for Teresa and her cause, elicited a suggestion from a parent ... "Let's do more, we'll stick with the fishing theme and have an old fashioned Fish Fry" – thus, the **Gary Vanselow Memorial Fish Fry was born!**

The first fish fry was held just a few months later in the Holy Spirit gymnasium on April 7, 2006. The event sold out, packing the facility beyond capacity with over 700 people served. Many generous donors contributed to the "Big Catch Raffle". Enough money was raised to fully fund

the scholarship (\$10,000 is needed to fully fund a scholarship) and the Gary Vanselow Scholarship was awarded for the first time, in his name, that very spring.

In 2007 the Gary Vanselow Fish Fry and Big Catch Raffle was moved to the International Event Center where it still resides. Approximately 700 – 1200 people are served a delicious fish dinner. This event has turned into not only a great Catholic schools event, but a wonderful Rochester community event as well.

This community event embodies the true essence of friends and family who are so committed to Catholic education. To date, the Fish Fry has raised more than \$100,000.00 for tuition assistance for Lourdes High School students. The Lourdes Foundation owes a huge debt of gratitude and thanks Teresa Vanselow and her family.