



## Refugees welcomed

World Religion Day was more special than usual this year as members and friends of the Regina Multi Faith Forum gathered at Beth Jacob Synagogue to welcome a Syrian refugee family the forum has sponsored.

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## Week of Prayer

The opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was celebrated with Scripture, prayer and song at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Saskatoon.

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## Samaritan Place

Samaritan Place is an innovative Catholic care home which has a resident-directed philosophy designed to maximize autonomy and independence.

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## Mexican clergy

As Mexican priests watch the death toll among clergy rise in their country, their first concern remains the ordinary people who suffer through the murderous reign of drug gangs, according to Rev. Ron MacDonell, a Canadian priest who has seen the effect of the killings first-hand.

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## Papal documentary

A new documentary on St. Pope John Paul II and his role in the fall of communism is well worth watching, writes Gerald Schmitz.

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## Call for unity

We need energizing reminders in these turbulent times that the call to unity is more real and needed than ever, says Tom Ryan, CSP.

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## Catholic leaders express outrage

President Donald Trump's executive memorandum intended to restrict the entry of terrorists coming to the United States brought an outcry from Catholic leaders across the U.S.

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# Christian unity requires learning from others

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Divided Christians need to recognize the gifts God has given to other communities and learn from them “without waiting for the others to learn first,” Pope Francis said.

Leading an ecumenical evening prayer service Jan. 25 for the close of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Pope Francis said Christians must overcome the “temptations of self-absorption that prevent us from perceiving how the Holy Spirit is at work outside our familiar surroundings,” including in the lives of other Christian communities.

The Vatican's Sistine Chapel Choir and the Anglican Westminster Abbey Choir sang at the service at Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Pope Francis walked to the tomb of St. Paul, under the basilica's main altar, and prayed there with Orthodox Metropolitan Gennadios of Italy, the representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and with Anglican Archbishop



CNS/Paul Haring

**ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE — Pope Francis delivers a joint blessing with Orthodox Metropolitan Gennadios of Italy and Malta and Anglican Archbishop David Moxon, the archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Vatican, during an ecumenical prayer service to conclude the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome Jan. 25.**

David Moxon, the representative of the archbishop of Canterbury.

At the end of the service, the

two took turns with Pope Francis in reading segments of the solemn blessing and in blessing the congregation with the sign of the cross.

In his homily, Pope Francis said St. Paul, who was persecuting the Christians, went from being a person who trusted “his own ability to observe the law strictly” to conversion and “cleaving with his whole being to the gracious and unmerited love of God: to Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.”

Like St. Paul, he said, “each person, forgiven and loved, is called in turn to proclaim the Gospel of reconciliation in word and deed, to live and bear witness to a reconciled life.”

“Authentic reconciliation between Christians will only be achieved when we can acknowledge each other's gifts and learn from one another, with humility and docility, without waiting for the others to learn first,” he said.

In the year marking the fifth centenary of the Protestant Reformation, Pope Francis said Christians must acknowledge the past but not allow themselves to be fixated on it and on the injuries suffered at the hands of the other.

Christians must allow God, “who makes all things new, to unveil before our eyes a new future, open to the hope that does not disappoint, a future in which divisions can be overcome and believers, renewed in love, will be fully and visibly one,” he said.

Praying for Christian unity, the pope said, is sharing in Jesus’

## Bolen speaks at First Nations University

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Archbishop Donald Bolen, in remarks delivered to a Jan. 19 audience at the First Nations University of Canada, said he would like to encourage the Catholic churches in the Regina archdiocese to invite indigenous elders to speak to the parishes about indigenous spirituality and the meaning of the treaties, from a spiritual perspective, and “to speak about their ceremonies and how those ceremonies have a life-giving, life-formative effect on those participating.”

Bolen focused on the Truth and Reconciliation Final Report as it applied to the Catholic Church, whose religious communities and dioceses operated over 60 per cent of the residential schools. He reasoned that the Catholic Church couldn't take meaningful action toward healing and reconciliation without the building of relationships, without the establishment of trust, without a deep investment on specific issues, without, in some sense, taking a lead from within the indigenous community itself.

“We can't come with answers,” said the archbishop,

“but with a willingness to engage and a readiness to learn.”

He told the audience, “I believe one critical area for us to work on as a church would be to set up a council, a circle, a structure for dialogue for the leaders of the church to engage deeply with our indigenous sisters and brothers, some of whom might be

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— JOURNEY, page 15

## Grief and solidarity in Quebec after mosque attack

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Faith and political leaders have expressed condolences and solidarity in prayer with Canadian Muslims after a shooting at a Quebec mosque Jan. 29 that killed six and injured many more.

“It was with horror and shock that we were all made aware of the violent and senseless attack carried out at the *Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec* yesterday evening,” said the president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) Bishop Douglas Crosby of Hamilton in a Jan. 30 statement.

“Such murderous violence is to be condemned in the strongest possible terms.”

“It is a violation of the sanctity of human life; an assault on the right and freedom of the members of all religions to gather and pray in the name of their deepest beliefs; a wound to the peace,

order and tranquility of our nation and its communities; and the desecration of a house of prayer and worship,” he said.

“Together with Pope Francis, His Eminence Gérald Cyprien Cardinal Lacroix, Archbishop of Québec and Primate of Canada, I extend condolences and prayers from my brother bishops as well as from Catholics across Canada to the victims, their families and friends,” he said.

“Muslims are our brothers and sisters, condolences and prayers,” tweeted Cardinal Lacroix, who was in Rome when he heard the news of the shooting at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec in the suburb of Sainte-Foy.

On Jan. 30., Pope Francis personally expressed his condolences and assurances of prayers to Lacroix, who then immediately departed for Quebec.

— POPE FRANCIS, page 4



Frank Flegel

**VOICE FOR HOPE — David Arnot, Chief Commissioner of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, introduced Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen at a recent event at the First Nations University of Canada. Arnot called Bolen “a strong voice for hope and a strong supporter of efforts to invite Pope Francis to Canada to issue an apology to the indigenous people.”**



# Catholics oppose Trump's actions on border wall

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic organizations expressed distress and unease with President Donald J. Trump's actions related to immigration while pledging to continue serving and supporting migrant people.

The reactions came within hours of Trump's signing of executive memorandums on national security Jan. 25 during a visit to the Department of Homeland Security. The memorandums authorized the construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and directed John F. Kelly, secretary of homeland security, to look at how federal funding streams can be cut for cities and states that illegally harbour those in the country without legal permission.

Agencies cited the words of Pope Francis in criticizing the president's actions and pledged to support and serve migrants in the United States.

"Pope Francis has urged people not to close the door on migrants and refugees," Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, said in a statement. "In concert with the Holy Father, we believe we must move from attitudes of

defensiveness and fear to acceptance, compassion and encounter.

"As the U.S. Catholic bishops have said, this is not an either/or situation for us," Markham added. We can protect our citizens and, at the same time, we can welcome newcomers. Our commitment to care for those who are most vulnerable resides at the core of our faith."

Catholic Charities USA also will continue to work for comprehensive immigration reform, Markham said.

The PICO National Network, the largest network of congregations and faith-based groups in the country, including Catholics, challenged the executive memorandum on sanctuary cities.

"Retaliating against local communities because they refuse to follow immoral policies is part of an emerging pattern of President Trump of not only bullying people who dare to disagree with him, but isolating and further marginalizing people who are different than him," said Eddie Carmona, campaign director for PICO National Network's LA RED campaign. "Such behaviour is inconsistent with the long-held notion that America was a place

of opportunity for all."

Sister Simone Campbell, a Sister of Social Service and executive director of Network, a Catholic social justice lobbying organization, called the presidential orders "antithetical to our faith."

"When Nuns on the Bus visited the U.S.-Mexico border in 2014, we walked along the wall and listened to the stories of communities that have been torn apart for decades. That is the reality experienced by border communities: The wall is there and it affects the daily life and commerce of the people.

"Federal appropriations for border security have grown to \$3.8 billion in FY2015, from \$263 million in FY1990, and fencing exists for hundreds of miles along our southern border," she



CNS/Tomas Bravo, Reuters

**BORDER FENCE TEXAS — A U.S. Border Patrol agent opens a gate on the fence along the Mexico border to allow vehicles to pass Jan. 17 in El Paso, Texas. President Donald Trump enacted an executive memorandum Jan. 25 to construct a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.**

said in a statement.

