



Bill 34

Health care professionals in Manitoba now have the legal right to choose not to participate in Medical Assistance in Dying under Bill 34, recently passed by the Manitoba legislature.
— page 5

New Year's homily

Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen invited the congregation to let go of the past year and begin anew in his homily for the Jan. 1 mass at Holy Rosary Cathedral. "The Incarnation points us to the future, to what God is doing anew in our midst," he said. "We have before us the challenge to be artisans of peace and reconciliation."
— page 5

Best of the year

The Golden Globes on Jan. 7 kicked off the film award season. This week Gerald Schmitz shares his choices for the best of 2017.
— page 7



Fear of God

We don't preach more about the dangers of hellfire, writes Ron Rolheiser, OMI, because "preaching divine threat dishonours the God in whom we believe."
— page 8

Patriarchy and abuse

Patriarchy is any system in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it, writes Jamie Manson. The patriarchal system, in both society and the church, "gives these men license to abuse their power through the sexual coercion and domination of women and, in some cases, minors."
— page 9

Two popes

"Conservative Catholic dissidents, who have been attacking Pope Francis, showed their true colours recently by attacking retired Pope Benedict, calling his writings 'subversive' and 'modernist,'" writes Thomas Reese, SJ.
— page 10

Chatlain outlines needs, values in North

By Kiply Yaworski

SASKATOON — Archbishop Murray Chatlain of Keewatin-Le Pas returned to his hometown for a visit recently, receiving a warm welcome at an information meeting about the Church in the North, held Dec. 11 at St. Anne's Parish in Saskatoon.

A crowd of interested and engaged listeners from across Saskatoon gathered for the evening presentation by Chatlain, who offered images, insights, and anecdotes about the people of his northern diocese, as well as some of the challenges facing their communities.

Chatlain's archdiocese covers some 430,000 square kilometres across northern Saskatchewan, northern Manitoba, and a small corner of northwestern Ontario. The culture of this vast area includes First Nations — Cree, Ojibwe, and Dene — as well as Métis and non-indigenous peoples. The archdiocese includes some 43 parishes and missions.

"There is hope for the faith in the north," said Chatlain, sharing images of people at prayer, celebrating the sacraments, and participating in pilgrimages across the archdiocese.

His slide show also highlighted the work of missionary priests such as Rev. Guru Prasad Mendem, MSFS, of India who is serving at Holy Cross Parish at Cross Lake, Man., the community that came to public attention after six people committed suicide there in one



Kiply Yaworski

Archbishop Murray Chatlain

short period in 2016.

Rev. Messia Vallapadasu, SDM, also from India, was shown with a proud mother and her child (wrapped on a traditional cradle board) at St. Theresa Point, Man., an active and strong Catholic community.

Rev. Victor Savarimuthu, SDM, serves at St. Marguerite d'Youville Parish in Wasagamach, Man., where he lived for 18 months in the church sacristy before the community was able to build a small house for him. "He is now able to say mass and communicate in Ojibwe or the local dialect, and has done very well in that community," described Chatlain.

Other images Chatlain presented included a diocesan youth leader, local lay leaders, and vol-

unteers (including the graduates of the Aboriginal Lay Formation Program) who are making a difference in the communities of their archdiocese.

The gifts of indigenous culture are incorporated into the practice of the Catholic faith, noted Chatlain, showing a picture of a teepee-style tabernacle next to a Divine Mercy image of Jesus. He also described the sacred drum: it "is used in every culture that we have," he said, describing how drummers will make the sign of the cross before and after a drum prayer. "The drum is not just for games or music; it is a way we pray."

"My hope for tonight is to give an appreciation of the gifts of the Aboriginal people," said Chatlain. Those gifts include a strong connection to the land and an appreciation for how God speaks through creation, the animals, rocks, and water. Indigenous people model a dynamic and healthy relationship with creation, he said. "They are a gift to us in trying to adopt more humility in how we approach the land."

The importance of elders is something we can also learn from Aboriginal people, he said. "One of the gifts of the North is forgiveness and acceptance: there is tolerance and acceptance of people as they are. There is a sense of openness — and they have some really tough stuff to forgive," he added.

The archbishop shared a story of visiting families after the shooting in LaLoche, Sask., last year, in which four people were killed and

several others injured. Chatlain described how one bereaved family sent a message to the family of the youth who committed the shooting, saying, "We forgive you, we don't hold it against you."

Loss, grief, trauma, suicide, addictions, family dysfunction, unemployment, and poverty all take their toll in northern communities, and highlight the need for support and healing.

Chatlain shared a quote from Barbara Brown Taylor, author of *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, about the harm of running away from sadness and darkness: "In the north we are doing a lot of running." Many northerners are struggling with alcohol and family violence. "These are practical issues we are trying to wrestle with."

The church tends to run away from its own darkness as well, he said, quoting the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung: "Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darknesses of other people."

Rather than coming in as if "we've got it all together," Chatlain said, there is a need for honesty and humility. Part of developing a healthy relationship with the north, he said, "is being aware of our own darknesses, our own places of blindness. When we are honest and open about that, we are much more healthy in our relationship with each other."

The legacy of the residential schools is "one of the pieces of our

— KNOWLEDGE, page 5

Pope to teachers: help kids live a consistent lifestyle

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A lifestyle that is environmentally ethical cannot be "schizophrenic" — for example, by showing more care for animals and forests, than for the plight of people, Pope Francis said.

A green lifestyle must be consistent and complete, driven by a love for God the creator and all of his creation, the pope said in a speech Jan. 5 to the Italian Association of Catholic Teachers, which held its national congress in Rome in early January.

The elementary school teachers must help children from a young age understand and practise an environmentally ethical lifestyle that must not be "schizophrenic," that is, a kind of disconnected concern for, as an example, "taking care of animals in extinction, but ignoring problems facing the elderly. No. Or defending the Amazon rainforest, but neglecting the rights of workers to have a fair wage," he said.

This approach demands teaching the importance of personal

responsibility, not bombarding the children with slogans or catchy commands that someone else will have to carry out, he said. Teach children to have an enthusiastic appetite for "experiencing an environmental ethics that stem from the choices and behaviours in daily life," he said.

The pope also encouraged teachers and schools to rebuild a new alliance with families that mutually supports and strengthens each other.

The educational alliance or "pact" that once existed among the state, schools and parents unfortunately "is broken" and must be repaired, he said.

Since constructive collaboration no longer comes "naturally," plan and design a way for it to happen, even with the help of experts in education, said the pope, who used to teach at a Jesuit high school in Buenos Aires.

"But even before that, foster a new 'conspiracy' — and I am fully aware of this wording — between teachers and parents," becoming jointly responsible accomplices to promote the well-



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

TEACHERS MEET POPE — Pope Francis receives a gift during a Jan. 5 meeting with members of the Italian Association of Catholic Teachers in the Clementine Hall at the Vatican. The group of elementary school teachers recently held its national congress in Rome. He told the teachers a lifestyle that is environmentally ethical cannot be "schizophrenic": showing more care for animals and forests, than for the plight of people.

being of children, he said.

Teachers and parents cannot see each other as opposing forces and or point fingers at each other, he said, but rather, they must put themselves "in the other's shoes,

understanding the real difficulties both sides face today in education, and thus creating greater solidarity, a supportive collusion."

— CHANGE, page 2

In Albania, prison remembered as place of horror

By Oscar Durand

SPAC, Albania (CNS) — Although empty for almost 30 years, the walls of the Spac prison in Albania still show evidence of the horrors that took place there.

“God, when will this finish? I cannot take it anymore” reads a prisoner’s handwritten message in a room that housed 54 men. On its dilapidated walls, it is still possible to see the marks left by columns of bunk beds.

This notorious and feared former prison is at the centre of the efforts of Albania’s Catholic Justice and Peace Commission to help the country deal with its communist past.

During more than four decades, Albania had one of the harshest, most repressive and isolated communist regimes. Contact with other countries was strictly forbidden and borders closed. Organized religion was officially banned in 1967, turning Albania into the first atheist state. Places of worship were either destroyed or repurposed. And dissidents, or any considered a threat to the regime, were persecuted, killed or

sent to prison. The communist regime finally collapsed in 1991, almost six years after the death of its leader, Enver Hoxha.

In 2012 while visiting Auschwitz, in Poland, amid the overwhelming and haunting experience of being at a former Nazi concentration camp, Luigj Mila, general secretary of the commission, thought of his own country. He realized that in Albania, most of the places of oppression and suffering from the communist era had been left abandoned.

Mila, who has worked with the commission since its founding by Franciscan fathers in 1996, said he cannot explain why, until then, the commission had not worked on projects related to remembrance. For many years they had been busy with social, economic and environmental issues, more immediate and visible challenges of post-communism Albania.

“We needed to leave some time. Maybe the blood was still warm,” Mila said. “But I am sorry we didn’t start before, because we could have protected a lot more (places), and they would be much better now.”

For the commission, the Spac

prison was the most adequate place to launch a remembrance project.

The prison was also a labour camp. In the nearby copper and pyrite mine, prisoners were forced to work in harsh conditions, six and sometimes seven days a week. The prison became an infamous symbol of the communist regime, and its name was used to discourage and warn would-be dissidents.

Jesuit Father Gjergj Simoni was a prisoner in Spac during part of his 10-year sentence for “writing literature against the regime.” Although he was not a priest at the time, he was secretly studying to become one. His dreams of priesthood became reality years later, when, in April 1991, he became the first Albanian priest to be ordained after the fall of the communist regime.

Simoni remembers much about Spac: the six water faucets available for more than a thousand prisoners, the door-less toilet stalls facing each other, and the mountains surrounding the prison, the only landscape prisoners could see. For Simoni, Spac was “the prison of hunger,” with daily rations consist-

ing of a single piece of bread and bowl of soup, and “sometimes not even that.” He called the living conditions “unbearable.”

On May 21, 1973, prisoners at Spac staged an uprising, the first in a prison in communist Albania. They raised a national flag without the communist star as a symbol of defiance. Two days later guards put down the uprising and executed the leaders. The revolt created a unique place for Spac in the country’s memory.

To get more people to visit Spac, the commission’s first steps were to protect it and to make it more accessible. After years of neglect, many of the buildings had decayed. Looters had taken windows and doors for scrap metal. The commission hired a caretaker and installed informational signs.

This year alone, about 1,000 people visited the prison on their own. And since 2012, about 500 students have joined the guided visits organized by the commission. Mila said students already learn about Albania’s communist past in schools, but they can learn and understand even more by

walking inside the prison’s buildings and talking to survivors and listening to their stories. Their guided visits are often led by former prisoners.

Other organizations are also working not only to protect Spac, but to heal Albania’s wounds through remembrance. Some have plans to turn Spac into a museum, to establish May 21 — the day of the prison revolt — as Albania’s national remembrance day, and to create a place of memory for the thousands of people who were persecuted, imprisoned and executed during the communist regime. No such place currently exists.

It is a challenging enterprise in society where, according to Mila, many prefer to look forward without thinking of the past. A survey conducted in 2015 by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe found that most people in Albania think that communism in their country was a “good idea, poorly implemented.”

“Neglecting the past is very dangerous,” said Mila. “If you don’t know it, you can repeat the same mistakes in the future.”

Vatican continues annual Christmas raffle for charity

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis’ raffle to benefit those in need will give even more people a chance to win a gift once owned by the pope.

Announcing the fifth annual raffle Nov. 30, the Vatican said tickets would be available for purchase online and in several areas accessible to the public, such as the Vatican Museums’ bookshop and the Vatican post office or pharmacy.

“In this way, people will have an opportunity to make a double gesture of charity,” said a statement from the Vatican City State governor’s office.

For 10 euros — about \$11 — ticket buyers are eligible to win

one of several items originally given as gifts to Pope Francis.

“The pope — as he has done every year — has personally donated all the prizes,” the governor’s office said.

The proceeds of the annual raffle go directly to charitable causes chosen by the pope, the Vatican said. Unlike previous years, the Vatican did not announce any specific beneficiaries of the 2017 raffle.

Last year’s raffle benefited the homeless and victims of the earthquake that struck central Italy Aug. 24, 2016.

Tickets are available for purchase on the governor’s office website: www.vaticanstate.va. The winning tickets will be drawn Feb. 2 and published on the website as well.

Admitting guilt does much good: pope

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Fear and the shame of admitting one’s own sins leads to pointing fingers and accusing others rather than recognizing one’s own faults, Pope Francis said.

“It’s difficult to admit being guilty, but it does so much good to confess with sincerity. But you must confess your own sins,” the pope said Jan. 3 at his first general audience of the new year.

“I remember a story an old missionary would tell about a woman who went to confession and she began by telling her husband’s faults, then went on to her mother-in-law’s faults and then the sins of her neighbours. At a certain point, the confessor told her, ‘But ma’am, tell me, are you done?’ ‘No. . . Yes.’ ‘Great, you have finished with other people’s sins, now start to tell me yours,’ ” he said.

The pope was continuing his series of audience talks on the mass, reflecting on the penitential rite.

Recognizing one’s own sins prepares a person to make room in his or her heart for Christ, the pope said. But a person who has a heart “full of himself, of his own success” receives nothing because he is already satiated by his “presumed justice.”

“Listening to the voice of conscience in silence allows us to realize that our thoughts are far from divine thoughts, that our words and our actions are often worldly, guided by choices that are contrary to the Gospel,” the pope said.

Confessing one’s sins to God and the church helps people understand that sin not only “separates us from God but also from our brothers and sisters,” he added.

“Sin cuts, it cuts our relationship with God and with our brothers and sisters, in our family, in society, in the community,” the pope said. “Sin always cuts, separates, divides.”



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE AUDIENCE — Pope Francis exchanges his skullcap during his general audience Jan. 3 in Paul VI hall at the Vatican. He continued his series of talks on the mass, reflecting on the penitential rite.

The penitential rite at mass also includes asking the intercession of Mary and all the angels and saints, which, he said, is an acknowledgment that Christians seek help from “friends and models of life” who will support them on their journey toward full communion with God.

Christians also can find the courage to “take off their masks” and seek pardon for their sins by following the example of biblical

figures such as King David, Zacchaeus, the Samaritan woman and St. Peter.

“To take measure of the fragility of the clay with which we have been formed is an experience that strengthens us,” Pope Francis said. “While making us realize our weakness, it opens our heart to call upon the divine mercy that transforms and converts. And this is what we do in the penitential act at the beginning of mass.”



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POPE VISITS HOSPITAL — Pope Francis greets a patient during an unannounced visit Jan. 5 to children at the Palidoro Bambino Gesù Hospital, in Fiumicino, outside Rome. The pope arrived at the hospital in mid-afternoon and visited the various wards where about 120 children are receiving treatment. By visiting the hospital, Pope Francis was continuing the experience of the Mercy Fridays, visits he made to hospitals, orphanages and other care facilities during the 2015 - 16 Year of Mercy.

Change the air for kids: pope

Continued from page 1

Pope Francis also urged the Catholic teachers to continue to be inspired by their Christian values, whether they teach in public or private Catholic schools, and to encourage their students to be open to others in a “culture of encounter.”

The challenge is to work together to teach kids to be open to and interested in what is around them, he said.

They need to be “capable of caring and tenderness — I am thinking of bullying here — free from widespread fallacies” that claim the only way to be worth

anything is “to be competitive, aggressive and tough toward others, especially toward those who are different, foreign or seen as being an obstacle in some way to one’s personal success,” he said.

“Unfortunately, this is the ‘air’ our children often breathe,” he said. The remedy is to give them a “change of air” that is healthier and more humane, he said, which is why it is important teachers build a new alliance with parents.

Help kids see others as brothers and sisters to be respected and as worthwhile in getting to know “with their past, their virtues and defects, assets and limits,” he said.

Residential school survivors subject of documentary

By Alicia Ambrosio

VANCOUVER (CNS) — Rev. Larry Lynn was wrapping up a visit to the Northwest Territories, interviewing Aboriginal survivors of residential schools about their experiences, when he thought to ask his tour guide about her life.

Reluctantly, Monique Sabourin agreed to be interviewed on-camera for the film being made by Lynn, a priest for the Archdiocese of Vancouver who was a cinematographer before entering the seminary. When the cameras started rolling, Sabourin spoke, unprompted, for 45 minutes and “told this story of paradise lost and paradise regained,” Lynn said at an early December premiere of his film *In the Spirit of Reconciliation*.

A member of the Dene Nation, Sabourin grew up in Fort Providence, on the banks of the Mackenzie River. Her father had gone through the residential school system but had never spoken about his experience. In the film, Sabourin said her father helped build the church in Fort Providence and covered any pain he felt with joy. He raised Sabourin in the Catholic faith and ensured she had a happy childhood.

When she was school-aged, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police removed Sabourin from her home because her parents had stopped sending her to school. She was sent to a residential school run by the Sisters of Charity of Montreal.

In Canada, 130 residential schools operated between the 19th century and 1996. An estimated 150,000 Aboriginal children were taken from their families and placed into residential schools during that time. The residential schools were funded by the government of Canada and run by various church groups, including the Catholic Church.

At the school, children were forbidden to speak any language other than English. Sabourin recalled being caught exchanging a few words in her native lan-

guage with a cousin who was also at the school. She said both girls were pulled by their hair to the bathroom, where a nun washed their mouths out with soap.

Sabourin recalled that the next day, she was taken to the chapel and told she had to confess. “Confess what? I didn’t know how to sin at that time,” she said, sharing her story on camera.

Sabourin said she was one of many girls in her school who was sexually abused by a priest during her years as a student. According to Sabourin, when she and the other victims reported their abuse to the sisters, they were told to stop telling lies.

“They took my language, my love, my love for my people, my Jesus, my church,” Sabourin recalled. Later in life, she turned to alcohol to numb the pain caused by the sexual abuse she had endured.

Similarly, George Tuccaro, a former commissioner of the Northwest Territories, also struggled with alcohol abuse in the years after he left residential school.

He said at the age of 29, while in a “drunk tank,” he remembered one of the sisters at his school had told him he would never do anything with his life. Tuccaro decided he did not want to allow her prophecy to become reality.

On camera, Tuccaro said he began praying in that jail cell, asking God, “Can I give you back the remote control?”

His journey to recovery was not easy, but he eventually became a broadcaster for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and was appointed Commissioner of the Northwest Territories in May 2010.

Like Tuccaro, Sabourin also reached a point when she decided it was time to break the power her residential school experience had over her.

Speaking as part of a panel after a Dec. 6 screening of *In the Spirit of Reconciliation*, Sabourin said, “It took 10 years of my life to realize where I was coming from.”



B.C. Catholic/Agnieszka Krawczynski

DOCUMENTARY WORLD PREMIERE — Rev. Larry Lynn smiles next to residential school survivor Monique Sabourin and Steven Point, former lieutenant governor of British Columbia, after the world premiere of Lynn’s documentary, *In the Spirit of Reconciliation*, in Vancouver Dec. 6.

In 1992, Sabourin sought treatment for alcohol abuse and has been sober ever since. She attended a Pentecostal church, but did not feel “at home.” Finally, she said, “I went back to my church . . . I have a lot of obstacles, but I keep facing them.”

For her, part of the healing process meant “accepting who I am as a Dene” and returning to the practice of her Catholic faith. “I had to love myself first and ask the Creator to help me,” she said.

Sabourin had also participated

in a three-part program, “Returning to Spirit.” The program was created by Aboriginal and church officials to help residential school survivors find a way to heal from their

— PRIEST, page 6

Archbishop who set up abuse inquiry dies

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The Canadian archbishop who three decades ago stood at ground zero of the global child sexual abuse scandals has died.

Archbishop Alphonsus L. Penney was 93.

He was Archbishop of St. John’s in Newfoundland for 12 years, beginning in 1979. During his tenure, there were revelations of child sexual abuse by the Christian Brothers at the Mount Cashel Orphanage in 1984 and 1985, then a series of revelations of abuse by priests who had served in multiple St. John’s parishes.

In 1989 Penney called into ex-

istence the Archdiocesan Commission of Enquiry into the Sexual Abuse of Children by Members of the Clergy and persuaded former lieutenant-governor of Newfoundland and Labrador Gordon Winter, an Anglican layman, to head the five-person commission.

A month after the commission delivered its report in July 1990, Penney tendered his resignation to Pope John Paul II and left office in February 1991. At the time of his resignation, five St. John’s priests and former priests had been convicted and more had trials pending.

“I recognize the deficiencies in my handling of this matter. My leadership and administration have not been perfect,” Penney told the press. “We are a sinful church. The wounds of the church have been laid bare. We are naked. Our anger, our pain, our anguish, our shame are clear to the whole world.”

The commission never called for his resignation, but it was the right thing for the archbishop to do, former commissioner Sister Nuala Kenny told *The Catholic Register*.

“We never called for it, but he did exactly what I think was required of him by the Gospel,” Kenny recalled.

