



Our Stories
March 2023



Compassionate Community Builder

As Board Member and chair of the Health Services Committee, Father Larry Leger helped Caledon Community Services (CCS) meet provincial requirements and become one of the first agencies funded through the Central West Local Health Integration Network (CWLHIN), one of CCS's largest funders. In the coming years, he built ongoing relationships with both its board members and staff.

Fr. Larry was no stranger to community involvement prior to joining the CCS board. He arrived to lead Holy Family Parish in Bolton in 2007 and started volunteering with CCS in 2008. When the agency got a grant in 2009 to research poverty, Fr. Larry tapped into his youth ministry relationships to find students affected by poverty for CCS to interview, which led to him holding a CCS board

position for nine years. He was awarded a CCS Honorary Life Membership in 2018 before relocating in 2019 to lead a parish in Barrie.

Fr. Larry recalls the poverty study taking place at a time when most people thought poverty was non-existent in Caledon. CCS' study proved otherwise. He recalls the sobering discovery of countless homeless teens, displaced by family conflict and spending nights couch-surfing. Shocking as well was finding Caledon residents living outdoors in the dead of winter, and seniors forced to choose between eating or heating their homes.

He got a taste of the difficult choices poverty creates while participating in a Food Bank Challenge that gave him just \$20 for a week's worth of food. He once contemplated

whether to rescue an apple he saw which had rolled underneath a parked car – he knew it would help alleviate the hunger that would hit him later in the day. Experiences like these helped drive his enthusiastic advocacy for Caledon’s least fortunate residents – he worked tirelessly as a fundraiser for the CCS, both personally and through his parish, which he inspired to sponsor the CCS’s Galas for five years in support of the Exchange.

Fr. Larry educated and inspired his congregation to contribute and held himself to the same high standard. As Carine Strong says, he “walked the talk by being a generous personal contributor.” He became famous in the CCS offices for his donations of fine wine for gala auction – a benefit of his membership in the Opimian Wine Club.

You could also find Fr. Larry often showcasing his baking skills at the Exchange, competing in cookie-baking contests or teaching youth how to make butter tarts.

He believed strongly in the CCS mission to help people help themselves and through his parish made numerous client referrals to CCS – for seniors and disabled citizens requiring transportation, for refugees and newcomers to Canada needing language and employment services, and for people facing food insecurity who he connected with the Exchange.

A passionate participant in board and committee discussions, Fr. Larry was a team player who enthusiastically supported initiatives like the launch of the Exchange and Evolve. He was, as Carine Strong describes, “A passionate and compassionate community builder whose work inspires us all to be better than he ever hoped to be.”



LIFE HERO

CAST

FATHER LARRY LEGER
Honorary Life Member (2018)

CCS CLIENTS, VOLUNTEERS & STAFF

COMMUNITY IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS*

*Statistics referencing 2022-2023 Community Impact Report

213 Newcomers assisted	356 Senior sessions delivered	2,592 Food pantry visits
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Discover the joy in helping others and see the impact for yourself.

ccs4u.org/get-involved