The Washington-based Columbian Centre for Advocacy and Outreach recalled Pope Francis' words at the close of the Year of Mercy that concluded in November in which he decried a global "epidemic of animosity and violence" toward strangers, immigrants and refugees who often are considered a threat.

Trump's signings "presents false and inhumane responses" to the harsh reality of poverty, violence and conflict that cause

people to migrate, the centre said in a statement.

"As people of faith, we are called to both address the root causes of migration and seek policies of welcome toward our migrant sisters and brothers. We stand against any policies that seek to build a wall, inhumanely detain women and families, end sanctuary cities, conduct immigration raids, limit migration based on a person's country of origin and further militarize the border," the statement added.

## Never underestimate courageous women

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The humble counsel of courageous women should never be disregarded but rather embraced as advice full of God's divine wisdom, Pope Francis said.

Women like the biblical heroine Judith are an example of trusting God amid sufferings and difficulties when it is easy to give up hope and fall into despair, the pope said Jan. 25 during his weekly general audience.

"This is my opinion, but women are more courageous than men," the pope said to applause.

As the pope arrived for the audience, the sounds of classical music echoed throughout the Paul VI audience hall as a youth orchestra from Bolivia played for the pope.

The Anglican choir of

London's Westminster Abbey and former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also were present and greeted the pope at the end of the audience.

Pope Francis focused his audience talk on Judith, "a woman of great beauty and wisdom," who reproached the people of Israel for their lack of trust in God to deliver them from foreign invaders.

"They were at the point of saying, 'God has sold us,' " the pope said. "How many times have we come to situations that test our limits where we are not even able to trust in the Lord? It is an ugly temptation."

Facing a situation full of despair, the pope continued, the people gave God five days to intervene. However, even in prayer they doubted that the Lord would help them.

"Five days are given to God to

intervene — this is the sin! Five days of waiting but already expecting the end. In reality, no one among the people is capable of hoping," he said.

Pope Francis said that in the moment of despair, Judith confronts the people's doubts with the "courageous language" of faith and hope.

Her courage, he explained, is a reminder for Christians "to knock on the door of God's heart; he is a father, he can save us. This widow risks (everything), even of making herself look like a fool in front of the others. But she is courageous, she goes forward."

Christians must "never put conditions on God," the pope said. Instead, they should allow "hope to conquer our fears."

"To trust God means entering into his plans without assuming anything" and to believe that "he knows better than us," the pope said.

The story of Judith exemplifies the importance of the "courageous counsel" of humble women, Pope Francis said. Their words, he added, contain "the wisdom of God" and should never be "dismissed as ignorant."

"The words of grandmothers — how many times do grandmothers know the right word to say," the pope said. "They give words of hope because they have the experience of life, they have suffered so much, they trusted in God and the Lord gave them this gift of giving us hopeful advice."

## Pope accepts resignation of Order of Malta's grand master

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After weeks of very public tensions with the Vatican, the head of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta accepted Pope Francis' request that he submit his resignation.

The order's communications office confirmed Jan. 25 that Fra Matthew Festing, the 67-year-old grand master, met with Pope Francis the day before and agreed to resign.

The Vatican said Jan. 25 that Pope Francis intends to appoint a pontifical delegate to govern the order.

Festing, who has led the world's largest chivalric order since 2008, submitted his resignation Jan. 28 to the order's governing council, according to the order's communications office.

A short Vatican statement said Festing offered to resign Jan. 24 and Pope Francis accepted his offer the next day while "expressing to Fra Festing appreciation and recognition of his sentiments of loyalty and devotion to the successor of Peter and his openness to humbly serving the good of the order and the church."

The Order of Malta is made up of more than 13,500 knights and dames; about 50 of them are professed religious, having taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The grand master is elected for life from among the professed knights.

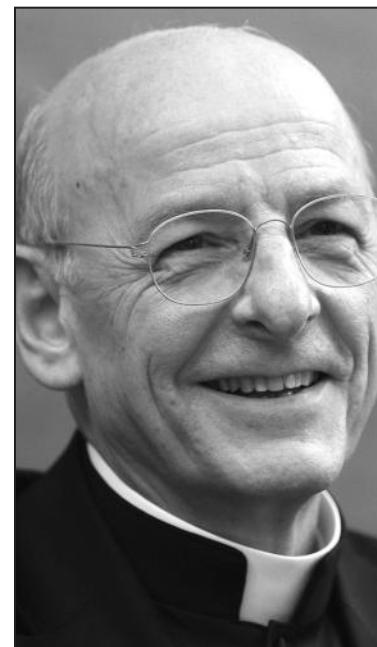
Festing's offer to resign came after Pope Francis set up a commission to investigate Festing's removal of the order's grand chancellor, Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager.

A member of the commission told Catholic News Service Jan. 25 that Pope Francis received the commission report before meeting with Festing and asking for his resignation.



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

**POPE MEETS ORIENTAL ORTHODOX — Pope Francis speaks during a meeting with representatives of the Oriental Orthodox churches at the Vatican Jan. 27. The representatives were in Rome for a meeting of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches.**



CNS/Paul Haring

**OPUS DEI — Spanish Msgr. Fernando Ocariz is the newly elected head of Opus Dei. His appointment was approved Jan. 23 by Pope Francis.**



# Church aims to ‘grab hold’ of youth with synod

By Jean Ko Din  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — What do you want to be when you grow up?

From the time we are children, adults ask this question as a way to start a conversation about the hopes and dreams of young people. In a way, that’s what the church is doing as it begins a consultation process prior to a special synod of bishops on youth.

Titled “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” the synod will be held in October 2018. It follows the 2014 and 2015 synods on the family and will focus on how the church can specifically accompany young people and help them “discover their life project and realize it with joy.” When the church speaks of vocational discernment, it is referring not just to religious vocations, but to marriage, living as singles and ordained life.

On Jan. 13 the Vatican released a preparatory document that invites youth around the world to start a discussion about youth ministry, about their hopes and dreams for the future church.

“As in the days of Samuel and Jeremiah, young people know how to discern the signs of our times, indicated by the Spirit,” the document states. “Listening to their aspirations, the church can glimpse the world which lies ahead and the paths the church is called to follow.”

In Canada, bishops and youth

ministry leaders are already discussing how this synod and preparatory document can be applied to Canadian youth.

“I think it’s a must-read for every pastor, bishop, youth coordinator because it frames where young people are in today’s world,” said Joe Vogel, executive director of NET Ministries of Canada.

NET Canada is a missionary organization that provides youth programs for local schools and parishes across Canada. Vogel said he was blown away with how the document “hit the nail in the proverbial head.”

It is divided into three parts. The first chapter describes the world young people live in. The second chapter discusses the importance of discernment. The third chapter is a call to pastoral action for young people to shape church ministry in their community.

David Dayler, director of the Office for Discipleship and Parish Life in the Diocese of Hamilton, said the document, at its root, is about building young people into disciples. He said he was impressed at how the document integrates Scripture into the context of youth, “where the pope is taking the discussions.”

“In the (introduction), he really drew discipleship into the picture so that we’re looking at this as an ongoing process of building disciples,” Dayler said.

In some ways, youth ministry in the Canadian church is already undergoing a renewal. Last June



Catholic Register/Jean Ko Din

**YOUTH SYNOD IN 2018 — A special synod of bishops on youth will be held in October 2018. The synod will focus on how the church can accompany young people and help them “discover their life project and realize it with joy.”**

the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops released a youth ministry resource called “You Give Them Something to Eat.” Antigonish Bishop Brian Dunn calls the 70-page guide a statement on the vision of youth ministry for Canada.

“The last statement came out about 25 years ago, and so this was an effort to update that,” said Dunn. “In light of other countries — U.S., Ireland, Australia — all of these have an updated vision of youth ministry and so this was an effort to have the Canadian bish-

ops be on the same kind of line.”

Dunn hopes the guide will become a tool for discussion in the lead-up to next year’s youth synod.

In his own Nova Scotia diocese, Dunn said the biggest challenge is connecting with young people.

“Unlike Ontario, we don’t have Catholic schools so there’s no place where the church can say, ‘The young people are going to be here. Let’s go and meet them,’” said Dunn. “It also has to do with geography and parish resources.”

