

## Teopoli Trip Aug 21, 2016

By: Loretta D'Sylva

I had never heard of Teopoli, but when TEGSA organized a bus trip there, I decided to avail of this opportunity to receive some much needed indulgences during this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

A group of 55 TEGSA friends boarded a bus bright and early at 7am. As the wheels of the bus started rolling, the mood was set with prayers and hymns. After savouring the delicious breakfast snacks lovingly prepared by Sheilah and her helpers, we played a short fun game after which time everyone settled in for the picturesque drive to Gravenhurst.

Time flew by quickly and soon we were at the Teopoli Catholic Spiritual Centre, a sprawling acreage of green fields and beautiful trees. We were greeted by Fr. Claudio Piccinini, C.P., who gave us a rundown of the events of the day. He then led the group to view a statue of Sr. Carmelina, a Passionist sister, who always made time to listen and pray for others, even though she was ill herself. She is believed to have worked miracles and the process of canonization of Sr. Carmelina of the Cross has already begun. Fr. Claudio then led the group in a procession, while saying the Stations of the Cross, followed by Holy Mass. The setting for Mass was outdoors, under swaying trees, overlooking a small lake and sounds of a waterfall could be heard. A huge cross was erected by Fr. Claudio in this spot in 1977, which was inspired by his many conversations with Sr. Carmelina. Fr. Claudio is a very knowledgeable, patient, and kind priest.

After a sumptuous lunch of Italian soup and fresh sandwiches prepared by the dedicated staff of Teopoli, Fr. Claudio again led our group in a procession to the Shrine of Jesus the Listener, while reciting the Holy Rosary to Our Blessed Mother. This is where everyone walked through the Holy Door of Mercy, after venerating the Holy Wood of the Cross relic. The group then returned to the outdoor "church" where the Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was held. Fr. Claudio then blessed everyone with Holy Water and wished us all a safe journey home.

Feeling blessed, the TEGSA group enjoyed the trip back home with friends. The ride was fun and filled with song, led by our talented committee members, Sheilah, Trevor, and Elizabeth. Many soloists delighted us with their great voices and everyone seemed to enjoy the sing along.

A big "Thank You" goes out to the TEGSA committee for organizing this very prayerful and inspiring trip. The group members were also great company and fun to travel with.

I am so happy I did this pilgrimage to Teopoli and hope everyone else did too.