Kenny had worked at arm’s-length from Penney and the archdiocesan administration, helping to produce the 39-page Winter Commission report. A few years ago Kenny and current Archbishop Martin Currie met with the former archbishop in a nursing home to speak with him of the “enormous contribution” he had made in calling the commission of enquiry.

“We had a cup of coffee with a very frail soul,” Kenny remembered. “He understood exactly what I said, but he actually had tears in his eyes as I told him that



Archbishop Alphonsus Penney

while I knew that all of that was terribly painful, now in the history and in the literature his commission is recognized as something that was really quite an extraordinary act of repentance.”

The commission made 55 recommendations, the first being that “the archdiocesan church formally acknowledge its share of guilt and responsibility, and that the archdiocesan administration apologize in such a way as to remove any suggestion that the victims were to blame.”

“These boys, now young men, are victims,” Penney told the na-

— GUIDELINES, page 8



Bob Barkman

CELEBRITY DINNER — Knights of Columbus State Deputy Brian Schatz (left) and Garry Maier (right), chair of the fourth annual Celebrity Dinner hosted by the Denis Mahoney Knights of Columbus Council at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon, recently presented a cheque for \$90,000 to representatives of the Jim Pattison Children’s Hospital Foundation: Jayne Wolfe, manager of development and engagement, and Brynn Boback-Lane, president and CEO of the foundation. So far, the event has raised some \$255,000 to purchase equipment for pediatric care in the children’s hospital, scheduled to open in Saskatoon in 2019. Special acknowledgment went to Mount Carmel Knights of Columbus Council of Landis, Sask., which contributed some \$23,000 to the event. The Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring a room in the new hospital.

Family makes room on trip for shoes, soccer balls

By Chris Berthelot
Grandin Media

EDMONTON (CCN) — When Paul Bourassa made his first trip to work in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, he often met children with no shoes, asking for money. He knew immediately that he couldn't return empty-handed next time.

So in December, Bourassa, his wife Kelly and their three children came back laden with boxes of shoes, soccer balls and toys.

Shoes that to us are out of style are valuable resources for children who have none.

"You help out when you can, where you can," he said.

"Things that we take for granted, like second-hand shoes that we don't wear because they're out of style or somewhat soiled, even though they can be cleaned, we just toss them out. And I thought to myself, 'Well if I'm going to come back, and that was the plan, why don't I dedicate one of my pieces of luggage to clothing?'"

Bourassa is currently on leave from his job as a federal Crown prosecutor and travels to Harare every few months to work for the United Nations Office on Drugs

and Crime. He also serves a Catholic trustee for the southern Alberta francophone school district and was recently elected vice-president of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA).

Soccer balls were shipped flattened so more could be shipped to Zimbabwe.

Over three dozen pairs of shoes, 25 soccer balls, and an assortment of other gifts were collected and delivered to children in Zimbabwe through the trustees' association, the Edmonton and Calgary Catholic school districts, and Sports Central, an Edmonton-based charity.

The goods travelled more than 14,000 kilometres with Bourassa in his luggage and were delivered on Dec. 17 and 18 to be distributed by two Zimbabwean organizations, the charity Harvesters in Sport and the Harvester Christian Fellowship, which runs two orphanages.

"The kids were ecstatic, particularly those that love soccer!" said Hattiaty Kwenda, the founder of Harvesters in Sport. Kwenda, who met Bourassa through the Canadian embassy in Zimbabwe, runs a drop-in program that caters to 300 children.

"They live in extremely difficult circumstances, but we are only able to have them on a drop-in basis until we can raise funds for orphanage structures," he said in an email interview. "Our care is through feeding, recreation, counselling, raising school fees and stationery."

While the older children will play with the soccer balls, the younger ones will have crayons to use as they develop their motor and skill development.

Kwenda is excited to begin an organized soccer training program for the children, with soccer coaches who will have their hands full this year.

For Bourassa and his family, the gifts added a special dimension to their time in Africa.

To find the resources he needed, Bourassa reached out to Cheryl Shinkaruk, the programs and projects manager for the Edmonton Catholic School District.

For Shinkaruk, it was an opportunity to expand the district's commitment to caring for children.

"We want our children to receive everything possible that they need, to have a strong foundation for making them healthy,



Courtesy of Paul Bourassa

BEARING GIFTS — Paul Bourassa, his wife Kelly, and their three children travelled to Zimbabwe in December laden with boxes of shoes, soccer balls and toys for children in the city of Harare.

contributing members of society," she said.

"And by giving children across the world the opportunity to be physically active, by using a variety of different types of activities . . . I believe is giving them the gift to be active. Children are meant to play, children are born to play."

Shinkaruk connected Bourassa with Sport Central, an Edmonton-based charity that donates sports supplies to disadvantaged children in Alberta as well as internationally.

Sheldon Oleksyn, the executive director of Sport Central, was glad to be part of the project, but he also stressed the needs of children in Alberta.

"We're certainly open to requests for equipment for people who are heading overseas, to poorer countries that we know have children in need," he said. "But more importantly, we are also looking for professionals who can verify any families or single parents that they know are in desperate need."

When the goods were delivered to Harvesters in Sport, the children responded by clapping twice, a Zimbabwean form of

gratitude. Bourassa recalls his wife's face, joyful at the sight of happy children.

"We were completely humbled at the fact that such a fuss was made over us, for what little we actually did. She still is beaming, as am I," he said.

"Their joy knew no bounds at receiving the consignment," Kwenda added.

Bourassa also contacted his children's elementary school, Ste. Marguerite Bourgeoys in Calgary. He received shoes from students, as well as the contents of the school's lost and found, and more shoes continue to be collected for Zimbabwe.

While Bourassa is grateful for the opportunity to bring joy to children in Zimbabwe, he believes everyone can make a difference wherever they are.

"I would just gently suggest, keep your eyes open and your ear to the ground, and if you see someone or some organization in need, do what you can in your own corner of the world."

For more information, please visit the following websites: <http://www.harvestersinsport.org> sportcentral.org



Grandin Media/Andrew Ehrkamp

ANGEL CRADLE — The outside door of the Angel Cradle drop-off site is seen at the Grey Nuns Hospital in Edmonton.

Abandoned baby saved at Edmonton hospital

By Andrew Ehrkamp
Grandin Media

EDMONTON (CCN) — A safe-haven program called Angel Cradle, operated by Covenant Health, may have saved a newborn baby's life.

A healthy baby was dropped off at the Grey Nuns Hospital in Edmonton within the last six months under the Angel Cradle program that lets parents anonymously leave a baby in a cradle within a doorway.

It's the first time a baby has been abandoned under the Angel Cradle program since it began in Edmonton in May 2013 and it's proof that the program is working, according to a spokesperson for Covenant Health. Covenant Health operates the Angel Cradle at Grey Nuns and Misericordia Hospitals in Edmonton.

"In light of Catholic social teaching, our mission is to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and in this case there was a positive outcome," said Dr. Gordon Self, vice-president of mission, ethics, and spirituality.

"We can't lose sight of the desperate circumstances that would lead to this decision, and we have to remember that this person chose to leave their baby in a safe environment. The Angel Cradle program helps prevent situations from being very tragic, which happens as we know."

On Christmas Eve a baby girl was found dead by a security guard in a Calgary parking lot. Calgary Police Service is investigating the incident.

A blue door marks the drop-off point by the emergency departments. Inside is a cradle for the

baby. Within 30 seconds, a sensor alerts emergency department staff. The baby is then checked by doctors and nurses and placed in the care of the Ministry of Children's Services. The cradle and alarm are checked daily to ensure the alarm is functioning.

"Nothing is more important than the safety and well-being of children," said Zoe Cooper, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Children's Services.

Cooper said ministry staff work with Alberta Health Services to provide temporary care for the baby, and to locate the parents. If they can't be located, the child will come into government care, where the goal is to find the child a permanent home.

As long as the baby is unharmed, police will not be involved.



M. Weber

LAST RUN — The *Prairie Messenger's* last issue of 2017 rolls off the press. The monks of St. Peter's Abbey have been publishing a paper since 1904, but will cease operations in May 2018.

Bill protects rights of health care professionals

By Patti Fitzmaurice

WINNIPEG — Health care professionals in Manitoba now have the legal right to choose not to participate in Medical Assistance in Dying under Bill 34, a new law passed by the Manitoba Legislature.

When Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon put out a request for the faithful to participate in a letter-writing campaign in support of the bill, it would have been easy to be cynical and not do anything in the belief that a letter would not help the bill get passed. But over 4,500 people did answer the call. The actual number of those who responded is estimated to be well over 5,500, as many spouses and families signed a single letter.

Combined with letters and emails received from all the dioceses in Manitoba — the Archdiocese of St. Boniface, the Ukrainian Archeparchy of Winnipeg, the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, the Diocese of Churchill, and other faith organizations — the Manitoba government received more than 14,000 letters in support of the bill.

At the committee stage, MLAs are invited to speak on a bill before a committee. It was clear from the comments made that the number of letters received by the government had made an impact. The ruling Progressive Conservatives were pleased with the support that their bill was receiving and the NDP indicated they were in support of the bill. Liberal Judith Klassen specifically mentioned that the letters made her feel more comfortable in her support of the bill and she also said the Liberals were supporting the bill.

The letters showed the Manitoba legislature that this was an issue that mattered to Manitobans.

Fitzmaurice is co-ordinator at Micah House, the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Catholic Centre for Social Justice.

bans. Once the letters started to arrive, the bill quickly moved to committee. The bill could have been put on the shelf for consideration at a later date, given the amount of legislation the government had to consider, but in light of the overwhelming evidence that Manitobans wanted this law, the government made sure the bill passed before the end of the session.

When the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that medical assistance in dying was a Charter right for every Canadian, it also mentioned the freedom of conscience and religious rights of health care professionals who do not wish to participate in providing medical assistance in dying. It was then left to debate how these two apparently conflicting rights would be dealt with. There were those who felt it was the right of patients to have their own doctors refer or provide the assistance regardless of the doctor's beliefs, and there were doctors and other health care professionals who said they would give up their profession rather than be forced to participate in a patient's death.

The law makes it clear how Manitobans want the issue of the competing Charter rights to be dealt with. It could have been left to the professional colleges to regulate how their members would respond the service, but such colleges do not speak for Manitobans as a whole, whereas the Legislature does. Furthermore, regulations are easily changed, and Manitoba could have ended up with a situation such as exists in Ontario, where the medical college has determined that its members, regardless of their personal convictions, must refer patients to a physician who will assist them in dying.

Conscience rights and freedom-of-religion rights are often dismissed as irrelevant or trivial, but Catholics believe that their conscience is their core and sanctuary, where they hear the voice of God leading them to do what is true and good. If people

are not allowed to follow their conscience, they cannot really know who they are. Likewise, they cannot permit someone else to have his or her freedom of conscience violated.

The Manitoba government has stated that there is no hierarchy in these Charter rights and by passing Bill 34 into law they have achieved a balance between the right to medically assisted suicide and the right of health care professionals to follow their conscience and not participate.

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Bolen urges congregation to let go of past

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Archbishop Donald Bolen invited his New Year's Day congregation to let go of the past year, to look forward and do something new. He quoted a poem by G.K. Chesterton, one of his favourite writers, illustrating this sentiment. The archbishop issued this invitation as part of his homily for the Jan. 1 mass at Holy Rosary Cathedral.

He reminded everyone that New Year's Day is really three celebrations: the Octave of Christmas, the Feast of Mary the Mother of God; the World Day of Prayer for Peace; and New Year's Day.

Bolen spoke of Mary "pondering in her heart" the things the shepherds saw and heard that prompted them to come to the manger. He noted the contrast of the quiet scene in the manger that gives us hope and joy with the insecurities and struggles of the world today, and perhaps with struggles in our own lives as we look to a new year.

The start of a new year, Bolen said, is a time to give thanks and express gratitude. Looking back, he said, there are many blessings we have received as a community and as individuals, but pain and

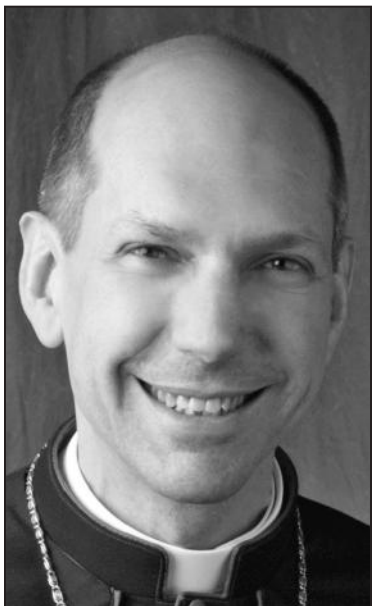
insecurity come to mind as well.

"We all have wounds in our lives and there are societal wounds as well," he said. "We lament how the dignity of human living and dying is eroded in the world, and we see in so many ways the need for healing and reconciliation."

He quoted from Pope Francis' message on the World Day of Prayer for Peace that focused on the millions of refugees around the world fleeing from wars, genocide, and ethnic cleansing, and also the millions who migrate looking for a better life.

"Pope Francis invites us to view (migration) not as a threat, but with confidence as an opportunity to build peace. So, on this World Day of Prayer for Peace, we have before us the challenge to be artisans of peace and reconciliation."

He suggested to let go of the past year and begin anew. "The Incarnation points us to the future, to what God is doing anew in our midst," he said, and referred to Revelations, where God says he is making something new, "and with Jesus coming to us, God is doing something new. I invite you to consider starting the New Year with some act of letting



PM file
Archbishop Donald Bolen

go and beginning anew."

He concluded his homily by quoting from the Book of Numbers, and bestowed a blessing on those in attendance: "May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, may the Lord show you his face and give you peace. Sisters and brothers, may we know anew God's blessing and daily extend that blessing to others."

Knowledge medicine against prejudice

Continued from page 1

darkness," Chatlain said. "We went from saying, 'Your culture, your language, your heritage are not really important. You need to know how to live in the south.' That message got passed on, even in our best school," the archbishop said.

Chatlain offered five concrete suggestions about how to connect with the church in the North. First, "Educate yourself about the North," he said. "Knowledge is medicine against prejudice."

Second, he invited those who want to help to "come and see. Jesus used those words quite a bit." Chatlain described examples of an individual, a family, and a retired couple who came to assist with ministry in the North in different ways. "The missionary role isn't for everyone, but it could be a call that God puts on your heart."

Third, Chatlain suggested developing a twinning relationship between parishes in the dioceses of Saskatoon and Keewatin-Le Pas. This has the potential for "building connections in different ways, but starting out by just getting to know each other."

A fourth idea is to support or sponsor projects or parishes in the North. There are many needs, large and small, he said: "Sometimes helping with a project in a parish, or a renovation, can be a big boost."

Finally, he suggested inviting

Even so, the school undermined culture, Chatlain related. "The message was, 'Your culture, your language, your heritage are not really important. You need to know how to live in the south.' That message got passed on, even in our best school," the archbishop said.

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Finally, he suggested inviting

people from a northern parish "to your home and your parish," describing the sometimes painful experiences of isolation and rejection that northerners have when coming south for events or appointments.

Chatlain concluded his presentation with a series of images showing the many faces, young and old, of Keewatin-Le Pas parishioners, saying, "Here are the reasons we want to keep working and being in our communities."

A question-and-answer period followed, with Chatlain answering questions about language, climate change, population, medical services, and the impact of technology.

Chatlain was born and raised in Saskatoon, and was serving at an inner-city parish when he began working with Aboriginal people. After taking a sabbatical to learn Dene, he eventually volunteered to serve as pastor at Fond du Lac and Black Lake in northern Saskatchewan. He was ordained Coadjutor Bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith in 2007, becoming bishop of that diocese in May 2008, before being appointed Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas in 2012.

In the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, a special collection Jan. 28 will go to the needs of the Canadian church and ministry in the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.



James Buchok

SERRA DINNER — Archbishop Richard Gagnon receives a cheque from Irene Kirouac and Guy Coughlin of the Winnipeg Serra Club. The annual dinner raised \$11,000 in support of vocations in the archdiocese. Serra clubs are groups of lay Catholics dedicated to promoting and fostering vocations. There are more than 1,100 clubs in 46 countries around the world, with a total membership of about 19,000. The Winnipeg and Brandon Serra clubs hold annual dinners to raise funds to support vocations, including funding for seminarians as they prepare for priesthood.

On the importance of names and becoming real

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



Fear not! For I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine . . . (Isaiah 43:1).

The sun is shining onto the wood floor where my cats are catching some rays. Any closer to the window and they will feel winter’s blue hands pressing against the glass. The two of them can comfortably rest in the

middle of the floor because this is the first quiet day in 10 days. I’m both enjoying the third cup of coffee this morning, at 10:30, in sweats, and lamenting said quiet. Christmas tree decorations throw beads of light, Anissa’s high chair

Priest had not planned to make film about survivors

Continued from page 3

experiences, and to educate religious men and women about the effect residential schools had on students.

Sabourin developed and has received funding for a 12-step recovery program for Aboriginal people in her community. She said 15 people had already signed up for the program, “and I thank Jesus for that.”

Lynn said he had not planned to make a film about survivors of residential schools.

He had been working on a different project for Catholic Missions In Canada and had been scheduled to make one more trip to the Northwest Territories. Just weeks before that trip, in December 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission —

established to hear the stories of those affected by residential schools and promote dialogue and healing — issued its final report, which included 94 “calls to action.”

Several of those calls to action recommended creating opportunities for all Canadians to learn about the impact of residential schools on survivors.

The priest said he hoped “Catholics all over North America will see this film and will be able to have insight into what colonialism has done . . . I want Aboriginal people to see the film, to think about how they are healing, how they are moving forward, because there are many, many, ways of dealing with it, and what we hear in public media, there’s one story and that’s not the complete story.”

is in the kitchen with the crumbs from yesterday’s breakfast, and the baby gates are resting by the wall. I’m not ready to put anything away.

Our family has expanded to nine children — four of our own, their four spouses, and now one grandchild. Among the lot of us there are also six cats and one dog. Only one son-in-law, Nohé, was unable to join us over the Christmas holidays, but Bear the dog did. It was a full house.

Sometimes when my children are together I find myself thinking about their names. The name *is* the person, but how did it get that way? Is personality influenced by name? Would they be different people if they had different names?

Before a child is born, parents consider what they will call their little one. Sometimes we just like the sound, some are named for a saint, sometimes names are invented, a child may be named after a family member, and some names reflect the family heritage of the father or mother.

Before our grandchild was born we knew she was going to be a girl, and so the surprise I looked forward to was hearing her name spoken for the first time. When Leigh spoke the baby’s name into the phone, I had to ask her to repeat it, because I’d never heard the name before. *Anissa*. Her beautiful name reflects her father’s Arab heritage. Anissa’s large dark eyes and impish playfulness, her good humour and robust appetite (*encore!*), have become the meaning of Anissa.

I doubt we think about our names very often, but it is the

gift we are given from the moment we are born, and it becomes one with our soul. When I hear my name spoken, especially by my husband, I have the sense, for a moment, of feeling whole. When someone pronounces our name or the name of a loved one incorrectly, it feels like a fracture. I have taken photos of cups from Starbucks baristas when they get my name *w r o n g* (*M o r i n ? M a r i n e ?*), and have seen others’ Facebook posts of “Starbucks name fails.” A simple mistake with one’s name, even from a stranger, is not only annoying, it’s jarring.

At 15 months old, Anissa is picking up new words every day. “*C h e e*” (cheers) when she lifts her sippy cup to my coffee cup and they clink together; “*chat*” when the kitties walk by (French is mixed with English); or “up,” her favourite word. Ask her to say Anissa and she says “*Sa*” with an emphatic whisper and a satisfied smile.

Two days after Anissa arrived

for the Christmas holidays, I was reading at the kitchen table when she toddled over in her Christmas pjs and, without prompting, said “Nana.”

The idea of being a grandparent is something I’ve been adjusting to ever since this little one was conceived. We have spent the



Weber

NANA AND ME — *I have called you by name; you are mine . . .*

past year getting to know Anissa, but I was not prepared for the impact of hearing her call me by my new name — Nana — the person she recognizes me to be. Until I was named, the concept of being a grandparent did not feel real.

I have called you by name, you are mine . . .

What we inherit from those we love is meant to be held close

By Caitlin Ward

I’ve been fighting with my hair lately. It’s an epic battle, filled with frustration and anger and silent diatribes to the mirror every

The Bright New Year

Bert Jansch

morning. There’s too much of it. It’s too big. It’s coarse and mean in this weather. In kinder seasons it hangs to my waist, but in the winter it’s dry and springs up in a haze around my face, full of static and without any sort of conscience or fellow feeling that would permit it to be more reasonable with me. I’ve spent too much money on things that promise to make my hair less malicious, with very little success. I know it’s inanimate; it’s dead protein that springs forth from my scalp. It possesses neither its own

Ward is a Saskatoon-based freelance writer who spends her days (and most nights) working at a small Catholic college. Her less eloquent thoughts can be found at www.twitter.com/newsetofstrings

will nor the profound hostility I impose on it in my mind. Oh, but some mornings, I genuinely believe it has a sort of consciousness that is entirely consumed with antipathy toward me.

It’s a familial trial. My mother’s hair has been short for most of my life because she can’t be bothered to deal with this absurd thing, and by and large her sisters have followed suit. My sister was with my grandmother in her final hours on this plane of existence, and one of the last things my grandmother said to her before she died was, “I’m sorry about your eyebrows.” They’re just as hateful and unruly as the hair on our head.

So far as we can tell, this hair has been passed down from our great grandfather, Maximillian, a child born out of wedlock whose parentage has been a matter of some conjecture in our family, and who looked nothing like his two half-brothers. They were small and blonde. He was tall and black-haired. Or, they were tall and blonde, and he was small and black-haired. I don’t remember the nature of the height difference as well as I remember the issue of the hair. With a few exceptions, we are a rather tall

family, but that could have easily come from somewhere else. Given that my mother is 5’2” I’m willing to believe that my stature came from another part of the family. But not my hair. I’m sure that’s from Great-Grandpa.

It’s hard to separate family history from family lore in these cases; though the historians and genealogists in my family would

probably be able to tell you more, I can’t really say anything definitive about Maximillian’s father except he must have also had hair like this. Whatever gene pool it sprang from, it’s particularly powerful. It doesn’t come from anywhere else in the family, and four generations on, we all still have it.

So that is the history of this absurd thing on my head. I could probably devote another article to the curious case of my nearly colourless eyes, which no one in the living memory of my family has but me, and forces me to wear glasses of one sort or another during daylight hours regardless of the time of year.

How strange I must look in your head, now: a towering woman with colourless eyes and a rat’s nest for a mane of hair. I don’t tell you any of this to give you an odd impression of my appearance, though. The point is not how any of this looks, but where it comes from. That, too, is a family trait: my sister

and I like to know why we look the way we do, which part of the family it comes from, and how it might be passed along to a new generation in time. And this, we got from our grandmother — the one who apologized for our eyebrows, though they were not her fault, and even if they were, she wouldn’t need to be sorry for them. She had a keen sense of history and of continuity.

And that is why I don’t cut my hair off, even though my life would probably be much easier if I weren’t constantly engaged in a grudge match with the strands on my head.

This hair is my grandmother’s hair. This interest is my grandmother’s interest. Only a few days into the bright New Year, I am feeling the loss of her again, though she has been gone a while and this isn’t even our first Christmas without her. A year-and-a-half later, I still wear the yellow-gold ring she wore on her ring finger up to her death. It still doesn’t look quite right on my very pale skin compared to her golden brown skin. That, I didn’t get from her. But everything I did get from her, I hold close. Even this ridiculous hair.

Hello mother dear
I hope you are well and happy today
I do love you and think of you
each single day
I dream of seeing you happy

In summertime I thought
that I would be able to see you again
I do love you and think of you
each single day
I dream of seeing you happy

As the bright new year
draws closer now
I’m on my way
to bring you my love
and wish you good cheer

Mother dear
I hope you are well and happy today
I do love you and think of you
each single day
I dream of seeing you happy

Words of praise for the best dramatic films of 2017

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



This will be my last best-of-the-year column in these pages, and it has been a privilege to share some thoughts on the passing cinema scene. There’s always lots to lament at the shallow end of show business entertainment. But as the following choices indicate, there is also a good deal to celebrate on the screen.

That said, the film business is in flux. Even with a late box-office boost from the year’s biggest blockbuster, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, habits are changing as digital platforms allow more content to be watched at home. The number of North Americans who go out to movies once a month or more has declined from 28 per cent in 2002 to 11 per cent in 2016. Theatre tickets sold per person have declined to the lowest since the early 1970s before the introduction of the multiplexes. Although some movies like *Star Wars* (and see *Dunkirk* below) almost demand to be seen on the big screen, as streaming services like Netflix (110 million subscribers in 190 countries and counting) continue to expand, my New Year’s wish is that more of the best will become accessible to discriminating viewers everywhere.

First Reformed (U.S.)

The subject of my Christmas column, veteran director Paul Schrader’s wrenching drama about existential ethical and political choices in a faith arena is also my choice as the movie of the year. Ethan Hawke gives a surpassing performance as an anguished former military chaplain turned pastor wrestling with private demons while also confronting larger issues of social sin as he ministers to a small historic church that is slated for closure. Amanda Seyfried plays the troubled pregnant parishioner who comes to him for help, and in whose loving concern following a tragic loss is found a saving grace for both.

The Square (Sweden/Germany/France/Denmark)

Writer-director Ruben Östlund’s top prize-winner from the Cannes film festival is a savage satire of the contemporary art world that also exposes social divisions and pricks the elite pretensions of a gullible well-heeled crowd of benefactors. Danish actor Claes Bang is terrific as the ultra-stylish museum artistic director Christian, who reacts badly through a series of slings and arrows and more than meets his match in a female reporter (played by the always excellent Elisabeth Moss). The scene of a performance actor aping a gorilla during a posh museum banquet is something else. By the end our amusement almost turns into sympathy for Christian, but not quite.

Loveless (Russia/France/Germany/Belgium)

This bleak family drama from director Andrey Zvyagintsev (*Leviathan*) is the next best film from the Cannes competition. In a Moscow apartment 12-year-old Aloysha is an unwanted child, staying with his resentful distracted mother, Zhenya, who is embroiled in bitter divorce and custody proceedings with his father, Boris. Both parents have other lovers. It’s several days before the boy’s disappearance is even noticed. Not an easy movie to watch, but a deeply affecting portrait of the human and social deficits that accumulate when love is lacking.

Lady Bird (U.S.)

This is the best-reviewed American movie of 2017, and deservedly so. Of course it’s not perfect, as I explained in my Toronto festival coverage, and



LADY BIRD — Saoirse Ronan is a standout as Lady Bird. The film is the best-reviewed American movie of 2017.

there’s always at least one contrarian, which has knocked down its record rating on rottentomatoes.com a smidgeon from 100 per cent. Still, actress and screenwriter Greta Gerwig moving into the director’s chair excels at telling this semi-autobiographical story of Sacramento, Calif., Catholic high school senior, Christine “Lady Bird” McPherson, as she begins to spread her wings. Saoirse Ronan is a standout as Lady Bird, as is Laurie Metcalf as Christine’s sometimes exasperated but always loving mom, Marion.

The Big Sick (U.S.)

Rounding out my top five, this Sundance hit, surprisingly snubbed by the Golden Globe nominations, was a sheer joy as movie experiences go. Directed by Michael Showalter, co-written by the husband-wife team of Kumail Nanjiani and Emily

Gordon, it also has the ring of authentic experience. Nanjiani essentially plays himself as an aspiring Chicago comedian (and part-time Uber driver) who has to fend off his traditional Pakistani-American family’s efforts at an arranged marriage. Fortune smiles on him as he falls in love with Emily (wonderfully played by Zoe Kazan), and while tested by the misfortune of a medical crisis that actually happened, their bond not only survives but thrives.

Call Me By Your Name (Italy/France/Brazil/U.S.)

Director Luca Guadagnino’s luminous adaptation of the André Aciman novel is perhaps the year’s most poignant love story. During a northern Italian summer, Elio (Timothée Chalamet), the talented son of an American professor of Greco-Roman culture (Michael Stuhlbarg), becomes drawn to Oliver (Armie Hammer), a handsome research assistant who comes to live with the family for six weeks. A situation fraught with potential for heartache is handled with great sensitivity, eliciting exceptional performances from Chalamet and Hammer; Stuhlbarg as well in a memorable father-son heart-to-heart that eases the pain.

A Ghost Story (U.S.)

From simple elements Texas writer-director David Lowery has fashioned a hauntingly supernatural tale of love, loss and the inexorable movement of time. When a woman (Rooney Mara) living with her musician husband (Casey Affleck) on the outskirts of Dallas abruptly loses him in a fatal car accident, she is traumatized by grief but also visited by intimations of his presence in the afterlife — visible to us as a spectre covered in a white sheet with two black eye-holes. In this place of their memories are the marks of the transience of human lives, of the spirits of the past, the ever-changing present, and of speculations stretching into an unknowable future. (*Now available on Netflix.)

The Shape of Water (Canada/U.S.)

No one does monster movies like director Guillermo Del Toro. Sally Hawkins plays a mute cleaning woman who falls in love with an amphibian-man held captive in a secret 1960s Cold War laboratory. Aided by a troubled neighbour, an African American female co-worker, and a scientist spy who disobeys orders, that bond prevails over the sinister agents of both Uncle Sam and the Kremlin. An adult fairy tale where waters run deep, it’s a visual and acting triumph.

Dunkirk (U.K./Netherlands/France/U.S.)

There was no bigger screen epic — shot in IMAX 70mm with a thunderous soundtrack — than writer-director Christopher Nolan’s retelling of the extraordinary events of May-June 1940 when more than 300,000 British and French troops, surrounded by Hitler’s invading armies and



THE BIG SICK — Kumail Nanjiani and Zoe Kazan star in *The Big Sick*, which is “sheer joy” as movie experiences go, writes Gerry Schmitz.

crammed on to the beaches of the Belgian port of Dunkirk, were rescued in a daring cross-channel operation that involved great numbers of small civilian boats. The horror and the heroism are on full display as Nolan introduces many moments of personal life-and-death drama at the same time as conveying the enormity of the situation and what was at stake — for Britain, Europe and the world.

The Disaster Artist (U.S.)

In 2003 the very weird and mysterious Tommy Wiseau, a wannabe actor living in San Francisco, spent millions of his own money and connected with another aspiring actor, Greg Sestero, to make a god-awful melodrama called *The Room*. But in one of those turns of fortune, tagged as “the worst movie ever,” it’s gone on to become a cult phenomenon. Indeed it’s been showing as a late-night event at Ottawa’s Mayfair theatre for 100 consecutive months complete with enthusiastic audience participation like shouting out lines and throwing plastic spoons at the screen!

The prolific James Franco (146 credits on imdb.com; 18 in 2017 alone) directs and stars as Wiseau in this hilarious but also oddly sympathetic telling of the making of *The Room*. Franco nails the role, ably supported by younger brother Dave as Sestero (whose 2013 memoir *The Disaster Artist: My Life Inside The Room, The Greatest Bad Movie Ever Made* provides the source material), and by Franco regulars like Canadian Seth Rogen in key roles. Sestero has actually worked with Wiseau again in a very good if definitely offbeat new movie called *Best F(r)iends*. In late 2017, he was at Ottawa’s Mayfair (a shot of which appears at the end of *The Room*) to introduce it along with, of course, more showings of that perennial bad-movie favourite.

Honourable Mentions

Baby Driver (U.S.): Writer-director Edgar Wright delivers a fantastically entertaining crime thriller with Ansel Elgort full throttle in the lead role. (Although Kevin Spacey has

become persona non grata in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations, he is terrific as the underworld boss.)

Blade Runner 2049 (U.S./U.K./Hungary/Canada): Quebec director Denis Villeneuve pulls off a stunning sequel to the iconic original sci-fi dystopia and the cinematography by Roger Deakins is superlative. Welcome back Harrison Ford too as an elderly “replicant.”

Mudbound (U.S.): Director Dee Rees and a strong acting ensemble bring to life this riveting story of tragic racial divides in rural Mississippi as two Second World War veterans return to their family’s farms.

Get Out (U.S.): African American writer-director Jordan Peele, who had a minor role in a strange 2016 movie *Keanu*, scored a breakout big success with the sharp satire embedded in this interracial horror movie with a difference.

Novitiate (U.S.): Margaret Betts earned a Sundance special jury award for breakthrough



Working Title Films
BABY DRIVER — Ansel Elgort stars in *Baby Driver*, one of the best of 2017.

director for this deeply observed 1960s story of a young woman pursuing a religious vocation, the crucible of personal decision coinciding with a time of great change within the church.

The signs of straying from God are all around us



Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

My wife, Eva, and I often have reflected that when looking forward we have always had a difficult time discerning the direction we should go. However, when we look back over our lives, the path we have chosen in retrospect seems clear and consistent with a purposeful design perceptible.

The psalmist prays, “Make me know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.” This should be our daily prayer as well. It calls us to critically reflect on our lives and the challenges we continually confront.

A rare few individuals we have known seem to have received a life call so clear that they stepped unhesitatingly into their futures and follow what seemed to be a preordained path. In Mark’s Gospel we see Simon, Andrew, James and John immediately leaving their nets and abandoning their lives as ordinary fishermen to follow Jesus. He called them on that fateful day on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and they joined him on a world-changing but difficult path.

Had they known him before? Had they heard him preach? Would they have so readily followed if they had known what was in store?

Maybe we shouldn’t see their experience as that unusual. When we come to think of it aren’t we all called constantly, at every stage of our lives, in subtle and dramatic ways, to reflect on our lives and to choose different direc-

Dougherty is co-chair of the Social Justice Committee at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Whitehorse, Yukon.

tions or make life-altering changes? The thing that is different is that the apostles in this reading responded to their call. How often do we close our ears and minds to our calls and even fear the implications of truly knowing the ways of the Lord.

“Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” The prophet Jonah’s words provoked an immediate reaction. A people repented and God spared them.

Don’t think of the story of Nineveh and the calamity they were threatened with when Jonah proclaimed God’s word in their midst as being meant for them alone. We certainly as a collective global community have fundamentally strayed from God’s path. The signs are all about us: war, pestilence, ecological collapse being among the indicators. In the face of myriad signals of looming judgment do we believe we really don’t have to change; that we have no need for sackcloth now?

There are multitudinous intermeshing factors tied together by our greed-based economic system that threaten all of us with ultimate destruction. Take, for example, the result of over 300 million tonnes of plastics being produced each year with the vast majority not recycled after first use. In one study reported in the July 2017 edition of

Third Sunday
in Ordinary Time
January 21, 2018

Jonah 3:1-5,10
Psalm 25
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Scientific Advances (“Production, use, and fate of all plastics ever made” by Roland Geyer et al): “8,300 million metric tons (MT) of virgin plastics have been produced to date.” One consequence of this is that micro-plastics caused by the breaking down of this industrial product can now be found in the drinking water supplies of all major North American cities. We just don’t know what the impact will be of all this material pouring out of our taps and into our bodies. Nor what happens from the human consumption of many animal and marine foods similarly exposed.

We hear occasionally of the huge ocean-borne mats of

this human detritus. I saw some troubling pictures of sea-borne waste resulting from hurricanes Irma and Martha a few months ago in the Caribbean. But hidden below the surface of apparently pristine harbours all along our coasts out of public sight, investigators find vast underwater dumpsites.

On and on the story goes, right around our planet. What would Jonah say? Should we don our contemporary sackcloth and desperately attempt to make amends? Or do we just go on ignoring the signs around us and await our judgment in “forty days.”

As I write this I am travelling up the Alaska Highway toward Whitehorse, Yukon, by bus. Surrounded by the immensity of the northern British Columbian wilderness and soon to be embraced by the remote grandeur of the terminal range of the Rockies, it might be hard to believe the hard facts of a world spiralling toward disaster. Our recent weather extremes in part due to a climate change destabilized polar vortex might serve to remind us of our common vulnerability.

Paul tells the Corinthians that, “the appointed time has grown short. . . . For the present form of this world is passing away.” In the middle of the first century early followers of Jesus believed his imminent return, the *parousia*, would occur in their lifetimes. As Christianity developed the faithful always held on to this belief. Every generation holds out hope for the Second Coming. Does ours?

Doing so implies that we, as Christians, live accordingly. Do we understand that this world, the world we have become comfortable in, is passing away? What will replace it? Will it be a just, equitable, non-violent and environmentally sustainable planet for our descendants? Or will selfishness, greed, and wilful blindness to the wounds we are causing to the life-sustaining systems protecting us all spell our future collective demise?

Whom do we follow? What path do we chose? No one of us bears this impossible burden alone. But we all have our roles to play in fashioning the long dreamed of New Jerusalem.

Preaching divine hellfire dishonours the God in whom we believe

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



Why don’t we preach hellfire anymore? That’s a question asked frequently today by a lot of sincere religious people who worry that too many churches and too many priests and ministers have gone soft on sin and are over-generous in speaking about God’s mercy. The belief here is that more people would come to church and more people would obey the commandments, particularly the sixth one, if we preached the raw truth about mortal sin, God’s wrath, and the danger of going to hell when we die. The truth will set you free, these folks assert, and the truth is that there is real sin and that there are real and eternal consequences for sin. The gate to heaven is narrow and the road to hell is wide. So why aren’t we preaching more about the dangers of hellfire?

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What’s valid in this kind of reasoning is that preaching about mortal sin and hellfire can be effective. Threats work. I grew up subjected to this kind of preaching and readily admit that it had a real effect on my behaviour. But that effect was ambivalent: On the positive side it left me scared enough before God and life itself to never stray very far morally or religiously. On the negative side, it also left me religiously and emotionally crippled in some deep ways. Simply stated, it’s hard to be intimate friends with a God who frightens you, and it’s not good religiously or otherwise to be overly timid and afraid before life’s great energies. Fear of divine punishment and fear of hellfire, admittedly, can be effective as a motivator.

So why not preach fear? Because it’s wrong, pure and simple. Brainwashing and physical intimidation are also effective, but fear is not the proper fuel for love. You don’t enter a love relationship because you feel afraid or threatened. You enter a love relationship because you feel drawn there by love.

More importantly, preaching divine threat dishonours the God

in whom we believe. The God whom Jesus incarnates and reveals is not a God who puts sincere, good-hearted people into hell against their will, on the basis of some human or moral lapse which in our moral or religious categories we deem to be a mortal sin. For example, I still hear this threat being preached sometimes in our churches: *If you miss going to church on Sunday it’s a mortal sin and should you do that and die without confessing it you will go to hell.*

What kind of God would underwrite this kind of a belief? What kind of God would not give sincere people a second chance, a third one, and seventy-seven times seven more chances, if they remain sincere? What kind of God would say to a person in hell: “Sorry, but you knew the rules! You’re repentant now, but it’s too late. You had your chance!”

A healthy theology of God demands we stop teaching that hell can be a nasty surprise waiting for an essentially good person. The God we believe in as Christians is infinite understanding, infinite compassion, and infinite forgiveness. God’s love surpasses our own and if we, in our better moments, can see the goodness of a human heart despite its lapses and weaknesses, how much more so will God do this. We’ve nothing to fear from God.

Or, have we? Doesn’t Scripture tell us that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*? How does that square with not being afraid of God?

There are different kinds of fear, some healthy and others not. When Scripture tells us that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, the kind fear it is talking about is not contingent upon feeling threatened or feeling anxious about being punished. That’s the kind of fear we feel before tyrants and bullies.

There is, however, a healthy fear that’s innate within the dynamics of love itself. This kind of fear is essentially proper reverence, that is, when we genuinely love someone we will fear being selfish, boorish, and disrespectful in that relationship. We will fear violating the sacred space within which intimacy occurs. Metaphorically we will sense we’re standing on holy ground and that we’d best have our shoes off before that sacred fire.

Scripture also tells us that when God appears in our lives, generally the first words we will hear are: “Don’t be afraid!” That’s because God is not a judgmental tyrant, but a loving, creative, joy-filled energy and person. As Leon Bloy reminds us, *joy is the most infallible indication of God’s presence.*

The famous psychiatrist Fritz Perls was once asked by a young fundamentalist: “Have you been saved?” His answer: “Saved? Hell no! I’m still trying to figure out how to be spent!” We honour God not by living in fear lest we offend him, but in spending the wonderful energy that God gives us to help life flourish. God is not a law to be obeyed, but a joyous energy within which to generatively spend ourselves.

Abuse guidelines were a first

Continued from page 3

tional press corps that had descended on St. John’s. “They are blameless. To you, we say that we are deeply sorry that this sexual abuse happened. We are sorry that our culture and the expression of church and priesthood were such that you felt alone and powerless. We are sorry for the times you were not believed, were not supported or were ostracized in any way in our archdiocesan community. For every word and action which may have deepened your pain, we are profoundly sorry.”

The Winter Report became one of the major building blocks for the 1992 statement and policy from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops called “From Pain To Hope” — the first sexual abuse guidelines ever issued by a national bishops’ conference.

Penney was born in St. John’s in 1924 and ordained for the archdiocese in 1949. His life as a bishop began in the Diocese of Grand Falls in 1972 and he became archbishop of his home town in 1979.

The funeral mass for Penney was held Dec. 15 at the Cathedral Basilica of St. John the Baptist in St. John’s.

Patriarchal system gives men license to abuse

The following is from the National Catholic Reporter (ncronline.org), Dec. 11, 2017, and is reprinted with permission.

By Jamie L. Manson

In mid-November, at what many thought was the height of revelations about sexual misconduct by powerful men in the media (we were post-Harvey Weinstein and Louis C.K., but pre-Charlie Rose and Matt Lauer), the *New Yorker Radio Hour* presented a series of interviews on the fallout from the unrelenting flood of sordid tales of sexual misconduct and assault by men.

In one interview, feminist author and activist bell hooks was asked about the roots of this male aggression and violence. She told *New Yorker* editor David Remnick that, though she had read a lot of commentaries since the first revelations about Weinstein, hardly any commentator had used the word “patriarchy” to explain the root cause of all of this bad behaviour.

“We want to act like this is individual male psychopathology,” hooks said, rather than admit that this behaviour has been normalized for men by a patriarchal system.

Lately it feels like every day another man vanishes from the limelight, as if taken by a plague. But in these cases, the pestilence was of their own making. And, as hooks points out, patriarchy created the conditions under which it could breed.

Patriarchy is any system in

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which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. In a patriarchal structure, powerful men dominate women, children, nature and other men. Frequently, one of the key ways that men predominate over women is by fixating on and controlling female sexuality.

In Hollywood and in the media, elite, ruling classes of wealthy men act as kingmakers. They have the power to decide what faces will become famous, which voices will become influential, and whose unknown name will become a household name. The patriarchal system gives these men license to abuse their power through the sexual coercion and domination of women and, in some cases, minors.

The entertainment industry’s patriarchal system enabled obscene levels of sexual misconduct, gross abuses of power, and conspiracies of silence. If it feels like we’ve seen this movie before, we have. Remember *Spotlight*? The patriarchal structure that led to this moment in Hollywood is remarkably similar to the system at the root of the prolonged sex abuse crisis in the Roman Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church may not have invented patriarchy, but it has certainly sanctified it. The patriarchal system that allowed famous actors, producers and newsmen to move about like gods is not much different from the patriarchy that has for centuries told priests that they are divine, exceptional men, set apart to rule over a lowly and lost laity.

If Hollywood had a pope, it was surely Harvey Weinstein, with his omnipotent authority to make actors’ visages immortal or con-



Malte Mueller / Getty Images

PATRIARCHY — “Patriarchy is any system in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it,” writes Jamie Manson.

demn them into irrelevance, and with his access to resources that could enforce secrecy and make unseemly rumours disappear. Rose and Lauer, we are finding out, functioned almost like bishops, dominating their own little fiefdoms, with unchecked power and scant accountability.

True to the patriarchal system, in both the church and entertainment industry scandals, the majority of victims were women and minors. In the church’s crisis, of course, the bulk of victims were children, but there are also untold cases of priests’ committing acts of sexual assault and impropriety with adult women.

Whether the crimes take place in Hollywood or the newsroom or the church, abusers who thrive within a

patriarchal environment seem to fit a similar psychological profile.

In her recent article, “The Power of Preying,” Dr. Alexandra Katehakis explains why men target women in the workplace. She could just as well have been writing about sexually abusive priests.

“These men have ample opportunity to groom the innocent by garnering their trust and seducing them with false promises,” she writes. “They bank on the likelihood that their victims’ terror of exposure will keep them from exposing their perpetrator.”

She also explains why, after being violated, so many victims remain silent:

“When the predator finally strikes, the victim becomes disorientated — a trusted, admired other has violated her. Sexual acts happen swiftly, sending the victim into a haze of confusion or freezing her ability to move or to determine what’s OK and what’s not in that one moment.”

Katehakis says that these acts are an “erotic form of hatred” that is born out of feelings of sexual inadequacy, of shame and of entitlement.

“For who else but a man who feels profoundly (if unconsciously) inadequate would find non-consensual, non-connective acts arousing, and would indulge in them?” she asks.

Katehakis believes that most male perpetrators suffered “grave verbal, emotional, or physical abuse as children.”

She explains, “They have a shame-based personality that manifests itself in a shame-based sexuality. When a male in power ‘acts out’ his sexuality, it means just that: He is regulating his long-buried rage (generally at the offending gender) by acting it out in the mime language of sex.”

Tragically, these damaged men find a haven in patriarchal systems where they have unparalleled access to women and children to act out their eroticized rage, often with little accountability. And, should a victim speak out, these predators can count on the protection of their fellow patriarchs.

Given how much sex abuse is fuelled by shame, it is no wonder

that it was rampant inside the Catholic Church, where sexual morality, from the time of Augustine, is founded on the notion that sexual desire is sinful and irredeemable.

Many people hope that the “#MeToo” cultural moment will give rise to a reckoning in which women, at long last, will experience respect and justice in the workplace as well as the opportunity to gain better positions and leadership based solely on their talents.


But there is also a #ChurchToo movement that has arisen in conjunction with #MeToo, in which victims of sexual abuse, particularly from Catholic and evangelical backgrounds, are speaking out. As their stories testify, it’s a much steeper climb toward justice in Christian patriarchal traditions where, as one blogger has described it, “the husband leads, the wife submits, and the children obey.”

If we think Hollywood is tough, try reckoning with Catholic and evangelical theologies that insist God has ordered the universe so that men are always destined to be the leaders and authorities.

The church is so entrenched in its patriarchal ways, there should be little wonder that initiatives like Pope Francis’ papal commission on clergy sex abuse failed to enact any real reforms and, instead, eliminated abuse survivors from participation.

Recently the New York archdiocese boasted — perhaps in response to the current cultural milieu — that 189 victim-survivors of abuse had received collectively \$40 million in compensation. Settlements provide long overdue support for individual victims, but they do not create the structural change necessary to address the fundamental causes of sexual abuse.

If this watershed moment in Hollywood and the media reminds Catholics of anything, it is that patriarchal systems are a breeding ground for sexual assault and misconduct. Most importantly, it shows us that sexual abuse will only be eradicated from the church if we continue to challenge its patriarchy, the real root of the problem.



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Pope Francis is not afraid of theological creativity

By Thomas Reese, SJ
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Conservative Catholic dissidents, who have been attacking Pope Francis, showed their true colours recently by attacking retired Pope Benedict, calling his writings “subversive” and “modernist.” That’s right, they think Benedict is a heretic.

In his new book, *Al Cuore di Ratzinger, Al Cuore del Mondo*, the Italian philosopher Enrico Maria Radaelli goes after Joseph Ratzinger’s Introduction to Christianity, one of Pope Benedict’s most popular books. Radaelli accuses him of embracing modern subjectivism by dabbling in Kant’s transcendentalism and Hegel’s “dialectical idealism.”

Radaelli is joined in this attack

Reese, a Jesuit priest, is a senior analyst at RNS. Previously he was a columnist at the National Catholic Reporter (2015-17) and an associate editor and editor-in-chief at America magazine.

by Monsignor Antonio Livi, dean emeritus of the faculty of philosophy of the Pontifical Lateran University. What is noteworthy is that last summer both of these academics signed a letter of correction addressed to Pope Francis asking him to change his “erroneous” views.

These folks are unhappy with everything that has happened in the church since the death of Pius XII in 1958 and the reforms of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s.

Levi thinks that “neo-modernist” theology (a slur used by conservatives to describe anything they don’t like) has enveloped the church, infiltrating its seminaries, bishops’ conferences and even the Vatican itself. This “heretical” view has infected all the documents of Vatican II and the teachings of post-conciliar popes, Levi argues.

The problem with these philosophers is that they see the world as ideologues with rigid categories and rules. They have absolute certitude in their views and are not open to new questions. They are incapable of dia-

logue or learning from others.

They remind me of the joke: What is the difference between a scientist and a philosopher? If a scientist’s theory does not fit reality, he changes his theory. If a philosopher’s theory does not fit reality, reality must change.

Luckily, Pope Francis does not take these critics seriously. In a talk to the Italian Theological Association on Dec. 29, he laid out what he believes is the true vocation of a theologian. Theologians must always refer back to Vatican II, where the church recognized its responsibility to “proclaim the Gospel in a new way.”



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

UNDER ATTACK — Conservative Catholic dissidents, who have been attacking Pope Francis, showed their true colours recently by attacking retired Pope Benedict, calling his writings “subversive” and “modernist,” writes Thomas Reese, SJ.

The pope spoke of “faithful creativity” in responding to a rapidly changing world. The job of a theologian is to show people what lies at the heart of the Gospel.

“There is need of a theology that helps all Christians to proclaim and to show, above all, the saving face of God, the merciful God,” he said, “especially in the presence of some unheard-of challenges that involve the human today.” Among these challenges, he listed the environmental crisis, technologies that can alter human beings, social inequalities, mass migration and relativism in theory and practice.

He even calls on theologians to work together to “reimagine the church so that it may conform to the Gospel that it must proclaim.”

The problem with conservatives is that they treat the great theologians of the past as a treasure chest of quotes rather than as examples of how to do theology. St. Augustine, for example, took Neoplatonism, the elite philosophi-

cal thought of his period, and used it to explain Christianity to the people of his age. St. Thomas Aquinas took the newly rediscovered writings of Aristotle — the avant-garde thinking of his time — and used it to explain Christianity to his 13th-century contemporaries.

The task of theologians is not to simply quote Augustine and Aquinas, but to imitate them, to take the best secular thought of our time and use it to explain Christianity to 21st-century men and women. After all, how many Neoplatonists or Aristotelians have you met lately? Do we really expect contemporary people to master Plato and Aristotle before we can talk to them about Christ?

Sadly, the church does expect seminarians to learn Greek philosophy before studying theology, which results in them spouting unintelligible concepts like “transubstantiation” and “con-

substantial.”

What theology needs today are thinkers like Augustine and Thomas who want to engage the thinkers of today, not yesteryear. Such creative thinking can get you in trouble in the church. Thomas’ books were burned by the bishop of Paris. Likewise, in the last century, creative theologians were persecuted and silenced by the hierarchy. Thankfully, Pope Francis is not afraid of theological creativity. In fact, he encourages the theological discussion and debate that are essential to the development of theology.

Catholic conservatives were brought up in a church that presented itself as unchanging because in Greek philosophy the perfect cannot change. Such an approach is not only ahistorical, it is doomed to failure. When such conservatives not only attack Pope Francis but also Benedict, they show that they are true ideologues, out of touch with reality, who should not be taken seriously.

‘Rise in love,’ rather than ‘fall in love’

Outlooks from the Inner Life

Cedric Speyer



“Only love is important.” — St. Thérèse

“Unless you can sweat blood like Jesus, you’ll never keep a commitment, in marriage, in priesthood, or anywhere. That’s what it takes!” — Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Love is both fortunately and unfortunately an all-purpose word. Fortunately, because it’s not an emotion (it’s an intention that makes sense of emotions). Unfortunately, because it encompasses a many-splendoured spectrum of subtle feelings, as well as levels, versions, variations, and dimensions of what love might mean. Are we talking about emotional attachment? All-consuming desire? Self-transcending compassion or “agape” love?

In Arabic, there are at least 11 words for love, corresponding to how far one can “fall” into the turmoil of romantic obsession. Beginning with *hawa*, the transient winds of attraction lead to *alaraqah* as the heart attaches itself to the desired one . . . the infatuation intensifies during the *kalaf* phase . . . then permeates the lover as *ishq* or what we mean when we say “love is blind” . . . the intensity starts to burn with *sha’af* as passion becomes inseparable from suffering . . . and turns to

shaghaf or the affliction we know as love sick . . . yet that still refers to the cracks in the outer shell of the heart until the *jawaa* takeover of the innermost grief-stricken entirety . . . which brings the lover to *taym* when the heart is totally enslaved by the beloved and becomes *tabl* or the incurable romantic state which overwhelms all reasonable faculties . . . as if this weren’t bad enough, it’s followed by *tadleeh* when the initial inordinate attachment turns out to be so intrinsically disordered that it leaves the lover deeply distracted and unbalanced, a floundering lost soul . . . bringing us back full circle to *hawa* in the final stage of *huyam* or pure insanity with the two words sharing similar linguistic roots. Thus, “to be attracted to” can also connote “to perish.” Yikes!

So much for the course of “falling” in love, as a prerequisite for committed self-giving. There’s no skilful self to give.

Standing in love is no easier — if it involves humans, it’s anything but endless harmony, intimacy, and belonging. Those are the seeds planted in the springtime of romance, yet every flower must grow through dirt. There inevitably comes the post-honeymoon stage, when misunderstandings happen, wounds open, and deep-rooted wrongs are choreographed by the genius of the evil spirit. The bickering and squabbling begin. For all the co-operating, clearing, and co-creating of hearts that love makes possible, there is the blaming, judging, and rejecting which threaten to sabotage it.

But that’s not the whole story. All the un-love brought to the surface doesn’t have the last word. Out of this spiritual battle, for that’s what it is, can emerge new depths of wisdom and forbearance. Now we can truly “make” love, with patience as the fruit of mutual understanding, and peace the fruit of patience. Wisdom, sympathy, and patience make us bigger, fuller persons. When we rise in love, not fall, we can then turn to other forms of soul making, much better equipped than we were before. That’s the importance of the kind of love Thérèse is talking about.

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Speyer is a Benedictine Oblate as well as an author, subject matter expert for e-therapy, clinical consultant and director of InnerView Guidance International (IGI).

Ecumenical dialogue tackles obstacles to unity

By Robert Duncan

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Many people, including many Catholics, believe the pope always ruled over the Catholic Church as an absolute monarch, appointing the world's bishops and definitively settling issues of faith and morals. Yet that exercise of the papal office is comparatively new.

The pope's supreme power, both in governance and doctrine, was defined by the First Vatican Council in 1870 and has been seen as crucial to defending the church from hostile governments and cultural forces around the world.

But at the same time, the pope's universal jurisdiction and doctrinal infallibility have emerged as major obstacles to the long-sought goal of Christian unity.

The idea that the pope, as the

"first bishop" of the church, has a leadership role that other bishops do not is an especially large stumbling block for Eastern Orthodox Christians, but one that the Catholic and Orthodox churches are committed to discussing.

Recent popes have sought to explore ways to exercise papal primacy in terms more amenable to other Christians. For instance, in his encyclical letter on ecumenism in 1995, St. John Paul II expressed openness to finding "a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation."

According to Dominican Father Hyacinthe Destivelle, an official of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Pope Francis has furthered this effort with his frequent references to

synodality — the involvement of a gathering of bishops in decision-making, as practiced in the Orthodox churches — and by often referring to himself simply as the "bishop of Rome."

The pope is trying to exercise his office "as St. Irenaeus of Lyon defined the church of Rome: the church that presides in love, in charity," said Destivelle, who is also a member of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

"The primacy that we know now, which is defined as a primacy of universal jurisdiction, is quite new. The fact that the pope appoints all the bishops is new, it's from the 19th century; it was not at all the case in the first millennium," said Destivelle, summarizing one conclusion from the current work of the official Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue.

Recent scholarship on the topic challenges both Catholic and Orthodox ways of thinking about the pope's role, said A. Edward Sicienski. The Orthodox scholar is author of the 2017 book, "The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate."

"Universal jurisdiction, the idea that the pope has in another diocese the same power he has in the diocese of Rome," Sicienski said, "is not something that the Orthodox could ever accept, because they had never accepted it."

On the other hand, he said, "the idea that, as the successor of Peter, (the pope) has a universal ministry is very, very different, and I think that the Orthodox could accept that the Petrine ministry does have this universal aspect to it."

That the papacy increased in power during the Middle Ages and Renaissance cannot be dismissed simply as a power grab, said a German Jesuit historian.

In a very practical way, "Rome could judge more impartially over certain things than local institutions who were subdued to local pressures," said Jesuit Father Klaus Schatz.

At the same time, Schatz said the Catholic Church had a constitutional or "parliamentary" tradition of church governance that did not fully give way to the monarchical model until the First Vatican Council.

"At least until the 16th century, all major questions were debated with the pope in the general congregations with the cardinals," Schatz said. And, "in extreme situations, the cardinals had power over the popes."

In his book "The Conciliarist Tradition," Francis Oakley argued that what he described as a parliamentary conception of church governance was able to rescue the church from one of its most confusing crises.

Oakley's book focuses on the Council of Constance (1414 - 1418), which ended the Great Western Schism, a period of time during which there were three rival claimants to the papacy. By declaring it had supreme power in the church, the council deposed the claimants and elected a new pope to end the schism.

According to Oakley, the Council of Constance presents a deep theological challenge — and counter-narrative — to the ecclesiological vision of papal supremacy outlined at the First Vatican Council. And, he claimed, it demonstrates that other models of church governance also are found in the

tradition of the church.

"My guess is that people in the pew assume that the pope has always run the whole show with the bishops around the world being sort of like branch bank officers waiting to hear from central casting," he said. "That's a very modern development."

The 2017 commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation was another opportunity to discuss how a modified exercise of papal primacy might benefit Christians of all denominations.

"We need a synthesis," said John Milbank, a prominent Anglican theologian and president of the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham, England. "We need a marriage of the papacy with a more conciliar model."

The late medieval tendency to view the papacy "in terms of a pure exercise of legal power and not sufficiently in terms of a spiritual authority" needs to be overcome, he said.

"Sometimes," he said, "it feels as if Catholic theology is too much a sort of debate about papal pronouncements, and I think maybe a stronger sense of every bishop as being a spiritual guide" would be a path forward.

In the end, he said, "I believe the road to Christian unity is much more in terms of doing things together and finding ways to share liturgy," rather than in seeking a juridical union.

"If you can do that, there will come a day when these doctrinal disagreements don't seem completely insurmountable," Milbank said.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed from Jan. 18 - 25.



CNS/Mariana Bazo, Reuters

POPE TO VISIT CHILE AND PERU — People walk near a banner with an image of Pope Francis on the facade of the cathedral in Lima, Peru. On Jan. 15, Pope Francis will begin a six-day visit to Chile and Peru.

Pope to diplomats: World peace depends on right to life, disarmament

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Because everyone has a right to life, liberty and personal security, nations must find non-violent solutions to conflict and difficulties, Pope Francis said.

A culture of peace "calls for unremitting efforts in favour of disarmament and the reduction of recourse to the use of armed force in the handling of international affairs," he said Jan. 8 in his annual address to diplomats accredited to the Vatican.

Given the urgent need to favour dialogue and diplomacy in conflict resolution and to end the stockpiling of weapons, "I would therefore like to encourage a serene and wide-ranging debate on the subject, one that avoids polarizing the international community on such a sensitive issue," the pope said.

At the start of a new year, the pope dedicated his speech to the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights, which will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its adoption by the UN General Assembly in December.

The declaration was an attempt to help the world's nations base their relations on "truth, justice, willing co-operation and freedom" by upholding the fundamental rights of all human beings, he said. The very foundation of freedom, justice and world peace, he said, quoting the document, is built on recognizing and respecting these rights.

However, in his nearly 50-minute speech to the diplomats, the pope cautioned that there has been a movement to create "new rights" that often not only conflict with each other, but can be at odds with the traditional values and cultures of many countries, while neglecting the real needs they have to face.

"Somewhat paradoxically, there is a risk that, in the very name of human rights, we will

see the rise of modern forms of ideological colonization by the stronger and the wealthier, to the detriment of the poorer and the most vulnerable," he said.

Seven decades after the creation of the universal declaration, Pope Francis said, "it is painful to see how many fundamental rights continue to be violated today. First among all of these is the right of every human person to life, liberty and personal security."

War, violence and abortion all infringe on these rights, he said.

Not only are innocent unborn children discarded because they are "ill or malformed, or as a result of the selfishness of adults," the elderly are often cast aside especially when they are infirm, he said.

Ultimately, the right to life entails working for peace, he said, because "without peace, integral human development becomes unattainable."

Integral development, in fact, is intertwined with the need for disarmament, he said. "The proliferation of weapons clearly aggravates situations of conflict and entails enormous human and material costs that undermine development and the search for lasting peace."

The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear



CNS/Paul Haring

DIPLOMATS MEET POPE — Pope Francis is pictured after a group photo with diplomats accredited to the Holy See during an annual meeting at the Vatican Jan. 8.

Weapons last year shows how the desire for peace continues to be alive in the world, he said.

"The stockpiles of armaments which have been built up in various countries must be reduced" and "nuclear weapons must be banned," particularly given the risk that a nuclear conflagration could be started by accident, Pope Francis said, quoting St. John

XXIII's encyclical on peace, *Pacem in Terris*.

"In this regard, it is of paramount importance to support every effort at dialogue on the Korean peninsula, in order to find new ways of overcoming the current disputes, increasing mutual trust and ensuring a peaceful future for the Korean people and the entire world," Pope Francis said.

If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life.

— Rachel Carson