As the economy declines in the Atlantic provinces, so too does the youth population. It is becoming increasingly difficult to create gathering places for young people to share their faith.

Sister Susan Kidd of the

Congregation of Notre Dame is a campus minister at University of Prince Edward Island. She said that the family unit is still strong in Charlottetown, but when it comes time for a young person to find a job, they have to leave the island.

There is a special need for ministry to young adults in Charlottetown, said Kidd. As students, they have the campus ministry centre. But after graduation, there is nothing.

“What’s interesting here in Charlottetown is I have a group of people after university who come to the (campus ministry centre) for Mass and Meal,” said Kidd. “They didn’t find a place in the parish, unless they were getting engaged and looking to be

— QUESTIONNAIRE, page 5

## Commercial process ‘spiritual in nature’

By Glen Argan  
Special to the Prairie Messenger

EDMONTON — Economists and proponents of Catholic social teaching need to overcome “a forgetfulness about the truth of the centrality of the person in the economic drama,” said a visiting scholar from Ireland.

Rev. John McNerney spoke at Newman Theological College Jan. 25 about what he called “the ultimate spiritual nature of the commercial process.”

“The human person acting as an entrepreneur is not merely froth and bubble in the stream of history,” McNerney said. Rather, the entrepreneur can overcome old economic traditions and create new ones.

The root of economics can be found in the nature of the human person — *homo spiritualis*, or spiritual man, he said. The root of economic production is not only practical, but also intellectual and spiritual.

McNerney is the head chaplain at University College Dublin, author of *The Wealth of Persons: Economics with a Human Face* and currently a visiting scholar at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

The priest quoted Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, who said, “The origins of Microsoft have little to do with money. The money was just an accidental byproduct. The purposive force was the human creativity

involved in the project.”

Entrepreneurial action is a source of wealth in today’s society, wealth that is both financial and moral. McNerney cited Pope John Paul II’s encyclical



Glen Argan

Rev. John McNerney

*Centesimus Annus* in which the late pope named virtues arising from entrepreneurship, including industriousness, diligence, fidelity, prudence in undertaking reasonable risks and courage in carrying out difficult decisions.

But he took issue with a talk given by Pope Francis in Bolivia in 2013 in which this pope emphasized “the fitting distribution of economic goods among all.”

That view of the economy makes no mention of how wealth

is created and sees the economy as a purely administrative machine, he said.

McNerney said Pope Francis, in his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’*, does speak of the creation of wealth and of technology as the fruit of our nature as human persons.

The Irish priest told of an Irish nun, Sister Agnes Morrogh-Bernard (1842-1932), who was raised in a wealthy family but horrified by the dire poverty of the Irish during and after the Great Famine of the 1840s. The Famine, he said, killed everything, including human self-determination, self-esteem and dignity.

In 1890, Morrogh-Bernard launched a woollen mill in the village of Foxford, which continues to this day. “She didn’t just harness the river, but she harnessed the creativity within the human person.”

The factory became a place where workers learned more than spinning and weaving, but also “the virtues of entrepreneurial action,” such as character, courage and change within the person, McNerney said.

The sister did not see poverty as simply the result of “systemic and ideological obstacles.” She realized success cannot be achieved by capital alone, but also requires creativity. “The person as a being who has the capacity to become more than we are — that’s what motivated her.”

Innovation, the priest said, “is constitutive of our nature as human persons.”

## Multi Faith Forum welcomes Syrian refugees

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — World Religion Day Jan. 15 was more special than usual this year as members and friends of the Regina Multi Faith Forum gathered at Beth Jacob Synagogue to pray and welcome the Syrian refugee family the forum has sponsored.

“The family actually arrived in Regina on Dec. 16,” said Dwaine Dornan, a member of the committee.

They are part of a larger group of the same family that arrived previously. Two other groups arrived separately, one sponsored by the government and the other sponsored by two Regina Catholic churches, Christ the King and St. Martin, working together.

Those refugees who arrived first talked about the rest of the family still in Lebanese and Jordanian refugee camps, and that is when the Multi Faith Forum became involved. The family sponsored by the forum included three generations: grandparents, their daughter, and her two children. The children’s father disappeared about three years ago while out on an errand, and is still missing.

This is the first time in several years the whole family has been together. Each group spent time in different refugee camps, with little contact with each other.

Dornan said the process began 15 months ago. “We wanted to show what could be done if the wider faith community worked together. Our group worked with the Regina Archdiocese, which is the sponsorship agreement holder.”

Each year on World Religion Day representatives of the world’s religions living in Regina gather at the synagogue to pray for peace and tolerance. This year each representative spoke about hospitality and how that is lived out in the context of their faith. The format has changed slightly over the years, but two traditions have remained: the blowing of the shankh to begin the service and the blowing of the shofar to end the service. The traditional reception was held following the service.

The number who attended the Jan. 15 service was about double that of last year, and one of the largest to attend since the Multi Faith Forum was established after the first Iraqi war.



# Food rescue operation sees ever-growing demand

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — When the Second Harvest truck arrives at Margaret's Toronto East Drop-In Centre, the homeless are the first

ones out the door, crowding around the truck to ask driver Hektor Habili what he's delivering.

Leon White, the kitchen manager, has the same question, but it's not as if he's picky. Margaret's kitchen is open 24

hours, serving 350 meals and an endless stream of snacks morning, noon and night. Leon needs whatever is in that truck.

Operating out of an old United Church that has served Toronto's homeless and hungry since 1984,

Margaret's relies heavily on food that Second Harvest rescues every day from warehouses, factories, farms, hotels and restaurants. But they're just one of 225 agencies that take delivery from Second Harvest — including 82 food banks, drop-ins and open kitchens that rely solely on Second Harvest.

Second Harvest collects 4.3 million kilograms of food a year, which agencies translate into 25,000 meals a day.

On this particular January morning, Margaret's is getting barbecue chicken, apple crumble and steamed vegetables from the Hot House Restaurant and Bar, carrots and cherry tomatoes that never made it into grocery stores, Pillsbury cinnamon rolls, frozen steaks and a generous supply of milk. Margaret's clients line up to help Leon cart it back into the kitchen.

Canada's largest food rescue operation knows the need for food is great and growing and the supply of waste food nearly endless. With help from a \$747,600 grant from the Trillium Foundation over the next 33 months, Second Harvest plans to grow its food rescue efforts by 50 per cent by 2020. In four years they will be collecting 6.8 million kilograms of food and distributing it to 280 agencies.

But the lottery and casino money from the Trillium Foundation is just a drop in the bucket. Second Harvest will need to raise another \$28 million over the next four years to replace aging trucks and move into a larger warehouse.

Currently it raises over \$3 million a year to support its operation and takes in \$23.7 million a

year worth of food. All this is bolstered by over 12,000 hours of volunteer labour.

While Second Harvest provides food for many religiously affiliated food banks, drop-ins and meal programs, it remains a non-denominational organization, available to all.

The consulting firm Value Chain Management Centre pegs Canada's wasted food at six billion kilos — enough to fill 60,000 rail cars, stretching along 1,000 kilometres of railway. An astonishing 31 per cent of all the food Canadians produce and import is thrown away.

About half the throw-away food is wasted by consumers who keep filling their green bins with mushy bags of rotted vegetables they find in a back corner of the fridge. Second Harvest concentrates on the other half — food they can rescue from manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors and even farmers.

Second Harvest and the Daily Bread Food Bank are the two major sources for food distributed to food banks and feeding programs. The two agencies complement each other, with Daily Bread sourcing food from grocery stores, the food industry and individual donors. Second Harvest focuses more exclusively on industry sources and diverting food out of the waste stream.

In 1985 Second Harvest started off with founders Ina Andre and Joan Clayton driving around to hotels and restaurants with their hatchback and delivering the prepared meals to soup kitchens and women's shelters. Andre and Clayton were moved to action by images of starving Ethiopian chil-

— CONCEPT, page 5



CNS/Dario Ayala, Reuters

**STANDING IN SOLIDARITY** — Large crowds gather for a Jan. 30 vigil in support of the Muslim community in Montreal. A man entered the Quebec Islamic Cultural Center and opened fire Jan. 29, killing at least six and injuring 19 more.

## Pope Francis expresses profound sympathy

Continued from page 1

In a telegram to the cardinal, signed by Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, Pope Francis formally expressed his condolences for the victims.

"Having learned of the attack which occurred in Quebec in a prayer room of the Islamic Cultural Centre, which claimed many victims, His Holiness Pope Francis entrusts to the mercy of God the persons who lost their lives and he associates himself through prayer with the pain of their relatives," said the telegram, translated into English by Vatican Radio. "He expresses his profound sympathy for the wounded and their families, and to all who contributed to their aid, asking the Lord to bring them comfort and consolation in the ordeal."

"The Holy Father again strongly condemns the violence that engenders such suffering; and, imploring God for the gift of mutual respect and peace, he invokes upon the sorely tried families, and upon all persons touched by this tragedy, as well as upon all Quebecers, the benefits of the Divine Blessing," the telegram said.

On Jan. 30 the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue released a statement saying "this senseless gesture violated the sacredness of human life and the respect due a place of worship."

"The Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue strongly condemns this act of unprecedented violence and wishes to send its full solidarity to the Muslims of Canada, assuring them of its fervent prayer for the victims and their families," said the communiqué from the Council's chair Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran.

"Nothing can justify acts of murder against innocent people," said Montreal Archbishop Christian

Lépine in a message of condolence to Lacroix. "We are called to reaffirm continuously, whatever our beliefs, that as human beings we are all brothers and sisters, and we are all equal in dignity."

"Taking a moment of silence, we ask God to keep us ever respectful with hearts set firmly on peace," he said.

The Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) issued a statement expressing its "deep sorrow and indignation at the recent tragic terrorist attack at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City."

"Members of the CRC remain in solidarity through prayer with the Muslim community in Quebec City," the statement said.

"We extend our condolences to the families bereaved by this terrorist act, which we strongly condemn," said Sister Michelle Payette, MIC, President of the CRC. "We are all created by the same God, sisters and brothers here on earth. In these moments of pain, we must redouble our efforts in favour of inter-religious dialogue in which several religious communities are involved throughout Quebec and Canada," she said.

The Anglican bishops of Quebec City and Montreal were in Canterbury, England, when the attack occurred.

In a joint statement on the shooting, Coadjutor Bishop Bruce Myers of Quebec and Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson of Montreal said: "Along with our grief and prayers we are called as disciples of Jesus to express our solidarity with our neighbours who are Muslim."

"We wish to express directly to our Muslim neighbours in Quebec our grief and repugnance at this brutal act of violence against another community of faith, and one in the midst of prayer. When one is attacked, we are all attacked, and our whole

society is diminished," they insisted.

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), a Christian social justice think-tank in Ottawa, also condemned the attack.

"Our members are dedicated to the work of building an inclusive, generous and fair society," said CPJ executive director Joe Gunn. "Last night's shooting, targeting people of faith during their worship and prayer, is a deplorable attack on all Canadians and our most deeply held values."

"Muslim Canadians are a critical part of the fabric of Canadian life and the global community," said Gunn. "Policies rooted in fear and isolation, like Donald Trump's ban on immigration of persons from seven nations, will only lead to greater division and violence."

On Parliament Hill, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other party leaders offered their condolences and solidarity with the victims and their families and with Canadian Muslims in general.

Trudeau described the shooting as a "terrorist attack" on "a group of people practising their faith."

He offered assurances to the "more than one million Canadians who practise the Muslim faith" of their welcome in Canada. "This was an act of terror committed against Canada and against all Canadians," he said.

Conservative Leader Rona Ambrose and NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair expressed their condolences as well.

Over the years, the mosque had been targeted by hate crimes. A few months ago, a pig's head was left at the front door, sparking indignation throughout the city.

Quebec City's population is more than 500,000 people. It has 6,100 Muslims.

With files from Philippe Vaillancourt



## BOSCO FOUNDATION

**John Bosco**  
**Child & Family Services Foundation**

The John Bosco Child and Family Services Foundation (Bosco Foundation) is a public foundation dedicated to the provision of buildings and facilities used for the treatment, education and housing of children, adolescents and adults who are in need of support.

Bosco Foundation believes in assisting non-profit and charitable organizations who provide vital services which aid vulnerable people in our society. We do this by providing our facilities to various non-profit and charitable agencies at below market level rental rates.

**Our facilities are used for social services group care, foster care, adult mental health care, the St. Francis Food Bank, two AA groups and a NE Edmonton cadet core among others.**

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# Murders of Mexican clergy won't stop missionary work

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

As Mexican priests watch the death toll among clergy rise in their country, their first concern remains the ordinary people who suffer through the murderous reign of drug gangs, according to a Canadian priest who has seen the effect of the killings first-hand.

Rev. Ron MacDonell led 70 priests through a five-day silent retreat Sept. 19 - 23 in Guadalajara, Mexico, during which they learned that three more priests were murdered in the country.

At least 16 Catholic priests have been killed since December 2012, Mexico's Catholic Multimedia Centre reports. The latest is Rev. Joaquin Hernandez Sifuentes, whose body was discovered Jan. 11 in Parras de la

Fuente, 1,000 kilometres north of Mexico City.

The country has been besieged by violence and an army-led war on drugs and gangs that has directly killed between 66,000 and 81,000 Mexicans since 2006, according to an April 2015 report from the University of San Diego's Trans Border Institute.

MacDonell said members of the Mexican missionary order he joined on retreat remained calm after receiving news of the murdered priests.

"They're not panicked about it. They're priests. They made (their) options," said the Scarboro Missions' priest. "We were there to pray and we always find strength in prayer. Sometimes the persecution makes people even stronger. It clarifies your option and your choice to follow Jesus and to announce his dream, to announce his vision."



Catholic Register/Michael Swan  
Rev. Ron MacDonell

News that the bodies of Rev. Alejo Jimenez and Rev. José Juárez were found in a ditch near their Catemaco parish, 530 km southeast of Mexico City, hit the first day of the retreat for members the *Misioneros de Guadalupe* (the Guadalupe Missionaries). On the last day of the retreat, they were told of the death of Rev. José Alfredo Lopez Guillen in his parish in Michoacán, 400 km west

of Mexico City.

For Mexican priests, the idea that priests can be a target in one of the most fervently Catholic countries in the world is sometimes shocking, said MacDonell. But the violence is what happens when the drug trade is the best paying and sometimes the only job available.

"I think it comes back to justice," MacDonell said. "What are the conditions of life, of living, of work that will give a person dignity? If you have a means of supporting your family or working that gives you human dignity, then you're not going to choose the way of violence. It goes back to the structures of social injustice and poverty."

Priests and journalists have been targeted because often they challenge the drug trade and condemn it.

"Sometimes (priests are targeted) because they speak up against the drug violence and other times the drug gangs just want to show who is boss," said MacDonell. "The context was a silent retreat. . . . It was just lamentable and we prayed for these

brothers. There's a market in North America and Europe (for drugs). The tie-in is that. So anyone who is going to denounce the sale of drugs or drug use, or talk about it, are open to persecution."

But priests don't face the violence alone.

"All of Mexican society is exposed. Priests are not spared from violence," Saltillo Bishop Raul Vera Lopez said after Hernandez' body was found earlier this month. Hernandez' murder was the fourth in four months for Mexico's clergy. The New York Times reports two per cent of murder cases are successfully prosecuted in Mexico.

MacDonell began his life as a missionary in Mexico's southern Chiapas state, serving as a lay missionary in the time of legendary Bishop Samuel Ruiz, a participant in the Second Vatican Council who was closely identified with liberation theology. After preaching the retreat in Guadalajara, MacDonell revisited Chiapas, where he served 30 years ago.

"The Mexican church stands for peace and justice," he said.

## Questionnaire coming soon

Continued from page 3

married."

Victoria Archbishop Gary Gordon said in one sense young people around the world are seeking the same thing — to belong. But in his diocese, young people face many extraordinary challenges.

Victoria is home to nine First Nations communities. According to a 2014 federal study, the suicide rate among First Nations youth is about five to six times higher than that of the general population.

"Back in November, we had a professional development day for our school teachers and administrators," said Gordon. "It was on anxiety, self-harm and suicidation. That's the world our young people are in."

Gordon said Aboriginal youth are intrinsically spiritual, more than most young people in Canada. Therefore, the church

must accompany these youth through struggles with mental health, access to education, underfunded health care systems and the trans-generational trauma caused by the residential schools.

The upcoming synod, Gordon said, is an opportunity for the Holy Father to voice the issues and problems of marginalized youth, like the Aboriginal community, and bring youth hope.

"(The pope) wants to touch deeply their real hopes and the energy they have to rise above these anxieties," said Gordon.

The preparatory document includes a 20-point questionnaire to assist bishops in understanding the experience of young people around the world. The Vatican intends to release the questionnaire on a website in March.

Responses will be collected until the end of October and a document on the questionnaire's findings is expected to be published in early 2018.

## Concept of food rescue is new

Continued from page 4

dren beamed by satellite into millions of Canadian living rooms, and by the "feed the world" movement that followed.

Second Harvest still picks up from a few hotel kitchens and restaurants that have large volumes. But since Queen's Park passed the Donation of Food Act in 1994, releasing food donors from liability, Second Harvest has been able to move up the chain of food production and rescue ever larger amounts.

"That is where more of the food waste happens," explains Second Harvest director of development Jennifer Verschraegen. "It happens as a result of an overrun on product which creates a surplus. Possibly things were mislabelled or mispackaged. It could be that the product was misshapen or is missing a key ingredient, so it's perfectly edible, it's just not what the manufacturer was looking for."

As one of the most obvious signs of a "culture of waste," wasted food is certainly something that irks Pope Francis.

"Throwing away food is like stealing from the table of the poor and the hungry," Francis said in 2013.

"The whole concept of food rescue is still something relatively new to the consumer," Verschraegen said. "We're one of Toronto's really well-kept secrets. Usually when we talk about ourselves people say, 'Oh yes, I know the food bank.'"

People rarely ask where the food bank or drop-ins and meal programs get their food.

Second Harvest puts nine trucks on the road every day, each making 13 to 18 stops picking up food and dropping it off for hungry people instead of watching it wind up as landfill.

Half the places where Second Harvest delivers food say they expect the demand to feed more people in the coming year will increase 40 per cent.

## People reflected in First Nations icon

By Agnieszka Krawczynski  
The B.C. Catholic

VANCOUVER (CCN) — St. Paul's Church in Vancouver has once again tipped its hat to the rich First Nations heritage of its parishioners.

A new icon displayed on its walls features St. Paul the Apostle clad in a woven cedar hat and holding a talking stick and a cedar bough on a typical West Coast shore.

"The people can see themselves in the icon," artist Andre Prevost explained.

Many churchgoers at St. Paul's and nearby Sacred Heart Church have First Nations backgrounds. Pastor Rev. Garry LaBoucane, OMI, who commissioned the icon, asked Prevost to make St. Paul an unmistakably First Nations man evangelizing his own people.

"St. Paul is portrayed as teacher and messenger in the act of journeying," Prevost said.

"The Coast Salish and indigenous peoples can see themselves within the icon as bearers of the Good News and as having a shared experience of St. Paul within their church."

Although not Aboriginal himself, Prevost worked closely with LaBoucane to find sensitive ways to make St. Paul look First Nations without using symbols that would single out any particular band. For example, St. Paul's cedar hat bears no decorations, and his clothing looks almost traditionally Byzantine.

Prevost said the talking stick, a traditional symbol of welcome and invitation, was important to include.

"St. Paul is coming into the community and, as the bearer of the talking stick, is inviting, coming, and speaking," said the iconographer. "He is inviting peo-

ple to the eucharist."

Talking sticks are "distinct for each bearer and for each family," he said. To help parishioners from any nation relate to the icon, he gave St. Paul a talking stick resembling the one belonging to their pastor, LaBoucane.

In his other hand, St. Paul carries a cedar bough, a symbol of cleansing and blessing, and a scroll with part of St. Paul's letter to the Colossians: "Follow him and let your roots grow deep into him" (Col 2:6-7).

St. Paul's Church has also incorporated First Nations cultural practices in other ways. A likeness of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first native American canonized as a Catholic saint, hangs inside the dimly lit church.

LaBoucane welcomes drumming and traditional clothing at mass and oversees programs that help First Nations people reconnect with their roots by learning to make drums, moccasins, and beadwork at the nearby St. Kateri Tekakwitha Centre.

Prevost has been writing icons since the 1980s, when he was a member of St. Edmund's Parish in North Vancouver.

Some of his earliest works are still there.

An icon of Our Lady of Canada, written in 2015 for Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, hangs in the headquarters of the Archdiocese of Vancouver, and Prevost's art is also displayed in various churches in Edmonton and Winnipeg.

The Catholic iconographer now lives and paints just outside Nanaimo. "The last number of years I've also been doing a series of paintings focusing on the West Coast totems," he said.

"With St. Paul came an interesting crossroads of my two interests."



B.C. Catholic/Agnieszka Krawczynski

**FIRST NATIONS ICON — A new icon at St. Paul's Church in Vancouver was commissioned by the pastor, Rev. Garry LaBoucane, OMI. He asked artist Andre Prevost to make St. Paul an unmistakably First Nations man evangelizing his own people.**



# Catholic bishops' communiqué disappoints B'nai Brith

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — A spokesperson for B'nai Brith Canada says a Jan. 19 communiqué from Catholic bishops condemning 50 years of occupation seems to blame Israel for lack of progress on peace in the Holy Land.

"We're disappointed that the communiqué seems to ignore important issues dealing with the conflict in Israel, including such important issues as ongoing Palestinian incitement to violence and the fact the PLO and Hamas Charters both continue to call for the destruction of the State of Israel," said Michael Mostyn, the Chief Executive Officer of B'nai Brith Canada. "While we all wish for peace in the region, it is important to acknowledge the very serious security concerns that Israel faces on an ongoing basis and when communiqués such as this ignore security issues, it is not helpful."

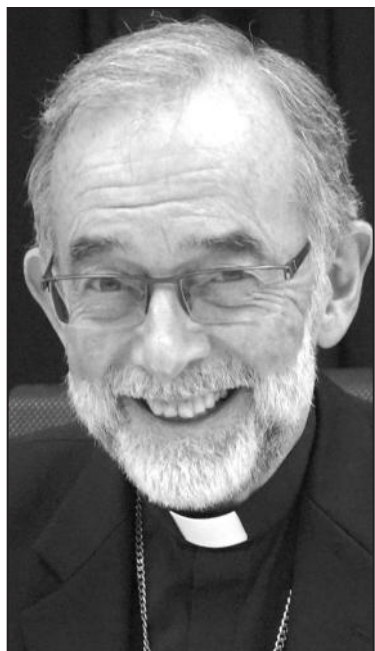
Mostyn said he would be writing to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) to outline B'nai Brith's concerns.

The vice-president of the CCCC, Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, Quebec, one of the bishops who signed the communiqué, said blaming Israel was not their intent.

"We truly wanted to show the occupation as it is problematic not only for the Palestinians but also for Israelis," he said upon his

return from the Holy Land Jan. 24.

Gendron was one of a dozen bishops primarily from Europe and North America who issued



CCN/D. Gyapong

Bishop Lionel Gendron

the communiqué after an annual pilgrimage to the region sponsored by the Co-ordination of Episcopal Conferences in Support of the Church of the Holy Land, also known as the Holy Land Co-ordination. This was Gendron's third participation in the pilgrimage.

Gendron said many of the bishops, some who have participated in the pilgrimage for 10 or 15 years, had become "tired" of encountering the same prob-

lems, so they decided to focus on the occupation and the settlements. The communiqué also called for non-violent resistance, based on Pope Francis' message Jan. 1 for the World Day of Peace that spoke of how non-violent means had "changed the situation in many countries," Gendron said.

Though Israeli occupation after the 1967 war was "supposed to lessen and disappear, that has not happened," Gendron said. "It has not happened because of the violence from Palestinians."

"But at the same time occupation provokes a reaction," he said. "Often, if rights of people are not respected, some of them become violent."

The bishops were also influenced by the Dec. 22 United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the building of illegal settlements in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem as a violation of international law, Gendron said. For the first time, the United States abstained rather than vetoed such a move, he noted.

Mostyn objected to the communiqué's reference to the UN resolution. "When the Security Council of the United Nations calls even the Jewish quarter in Jerusalem occupied, and the United Nations attempts to remove the Jewish history from even areas such as the Western Wall and Temple Mount, this has caused widespread outrage within the Jewish community worldwide," Mostyn said. "Rewriting

history is not the pathway forward to peace."

The communiqué makes no mention of the Jordanian occupation of East Jerusalem prior to 1967 during which Jewish inhabitants of the ancient Jewish quarter were banned from living there, he said.

"There is no question that any future peace deal between the Israelis and the Palestinians will involve a certain exchange of land and this will be a result of direct negotiations between the two parties," Mostyn said. "However, so long as incitement to violence is not roundly condemned by the worldwide community, then unfortunately, it will be very difficult to find a Palestinian peace partner."

"It only mentions one factor," he said. "So it appears they are blaming the Israelis, and that's how many will read this release."

Gendron agreed the Hamas Charter does call for the destruction of Israel, but said the PLO has recognized the State of Israel and a two-state solution. "Hamas is not all the people of Palestine," he said. "Lots of people who do

not agree with that would like to live in a free country."

Gendron said they met with a number of Israeli NGOs who do not support the right-wing policies of the present government and its support for the building of settlements, which the communiqué described as the de facto annexation of Palestinian land.

As for the plight of Palestinian Christians in the Cremisan Valley who have been fighting a proposed route for the separation wall that would separate 58 families from their agricultural land, Mostyn said, "There's no question this is a very difficult situation and people are suffering."

He defended the existence of the wall. "There's nothing more valuable than human life," he said. "The security fence was built to save lives and in fact it has saved many lives from Palestinian terrorist incursions."

"Hateful words lead to hateful actions and unless internationally respected bodies are willing to address the root causes, which is incitement to violence, then unfortunately peace may continue to elude us into the future."

## Papal apologies not widely reported

Continued from page 1

Catholic and some not. I think that perhaps the Anglican bishop would like to work together with us, too, to create a context where we listen to and engage with the needs and requests that come from the indigenous community."

David Arnot, chief commissioner for the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, introduced Bolen, calling him a strong voice for hope and a strong supporter of efforts to invite Pope Francis to Canada to issue an apology to the indigenous peoples.

Bolen did speak about apologies issued by previous popes, which were often not widely reported. An apology was offered by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009 at the Vatican, in a meeting with then national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, along with a small delegation of other indigenous leaders. Another apology was made by Pope Francis in Bolivia in July 2015, to indigenous peoples of the Americas. Bolen also made reference to numerous apologies offered by religious communities and bishops over the past 25 years.

Harry Lafond from the Treaty Commissioner's Office has spoken about the benefits of an apology and a strong outreach from the pope to indigenous people in Canada. The bishops of

Saskatchewan made a decision to support the indigenous people's request to have the pope come to Canada. Pope Francis replied that he can't come this year but will look at 2018 or 2019 as possibilities. Bolen said he hoped Pope Francis would seriously consider the invitation to meet with indigenous peoples if he visits Canada.

The archbishop said he was deeply thankful to the TRC for bringing out the truth of the mistakes and sins of our own history. "The residential schools left

deep scars and a damaged relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that will take a long time to heal," he said.

Bolen also mentioned efforts to establish a day of prayer for healing and reconciliation with indigenous people, and suggested he would like to be involved in introducing such an annual day of prayer in Regina. "These steps that we are taking are very small steps, but hopefully in the right direction. There is much to be done."



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**The Book of Exodus** — Fr. Paul Fachel, OMI  
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Cost: \$15/session; \$25 including lunch.

**Science & Spirituality Today: Revealing an Amazing World**  
Sr. Judy Schachtel, SMS  
Tuesday evenings, Feb. 7, 14, 21 & 28, 7 - 9 p.m. Cost: \$10 per session.

**Quiet Day for Prayer & Reflection** — Gisele Bauche  
Second Wednesday of each month, Feb. 8, March 8, April 12,  
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Cost \$25/session with lunch.

**Transitions: Journey of Transformation Through Grief and Loss**  
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April 27, 7 - 9:15 p.m., and three Saturdays, Feb. 18, March 11 & April 8,  
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (lunch available at \$12 each) Cost \$280  
Limited enrolment of 12 (attending all sessions strongly recommended).

**Taizé Prayer for Christian Unity**  
Second Tuesday of each month, Feb. 14, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13,  
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Cost: \$35 with supper; \$25 workshop only.

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# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity celebrated

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — The opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was celebrated with Scripture, prayer and song Jan. 22 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Saskatoon.

Dr. Darren Dahl, executive director of the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, preached at the opening celebration: a Catholic lay person preaching in a Lutheran Church as Christians around the world reflect and pray on the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The week of prayer in Saskatoon concluded with a similar celebration Jan. 29, with a Lutheran — Rev. Dirk Lange of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. — preaching at St. Anne Catholic Church.

Prayers and resources for the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity were developed by Christians in Germany, where the Protestant Reformation began with Martin Luther nailing his call for reform on the doors of a Catholic church on Oct. 31, 1517.

The theme of the week of prayer is “Reconciliation — the love of Christ compels us,” taken from 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.

In his sermon, Dahl reflected on themes of worship and “the great heavenly banquet in which all things are gathered together with Christ, around the altar of God.”

He described worship as “the divine presence made real to us in words spoken and sung, in bread and cup, lifted and shared in the company of God’s saints and angels, surrounded by the prayers of God’s people, grounded and

placed with handshakes and smiles and a concern of a community of friends.”

Dahl then spoke about the reality of Christian division, which means that the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup are not part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Referencing the hymn “Thine the Amen,” sung after his sermon, Dahl said, “for at least 500 years we have told different stories, with the result being a vineyard known more for its walls and battlegrounds than for its vines.”

The solution for the “sin-sick sheep” who have lost their unity, divided up their story, and lost the common loaf and cup, is to seek healing and salvation in “the same Saviour,” Dahl continued.

“On the other side of our broken story we find each other again in the light of Easter morning,” he said. “As we seek each other in light of our common redemption . . . we see God’s justice flow into the world, as God’s glory shines from the church, and we get our story back, not broken, but made beautiful by the blending of many unique voices.”

In addition to the opening and closing celebrations, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity also included 7 a.m. services at different churches across the city each weekday morning, a “Singing into Unity” event Jan. 24, and a luncheon at Queen’s House Jan. 26.



Kiply Yaworski

## Bolen meets with priests

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — It was a new experience for most of the priests in the Regina Archdiocese — one that was very much appreciated, according to Rev. Danilo Rafael, chair of the Regina Archdiocese Personnel Committee. He was referring to the interviews Archbishop Donald Bolen conducted with each priest in the Regina archdiocese.

“It was something I did shortly after being appointed Bishop of Saskatoon. It was well received so I began arranging interviews here in Regina in October,” said the archbishop in an interview with the Prairie Messenger.

The interviews continued through December into January until all 64 active priests had had an opportunity to meet with the archbishop in the chancery office. Vicar-general Rev. Lorne Crozon and Rafael sat in on the interviews at the invitation of Bolen.

Crozon said, in speaking with the Prairie Messenger, that each priest was asked four questions: 1) How are you? 2) How are things in your parish? 3) How

happy are you there? and 4) Would you like a transfer to another parish?

Bolen was asked if any of the foreign-born priests, who make up about half of the cohort, expressed a desire to return home. He replied that most have the wherewithal to visit their homeland and have done so, and all have expressed satisfaction with being missionaries here and, he said, we are so blessed with the priests we have.

The retired priests were all visited in their homes. “Of course, I know most of them, having grown up here and served as priest in the archdiocese, so it was really getting reacquainted with old friends,” said Bolen. “It was supposed to be a one-off thing in Saskatoon, but the response from priests was so positive we made it an annual occasion and I’ve suggested it could become annual in the Regina archdiocese depending on the response. Rafael said all the responses he has received are positive, and he was sure the priests would welcome an annual event to meet and talk with their archbishop.



Michelle Sieben

**ANNIVERSARIES RECOGNIZED** — Couples who celebrated significant wedding anniversaries in 2016 were invited to renew their commitment during mass on New Year’s Eve at Sacred Heart Parish in Denzil, Sask. The idea was initiated as a way of celebrating family life around the Dec. 30 Feast of the Holy Family. Couples who celebrated jubilee anniversaries during the year were given corsages and joined the entrance procession, renewed their commitment during the celebration, and were presented with a certificate.

## Samaritan Place celebrates anniversary

By Amy Bunce

SASKATOON — The fifth anniversary of Samaritan Place was celebrated Jan. 17 with joy and gratitude.

The innovative Catholic care home, which has a resident-directed philosophy designed to maximize autonomy and independence, opened in 2012 in the Stonebridge neighbourhood of Saskatoon.

The anniversary celebration began with mass celebrated by diocesan administrator Rev. Kevin McGee and Rev. John Zunti, OMI. The Gospel reading from Luke was the parable of the Good Samaritan, which provides the inspiration for the facility’s model of care.

Jesus’ words to “go and do likewise” in showing compassion is considered the Samaritan Place call to mission as a Catholic health care facility, where care is “compassionate, resident directed, safe and respectful.”

The celebration continued in the dining room with a program of greetings from seniors’ health director Karen Levesque of the Saskatoon Health Region, executive director Scott Irwin of Emmanuel Care, Samaritan Place board chair Todd Rosenberg and executive director Lynn Kohle. Administrative co-ordinator Sharon Koop also read greetings sent by past executive director Juanita Tremeeer.

Some of the residents at Samaritan Place who have lived there since the opening five years ago were featured in a video presented during the program.

The week also included the De Margerie Series on Christian Unity and Reconciliation, which this year featured Rev. Dirk Lange giving a lecture at St. Thomas More College Jan. 26 and morning workshops at the Cathedral of the Holy Family on Jan. 27 and 28. Lange’s theme was “Reformation Today: From

Conflict to Communion, Together in Hope.”

Celebrations of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity were also being held in other communities throughout the world, including Humboldt, which marked the week from Jan. 15 - 22 with evening services at a number of local churches.

Many expressed surprise that five years had passed since the opening, with one saying, “I can’t believe it! Has it really been that long?”

Residents also said that Samaritan Place is a good place to live, especially remarking on the caring staff who help to create a sense of home. One resident said that when she first moved in five years ago, there weren’t very many residents. She felt like the “queen of the castle.” Another resident noted that many residents he had lived with over the past five years have passed away.

Staff were also given an opportunity to speak, with presentations by care partners and LPN’s who have been a part of Samaritan Place since its opening.

Staff reminisced about a retreat at Queen’s House as the team was being formed. They expressed gratitude for family members and residents who had become “like family” to them over the years. Two nurses read out a poem they had composed about Samaritan Place, and a care partner sang two songs, accompanied on guitar.

Finally, five-year service awards were presented to 26 staff members by Jaclyn Heinrich (Clinical Services director), Kevin Breher (Support Services director) and Kohle. Each staff member was personally acknowledged, and a core value was read out — a value that the staff member considers the most important to their life and work. Staff chose the values of holistic care, compassion, human dignity, collaboration, spirituality and integrity as

being key to their work in long-term care.

Samaritan Place includes 56 individual living suites, designed to maximize autonomy and independence. Another 24 units are specifically designated for individuals experiencing dementia. As well, 20 innovative “companion suites” are designed for two people who have different care needs, yet want to remain living together; this might be a husband and wife, siblings, or a parent and their adult child. Even though only one of them may need level 3 or 4 care, this design ensures families can stay together.

Other Catholic Health Care facilities operated by Emmanuel Care in the province include: St. Paul’s Hospital and St. Ann’s Senior Citizens’ Village in Saskatoon, St. Joseph’s Integrated Health Centre in Macklin, St. Peter’s Hospital in Melville, Marian Health Centre in Radville, St. Joseph’s Hospital in Estevan, St. Joseph’s Hospital Foyer d’Youville in Gravelbourg, Santa Maria care home in Regina, St. Anthony’s Hospital in Esterhazy, Foyer St. Joseph Nursing Home in Ponteix, and Providence Place for Holistic Care in Moose Jaw. Emmanuel Care also operates Trinity Manor, an independent and assisted-living facility across the street from Samaritan Place.

The Samaritan Place anniversary celebration also included food, balloons, music and a feeling of togetherness as the Samaritan Place community expressed gratitude to God for guidance and provision over the past five years and into the future.



# Shriver goes in search of the real Pope Francis

By David Gibson

NEW YORK (RNS) — A member of the nation's most famous Catholic political clan, Mark Shriver said he had grown "disillusioned" with the church thanks to the clergy abuse scandal and other issues, and for years he had been pouring much of his spiritual energy into his work as head of Save the Children Action Network.

But from the moment Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elected Pope Francis in 2013, the pontiff fascinated Shriver. He soon set out to Argentina — Bergoglio's homeland — and to the Vatican, among other places, for a book that would become *Pilgrimage: My Search for the Real Pope Francis*.

This volume follows Shriver's bestselling memoir, *A Good Man: Rediscovering My Father, Sargent Shriver*. Sargent Shriver was a fixture in Democratic politics who married into the Kennedy family and was named the first director of the Peace Corps by President John F. Kennedy.

Social justice is clearly part of the Shriver DNA as much as Catholicism — Mark's brother Tim is chair of the Special Olympics. But Mark Shriver found in Francis a leader who helped him reconnect faith and works.

In this interview, conducted during a recent trip he made to New York, Shriver, who is 52 and married with three children, talks about his "search" and how it changed him.

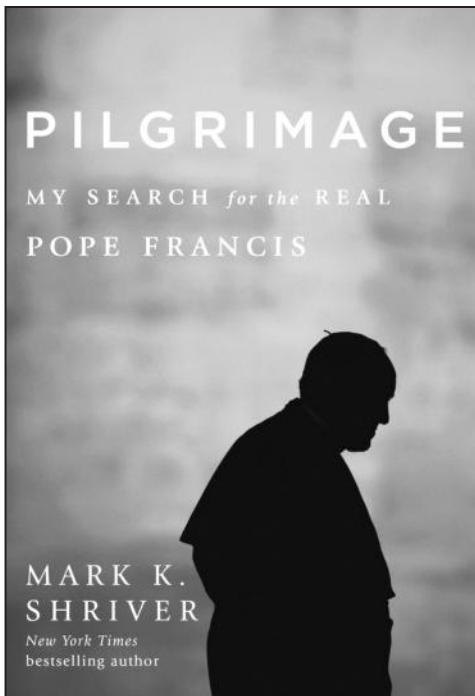
**Why did you need to find the "real" Pope Francis? Is there an image of him that doesn't correspond to reality or our perceptions?**

The idea was that he made these gestures as soon as he became pope, from asking the people in St. Peter's Square to bless him to paying his hotel bill himself to washing the feet of those juvenile delinquents, including a Muslim girl, on Holy Thursday. That was so different from what the previous popes had done. And he was the first Jesuit ever elected pope. I wanted to try to dig in to find out who this guy really was. Were these gestures consistent with the rest of his life or were these publicity gestures to try to garner goodwill for the church?

I wanted to dig in and figure out who this guy really was and what made him tick, what made him so joyful. I wanted to talk to his friends and colleagues and also his detractors. So not necessarily the big shots — the cardinals or the Argentine president. I wanted to find out from the guys who pick up trash in Buenos Aires, from the priests and nuns, from grieving parents who had interacted with him, to figure out who he really was.

**And you found out that he is the real deal?**

He is the real deal. All these gestures, he'd been doing them for years in Buenos Aires (where he was the cardinal and archbishop). He's the real deal but he's



RNS/Laurence Levin (left) RNS/Penguin Randomhouse

**THE REAL POPE FRANCIS — Mark Shriver is the author of *Pilgrimage: My Search for the Real Pope Francis*.**

more than that. He's a real challenge, regardless of whether you're a conservative or a progressive, whether you're a Democrat or a Republican. He doesn't fit into any of those ideologies. He's risen above ideologies. He's trying to move us forward together.

His whole concept of mercy, when I first thought about it, was maybe to be kinder, or maybe to write a bigger cheque to a non-profit. But he's talking about it at a whole different level.

He's trying to get us into more intimate relationships with other human beings — their joys, their pains, their chaos. And he's trying to get us into a more intimate relationship with God.

He's like a prophet. He's challenging everybody, if you take him seriously. The real Pope Francis isn't the nice uncle who you invite over for Thanksgiving, a nice man who smiles and doesn't judge you. This guy doesn't judge but he's talking about mercy at a level at which I never thought about. Maybe it's not that way for hard-core Catholics but for me, as an everyday guy in the pew, he's a real challenge.

**Is he so challenging that he could drive you away?**

I love it! I mean, what's the point if you're not challenged? The unexamined life is not worth living. What he's saying is, "Are you really alive?" He's saying, leave security and comfort on the shore. He's not saying it out of a sense of Catholic guilt, he's not doing it because he's mean, because he's not nice. He's doing it from a place of joy.

His encyclical isn't called the "Guilt of the Gospel." It's the "Joy of the Gospel." He's like a great Jesuit teacher. I love it.

**But Catholics are so divided. Can he pull them together?**

He's trying to move us all forward together. Is it hard? Yeah. It's a huge challenge. But it's on us to discern what Jesus' message is. Francis is not picking sides.

We all, as Americans, want him to be on our side. I thought he was on my side, because you know he believes in serving the poor. But he's not on my side — he's on Jesus' side!

And he's trying to move me comprehensively in that direction and he's trying to move people of other ideologies in that direction. That's huge.

**How did writing this book affect you as a Catholic?**

Francis talks about these little movements, what Bobby Kennedy called "these little ripples of hope," and I think that's what he's trying to do, to move us in these small gestures. That's how I ended the book, with his talk in Philadelphia at the end of his trip to the U.S. (in 2015) when he spoke about these little gestures on behalf of the homeless guy or the annoying person we work with.

They're not big dramatic things. But that starts to change the world one person at a time. Sometimes I do think that the "one-person-at-a-time" idea, that, well, he's crazy. It's never going to make a difference. Then I think, God, he's a prophet and he's completely right.

For me, I try to be more merciful with my kids, with my colleagues, with the homeless guy on the street. And hopefully that starts to make me a better human being.

**And a better Catholic?**

Yes, ultimately that's what it's all about. Look, I went to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, and all of our kids go to Catholic schools. The priests and nuns I know do great work. I have great admiration for them.

The disconnect for me was the sexual abuse scandal, the Vatican bank scandal, popes worrying about red shoes and living in palaces, comments about Islam and women that didn't make sense. This pope has reinvigorated my belief in the work that priests and nuns are doing all over.

**You went to the Vatican to try to meet the pope?**

He turned me down, which was kind of hard because I thought that'd be the end of the story. So it threw me off for five days. But he should have turned me down. He's not interested in his own publicity. He's interested in how you get close to God. He's interested in the poor and the powerless. He should have turned me down. It took me two years to figure that out.

We did get invited last summer to a mass at Santa Marta (the pope's residence in the Vatican), after the book was finished. I met him for a minute and wrote it as the afterword.

**But he will pick up the phone and call people out of the blue, so you never know.**

It's true, I know this priest, Father Pepe, who's really close to Francis, and his father got cancer. I was talking to his brother, who lives in Colorado, and he said the pope called up the other day and his mother picked up the phone and the pope said, "Hi, it's Father Bergoglio."

The mother went, "Pope Francis?" He said, "Yeah, Father Bergoglio." She told him he must be calling for Jorge, her husband who has cancer. He said, "No, no, I want to talk to you, too." He talked to her for 20 minutes, she handed the phone to her husband, they talked for 40 minutes. So they talked for an hour. And he placed the call. He didn't have someone call and say, "Hold for Papa Francesco."

Most political leaders will only spend an hour on the phone if you're going to give them a lot of money. But not him.



## MERCY

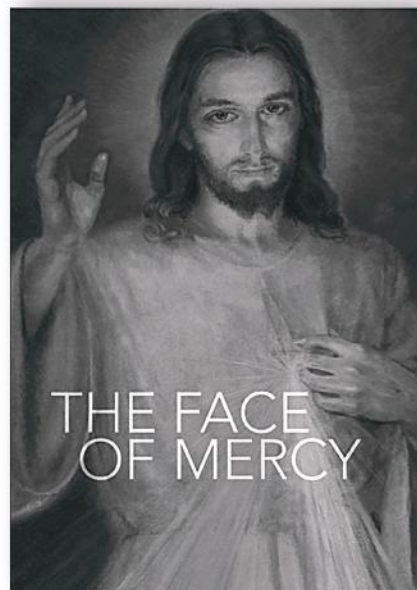
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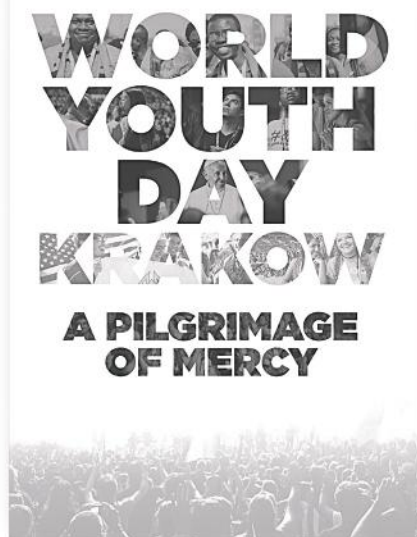
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# A papal documentary and two dramas worth watching

## Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



In mid-January the HBO network unveiled a new series titled *The Young Pope*, a ludicrous fiction imagining how a brash young American ascending to the pontifical office and taking the name Pius XIII might shake things up. Our attention is better directed to the actual history of

armed might of a totalitarian empire. As observed by executive producer Carl Anderson, head of the Knights of Columbus: “By his actions and his words, John Paul II inspired a thirst for freedom that would evolve into the Solidarity Movement. Without his spiritual support, Solidarity’s success would not have been possible, and without Solidarity, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Revolution of ’89 would never have happened.”

Drawing on archival materials and interviews, Karol Wojtyla’s personal story is presented in the historical context of the struggles of the Polish nation. Born in 1920 he was steeped in a Polish culture that found affirmation through its religious identity. As his biographer George Wiegel puts it, “the Catholic Church was the safe deposit box of Polish culture.” He grew up with a deep faith that was tested as a young man during the Second World War when Poland suffered atrocities at the hands of both Hitler and Stalin. He worked as a manual labourer and became a secret seminarian in an underground university. The result of Stalin becoming a western ally in the defeat of Nazi Germany was that eastern Europe was effectively conceded to the Soviet sphere. Wojtyla entered the priesthood at a time when the new Communist authorities sought to control Polish society and destroy the influence of religion.

Father Wojtyla, who had a background in literature and the theatre, found ways to resist this suffocating regime. The young were a focus of his ministry which sought to create “zones of freedom” outside of Communist ideology. As he rose through the ranks of the church — ultimately becoming archbishop of Krakow in 1964 and a cardinal in 1967 — the totalitarian state tried in vain to manipulate and undermine him. While the Vatican pursued a somewhat cautious diplomacy with the USSR in order to protect

the church, his example was a powerful symbol of internal resistance.

Cardinal Wojtyla’s election as pope had an immediate “electric effect,” nowhere more so than in his native Poland. His nine-day visit to Poland in June 1979, marking a major religious anniversary, had an extraordinary impact in showing how the seemingly all-powerful Communist system could be contested by a spiritual power. Pope John Paul II urged the huge crowds to not be afraid and prayed for the Spirit to descend on the land. He had a strong affinity for working people and his papacy provided crucial impetus for the Solidarity movement that arose in 1980. One of his encyclicals proclaimed the rights and dignity of human labour — calling attention to the repression in the supposed workers’ state (though it could also be seen as challenging Reaganite free-market ideology).

The 1980s proved to be a deeply troubled and dangerous time in Poland, much of it under martial law and the threat of a Soviet invasion. Moscow was also suspected of having a hand in the 1981 attempted assassination of the pope. That did not stop John Paul II from making two more important visits, in 1983 when he insisted on meeting with Solidarity founder Lech Walesa, and in 1987 when his presence revived the Solidarity movement from a low ebb.

Of course there were other factors during these years of upheavals that brought the Cold War to an end and caused the Soviet empire to implode. The relationship between American President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, both of whom met with the pope, was a crucial element in a largely peaceful transition. Yet America’s military prowess wasn’t what turned the tide and Gorbachev’s reform attempts could not save a system that was fundamentally broken. The film perhaps too briefly passes over Gorbachev’s role and events in Russia. Still, as Gorbachev himself acknowledged: “The collapse of the Iron Curtain would have been impossible without John Paul II.” