



Elder prays

Elder Lorna Standingready asked for the “wisdom to deal with our challenges” as she offered the opening prayer for this year’s World Day of Prayer for Christian Unity, held at Regina’s First Presbyterian Church Jan. 21.
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Young voices

As Canada’s bishop delegates prepare for this fall’s synod on young people in Rome, one objective is immediately clear — the voices of the young must take centre stage.
— page 5

Share Lent

“Together for Peace” is the theme of the 2018 Share Lent campaign. Materials presented to parish representatives at workshops held recently in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon demonstrated the clear connection between peace and development.
— page 6

Miscommunication

Winnipeg MP MaryAnn Mihychuk blames miscommunication from the federal Liberals for causing confusion among pro-life organizations and others who depend on summer student help, and says she will never agree to new rules blocking Catholic employers’ access to federal grants.
— page 7

Bitter divisions

“We are becoming hate-filled people who both fuel and justify our hatred on religious and moral grounds,” writes Ron Rolheiser. OMI. “What’s needed is nothing short of religious conversion, a religious change of heart, and that’s contingent on the individual. The collective heart will change only when individual hearts first do.”
— page 11

Blind spot

Pope Francis “may be on the side of refugees, migrants, the sick, the poor, the indigenous and other marginalized peoples, but he just doesn’t get it when it comes to victims of abuse,” writes Thomas Reese, SJ.
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God’s grace at work in other churches

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — When different Christian churches recognize the validity of one another’s baptisms, they are recognizing that God’s grace is at work in them, Pope Francis said.

“Even when differences separate us, we recognize that we are part of the redeemed people, the same family of brothers and sisters loved by the one Father,” the pope said Jan. 25 at an ecumenical evening prayer service closing the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The week ended on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, and the papal vespers were celebrated at Rome’s Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, the church where, according to tradition, the apostle is buried.

At the beginning of the prayer service, Pope Francis stood before what is believed to be St. Paul’s tomb, accompanied by Orthodox Metropolitan Gennadios of Italy and Malta and Anglican Archbishop Bernard Ntaho-turi,

the archbishop of Canterbury’s personal representative to the Holy See.

The theme of the 2018 week of prayer was “Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power,” which is taken from the song of Moses and Miriam in the Book of Exodus. It is a song of praise to God for having saved the Israelites as they crossed the Red Sea.

In his homily, Pope Francis said the early church theologians saw the parting of the Red Sea, the drowning of the Pharaoh’s forces and the safe passage of the Israelites as an image of baptism.

“Our sins are what was drowned by God in the living waters of baptism,” he said. “Sin threatened to make us slaves forever, but the force of divine love overpowered it.”

Precisely because Christians have experienced God’s “powerful mercy in saving us,” they can pray together and sing God’s praises, he said.

Another lesson from the crossing of the Red Sea, the pope said, is that while it involved individu-



CNS/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters

CHRISTIAN UNITY PRAYER SERVICE — Pope Francis presides over an ecumenical prayer service Jan. 25 with Orthodox Metropolitan Gennadios of Italy and Malta and Anglican Archbishop Bernard Ntaho-turi, the archbishop of Canterbury’s personal representative to the Holy See, at Rome’s Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The service marked the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

als being saved by God, it also involved a community.

And after St. Paul was knocked off his horse and con-

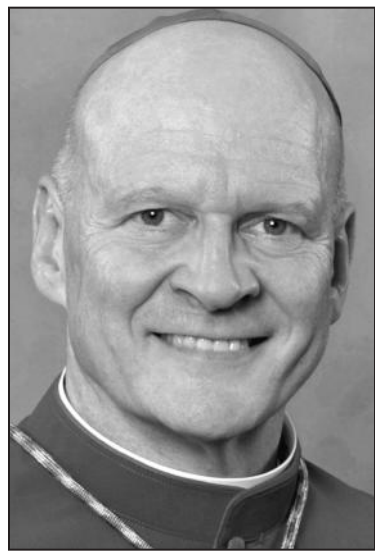
verted, he said, “the grace of God pushed him to seek communion

— GRACE, page 15

Diocese responds to job application requirement

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon is among those across the country expressing opposition to a government program requiring groups to attest that their core mandate supports “reproductive rights” in order to receive funding. (See related story, page 4.)



PM file

Bishop Mark Hagemoen

The federal government’s Canadian Summer Jobs application describes these rights as including “the right to access safe and legal abortions.”

In a letter issued this week, Bishop Mark Hagemoen encouraged concerned Catholics to contact their elected officials to express opposition to the requirement, which conflicts directly with the right to freedom of religion

and conscience, as guaranteed in Section 2 (a) (b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

“We are called to uphold the dignity and the life of each human person, made in the image and likeness of God, including the lives of unborn children,” wrote Hagemoen. “We disagree with the government’s interpretation of the Charter and the coercion it is using on those applying for funding.”

The bishop’s letter quoted a recent statement by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops: “Faith communities consider abortion, sexual orientation, and gender identity as major questions with ethical, moral, social and personal bearing which determine our understanding of human dignity and thus appreciation for the meaning and significance of each and every human life. This new policy conflicts directly with the right to freedom of religion and conscience.”

In the letter, Hagemoen suggested a plan of action for Catholic organizations in the diocese, encouraging those seeking Canadian Summer Jobs funding to submit a printed application by mail and leave the “I attest” section blank. (It is not possible to complete the online electronic application without making the attestation.) Catholic groups were also encouraged to add a letter explaining their reasons for not making the attestation.

The bishop also asked Catholic groups applying for CSJ funding to contact diocesan Justice and Peace co-ordinator Myron Rogal to share how many students each

organization hoped to hire, how particular projects might contribute to the common good, and the anticipated impact on the

community or the organization if funding is denied.

— TIME, page 7

Ombudsperson greeted with guarded optimism

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Church agencies in Latin America and the Philippines are cautiously welcoming Ottawa’s move to set up a Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise who will have power to investigate human rights abuses and environmental damage associated with Canadian-owned or operated mines abroad.

The key to success for the new office will be whether the Canadian ombudsperson will accept complaints directly from individuals and communities living next to the mines, said Rev. Dario Bossi, director of the ecumenical Latin American Churches and Mining Network.

“We are most hopeful that an ombudsperson in Canada will be sufficiently empowered to bring changes to Canadian companies starting from effective state oversight,” Bossi told the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace in a Spanish-language email.

Global Affairs Canada told *The Catholic Register* a web portal will be set up to enable complaint submissions from affected parties,

including allegations of human rights abuses by Canadian corporations. There will also be an option to submit complaints by mail.

The Jesuits in Honduras said they were giving Canada a second chance after the previous Office of the Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor “proved ineffective and insufficient.”

The Office of the CSR Counsellor was set up in 2009 by the previous Conservative government, but it wasn’t able to complete a single investigation. Companies could shut down investigations simply by refusing to participate.

Rather than the voluntary cooperation of companies, an effective office must start with “the state obligation to defend and protect human rights, given their universal nature,” said Pedro Landa of the Jesuit-sponsored Reflection, Investigation and Communication Team of the Jesuits in Honduras.

The accusations against Canadian companies in Latin America have included unsafe working conditions, forcing local people from their land and violence against mining protesters.

— BISHOPS, page 5

Sharing ‘fake news’ can be evil

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People have a responsibility to check the source of what they share on social media to ensure it is not “fake news” designed to further prejudices or increase fear, Pope Francis said.

Fake news grabs people’s attention “by appealing to stereotypes and common social prejudices, and exploiting instantaneous emotions like anxiety, contempt, anger and frustration,” Pope Francis wrote in his message for World Communications Day 2018.

The message is a reflection on the theme, “ ‘The truth will set you free.’ Fake news and journalism for peace.” World Communications Day will be celebrated May 13 at the Vatican and in most dioceses. The papal message was released at the Vatican Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

Fake news is so effective, he said, because it mimics real news but uses “non-existent or distorted data” to deceive and manipu-

late.

The first to employ the fake-news tactic was the serpent in the Garden of Eden who convinced Eve she would not die by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, he said. The Bible story shows that “there is no such thing as harmless disinformation; on the contrary, trusting in falsehood can have dire consequences.”

Pope Francis praised educators who teach young people how to read and question the news and the information they see presented on social media. He encouraged efforts to develop regulations to counter fake news and he praised tech and media companies for trying to improve ways to verify “the personal identities concealed behind millions of digital profiles.”

But, he insisted, individuals always will have the final responsibility for discerning what is real news and what is helpful to share on social media.

“We need to unmask what could be called the ‘snake tactics’ used by those who disguise themselves in order to strike at any time and place” like the serpent in

the Garden of Eden did.

The snake’s power grows as people limit their sources of information to one outlet, especially if that outlet is a social media platform whose algorithms are based on providing users with more information like they have just read, the pope said.

“Disinformation thus thrives on the absence of healthy confrontation with other sources of information that could effectively challenge prejudices and generate constructive dialogue,” he wrote.

People who repost or retweet such false information, the pope said, become “unwilling accomplices in spreading biased and baseless ideas.”

One way to know if something should be checked and not be shared, he said, is if it “discredits others, presenting them as enemies, to the point of demonizing them and fomenting conflict.”

In the modern world, with the rapid and viral spread of news and information — both real and fake — lives and souls are at stake, he said, because the “father of lies” is the devil.

Pope Francis' Prayer for Countering "Fake News"

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Help us to recognize the evil latent in a communication that does not build communion.

Help us to remove the venom from our judgments.

Help us to speak about others as our brothers and sisters.

You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world:

Where there is **shouting**, let us **practice listening**;

Where there is **confusion**, let us **inspire harmony**;

Where there is **ambiguity**, let us **bring clarity**;

Where there is **exclusion**, let us **offer solidarity**;

Where there is **sensationalism**, let us **use sobriety**;

Where there is **superficiality**, let us **raise real questions**;

Where there is **prejudice**, let us **awaken trust**;

Where there is **hostility**, let us **bring respect**;

Where there is **falsehood**, let us **bring truth**.

Amen.

— Pope Francis, message for World Communications Day 2018

CNS/Joanna Korhorst

POPE’S PRAYER ON FAKE NEWS — At the end of his message for World Communications Day 2018, Pope Francis included a prayer he wrote adapted from the “Prayer of St. Francis.” The message was released at the Vatican Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

Pope explains in-flight nuptials

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis’ decision to convalidate the marriage of two flight attendants in the air sent waves of turbulence through the Catholic blogosphere, where respected canon lawyers and pastors raised serious questions about the pope sending a message that marriage wasn’t so serious.

But three days later, the pope gave reporters more of the background, demonstrating that he did not make the decision on the fly and neither did the couple.

“I judged they were prepared, they knew what they were doing,” the pope told reporters Jan. 21 on his flight back to

Rome. “Both of them had prepared before God — with the sacrament of penance — and I married them.”

The blessing of the marriage of LATAM flight attendants Carlos Ciuffardi Elorriaga and Paula Podest Ruiz took place during the pope’s flight Jan. 18 from Santiago, Chile, to Iquique.

When the couple went to the back of the plane and told reporters about it, the whole thing had sounded very spontaneous.

But Pope Francis told reporters later that Ciuffardi also worked on the papal flight to Temuco the day before; Podest, whom he had married civilly in 2010, was not working the Jan. 17 flight.

So the groom had a chance to speak to the pope alone. “Later, I realized he was checking me out,” the pope told reporters. They spoke about life, marriage and the family. “It was a nice conversation.”

The next day, both attendants were on duty. They told the pope they had planned to marry in the church, but early in the morning the day of the wedding, Feb. 27, 2010, a massive earthquake struck Chile and the church collapsed.

The couple ended up marrying in a civil

ceremony, and they have two daughters. They told the pope they planned to reschedule the church ceremony but just kept putting it off.

“I questioned them a bit and their answers were clear, it was for life, and they told me they had done the pre-marriage course,” the pope told reporters. Also, he said, “they were aware that they were in an irregular situation.”

In a story Dec. 19 about the crew chosen to work the papal flights, *El Mercurio*, a Chilean newspaper, had interviewed the couple. Already then, they raised the hope of Pope Francis blessing their union in flight. “We would love it, it’s our place, it’s our second home,” Podest was quoted as saying.

“One of you said I was crazy to do this,” the pope told reporters. But “they were prepared, and if the priest says they are prepared and I decided that they were prepared . . . the sacraments are for the people.”

“All the conditions were there, that is clear,” he said. So, “why not do it today,” otherwise they could have put it off for another 10 years.

“The pope saw an opportunity and he worked it,” said Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life.

“What he is saying to the priests and to the church is that God’s time to bestow his blessings upon anybody does not necessarily depend on a rule or a regulation,” the cardinal told Catholic News Service Jan. 23.

Farrell said that as bishop of Dallas, he would not allow couples to get married on a ranch or in a park. But the pope was not celebrating a wedding on the plane, he was convalidating a marriage, and Farrell, like most priests, has done that in a variety of settings, including hospital rooms. “He did what any good pastor will do.”

Pope is firm on protecting minors from sexual abuse

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said he told the bishops and priests of Chile to be uncompromising when it comes to protecting minors from sexual abuse and to trust that God will purify and renew his church during this time of trial.

Problems and conflicts must never be swept under the rug, he also said, because they can be resolved only through openness and dialogue.

At his weekly general audience Jan. 24 in St. Peter’s Square, the pope told an estimated 15,000 pilgrims and visitors about his Jan. 15 - 21 visit to Chile and Peru.

Thanking leaders, organizers and volunteers for all their hard work and generosity in contributing to a trip where “everything went well,” the pope also recognized the presence of protesters.

The protests made the theme of his visit to Chile, “I Give You My Peace,” even more relevant and timely, he said, as these words Jesus spoke to his disciples explain how he is the one and only source of peace for those who trust in him.

Some of the more “intense” moments of the trip, he said, were meetings with Chile’s priests, religious and bishops.

Those encounters were made “even more fruitful by the shared suffering over some of the wounds that afflict the church” there, he said. The pope had earlier asked forgiveness from those who were sexually abused by priests, but stood firm with his decision in 2015 to give a diocese to Bishop Juan Barros, who was accused of turning a blind eye to the abuse perpetrated by Father Fernando Karadima, his

former mentor.

During his general audience at the Vatican, the pope said he emphasized to his brother bishops and priests that they must “reject every compromise with the sexual abuse of minors and, at the same time, trust in God, who through this difficult trial, purifies and renews his ministers.”

After detailing other highlights of the trip, he emphasized the importance of never ignoring or hiding problems or conflicts because handling them that way only makes things worse.

“Conflicts that come to light are talked about, are resolved through dialogue. Think about the small conflicts that you certainly have at home. Don’t hide them,” he said, instead, find the right moment to talk things through.

When he talked about visiting a women’s prison in Santiago, he urged all nations to make sure their incarceration practices always included programs for the rehabilitation and social reintegration of prisoners. Without that glimmer of hope of someday being welcomed back into society, “prison is a torture without end.”

He also mentioned how he told leaders in Peru to do all they could to address the social and environmental challenges there as well as the problem of corruption.

Looking up from his text at those in St. Peter’s Square, the pope said, “I don’t know if you here have ever heard talk about corruption?” As people applauded, he acknowledged how corruption exists “here, too,” not just in other countries.

Corruption, he said, “is more dangerous than the flu.” It lodges itself in the heart, destroying it, he said, as he urged everyone to fight this problem.



CNS/Kenny Katombe, Reuters

CONGO PROTESTS ELECTIONS — Riot police fire tear gas to disperse a priest and demonstrators during a protest organized by Catholic activists in Kinshasa, Congo. At least six people were killed during demonstrations across the country against delayed elections and Congolese President Joseph Kabila.

Chaldean bishop plots fresh spiritual path in Canada

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Chaldean Bishop Biwai Soro had been a priest and pastor for more than a decade when he stumbled on a simpler, more basic understanding of priesthood.

“The church is not about seeking my future, my ideas, my career, my episcopacy, my priesthood,” Soro told The Catholic Register. “Really, the church is about connecting people to God. Priesthood is a conduit.”

As the new bishop to a Canadian church which has grown in recent years because of the refugee Christians fleeing ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the connections Soro hopes to make are complex — spiritually, culturally and politically.

It’s a task the 63-year-old Iraqi-born priest is ready to tackle as he takes charge of the Chaldean Eparchy of Mar Addai of Toronto. Established in 2011, it is the only Chaldean diocese in Canada, serving an estimated 40,000 Chaldean Catholics.

Soro helms an oriental church whose traditions stretch back to the Apostles. The Chaldeans have survived the Ottoman, Seljuk, Mongol and Sassanid Empires and now must root themselves within a western, democratic and mostly secular society.

“It’s a phenomenon that we’re seeing for the first time in history,” said Soro, who was appointed to Toronto by Pope Francis in October. “So, all these answers are really the subject of the next 50 to 100 years of our lives. We will discover those answers there.”

On the run from misguided attempts by ISIS to return to the age of empires, the Chaldeans must now embrace a whole new perspective on life, Soro said.



Michael Swan

FRESH SPIRITUAL PATH — Bishop Biwai Soro is the new leader for Canada’s Chaldean Catholic community.

“We grew up in a culture that says you are guilty until proven innocent, while in the West it’s totally the reverse,” he said. “Because of the Judaeo-Christian background and the synthesis of these values into the Enlightenment, with the production of the current law and the culture, man has a dignity and everyone is innocent until proven guilty.”

For the refugee church, that might sound like good news. But it’s difficult to trust and hard to adjust, “to switch the voltage, if you will, from 220 to 120,” said the bishop.

St. Peter’s Chaldean Catholic church pastor Rev. Niaz Thoma in Oakville appreciates the challenge his new boss faces bridging the gaps between generations, between

new arrivals and established Chaldean-Canadians, between the families that have adjusted well and those that still struggle.

Elder offers opening prayer for unity

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Participants praying for Christian unity formed a circle around the perimeter of the nave of the church. They prayed for peace, they prayed for justice, they prayed for reconciliation, and then they linked arms to connect their circle and prayed together the Lord’s Prayer to conclude the annual service of prayer for Christian unity.

First Presbyterian Pastor Rev. Amanda Currie welcomed everyone on behalf of the Regina Council of Churches and the Downtown Regina Churches. She was followed by Elder Lorna Standingready who offered the opening prayer, in English, asking for the “wisdom to deal with our challenges.”

First Presbyterian Church hosted this year’s service Jan. 21 and attracted representatives from several Christian faiths as well as representatives from Regina’s Aboriginal community, a Christian outreach program, and at least two soup kitchens. This year’s program was put together by the churches of the Caribbean.

Dr. Michael Cappella, chair of the University of Regina’s undergraduate core program in the Faculty of Education focused his message on “Truth, Reconciliation, and the right Hand of God.”

“The challenge is because we don’t have these associations and these agencies,” Thoma said. “The church hierarchy cannot do everything, especially because we are so very occupied with the scenario of persecution and dealing with the day-to-day issues for newcomers who have just arrived in Canada.”

Not to be flip about the suffering and martyrdom of thousands of Chaldeans, Thoma counts persecution as a blessing.

“The positive dimension of persecution is to make everybody realize we’re in the same boat,” he said. “Persecution is bringing all of us together.”

Unity is not something that can be taken for granted. Just as in the western, Roman church, the Chaldeans are sometimes divided over liturgy. Conservatives cling to every word and gesture which has accumulated over the years, freezing it somewhere around 1830 when the Catholic patriarchate reunited in Mosul, Iraq, after two centuries of division and rivalry.

“The traditionalists would say, ‘Hey, this is what gives us character. This is how we connect ourselves to our sources, our forefa-

thers,’” Soro explained. “The others would say, ‘Hey, look, the mass and the liturgy were created for the sake of man. It’s not that man was created to sing the liturgy.’”

Many of the conservatives are to be found right here in Canada in the established immigrant church. The innovators are either in Iraq or among the new arrivals — people who have witnessed not just war but enormous cultural upheaval. They demand a liturgy and a Christianity that responds to their reality.

That’s not so easy for older immigrants who have sacrificed so much to start over in Canada, said Soro.

“They begin growing in a new environment, totally alien to them. What’s the only thing, however, that they continue to hold? It’s their liturgy. They cling to it,” he said.

Soro is not going to take sides. Bishops are there to care for the people whose passions and problems, whose families and traditions, are engaged in the liturgy. He’s there to foster and encourage a genuine, organic spirituality.

At 15, in his hometown of Kirkuk, in Kurdish-dominated

— UNIFY, page 4



Kiply Yaworski

DE MARGERIE LECTURE — The 2018 De Margerie Series for Christian Reconciliation and Unity was held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Saskatoon, featuring special guest Rev. Susan Durber, moderator of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, theology co-ordinator for Christian Aid in the United Kingdom, and a minister of the United Reformed Church. Leaders gathered for her presentation of the De Margerie Lecture Jan. 25 at St. Thomas More College included (from left): STM president Dr. Terrence Downey, St. Andrew’s College professor of church history and ecumenics Rev. Sandra Beardsall, STM director of mission Gertrude Rompré, Rev. Bernard de Margerie, Rev. Susan Durber, Prairie Centre for Ecumenism director Darren Dahl, and Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon Bishop Mark Hagemoen. During the evening, local ecumenical leaders, de Margerie, for whom the series is named, and Rev. Colin Clay were recognized for 60 years of ministry: the two men were ordained in their respective churches (Roman Catholic and Anglican) on the same day in 1958. As part of the annual De Margerie Series, Durber also led morning workshops Jan. 26 and 27 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon and gave the homily at the Jan. 28 closing celebration for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



Frank Flegel

ELDER’S PRAYER — Rev. Amanda Currie, pastor of Regina’s First Presbyterian Church, listens as Elder Lorna Standingready offers the opening prayer for this year’s World Day of Prayer for Christian Unity. Standingready asked for the “wisdom to deal with our challenges.” First Presbyterian hosted this year’s service Jan. 21, which attracted representatives from several Christian faiths, the Aboriginal community, a Christian outreach program, and at least two soup kitchens.

number of unmarked graves. The only graves with markers are those of two sons of a former director of the school who died while their father worked there. There have been indications that there are other graves outside the currently marked boundaries of the cemetery.

“We need to unlearn our apathy,” said Cappella. “There is no healing without justice.”

The Regina Indian Industrial School cemetery was mentioned in several prayers during the service, and the collection taken at the gathering is to go to the Regina Industrial School Cemetery Committee, which is working to restore and preserve the site. There is also a move to have it designated a heritage site.

The World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity began in 1908, and the movement grew following the organization of the World Council of Churches in 1966. Each year, Christian organizations in a country, or a group of countries, produce an Order of Service which is then sent around the world for groups to use in their local services.

Leaders request gov't drop summer jobs attestation

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CNS) — Eighty-seven religious leaders, including Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins, have united to call on the Canadian government to strike down a new policy that requires organizations seeking summer jobs grants to confirm support for the pro-abortion and gender policies of the Liberal party.

“The promise of a free and democratic society is that there be no religious or ideological test or conditions to receiving government benefit or protection,” said a Jan. 25 statement signed by Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders.

Collins, speaking on behalf of Canada’s Catholic bishops, said religious groups want to continue working with the government on a program that provides funding to hire students to work at a wide range of small business, church and charitable organizations during the summer.

“Nobody here is trying to start any conflict,” Collins said at a joint news conference with other faith leaders at St. Benedict Catholic Church in Toronto. “We follow the law, the Charter of Rights and the human rights codes. What more do you want?”

Employment Minister Patty Hajdu told an Ottawa news conference later the same day her government has no intention of removing the attestation or changing the wording to address the concerns of the religious leaders. She continued to stress the government would refuse to fund any organization that, in her opinion,

disputes a woman’s right to abortion as part of the organization’s core mandate.

The issue arose last summer when pro-abortion groups protested that some grants from the \$220-million Canada Summer Jobs program were going to pro-life organizations, whose activities included distributing graphic anti-abortion pamphlets. In response, the government changed the rules this year. Applicants must now sign an attestation that many interpret as being nothing more than a blanket approval of the government’s abortion and gender identity policies.

Hajdu said the purpose of the change is not to deny religious and charitable organizations access to funding, but to ensure that funding “should never go to pay for work that seeks to remove Canadian rights — like a woman’s right to choose, or LGBTQ2 rights.” Canadian law permits abortion at any time during a pregnancy.

Collins said he is convinced the government did not intend to upset such a wide swath of religious Canadians.

“If the government has a problem with a particular group doing something they disagree with, they should talk to those groups,” the cardinal said. “The handing out of graphic anti-abortion material is very troubling, I know.

“To have a wide-open ideological test for everybody, which we cannot in conscience sign, that’s just not fair.”

In an attempt to quell the growing criticism of the funding policy, Hajdu made personal phone calls Jan. 22 - 23 to a number of organi-

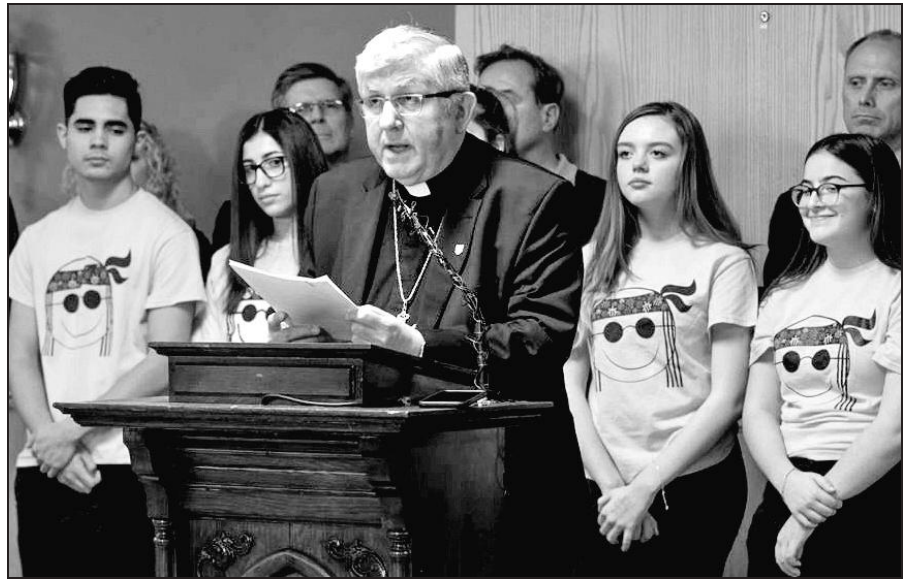
zations, including the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and added a supplementary guide to define what is meant by “core mandate.” As long as an organization’s “primary activities” do not include pro-life advocacy or discrimination against minorities, an application will be accepted, she said. However, the applicant still must check a box to attest general support of the government’s abortion and gender policies.

Canada’s bishops remain “seriously concerned.”

“The attestation and examples still amount to the government’s coercion on matters of conscience and religious belief,” said a statement from Rene Laprise, CCCB communications director. “They foreclose the possibility of wide-ranging views and even healthy disagreement. The attestation remains unacceptable.”

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler emphasized how troubling it is for Jews to see the government impose an ideological or values test on any minority.

“We have been a minority throughout history. We are very sensitive to the possibility of the majority trying to impose values, even if we agree with those values . . . (forcing people) to believe or to act in a certain way not in accord with their basic val-



The Catholic Register/Michael Swan

COLLINS ADDRESSES MEDIA — Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins, flanked by students who have staffed a summer day camp at St. Benedict Church, addresses media in Toronto Jan. 26.

ues,” Strauchler said.

St. Benedict Parish is home to a summer day camp in a neighbourhood with many low-income families. Natalia Opara, now in Grade 10, has been a camp counsellor there for two years, following eight years as a camper.

“It feels like a family when I walk through the door. I only get to see some of these people one month every year,” said Opara.

Opara said she worries about the families who might be denied an affordable summer camp this July.

“It feels pretty good to help some of the families,” Opara said.

Bruce Clemenger, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, said more than 1,500

Evangelical projects have received government funding in the past.

“The government has placed us in an untenable position,” he said.

“We’re worried about the future, not just now,” said Imam Refaat Mohamed of the Canadian Council of Imams.

Ideological tests, if allowed, could be used in other ways if it is permitted for this issue, said Mohamed.

“We love the differences we have in Canada. We are very proud of who we are. We are really proud of who we are. And we should always respect those with different beliefs,” Mohamed said.

Contributing to this story was Deborah Gyapong in Ottawa.

Abortion not a Charter right: CCCB

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA, CCN — There is no “right” to abortion, say Canada’s Catholic bishops on the 30th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s Morgentaler decision that struck down Canada’s abortion law.

The bishops joined a number of pro-life organizations that have publicly objected to the federal Liberal government claims that abortion is a right.

The Catholic bishops also pointed out that the 1988 Morgentaler decision recognized Parliament’s interest in protecting unborn human life.

One pro-life group, WeNeed-aLaw.ca, marked the Morgentaler anniversary with a proposed law making abortion illegal after 13 weeks of gestation, with a number of safeguards such as a 48-hour waiting period, coercion protection and required counselling on the possible health and psychological effects of abortion.

In a Jan. 27 statement, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops said at the time of the Morgentaler decision: “none of the seven judges held that there was a constitutional right to abortion on demand.” In fact, “all of the judges acknowledged (that) the state has a legitimate interest in protecting the unborn.”

“While unrestricted access to abortion continues to be touted by

some as the guarantor of women’s freedom, the truth is that abortion does nothing at all to address the very real challenges which confront a woman when she finds herself facing an unintended pregnancy,” said CCCB president Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil in the statement. “Nor does it address any of the other conditions in a society that unjustly limit a woman’s freedom.”

Instead abortion “makes is easier for society to avoid its moral obligations to ensure protection and shelter for the most vulnerable,” the bishops said.

Science and reason both place “the humanity of the unborn child beyond question,” the bishops said, making defence of unborn human life not merely a “theological opinion.”

“As Canadians, we take pride in our record of upholding international human rights — while at the same time failing to provide the most basic protection for the child in the womb and so contradicting and eroding our own humanity.”

WeNeed-aLaw.ca spokesperson Anna Nienhuis pointed out in a release the justices who ruled in the Morgentaler expected Parliament to craft a new law “that protected pre-born children at some stage of pregnancy.”

“They certainly did not think that 30 years later the status quo would remain,” she said.

“Canada is way of out line

with our international counterparts when it comes to protecting pre-born human rights,” said Nienhuis. “As much as the prime minister would like to think that abortion is a Charter right, that simply is not the case.”

Nienhuis pointed out the majority of Canadians support some limits on abortion.

WeNeed-aLaw’s proposed bill also includes mandatory reporting on abortions. It is modelled after similar laws in Germany, Spain and France.

Campaign Life Coalition president Jim Hughes had recently resent an open letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, quoting his father, former prime minister Pierre Trudeau in a 1981 letter to the then president of the CCCB, Archbishop MacNeil of Edmonton. Trudeau wrote: “The arguments advanced to show that the Charter will create an entitlement to abortion on demand have been clearly refuted in the opinion given by the Department of Justice. In my view, the need of an amendment has not been clearly demonstrated.”

Hughes’ letter reminded the prime minister his father also said in June 1981: “Because the public is evenly divided on the subject of abortion it was the government’s ‘considered view’ that a position favouring one side should not be enshrined in the Charter. The government feels the issue is not one which should be

Continued from page 3

northern Iraq, Soro decided he wanted to be a priest. At that time he belonged to the Assyrian church of the East, a church not in communion with Rome, but comprising people who share the language and ethnic traditions of Chaldeans.

“I had a parish priest who was a good preacher and a very funny guy. I thought that by becoming a priest I would be like him,” Soro said. “I was really mistaken.”

As his family moved first to Lebanon and then to the United States in the 1970s, Soro began to equate priesthood with a defence of culture and ethnic identity. Though he no longer conceives of his ministry in those terms, he is not so quick to discard his sense of religious-ethnic pride.

“It’s a love that you have for your people. It’s a bond that you have to your family. You want to serve them in any way you can and you realize that they need a priest like you,” he said.

That’s the kind of priest he was when he first came to Toronto in 1982 as pastor of Saint Mary’s Assyrian Church of The East in Mississauga.

Elected a bishop in 1995, Soro stumbled into an opportunity to deepen his theological education at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in his middle 40s. There he began to question his understanding of church, priesthood and communion with God.

“In my case, I had to demolish

the old man and rebuild a new man,” he said.

By 2002, Soro had earned a doctorate in ecumenical theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome. In 2013 the Synod of Chaldean Bishops received him as one of their own and he began to serve California’s growing Chaldean community from San Diego.

Today he sees Chaldean Catholicism in a global context, as “one ship in the fleet of churches that journey from a shore where there are a lot of wars, a lot of discomfort, into a place where the sun shines eternally and God is present perpetually,” Soro said. “That really is the journey of the church toward the kingdom of God.”

“We have started to have second and third-generation Chaldeans in Canada, where they are Chaldean but they seem to be very different from the Chaldeans who are just arriving in Canada,” said Thoma.

While Soro may seek a Chaldean spirituality that transcends ethnicity and culture, he will find people’s attachment to their roots is his ally in his ministry of unity, according to Thoma.

“Two main bases for the bishop to unify the community will be faith and heritage at the same time,” he said. “For us Eastern Christians, they go hand in hand. It’s not only the faith we’re so proud of, but the heritage. We consider ourselves descendants of the ancient civilizations on Earth.”

Canadian bishops looking to youth for synod guidance

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — As Canada’s bishop delegates prepare for this fall’s synod on young people in Rome, one objective is immediately clear — the voices of the young must take centre stage.

“I hope there will be lots of representatives (of young people), so we can get together and reflect on the experience of being Christian and young in the world today,” said Bishop Stephen Jensen from the Diocese of Prince George, B.C.

“We want them to help us discern the sign of the times and how the church can support young disciples in their life and in their mission.”

Jensen and Bishop Fred Colli from Thunder Bay, Ont., have been chosen as synod delegates for the English sector of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. The president of the CCCB, Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, will be joined by Sherbrooke Archbishop Luc Cyr to represent the French sector at the Oct. 3 - 23 synod.

Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Dowd from Montreal and Quebec Auxiliary Bishop Louis Corriveau were elected as substitute delegates for the English and French sector respectively.

“I see in young people a thirst for developing projects, a thirst for dreams and a thirst to find a meaning in life,” said

Cyr, in an email translated from French. “The objective is to know how, with the church, we can respond to these thirsts of our times.”

The four bishop delegates received copies of the consultation reports Canadian dioceses submitted last year in response to a Vatican-issued questionnaire. Their first task will be to study the diocesan summaries and take the questionnaire responses to heart.

“A lot of (the responses) are what you would expect. It talks about the situation of young people in western society and what are the challenges of living in a secular world,” said Jensen. “It kind of confirms what our own experience is in this diocese.”

In the Prince George diocese, Jensen said he has witnessed first-hand the importance of community support for young people. He has found that youth tend to thrive in community because they feel free to share and grow in their Catholic life.

“Through that experience, I’ve seen many times, young people discovering their sense of vocation,” said Jensen.

Now more than ever, young people need support, he said, because they are exposed to many ideologies in secular society which pose a threat to Catholic morality.

Questions about love, courtship and sexuality were recurring topics in the questionnaire responses, said Jensen, and the

Catholic Church must continue to be a part of these conversations.

“It’s not only an issue for young people in the context of the synod,” he said. “This whole gender ideology that the pope has decried as ‘ideological colonization,’ those are all the challenges that our culture is sending toward everybody and not just our young people.”

In his 22 years as bishop, Colli said he has always found that young people respond best when the Gospel speaks to their experience. He said young people want

to put their faith into action and the church must take advantage of that spirit.

“I know that when I celebrate a mass at a high school, I’m better able to gear my talk to the young people and to their life needs and see how the Gospel relates in that way and they appreciate that,” said Colli. “But it doesn’t always happen on Sunday morning.”

The synod, Colli said, has to be an opportunity for the church to be more attentive to their spiritual needs.

The church must also be more attentive to the needs of the Aboriginal youth in the community.

Thunder Bay has the highest proportion of Aboriginal people among major Canadian cities. A little more than 12 per cent of the city’s population identify as First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

There will be a pre-synod meeting March 19 - 24 in Rome, where youth delegates around the world are invited to discuss their concerns. Canada is selecting two youth delegates for that meeting.

Bishops hope appointment will be a step forward

Continued from page 1

At the Ottawa press conference announcing the new ombudsperson,



International Trade Minister
François-Philippe Champagne

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son, International Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne said the days of voluntary co-operation were over.

“It is essential that all Canadian companies understand that co-operation in good faith with the (ombudsperson) is not optional,” Champagne said. So far there’s no deadline for hiring an ombudsperson, but Champagne promised the job would be filled soon.

Canada’s Catholic bishops said they “hope and pray that the appointment of an Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise will be an important step forward.”

The bishops, along with Development and Peace, have been calling for closer monitoring and regulation of Canadian mining for years.

The Catholic development agency welcomed the prospect of an ombudsperson with independent investigatory powers.

“When we heard Minister Champagne saying all of the key words we had been asking for, we just really, really felt like it was a victory,” said Development and Peace advocacy officer Elana Wright.

Oil and gas projects and the garment industry will come under its purview in the first year, but the government expects the ombudsperson to expand its oversight of Canadian international business.



Chris Berthelot

HISTORIC RESOURCE — Edmonton’s oldest Catholic church, St. Joachim, has been designated as a municipal historic resource.

Edmonton church named a heritage resource

By Chris Berthelot
Grandin Media

EDMONTON (CCN) — Edmonton’s oldest Catholic church has been designated as a municipal historic resource, and the parish council has received more than \$400,000 for renovations to the 119-year-old building.

“We are delighted that the city council has approved our application,” said Pauline Lambert, president of St. Joachim’s Parish council. “It is also a great relief to know that we will be able to receive financial help for the much needed restorations.”

City council made the designation official on Jan. 23. The \$411,176.60 grant, from the city’s heritage resources reserve fund, will be used to repair the windows, two surrounding porches and other building fixtures. St. Joachim can apply for additional maintenance grants of \$50,000 in the future.

“It’s that tangible connection to the past,” said David Johnston, principal heritage planner for the City of Edmonton. “This beautiful red brick church is an excellent representation of late 19th-century French-Canadian ecclesi-

astical architecture and an important part of Catholic history in Edmonton.”

St. Joachim’s, located in central Edmonton, is one of two francophone parishes in the city and in recent years has become a home for immigrants from Africa.

“We were left with a wonderful heritage and I think it should be known,” said Sister Dolores Dèry, the former parish administrator.

Designed by local architect Francis Deggendorfer, the church was built in 1899 in the Gothic style, with traditional round-arch windows and a round oeil-de-boeuf (bull’s-eye) window above the entrance.

Four pinnacles surround the belfry, which houses the original church bell. Etched with the coat of arms of Alberta’s first bishop — Vital Grandin — the bell was originally used for timekeeping.

St. Joachim Parish has also had its share of historic pastors, including the Oblate missionaries Rev. Albert Lacombe and Rev. Hippolyte Leduc.

Inside the church, painted glass windows depicting the life of St. Joachim and the saints surround the interior and there is an

off-white marble altar that contrasts with the dark wooden ceiling and archways.

Rev. Philippe Insoni, the current pastor, said St. Joachim’s reminds him of churches in Europe.

And parishioners say they welcome the renovation to the church that’s been a big part of their lives.

“Within these walls dwells our personal history, our memories,” added Elise Dèry, who married her husband Amiè in the church in 1961. The couple has attended St. Joachim’s for more than 60 years.

St. Joachim’s Church is the 146th building to be designated as a municipal historic resource. It was designated a provincial historic resource in 1978.

The original St. Joachim’s mission, housed in a modest house-chapel in Fort Edmonton, was established in the 1850s by the members of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. By the late 1890s, the congregation had grown to a size that necessitated the building of the church.

The Oblate Provincial House beside St. Joachim’s church was designated as a municipal historic resource in 2004.

Share Lent 2018 workshops held in Saskatoon

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — “Together for Peace” is the theme of the 2018 Share Lent campaign, parish representatives heard at workshops recently held in the

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Materials presented Jan. 21 in Humboldt and Jan. 23 in Saskatoon demonstrated the clear connection between peace and development, and the work of Development and Peace Caritas Canada

partners in promoting peace in countries around the world. A third workshop was offered as an online webinar Jan. 30.

At the Jan. 23 meeting held at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Saskatoon, Development and Peace Caritas Canada provincial animator Armella Sonntag provided an overview of the Share Lent campaign, describing the importance of peace-building and dialogue.

Development and Peace has historically supported and continues to support local initiatives that promote dialogue, openness, and understanding of “the other,” she described, as well as empowering grassroots partners to accomplish their goals for peace-building initiatives.

She highlighted one of four partner organizations featured in this year’s Share Lent materials, focusing in particular on the work of Adyan, an organization in Lebanon striving to build tolerance and understanding, particularly among youth and students of different religious backgrounds.

With support from Development and Peace, Adyan runs programs that include conferences, training for educators, building networks of interfaith leaders, and offering workshops on peace, reconciliation, and coexistence.

“At Adyan, we promote spiritual solidarity, which is not only being in political or social solidarity with another, but also means integrating the other into my thoughts and my prayers. I must integrate the suffering of

others, and understand it. I must integrate the other into my religious thoughts and into the way I explain my faith,” explains Nayla Tabbara, one of the founders of Adyan.

Other partner organizations working on peace initiatives with support from Development and Peace are the Lagos Marginalized Communities Forum in Nigeria, the Bartolomé de Las Casas Institute in Peru, and the Indigenous Community Support organization in Cambodia.

Ideas for sharing the resources in local parishes and highlighting the peace-building side of the Development and Peace mandate were also presented during the workshop.

For more information, see www.dev.org



Tim Yaworski

RELIC MASS — Bishop Mark Hagemoen presided at mass with the relic of St. Francis Xavier Jan. 19 at St. Francis Xavier Parish, marking the end of the relic’s visit to Saskatoon.

Relic pilgrimage concludes with mass at St. Francis

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Bishop Mark Hagemoen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon reflected on themes of evangelization and mission during a celebration of the eucharist at St. Francis Xavier Parish Jan.19. The mass concluded the Saskatoon portion of a national pilgrimage with a relic of St. Francis Xavier, the saint’s uncorrupted hand and forearm.

The bishop reflected on how the famous missionary is an inspiration for evangelization, including the “New Evangelization,” a concept introduced by Pope John Paul II to describe the need to re-evangelize those who are baptized but who live a life far removed from Christ and the Gospel.

Hagemoen shared insights into evangelization from recent popes, including Benedict XVI, who reflected on several features of evangelization several years before he was chosen pope.

“First, he said evangelization is a journey that teaches the art of living the path toward true happiness,” Hagemoen said. “Second, he said that everything the church does is always about evangelizing. Third, he said the New Evangelization will build upon the church’s constant effort of uninterrupted evangelization because everybody in the world, in every time and every place, needs Jesus Christ.”

Pope Benedict noted that evangelization is always an exercise in patience, Hagemoen added. “He talked about the planting of the seed, that we must allow the Spirit to help people — and not just those whom we evangelize, but also the evangelizers — to grow in love of God.”

Further, the method of evangelization must derive from the message from the one who is proclaimed: Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world.

“Like all the other popes, for Pope Benedict the Incarnation — God coming in the flesh — is a very important point. God reveals himself to us in how God is manifest in Jesus Christ, the God made man, the Saviour of the world — and so the Incarnation is a key way in which we are evangelized.”

Pope Benedict said the content of evangelization must include four crucial elements: conversion, the proclamation of the kingdom of God made manifest here and now, developing a relationship with Jesus Christ, and awareness of the goal of eternal life.

Hagemoen pointed to St. Francis Xavier as a young person who looked at the world and longed for something more. “He was also living at a time of conflict and war, and he was one who was blessed with much influence and social prestige. And yet these circumstances of time and personal circumstance did not overshadow the yearning of his heart for something deeper.”

Francis Xavier was “someone who would simply bring the good news of Jesus Christ and affect conversion — conversion that was not changing people into something they weren’t, but calling them into the dignity of their lives.”

The need for evangelization does not end, Hagemoen stressed. “The mission of Jesus Christ is always at work, evangelizing the bone and the marrow of our lives. In many ways the work of the missionary is not only as alive and needed as ever, but it is calling us even deeper.”

Youth ministers gather in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — God is present in every moment of our lives: that was one of the messages heard by some 45 people working in youth ministry across Western Canada gathered in Regina Jan. 11 - 13. Michelle Braden, Regina archdiocese youth co-ordinator, identified the occasion as their annual gathering to hear inspirational speakers, discuss the business side of their organization, elect a new executive, and socialize.

Parker Love was the keynote speaker for the morning session. He is in his fifth year as a seminarian and expects to be ordained to the transitional diaconate in June and to the priesthood in 2019. He is serving his internship at Regina’s Resurrection Parish, where he is involved in all aspects of ministry.

His message was of recognizing God’s presence in our lives, especially in times of suffering.

He described how, “If you want to see God, you have to love him in all of those moments.” Love was speaking from personal experience, having spent four months in hospital recovering from a vehicle accident, relying on his faith to get him through the ordeal. He now relies on a wheelchair to get around.

The keynote speaker for the afternoon session was Deacon Joe Lang, a permanent deacon in the archdiocese and a consultant to the Regina Catholic School Board. His ministry includes working with youth.

He told the youth ministers that mentorship is tied up in many things: our sense of leadership, who we are, who we are called to be. “We have God, we have Jesus, and we have people in our community who seem to be leaders all the time. We have questions now,” he said, “in this time of fake news. What does it all mean?”



PM file

Michelle Braden

Lang wondered why we don’t trust anyone anymore, and asked, “How do we take this message of Christ that is burning within our hearts with the passion of the Holy Spirit and try to make it something that people see within themselves?”

He went on to say that what people are looking for is not in Scripture or the catechism; it’s something they want to experience in the present. He encouraged the ministers to be out in the community to meet people where they are.

The group ended their gathering on Saturday evening by attending a mass at Resurrection Church, where Archbishop Donald Bolen was the celebrant, followed by a banquet.



Paul Swart

HOCKEY FAN — Msgr. Maurice Comeault of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood Dec. 23. Comeault was born and raised in rural Manitoba, and for a time lived a monastic life with the Trappist community. He has served for many years in the archdiocese and is currently pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Charleswood. An ardent hockey fan, Comeault was presented with the gift of a new stick by (from left) Max Comeault, Guy Comeault, and Matthew Labossière.

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Winnipeg MP opposes Canada Summer Jobs rules

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — A Winnipeg member of Parliament says she will never agree to new rules blocking Catholic employers’ access to federal grants to help pay for summer students, and in fact, she says, Catholic groups are still eligible to apply for such funds.

MaryAnn Mihychuk, Liberal MP for Kildonan-St. Paul, blames miscommunication from the federal Liberals for causing confusion among pro-life organizations and even panic for those who depend on summer student help. Mihychuk is calling on the federal government to extend the deadline to apply for the Canada Summer Jobs program.

In a letter to Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon, Mihychuk states, “I would never support an initiative that required any individual or organization to compromise their values and beliefs. Please be assured that I have raised our concerns with the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour and the office of the Prime Minister.”

Mihychuk’s comments are in response to Employment and Social Development Canada announcing a major change to its requirements regarding applications for federal funding under its Canada Summer Jobs program for youth employment. Attestation must now be included that “both the job and the organization’s core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada.” These include reproductive rights, specifically the right to access abortions. According to the department, this is intended to “prevent youth (as young as 15 years of age) from being exposed to employment within organizations that may promote positions that are contrary to the values enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and associated case law.”

In Mihychuk’s view, the requirement that both the job and the organization’s core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada, “are the same as last year and years before.”

“For many religious groups,” writes Mihychuk, “their mandate may be similar to the description of ‘ongoing programs’ that they provide to the Canada Revenue Agency at tax time, which focuses on what the organization does in a given year. For example, in the case of religious groups, the core mandate of the group or church is often to promote their religion and includes activities such as summer camps, Bible study, and hosting activities for seniors. None of these activities or the mandate goes against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, making the organization or religious group eligible to apply to the CSJ program.

According to Mihychuk, “Faith-based groups are required to meet the same eligibility criteria as any applicant to CSJ 2018, and I must stress that it is not a new requirement for applicants to outline their organization’s mandate and the key activities of the proposed job.

“Contrary to what has been implied,” she writes, “applicants are not asked to provide their views, beliefs or values nor are these taken into consideration during application for the program, including pro-life beliefs. Due to the misinformation that has been spread, I have requested that the CSJ application deadline be extended past the Feb. 2 deadline to both the prime minister and to Minister Hadju.”

In her letter, Mihychuk tells Archbishop Gagnon, “Faith-based groups such as yours provide tremendous value to our community. I encourage you, and



MaryAnn Mihychuk

Relic draws large crowds in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The relic St. Francis Xavier attracted more than 3,000 people to the two locations where it was displayed during its two-day stop in Regina.

An estimated 450 people visited the Campion College chapel at the University of Regina over the course of a 12-hour vigil, and some 2,400 attended at Resurrection Church during a 10-hour

vigil there. Campion was an obvious first choice, as St. Francis Xavier was a co-founder of the Society of Jesus.

The relic at Campion remained exposed from 7 p.m. Jan. 19, till 9 a.m. Jan. 20, when it was moved to Resurrection Church for a 10 a.m. mass celebrated by Archbishop Donald Bolen.

The format was the same at each location: Rev. John O’Brien, SJ, talked about the relic and the

life of St. Francis, followed by Angele Regnier, co-founder of Catholic Christian Outreach. CCO is transporting the relic on its tour of Canada.

Regnier explained the contents of the package everyone received when they arrived. “Listen to your heart and soul when you come to venerate the relic, gently touch the reliquary with the card that has the image of St. Francis. It then becomes a holy card.” She invited people to leave the white prayer card in the basket beside the reliquary. The cards will be collected and intentions written on the card will be prayed for by members of Catholic Christian Outreach.

Bolen thanked CCO for including Regina on the relic’s Canadian tour. Rev. Sami Helewa, SJ, superior of the local Jesuit community, gave the homily at the mass at Resurrection Church.

“Francis was a member of a proud family who lived in what is now the Basque region of Spain,” Helewa explained. “When he went to school in Paris, it was something he was expected to do to keep up the name of the family. One of his roommates was Ignatius Loyola who, in conversations with Francis, changed Francis’ direction by encouraging him to be a missionary.”

Together, they founded the Jesuit order.

The Regina visit was organized by Pierre and Laura O’Reilly. Pierre is Director of Development at Campion College. “It was beyond what was expected,” he told the *PM* about the Regina visit.



Frank Flegel

BLESSING — Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen blesses the congregation during a mass at Resurrection Church Jan. 20, celebrating the exposition of a relic of St. Francis Xavier, co-founder of the Society of Jesus.

Time too short for changes

Continued from page 1

“We see this as something highly problematic: that the government is imposing a particular morality that is part of this particular government’s stance on this issue,” said Rogal. “We see it as a direct violation of the right to freedom of conscience guaranteed in the Charter.”

Local groups are being forced to make difficult and painful choices because of this application requirement, he said. He noted that a Catholic summer camp and a cherry festival are among the programs in the diocese seeking to employ students through the summer job program — but which are unable to make an attestation that denies core Catholic beliefs.

“Even if a particular group’s specific project is to run a summer camp or work on climate change, they may not be able to sign on to this, because their core mandate runs much deeper than that single program. Our belief is part of our identity,” Rogal said.

“We support the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,”

Rogal said, but stressed that those rights include freedom of conscience and religious belief. “In a diverse, pluralistic country, where religious freedom is something we all enjoy, and where we are a richer country because of it, we would hope that matters of conscience would be respected.”

Rogal quoted the Jan. 25 interfaith statement signed by some 80 leaders of various religious groups in the country, protesting the Canada Summer Jobs guidelines and application process: “The promise of a free and democratic society is that there be no religious or ideological tests or conditions to receiving government benefits or protection.”

He added that it is vital that citizens concerned about the issue contact elected officials to express their opposition, including addressing their concerns directly to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

“We would prefer that an amendment be made, or that a dialogue could be had about this.” However, Rogal noted that with a Feb. 2 application deadline, time is short for government to make a change to the process this year.

all eligible employers, to apply (to CSJ), to grow the local economy this summer and help young Canadians gain the experience they need to succeed in the job market. Your concerns over the CSJ attestation are understandable. I hope I have been able to provide clarification on the subject and you take it into account when making the decision to participate in the program.”

Catholic and other religious groups across the country have been rocked by the CSJ changes. In a report in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the president of Lorette-based Eastman Youth for Life called the new rules “absolutely bogus.” Justin Jeanson said he is left wondering “how (Prime Minister Trudeau) could decide that only the people who believe what he believes can receive this kind of money.”

Kevin Prada, director of the Catholic School of Evangelization in St. Malo, Man., which runs Catholic camps year round, said his organization relies on CSJ funding to provide the camping experience to children and youth.

“It’s going to hurt us,” he told the *Winnipeg Free Press*. “The government’s actions transcend the abortion debate and should bother pro-choice Canadians, too. For me, this is a serious affront on my liberty and the liberty of Canadians: their liberty of conscience, their freedom of expression and freedom of religion.”



MOTHER TERESA SCHOOL VISIT — Students at Mother Teresa School in Saskatoon met with Bishop Mark Hagemoen Jan. 22, hearing a bit about his life and ministry, asking questions, and offering advice on a variety of issues. The bishop thanked students who had sent him a gift of a cupcake, and he met with school principal Guy Werbicki and faith formation facilitator Shelley Twa.

Living up to the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King

Soul Searching

Tom Saretsky



A couple of weeks ago the United States commemorated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. It is celebrated on the third Monday of January, usually the closest day to Dr. King’s actual birthday, Jan. 15. Martin Luther King Jr. was America’s prophet of non-violence and the chief spokesperson for the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1960s. It was his aim to end racial segregation through non-violent activism.

Out of all the African American civil rights leaders during the 1960s, Dr. King was the most influential. He helped establish the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing discrimination in public accommodations, facilities and employment. He was awarded the Nobel Prize

Saretsky is a teacher and chaplain at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon. He and his wife, Norma, have two children, Nathan and Jenna

for Peace in 1964, and sadly was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

It was tragic that one so passionately against violence had to die so violently. His assassination initiated a flurry of racial riots, known as the Holy Week Uprisings, throughout the nation. It was the greatest wave of civil unrest to hit the nation since the Civil War. “Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love.”

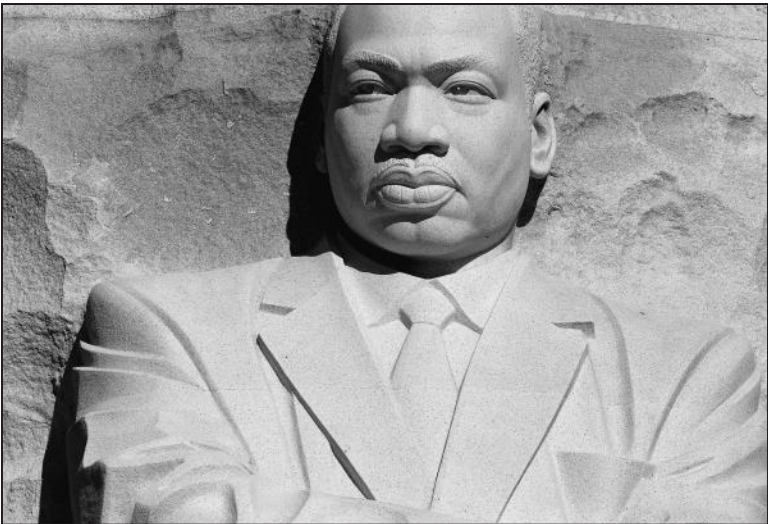
I could only imagine that Dr. King would be turning in his grave to see what has become of the United States today. How would you even begin to explain to him that his country is being run by the most polarizing, openly racist, egotistical, mercurial, and bombastic president in the history of the United States? How does one explain that Donald Trump, a man of profound narcissism and ignominy, was given a mandate to rule the most powerful nation on Earth?

How would one get Dr. King

to understand that this president has become a contributor to civil unrest in the U.S. and to world peace in general? Dr. King literally gave his life for the causes of racial equality and freedom. Their president’s latest vile, hate-filled exhortation expressed that the U.S. should not be accepting people from “shithole” countries such as Haiti and certain African nations. “I look to a day when people will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

Members of Trump’s own party and other leaders in the world have decried his ignorant and dangerous diatribe. It is disappointing that our own prime minister did not call him out and take a stand. Mr. Trudeau simply said he “would not opine on what the president may or may not have said.” It is reprehensible of our leader not to respond to this misogynistic bully for the divisiveness he sows regularly. “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

Though I am not an American, I feel it necessary to issue an apology to Dr. King for what has taken place in his own home country, even though our country is not the Promised Land either. Dr. King, I am sorry for the state to which your country has descended, despite your passion for justice,



CNS/Tyler Orsburn

DREAM OF PEACE — The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in Washington. “ . . . we continue to struggle to live up to your dream for a peaceful tomorrow; your dream for equality among all; your dream for mercy and justice,” writes Tom Saretsky.

equality, fairness and freedom. I am sorry that “Trumpocracy” is replacing democracy, and that dialogue has been replaced with self-aggrandizing “tweets,” autocratic orders and terminations. “Violence leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue.”

* * * * *

A second look at what I have just expressed tells me I may need to rethink the tone of my own caustic language. “Never succumb to the temptation of bitterness.” It seems I, too, am sowing the seeds of violence. “. . . non-violence cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it.”

Through my words it appears I haven’t done justice to Dr. King either, nor have I contributed to the heart to which you hoped for humankind. My heavy-handed attack seeks to divide rather than

unite, and I will need to take your words more to heart.

Maybe we all do in our own ways. “Violence in word and action is immoral because it seeks to humiliate rather than to seek understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than to convert.”

Rest in peace, Dr. King, while we continue to struggle to live up to your dream for a peaceful tomorrow; your dream for equality among all; your dream for mercy and justice. Through your unwavering faith, may we “be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. Through your faith, may we be able to transform the jangling discords of our nations into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. Through your faith, may we be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together . . . to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.”



Art Babych

WINTER BLUES — This well-fed jay doesn’t mind January, but some of us are happy this “blue” month is over.

Executive Director

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Great performances seen in Oscar-nominated films

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



The timing could not be better for veteran director Steven Spielberg’s *The Post*, which David Erhlich of Indiewire aptly calls a “spectacularly entertaining journalism thriller (that) is a rallying cry for the resistance.” (*The Post* has received an Academy Award nomination for best picture.) It taps into the zeitgeist of the necessary fight against the corrosive effects of “post-truth” and “alternative facts,” against the constant attacks on the news media by autocrats and Trumpers.

The Post Phantom Thread

The “Post” of the title is *The Washington Post*, the U.S. capital’s newspaper of record although it held a less prominent position than the august *New York Times*, also hated by the Nixon White House when a famous 1971 showdown took place over publication of what

came to be known by as “The Pentagon Papers,” a 47-volume detailed study of U.S. involvement in Vietnam which revealed that successive American governments had systematically lied to Congress and the public over decades. It was the work of the Vietnam Study Task Force created in 1967 by U.S. Secretary of defence Robert McNamara (well played by Canadian Bruce Greenwood). Classified “Top Secret — Sensitive” on every page, the candid findings were supposedly intended “for posterity.”

The movie actually opens in 1966 in the steamy jungles of Vietnam as an armed military analyst, Daniel Ellsberg (Matthew Rhys), experiences the frontline first-hand, then briefs McNamara with a pessimistic assessment of the war’s prospects. After returning from two years in South Vietnam Ellsberg contributed to the Pentagon Papers and went back to work for the Rand Corporation, which held several copies.

Increasingly dismayed by how senior administration officials continued to mislead the American people, sending more young men to die in vain, Ellsberg took the courageous step of surreptitiously removing volumes and photocopying them over several months. These pages would find their way to *The New York Times*’ ace reporter on the war, Neil Sheehan, igniting renewed anti-war protests and a political firestorm when *The Times* began publishing excerpts on June 13, 1971.

The venerable *Washington Post* (founded 1877) had long been owned by the Graham family company. Katharine “Kay” Graham (Meryl Streep, nominated for best actress) had taken over as publisher following the tragedy of her husband’s suicide in 1963. A prominent Washington socialite, she also considered McNamara to be an old friend. Indeed he was a guest at a gathering she held in her home in the midst of the turmoil. She was surrounded by powerful men, notably *The Post*’s hard-driving executive editor, Ben Bradlee (Tom Hanks), and her chief adviser, Fritz Beebe (Tracy Letts), as well as being the only woman in rooms full of assertive male bankers and lawyers.

The timing was critical to *The Post*’s fortunes in another respect as it was being listed through a public offering on the American Stock Exchange in order to raise funds, hence vulnerable to nervous investors as well as potential criminal prosecution for leaking government secrets. While Kay hesitated (meeting privately with McNamara at one point) she did not flinch and made clear she had the last word.

In the lead-up to these dramatic events, there was a kerfuffle over a *Post* reporter being barred from covering the wedding of one of President Nixon’s daughters. But sensing something much more important, Bradlee suspected Sheehan might be about to break a big story at the rival *Times* headed by Abe Rosenthal (Michael Stuhlbarg). His competitive instincts were aroused. Although Bradlee was unable to discover the content, he put a trusted reporter, Ben Bagdikian (Bob Odenkirk), on the case. After the initial story broke, the Nixon White House quickly got a federal judge to issue a temporary injunction blocking further excerpts from appearing in *The Times*. That created an opportunity for *The Post* to publish, and a crucial moment of decision after Bagdikian was able to track down Ellsberg as the source and obtain 4,000 pages of the Pentagon Papers from him.

The problem, for the *Post*’s lawyers, was that if this was the same source as that used by *The New York Times*, the injunction could subject the paper to prosecution under the Espionage Act. Graham and Bradlee could have faced jail time for contempt of court. *The Post*’s very survival could have been on the line. In the circumstances the late night call to “roll the presses!” was a courageous act for the rights of a free press, one that was vindicated within days by a 6-3 Supreme Court decision upholding the right to publish.

Streep and Hanks, together for



Fox

THE POST — Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks (left) star in *The Post*, which has been nominated for an Academy Award in the best film category. Streep has also earned an acting nomination.

the first time on screen, do great work. The whole ensemble is strong, working from a sharp screenplay by Liz Hannah and Josh Singer (co-writer of the 2015 Oscar best picture *Spotlight* which also highlighted the vital role of investigative journalism). Spielberg’s assured direction, more methodical than flashy, proves effective in conveying the high stakes involved.

The Pentagon Papers revelations were deeply disturbing to both Graham and Bradlee as they had been on friendly terms with the administrations of “Jack” Kennedy and LBJ. They had to accept the evidence that, to cite the title of a 2016 documentary about gadfly journalistic icon I.F. Stone, “all governments lie.” Still, some governments lie more often, blatantly and vindictively than others. *The Post* actually ends with the discovery of the burglary of the offices of the Democratic National Committee a year later in June 1972, which led to the “Watergate” scandal that brought down Nixon. And as Chris Knight observes in his *National Post* review: “When we hear Nixon (the film used his actual recordings) railing against *The Post* and telling an aide their reporters are to be banned from the White House, it’s impossible not to imagine a president flailing about over ‘fake news’ and demanding that reporters be fired for disagreeing with him.”

Parallels to the dangers posed by Trump’s war on a free press that is less than “loyal” to him are clearly intended. That’s also reflected in the look of the picture as shot by Spielberg’s regular cinematographer Janusz Kaminski. As the director told *The Hollywood Reporter*: “I wanted this movie to feel very contemporary, just like the story. I wanted people to feel there is a (direct parallel) between what was happening in 1971 — and the Nixon administration and *Washington Post* — and

what’s happening right now with this administration and (Trump’s) desire to control the press and freedom of speech.”

The threat is to American democracy itself as explained by Yale University professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*. Pertinently he writes: “In 1971, contemplating the lies told in the United States about the Vietnam War, the political theorist Hannah Arendt took comfort in the inherent power of facts to overcome falsehoods in a free society. . . . We need print journalists so that stories can develop on the page and in our minds. . . . The better print journalists allow us to consider the meaning, for ourselves and our country, of what might otherwise seem to be isolated bits of information. But while anyone can repost an article, research and writing is hard work that requires time and money. Before you deride the ‘mainstream media,’ note that it is no longer the mainstream. It is derision that is mainstream and easy, actual journalism that is edgy and difficult . . . the work of people who adhere to journalistic ethics is of a different quality than the work of those who do not.” In short, the public’s right to know the truth still matters for a democracy to be worthy of the name.

— DAY-LEWIS, page 11



Focus Features

PHANTOM THREAD — Daniel Day-Lewis and Vicky Krieps star in *Phantom Thread*. Both actors and the film have received Academy Award nominations.

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‘Both lungs’ spirit brings students together

Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



Today the darkness of the world vanishes with the appearance of our God.

Today the celestials celebrate with the terrestrials, and the terrestrials commune with the celestials.

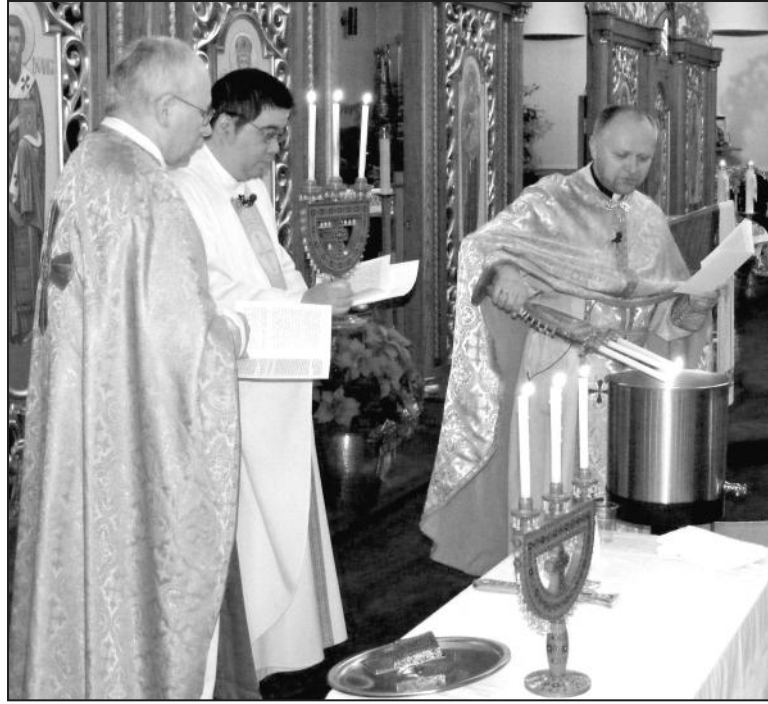
— The Great Service for the Sanctification of the Water

Christians both East and West are united in their celebration of feast days, or holy days, which commemorate significant events in our salvation history. Christmas and Easter are universally recognized as momentous events in re-establishing our relationship with God. Perhaps equally significant is the feast celebrated Jan. 6. Although the moment chosen to celebrate differs between East and West as does the theology behind the feast, the essence is the same — God Incarnate is made manifest to the world.

Kostyniuk, who lives in Edmonton, has a bachelor of theology from Newman and is a freelance writer. He and his wife Bev have been married for 39 years and have eight grandchildren.

In the West, Jan. 6 is known as Epiphany and recalls the visit of the magi to Bethlehem. The word Epiphany is from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning manifestation or appearance. In classical Greek it was used to describe the appearance of dawn, and also the manifestation of a deity to a worshipper. Thus Epiphany is particularly apt in reminding us that the magi brought about what might be termed the first “public recognition” of Jesus as the Son of God. In many Latin American countries the festival is celebrated as Three Kings, giving prominence to those who sought out the Christ Child on their own.

In the East, Theophany draws our attention to the very centre of our faith — revelation of the Holy Trinity when Jesus was baptized by John the Forerunner in the Jordan. Not only does God appear,



Brent Kostyniuk

BLESSING OF WATER — Rev. Mihajlo Planchak, Rev. Andrew Leung, CSB, and Rev. Julian Bilyj celebrate the Ukrainian Catholic service for the Sanctification of Water for students of St. Nicholas Catholic School in Edmonton.

but God is revealed as the Triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Also derived from an ancient Greek word, Theophany means appearance of a god. As we read in Mark, “And immediately on coming up from the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, as a dove, descending and remaining on him. And there came a voice from the heavens: You are my beloved Son; in you I am well

pleased.” The feast is thus also known as the Manifestation of God, or more popularly as the Feast of Jordan, or simply Jordan.

Recently, students from St. Nicholas Catholic School in Edmonton took part in a truly Both Lungs event. Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church is the only Catholic parish within easy walking distance of the school. The

happy coincidence has brought about a unique collaboration, as Rev. Mihajlo Planchak, pastor of Protection, explains. “We have had new co-operation between the school and the parish. They asked if they could use our church for a mass for Epiphany, which was agreed. Later it was decided that we should concelebrate it and include a Blessing of the Water.”

Thus it was that Father Mihajlo, along with Rev. Julian Bilyj, chaplain for Edmonton Catholic Schools, and Rev. Andrew Leung, CSB, pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish, concelebrated the Blessing of Water, with each priest taking an equal part. Throughout, Father Julian explained the significance of prayers and actions such as when the priest makes the sign of the cross three times over the water with a three-branched candle, saying, “Great art You, O Lord, and wondrous are your deeds, no single word will suffice to sing of your wonders.” After, the three concelebrated a Latin-rite mass.

Later, Kathryn Herzog, the school’s chaplain, reflected on the event. “We at St. Nicholas School are so happy to have created a connection with Father Mihajlo Planchak at Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish. For many years it was just known as ‘the church down the lane,’ as staff and students instead attended St. Clare Parish much further down the road. This year, however, a connection was finally made and we are so happy that one was.”

This connection is bringing surprising knowledge of the East to St. Nicholas students, as Kathryn Herzog explains. “Already Father Planchak has come in to talk with students and has given church tours, wonderfully explaining some of the Ukrainian rite to students. I reflect fondly to the quiet gasps when the students found out Father Planchak was married *and* had daughters. Father Planchak smiled and kindly explained that particular difference between the Latin and Ukrainian rite.

“To be able to expose students to the Ukrainian rite has shown that our Catholic Church is truly universal. It also shows the different traditions between the rites like the water blessing. For the majority of staff and students, this was the first time they had seen this water blessing. The explanations of the symbols were appreciated and gave us all a greater understanding of these Ukrainian traditions.

“Now, when students see vials of the holy water in our classrooms, they’ll reflect back on the initial blessing. We look forward to strengthening our connection with Father Planchak and his parish. He is even coming this week to bless our classrooms, as in the Ukrainian rite, this is when he would be going into his parishioners’ homes and blessing them. It is always a beautiful thing when our staff and students can be witnesses to our universal faith.”

Sometimes things just seem to go right. The unique connection between St. Nicholas school and Protection parish brings heart-warming knowledge that the Both Lungs spirit can, and does, exist. It is, perhaps, a marriage made in heaven.

Listening is a rare skill that requires practice

Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



“I don’t think I listened to you very well the other day. I’m sorry; let’s try again. What’s up?” I am out walking with a friend on a beautiful winter day. Our conversation begins with my apology.

A few days prior my husband and I had been out for dinner with this friend and her husband. Over the salad course she began telling me about something that was bothering her. I was quick to offer a word of advice and the conversation moved on. It was only later, in reflecting on the evening, that I realized that while I had heard my friend, I had not listened to her.

Hearing, like seeing, is more than a biological process. Just as we can look and not see, we can hear and not listen. How often in Scripture does Jesus say, “They have ears but do not hear!” The

Prather, BEd, MTh, is a teacher and facilitator in the areas of faith and spirituality. She was executive director at Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert, Alta., for 21 years and resides in Sherwood Park with her husband, Bob. They are blessed with four children and 10 grandchildren.

common mode of human discourse, experts point out, is distracted or superficial listening.

Studies show that in most conversations participants are busy planning what they are going to say while the other is still speaking. People talk past each other, abhor silence and rush to fill in any gaps. Listening to another’s problems, they are quick to offer advice and move on.

A favourite cartoon of mine shows a husband and wife sitting in chairs across from one another in a living room. The husband has a newspaper held up in front of him and the caption is the wife speaking to him: “You can quit saying yes, I stopped talking an hour ago.” Inevitably we leave these types of conversations unsatisfied and empty.

Active listening, or deep listening, is different. It’s not about simply hearing the sounds; it’s about apprehending and understanding. It involves setting aside one’s own agenda in order to really hear the other. Such listening requires time, patience and attention. One has to listen for both content and feeling, and one allows silence to have its time. Deep listening knows that time is required in order for the deepest

emotions and thoughts to emerge. You are listening not to respond, but in order to appreciate; interruptions, refuting, contradicting and arguing have no place in the conversation.

Listening at this level is an act of love. “Listen with the ear of your heart,” St. Benedict instructs us, because the heart has a different faculty for knowing. It is more direct, intuitive, and contemplative. With the heart, one listens compassionately, refrains from judging, and offers insights but not advice. The other is freed to speak their truth, knowing they will be heard with empathy. It is through such listening that we come to know the other and relationships are established and deepened.

Furthermore, when someone listens to us at that level, we know we have received a gift. Our hearts are lighter, our thoughts clarified, and our paths often clearer. We can work through emotions and come to understand what is happening to us. Counsellors have commented that such listening is much of what they do in their work. We are blessed when we have such friends and relationships in our lives.

So here we were, my friend and I. We do have such a relationship and mostly we are very good at listening to one another. Our walk afforded me the opportunity to remedy my lapse. Acknowledging my poor listening on the previous occasion, I invited her to tell me again what was bothering her. As we walked through the neighbourhood, she began speaking, this time with more detail, some halt-

ing language and lots of emotion.

As the flow of words slowed, I asked a few questions for clarification and invited her to elaborate on her feelings. As she did so, the heightened emotions lessened and some perspective began to emerge for her. She started to make connections with other events and even began thinking of some strategies to move forward. As the conversation wound down, her comment was, “Thank you for listening.”

“Thank you for listening.” The episode leads me to wonder: how well do I really listen to others? Whose heart do I hear? Are there people in my life who would love for me to listen to them but I tune them out for various reasons? How can I be a better listener to those around me?

I think also about the people who listen to me in a heartfelt manner. With whom am I free to express my deepest feelings, knowing I will be understood? Do I express my appreciation for them for the gift of their listening?

Finally, I am led to look at my prayer time, my conversations with God. Distracted, inattentive, superficial: I can be all of these things in prayer. I have ears to hear but, too often, the receptors are off. What might happen if, “Speak Lord, I’m listening,” was my prayer and deep listening my practice?

“True beauty is a warm heart, a kind soul, and an attentive ear,” writes Ken Poirot. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we all listened more with the ears of our hearts? Then “Thank you for listening” would not be such a rare comment, and we’d all be the happier for it.

Concealing our ‘leprous’ spots keeps us from healing

Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



Do you ever wonder why there is so much talk about leprosy in the Bible? Certainly, leprosy was a dreaded disease in Jesus’ time, a disease that led to profound physical suffering, social exclusion, and spiritual angst. Leprosy in the gospels, however, is more than a historical phenomenon. It serves as a key symbol of our human brokenness and need.

To be leprous is to be frail and broken, excluded and ashamed, needy and repulsive. To be leprous is to have all those aspects of the human condition we would rather deny exposed. To be leprous is to have our hidden and shameful selves revealed. Leprosy, in this wider sense, is something we all experience. What Scripture teaches us, however, is how to best deal with our broken, hidden selves. This week’s readings do so in a particularly powerful way.

The man with leprosy approaches Jesus. We can learn from his approach. We know from the first reading that this was a bold, even unlawful, act. The law of Moses

Rompré is the director of Mission and Ministry at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.

taught that those with a leprosy should be segregated from the community, shouting “Unclean, unclean” to warn anyone who might come near. So, for the leprous man to approach Jesus is already an act of courage. He is pushing back against the social constraints that would have him hide his disease, and rebelling against those messages that tell him he is unworthy of healing. Instead, he acknowledges his need for Jesus’ touch and comes forward in humility and trust. “If you choose,” he says, “you can make me clean.”

We have much to learn from this courageous and humble man. When it comes to our own leprous spots, we are often tempted to keep them hidden, segregated from human company, preferring to live behind a mask of superficial success rather than exposing our truer, mottled selves. But these masks keep us away from Jesus and, more importantly, from Jesus’ healing touch. The man living with leprosy teaches us the importance of openly admitting our need, of revealing our broken selves to our loving God.

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 11, 2018	Leviticus 13:1-2, 45-46 Psalm 32 1 Corinthians 10:31 — 11:1 Mark 1:40-45
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What is true for us as individuals is also true for our communities and institutions. What leprous spots remain hidden within our social interactions, blemishes of injustice and abuse, misused power and oppression? This brokenness, too, needs to be revealed and brought forward to Christ’s healing touch.

This revelatory work has been the task of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, for example.

Similarly, the #MeToo campaign is working to expose the ugly underbelly of sexual coercion within our institutions. This is important work, the necessary precursor to societal healing and transformation.

As we continue the gospel story, we also see how Jesus responds. Jesus, too, transcends the social boundaries. He goes beyond the taboos that would maintain a healthy distance from others’ messy brokenness. Jesus allows the man to approach, he is moved with pity, he stretches out his hand, and, get this, touches him! Jesus is willing to get his hands dirty, to touch the man’s shame and tenderly embrace his brokenness. In this “touching” moment, healing happens.

Both Jesus and the man with leprosy step outside of the norm. The man reaches out and admits his shame, while Jesus reaches back and embraces it. Therein lies the lesson. We are called to ignore all those messages, be they internal or social, that would have us keep hidden our broken selves. We are called to acknowledge our pain and seek healing, even if that means going outside of our normal and familiar patterns of existence. We can do this because we trust, we trust in a God who is willing to touch our inner “yucky-ness” and embrace it with healing love. God reaches into our hidden and shameful spaces and transforms us. We can be made clean.

“I do choose. Be made clean!” Jesus’ words respond to our deepest human desires. Jesus always chooses our liberation and seeks to make us whole again. When we are ready to reveal our leprous spots, Jesus is ready to touch our hidden selves.

Then, with the psalmist and the leprous man, we can sing: “Be glad in the Lord and rejoice . . . shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”

Divisions will remain until we can transform rather than enflame hatred

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



We live in a world of deep divisions. Everywhere we see polarization, people bitterly divided from each other by ideology, politics, economic theory, moral beliefs, and theology. We tend to use overly simplistic categories within which to understand these divisions: the left and the right opposing each other, liberals and conservatives at odds, pro-life vying with pro-choice.

Virtually every social and moral issue is a war zone: the status of women, climate change, gender roles, sexuality, marriage and family as institutions, the role of government, how the LGBTQ community is to be understood, among other issues. And our churches aren’t exempt; too often we cannot agree on anything.

Civility has disappeared from public discourse even within our churches where there is now as much division and hostility within each denomination as there is between them. More and more, we cannot discuss openly any sensitive matter, even within our own families. Instead we discuss politics, religion, and values only within our own ideological circles; and there, rather than challenging each other, we mostly end up feeding each other in our biases and indignations thus becoming even more intolerant, bitter, and judgmental.

Scripture calls this enmity, hatred, and indeed that’s its proper name. We are becoming hate-filled people who both fuel and justify our hatred on religious and moral grounds. We need only to watch the news on any night to see this. How’s this to be overcome?

At the more macro level in politics and religion, it’s hard to see how these bitter divides will ever be bridged, especially when so much of our public discourse is feeding and widening the division. What’s needed is nothing short of religious conversion, a religious change of heart, and that’s contingent on the individual. The collective heart will change only when individual hearts first do. We help save the sanity of the world by first safeguarding our own sanity, but that’s no easy task.

It’s not as simple as everyone simply agreeing to think nicer thoughts. Nor, it seems, will we find much common ground in our public dialogues. The dialogue that’s needed isn’t easily come by; certainly we haven’t come by it yet. Many groups are trying for it, but without much success. Generally what happens is that

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the even most-well intended dialogue quickly degenerates into an attempt by each side to score its own ideological points rather than in genuinely trying to understand each other. Where does that leave us?

The real answer, I believe, lies in an understanding of how the cross and death of Jesus brings about reconciliation. The author of the Letter to the Ephesians tells us that Jesus broke down the barrier of hostility that existed between communities by creating one person where formerly there had been two — and he did this “by reconciling both (sides) in one body through his cross, which put that enmity to death” (Eph 2:16).

How does the cross of Christ put enmity to death? Not through some kind of magic. Jesus didn’t break down the divisions between us by mystically paying off some debt for our sins through his suffering, as if God needed to be appeased by blood to forgive us and open the gates of heaven. That image is simply the metaphor behind our icons and language about being washed clean of sin and saved by the blood of Christ. What happened in the cross and death of Jesus is something that asks for our imitation, not simply our admiration. What happened in the cross and death of Jesus is an example for us to imitate. What are we to imitate?

What Jesus did in his passion and death was to transform bitterness and division rather than to retransmit them and give them back in kind. In the love he showed in his passion and death, Jesus did this: He took in hatred, held it inside himself, transformed it, and gave back love. He took in bitterness, held it, transformed it, and gave back graciousness. He took in curses, held them, transformed them, and gave back blessing. He took in paranoia, held it, transformed it, and gave back big-heartedness. He took in murder, held it, transformed it, and gave back forgiveness. And he took in enmity, bitter division, held it, transformed it, and through that revealed to us the deep secret for forming community, namely, we need to take away the hatred that divides us by absorbing and holding it within ourselves and thereby transforming it.

Like a water purifier that holds

within itself the toxins and the poisons and gives back only pure water, we must hold within ourselves the toxins that poison community and give back only graciousness and openness to everyone. That’s the only key to overcome division.

We live in bitterly divisive times, paralyzed in terms of meeting amicably on virtually every sensitive issue of politics, economics, morality, and religion. That stalemate will remain until, one by one, we each transform rather than enflame and retransmit the hatred that divides us.

ress and decides to make her his model and inspiration. A complex relationship develops that is something to behold. Amid the sometimes stormy moments there is a suggestion they have become lovers. As we follow the threads of the story the intricate hand-stitched creations (from designer Mark Bridges) that are the fruit of this collaboration share centre stage (the film has received a nomination for costume design).

As a rule, the fashion world doesn’t much interest me (or what lies behind those perennial red-carpet questions “what and who is she wearing?”). But this evocative character study, which also benefits from a fine original score by Jonny Greenwood, ruffles a lot more than beautiful clothes. Day-Lewis gives us the satisfaction of another memorably idiosyncratic performance. Krieps excels too. (Watch for her as Jenny Marx in Raoul Peck’s new movie *The Young Karl Marx*.) It’s enough to enjoy the flourishes in this strange fashion-struck tale.

Day-Lewis gives another idiosyncratic performance

Continued from page 9

* * *

Phantom Thread, the new film from writer-director-cinematographer Paul Thomas Anderson, is getting admiration as well as attention for being reputedly the final performance of 61-year-old British acting legend Daniel Day-Lewis who already owns three best actor Oscars (and is nominated in that category for this role). The film is also nominated for best picture.

Day-Lewis portrays a mid-20th century British dressmaker, Reynolds Jeremiah Woodcock, an obsessive perfectionist who runs the celebrated haute couture Woodcock House with his trusted sister Cyril (Lesley Manville, nominated for best supporting actress). As always, Day-Lewis completely inhabits the role, the solitary nature of which is challenged when the fastidious bachelor discovers a young German immigrant, Alma (Vicky Krieps), working as a wait-

Pope Francis has a blind spot on sexual abuse

By Thomas Reese
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The overwhelming consensus in the media is that Pope Francis has a blind spot when it comes to sexual abuse.

He may be on the side of refugees, migrants, the sick, the poor, the indigenous and other marginalized peoples, but he just doesn't get it when it comes to victims of abuse.

The evidence for this assertion is the pope's unwavering support for Rev. Juan Barros, whom he appointed bishop of Osorno, Chile, despite accusations from victims that he witnessed and covered up abuse by Rev. Fernando Karadima, the charismatic priest who in 2011 was found guilty by the Vatican of

Rev. Thomas J. 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 (1978 - 85) and editor-in-chief (1998 - 2005) at America magazine.

abusing minors in his upscale Santiago parish.

In a leaked letter to the Chilean bishops, Francis defended his January 2015 appointment of Barros to Osorno. Francis acknowledged that the Vatican was so concerned about the crisis in Chile that it planned to ask Barros, who was the bishop for the military, and two other bishops to resign and take a sabbatical. Despite these concerns, Francis appointed Barros anyway.

Francis' defence of Barros has been excessive, accusing his detractors of calumny and being leftist agitators. He said he would not believe the accusations until he was given proof.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley publicly corrected the pope's words:

It is understandable that Pope Francis' statements yesterday in Santiago, Chile, were a source of great pain for survivors of sexual abuse by clergy or any other perpetrator. Words that convey the message "if you cannot prove your claims then you will not be believed" abandon those who have suffered reprehensible crim-

inal violations of their human dignity and relegate survivors to discredited exile.

Francis accepted O'Malley's criticism and apologized for saying the victims need to show "proof" to be believed. But he continued to say that anyone who made accusations against the bishop without providing evidence was guilty of slander.

"I can't condemn him because I don't have evidence," Francis said. "But I'm also convinced that he's innocent."

But O'Malley is right. It is often impossible to produce evidence of crimes that are committed in secrecy. It can often come down to whether you believe the victims.

One of the few journalists to come to Francis' defence is Austen Ivereigh, contributing editor at Crux and author of one of the best biographies of Francis.

"Victimhood doesn't just elicit sympathy," he writes, "it lends credibility, and confers moral authority. So, despite the fact that the bishops consistently and firmly deny that they witnessed Kara-

dima's abuse (and, in the case of Barros, that he ever received a letter detailing that abuse while serving as secretary to Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno of Santiago), and despite no verified evidence in any civil or canonical case so far that the bishops are lying, the charges against them have stuck in the media."

He notes that the victims are so far unsuccessfully suing the Archdiocese of Santiago for \$450,000. The case "depends on demonstrating that those in authority knew and failed to act on the abuse they suffered."

"There are plenty of other questions to be asked about the victims' case," he concludes, "but few dare to do so for fear of being accused of 'revictimizing' them."

I would argue that both Barros and the victims deserve their day in court, both in civil court and in ecclesiastical court.

Francis is not helping by throwing around accusations of slander and calumny. It is wrong to declare, before the process is completed, that he is convinced the bishop is innocent and his

accusers are lying. His job is to see to it that there is a transparent and legitimate process in place to handle such accusations and then get out of the way. To appoint a bishop to a new diocese before his name was cleared was a serious mistake. Francis' advisers were correct; the bishop should have taken a sabbatical.

The fundamental problem is that the church has no process for judging bishops that is transparent and has legitimacy with the public.

The bishop may or may not be innocent, but no one will trust a secret process that involves clerics investigating clerics, clerics judging clerics.

The past decades have shown that no profession is good at judging its own, whether police, doctors, lawyers, teachers, politicians, government workers, athletes, coaches, entertainers, spies, the military or clergy. Too often colleagues look the other way and don't want to believe that their friend is guilty. When guilt becomes apparent, there is the temptation to deal with it internally and keep it secret lest the profession suffer.

It took too long, but the church now has procedures in place for dealing with abusive priests that involve lay review boards, suspension while an investigation takes place, collecting evidence, hearing from victims and zero tolerance for abusers. It is not a perfect system, and sometimes it is ignored, but at least it exists.

There is no similar process for handling accusations against bishops for failing to report and deal with bad priests.

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors recommended that Francis set up a separate office in the Vatican to deal with bishops who fail to do their job protecting children. At first, he agreed, but then he left the job with the Congregation for Bishops and existing Vatican offices. That was a mistake. The office that creates bishops will never be eager to uncover evidence that the man it helped become a bishop is a failure.

The Catholic Church could learn from secular governments on how to structure itself to deal with crimes and coverups, especially those that do not come under the jurisdiction of secular authorities.

Spiritual ecumenism and quest for Christian unity

Challenge of Ecumenism

Thomas Ryan, CSP



In late January the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was observed around the world. Hopefully, there was at least one event in your town or city that brought Christians together to join their hearts and voices in prayer.

This Week of Prayer was originally initiated by Rev. Paul Wattson in 1908 as a Church Unity Octave. Father Paul founded the Society of the Atonement at Graymoor, Garrison, N.Y., with the mission of promoting Christian unity. He believed that an annual time set aside for prayer and seminars would advance the cause and deepen people's understanding of the ecumenical movement.

A huge advance in deepening that understanding within the Catholic Church was the 1962 - 65 Second Vatican Council. One of the two reasons offered by Pope John XXIII in convoking it was the promotion of Christian unity. In the Council's landmark Decree on Ecumenism, the world assembly of bishops gave priority of place to prayer: "Spiritual ecumenism should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement." They defined it as "change of heart and holiness of life" as well as "public and private prayer for the unity of Christians" (Decree on Ecumenism, 8).

Cardinal Walter Kasper, who

Ryan directs the Paulist North American Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, now located in Boston.

directed for several years the work of the Vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, said, "The first place in spiritual ecumenism belongs to prayer, which joins Jesus' own prayer on the eve of his death, 'that all may be one' (Jn 17:21)."

But Cardinal Kasper then identified various other expressions of spiritual ecumenism as well: the shared reading and meditation of Sacred Scripture; exchanges between monasteries, communities and spirituality movements; visits to pilgrim sites and centres of spirituality.

He also saw as one of the most encouraging signs the creation of ecumenical monasteries like Taizé (France), Grandchamp (Switzerland), and Bose (Italy); international lay movements and institutes of consecrated life like Focolare, the Community of Sant'Egidio, and the l'Arche Federation.

When John Paul II told the College of Cardinals in a state-of-the-church address, "I pray every day for Christian unity," I couldn't help but wonder how many Christians could say as much. Imagine what a different church it would be if many members in all the churches that make up the one church of Christ could say the same.

It would make a difference because prayer's first effect is in us. Our own hearts and minds would be shaped by our own prayer and become more sensitive to the opportunities we have to translate that prayer into practice. Prayer is and will always hold the first

place in unity efforts because it is prayer that most changes our hearts, and it is our hearts that most need to be changed.

That said, as we noted, spiritual ecumenism encompasses more than simply prayer for unity. It is also an exchange of spiritual gifts — contemplative and charismatic ways of praying, *lectio divina*, devotional practices, the theology of icons, the tradition of spiritual direction, effective approaches to youth and young adults, the practice of annual retreats and monthly desert days, methods of singing, preaching, and sharing the faith.

After working for 14 years at the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism, I saw the need for more places where Christians from different traditions of practice could come together for days at a time to share faith and life with one another and engage in the exchange of spiritual gifts. So I became involved in the work of founding Unitas, an ecumenical centre for spirituality co-sponsored by eight different denominations in Montreal. By the time I left there five years later in response to the Paulist community's call to develop a national Paulist Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Rela-

tions in New York, there were 9,000 participants annually in our programs and retreats. It met a need.

The approach we took there was one of spiritual ecumenism. The time spent in faith sharing and prayer together, the spiritual gifts exchanged, transformed peoples' perceptions of one another and enriched their lives in concrete and lasting ways. Here was a way of engaging in the work for Christian unity that moved on the level of church members and had a direct, positive impact on their lives and their subsequent witness and prayer.

Spiritual ecumenism must seek out and serve life. It must be concerned with everyday human experiences as well as with the great questions of justice and peace and the preservation of creation. Through the prayer, sharing, and ministerial engagement our hearts are turned more fully toward Christ, and the closer we come to him, the more we discover ourselves in unity. And in the exchange of gifts, what is lacking in each of our traditions finds its needed complement.

In what form of spiritual ecumenism might it be possible for you to engage in the year ahead?

— NO ONE, page 13

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‘Joy’ pervades all of life

What is it about Pope Francis that he is so insistent on linking the Christian lifestyle with “joy”?

For example, on Jan. 29 the pope issued revised norms for what are known as “ecclesiastical universities and faculties” — those that grant Vatican-recognized degrees. The document is labelled *Veritatis Gaudium* (The Joy of Truth). It replaces the 1979 constitution published by Pope John Paul II called *Sapientia Christiana* (Christian Wisdom). The Joy of Truth gives a different connotation than Christian Wisdom. Both are correct. But they have a different emphasis.

In a speech the same day to members of the Tribunal of the Roman Rota, which mainly deals with appeals filed in marriage annulment cases, the pope examined the central role conscience plays in the process of discerning the nullity or validity of the bond of marriage. He said it is critical to help young people recognize “with a sure and clear conscience that the conjugal union, open to the gift of children, is a great joy for God, the church and humanity.”

Again, the emphasis on joy.

In his Jan. 20 speech to priests, seminarians and men and women in consecrated life from various parts of Peru, the pope said religious men and women must be marked by joy and gratitude, “which enlarges the heart and inspires us to service.”

In his apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the*

Gospel Pope Francis explained its purpose in the opening paragraph: “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the church’s journey in years to come.”

Later in this document he writes, “Christians have the duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone. Instead of seeming to impose new obligations, they should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. It is not by proselytizing that the church grows, but ‘by attraction’” (15).

“Sharing one’s joy” has a different feel than “imposing new obligations.” Both are correct. But they have a different emphasis.

Pope Francis is not the first to stress joy as a hallmark of a Christian lifestyle. St. Teresa of Avila is often quoted as saying, “From sour-faced saints, good Lord, deliver us.”

Cardinal John Henry Newman said, “The chief grace of primitive Christianity was joy.” Despite being persecuted, the early Christians attracted others by their joy.

Pope John XXIII made a similar observation: “The message of Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was an announce-

ment of joy; it was the joyful good news. It is a mistake to think of Christianity, as did many thinkers and poets of the past, as something solemn and sad. No! Christianity is joy. Joy in right order, in peace with God, with oneself, and with one’s neighbour.”

Pope Francis tries to see everything coloured by joy. It provides a model for us to emulate. — PWN

A message of our subscribers

As most readers of the *Prairie Messenger* are aware, we will cease publication of our paper in May 2018.

For those subscribers who would normally receive a renewal notice during the months of February, March and April, we wish to assure you that you will continue to receive your copy of the *Prairie Messenger*. Renewal notices will not be sent out. Your previous support on our subscription list guarantees your copy until we cease publication.

For any readers who are interested in a new subscription until May 9, 2018 (our closure), we will charge a fee of \$15 to help offset administration and mailing costs.

We are humbled by the outpouring of support for the *Prairie Messenger*. Although this support cannot change the decision made by the Benedictine community to cease publication, it encourages our efforts to continue in our mission to deliver the Good News. — PWN

Too Many ‘Catholic’ bloggers try to discredit Pope Francis

By Phyllis Zagano

I am all for folks voicing their opinions, but when did free speech turn into a free-for-all?

I am not speaking about the so-called “fake news” phenomenon reflecting the political bent of an individual news outlet. I am speaking about the nasty tenor of public discourse, especially the unedited blogs — especially the “Catholic” blogs — that spew all sorts of nonsense around the globe.

Let me explain. As CNN television commentator Chris Cuomo said not long ago: “The situation out there is so ugly. . . . People are out to get you whether whatever is being said is true or not.”

I’m sure the same sentiment appears somewhere in the Bible.

The fact is, bloggers increasingly disrespect their targets, from Pope Francis to the town councillor to the girl next door. Everyone is fair game for self-appointed experts.

Further, understandings of libel and slander float in an amnesiac fog. No one remembers what they are anymore.

For the record, slander is a spoken lie; libel is a published lie.

Short of libel, there are too many negative commentators, even clerics, who dislike anything Pope Francis does.

Witness the wedding on the airplane in Peru. A civilly married couple, both airline stewards, asked for the pope’s blessing. He asked if they were married. Yes, they answered. But on their wedding day in 2010, the church building collapsed and they ended up with a civil marriage.

After asking a few questions and rounding up the requisite witnesses, the pope performed a

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marriage ceremony — technically a convalidation — right then and there. A cardinal hand-wrote a wedding certificate and all signed it. Everybody on the plane was very happy.

Of course, once word got out, the blogosphere exploded and the usual suspects began waiving their Canon Law books, pointing to one or another jot or tittle.

Hello?

The point well made by the Holy Father at 36,000 feet is that Catholics — especially Catholics in civil marriages — should be married in Catholic ceremonies. The negative bloggers, bent on finding something wrong in everything the pope does or says, objected strongly. These included self-appointed marriage experts, few (if any) of whom hold diocesan judicial appointments.

These naysaying electronic equivalents of the town gossip spread distrust and hatred over a perfectly simple fact: A priest met a couple who wanted their marriage (eight years, two children) blessed.

Why are these so-called “Catholic” bloggers so negative? More, why is anyone listening to them?

Is it because their nasty opinions are in print? Once was, words were hard to get published. In fact, it still is hard to be published by reputable outlets. Therein lies the rub. Reputable outlets are being pushed off both stage and screen by self-publishing (and often self-aggrandizing) individuals with more time than training.

Today, upwards of 30 million bloggers spew unedited musings without benefit of fact checkers or editors or publishers who actually attended journalism school. They create fact from their own opinion and gain followers through their negativity.

Nearly two years ago, Basilian Father Thomas Rosica, CEO of the Canadian Salt & Light Catholic Media Foundation, said “Catholic” bloggers had turned their corner of

the Internet into a “cesspool of hatred.” There were about 2,500 “Catholic” blogs then — blogs by clergy and religious — no one knows for sure how many are out there now. Granted they are not all nasty or founded in fantasy. But some of them are. And they repeatedly attack the Holy Father.

Break silence about end-of-life decisions

By Sharon Kaasalainen and Tamara Sussman

Many people must make critical decisions for family and friends who are at the end of their lives. This can create a great deal

Kaasalainen and Sussman are Canadian Frailty Network (CFN) investigators and expert advisers with EvidenceNetwork.ca. Kaasalainen is an associate professor with the School of Nursing at McMaster University. Sussman is an associate professor with the School of Social Work at McGill University. www.troymedia.com

One interesting fact that does not seem to be on the radars of bishops conferences around the world: Clerics need permission to publish in their own dioceses or in others. Bloggers cross diocesan territories. In theory at least, the cleric speaks for the bishop, and with the permission of the bishop

of stress and burden. They must navigate the social and health care systems while coping with their impending loss and grief.

A large proportion of these situations occur in long-term care homes, where almost a third of residents die every year.

In addition, people must often make decisions for loved ones who have lost cognitive capacity. Families and friends struggle with stress and guilt while trying to do what they feel is best.

Our society doesn’t want to talk about aging and death because we have an entrenched belief that quantity of years is always preferred over quality of

in whose territory he publishes. With blogs, the territories are unlimited. So, one might argue that when a blogging cleric disrespects the Holy Father, he is doing so on behalf of his own bishop and with the permission of the rest of the bishops.

Something to think about.

life. This has largely been driven by advancements in life-prolonging technology and treatments.

So when should we forgo these treatments and transition to “comfort care” only? When should medical staff focus on quality end-of-life care instead of trying to make the patient live ever-longer? How can we alleviate stress and guilt?

We all need to start the conversations about end-of life wishes earlier.

In our ongoing research, we interviewed residents of long-

— LONG-TERM, page 15



Westminster Abbey

BISHOPS’ RETREAT — The bishops of Western Canada and the North took part in a retreat for bishops at Westminster Abbey, Mission, B.C. Jan. 8 - 11. Bishop-emeritus Gerald Wiesner was a last-minute substitute as retreat master and some bishops cancelled at the last minute because of a health alert at the abbey.

Pope praises Ukrainian women of faith in Rome

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Pope Francis' visit to the Ukrainian Catholic Basilica of Santa Sophia in Rome combined elements of his parish visits with elements of his visits to centres for migrants and refugees.

While the basilica is a fully functioning parish, most of its members are migrant women working in Rome and sending money home to their families in Ukraine.

In his speech to the community gathered at Santa Sophia Jan. 28, Pope Francis offered his own reflection on The Vibrant Parish: a Place to Encounter the Living Christ, which is the theme of a multiyear renewal effort in Ukrainian Catholic parishes around the world.

"A vibrant parish is a place to encounter the living Christ," he said. "I hope that you always will come here for the bread for your daily journey, the consolation of your hearts, the healing of your wounds."

A vibrant parish, he said, also is the place to pass on the faith to the younger generations.

"Young people need to perceive this: that the church is not a museum, that the church is not a tomb," the pope added. They

need to see that "the church is alive, that the church gives life and that God is Jesus Christ, the living Christ, in the midst of the church."

But Pope Francis also spoke about the loneliness of being a migrant, the hard work and low pay many Ukrainian women receive in caring for children or the elderly in Italy and, particularly, the worry and concern over the ongoing war in Eastern Ukraine.

The pope also used the visit as a way to underline the importance of remembering the past and honouring those who dedicated their lives to preserving and sharing the faith, including under the harshest conditions, when the Ukrainian Catholic Church was outlawed by the Soviet Union and its bishops and many of its priests were imprisoned.

The first person he honoured was the late Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, who was exiled to Rome after 18 years in Soviet jails and gulags. The cardinal built the basilica as a cathedral for the Ukrainian Catholic Church, which was banned in its homeland.

Pope Francis said the cardinal wanted it "to shine like a prophetic sign of freedom in the years when access to many houses of worship was forbidden. But with

the sufferings he endured and offered to the Lord, he contributed to building another temple, even grander and more beautiful, the edifice of living stones which is you," the pope told the faithful.

Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, major archbishop of Kiev-Halych and head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, welcomed Pope Francis to the basilica. He said that while officially there are about 200,000 Ukrainians living in Italy, the number is probably double that. About 17,000 people attend the Divine Liturgy each week in one of 145 Ukrainian Catholic communities in Italy; they are served by 65 priests, the archbishop said.

The archbishop also said he hoped Pope Francis' visit to the basilica would be just the first step toward a papal visit to Ukraine.

Pope Francis urged the community members to remember all those who suffered in Ukraine to preserve the faith and to hand it on, including mothers and grandmothers who baptized their children or grandchildren at great risk when Ukraine was under Soviet domination.



CNS/Remo Casilli, Reuters

POPE VISITS UKRAINIAN BASILICA — Pope Francis delivers his speech as he attends a meeting with the Ukrainian Catholic community at the Basilica of Santa Sophia in Rome Jan. 28. Seated near the pope is Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kiev-Halych, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Most of its parishioners are migrant women working in Rome and sending money home to their families in Ukraine.

That same commitment to faith and desire to share it, he said, is seen today in the

Ukrainian women who work for Italian families and become witnesses of faith to them.

Support families, human dignity, Davos leaders told

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Global leaders must implement policies that support the family and offer real opportunities for the growth and development of all people, Pope Francis told people attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

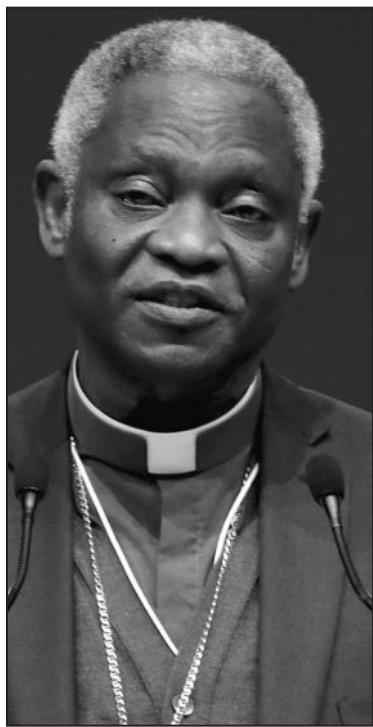
"If we want a more secure future, one that encourages the prosperity of all, then it is necessary to keep the compass continually oriented toward 'true North,' represented by authentic values," he wrote.

"Now is the time to take courageous and bold steps for our beloved planet. This is the right moment to put into action our responsibility to contribute to the development of humanity," he told corporate and political leaders.

The pope's message was read at the meeting Jan. 22 by Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

The annual meeting in Davos brought together people representing business, government, academia and media to discuss the theme, Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World. They were to address topics such as sustainable development and inclusive economies as well as challenges posed by cyberattacks and divisive "narratives."

In his written message, the pope said, "we are increasingly aware that there is a growing frag-



CNS/Denis Balibouse, Reuters

Cardinal Peter Turkson

mentation between states and institutions."

The pope told world leaders and global executives that they must confront both new and lingering problems and challenges, such as unemployment, poverty, economic and social inequality, and new forms of slavery.

"It is vital to safeguard the dignity of the human person, in particular by offering to all people real opportunities for integral human development and by implementing economic policies that favour the family," he said.

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The idea of exceptionally ordaining older married men of proven virtue to celebrate the eucharist in isolated Catholic communities is something that should be discussed, said Cardinal Beniamino Stella, prefect of the Congregation for Clergy.

"It is not about being in favour of or against something, but about attentively evaluating various possibilities without being closed or rigid," the cardinal said in a new book in Italian, "*Tutti gli Uomini di Francesco*" ("All Francis' Men") released Jan. 22 by Edizioni San Paolo.

The book, by Italian journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona, includes interviews with churchmen named to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis.

Pope Francis was asked by the German newspaper *Die Zeit* last year about whether, in the Latin-rite church, he could see allowing married *virī probati* — men of proven virtue — to become priests.

"We have to study whether *virī probati* are a possibility. We then also need to determine which tasks they could take on, such as in remote communities, for example," Pope Francis said.

The issue is expected to come up in the 2019 special gathering of the Synod of Bishops to study questions related to the church's pastoral work in the Amazon. Already at synods in 1990 on the priesthood and 2005 on the eucharist some bishops — especially from Brazil's Amazon region — suggested ordaining married men as the only way to ensure Catholics in isolated villages could receive the eucharist regularly.

Stella said that in the Amazon or in some remote Pacific islands, "but not only, there is acute suffering because of a real 'sacramental emergency,' which the few

priests present are not able to accommodate."

The discussion Pope Francis wants the church to have, he said, is to look seriously at all the options for responding to people's real hunger for the eucharist and honouring its central place in the life of the church.

While the Catholic Church throughout the world, especially in the more secularized West, must improve its vocations work, Stella said, it also should study the possibilities and see if "the Spirit suggests something."

One possibility to explore is the exceptional ordination of older married men in remote com-

munities, he said. "Continuing to maintain their family and jobs and receiving a formation contextualized for their environment, they could offer part-time service to the community they come from in order to guarantee the sacraments, especially by presiding at the eucharistic celebration."

But an "attentive study and a widespread ecclesial discernment" are necessary before moving in that direction, he said, adding that the ordination of elders in those cases would never mean changing the usual requirements for and ministry of priests in the Latin Rite and "in no way would lead to optional celibacy."

Pope revises norms for theology, philosophy studies

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholic university programs in philosophy, theology and canon law — especially those designed for future priests — must be marked by fidelity to church tradition, academic rigour and an awareness of the challenges to belief in the modern world, Pope Francis said.

In the apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (The Joy of Truth), the pope issued revised norms for what are known as "ecclesiastical universities and faculties" — those that grant Vatican-recognized degrees, which are necessary for teaching most philosophy, theology and canon law courses in seminaries and pontifical universities.

Cardinal Giuseppe Versaldi, prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, presented the document to the press Jan. 29 at the Vatican, saying it "indicates the meaning and, more specifically, the basic criteria for a renewal

and relaunching of the contribution of ecclesiastical studies to a missionary church that 'goes forth.'"

The constitution replaces *Sapientia Christiana* (Christian Wisdom), an apostolic constitution issued by St. John Paul II in 1979; the new document includes the amendments made to the norms in *Sapientia Christiana* by St. John Paul in 2002, by Pope Benedict XVI in 2011 and by Pope Francis in 2015, the cardinal said.

Pope Francis wrote in the new constitution that it was time "to promote with thoughtful and prophetic determination the renewal of ecclesiastical studies at every level, as part of the new phase of the church's mission, marked by witness to the joy born of encountering Jesus and proclaiming his Gospel."

A key motivation, he said, was to find ways to respond positively to the call of the Second Vatican Council "to overcome this divorce between theology and pastoral care, between faith and life."

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.

— Martin Luther King Jr.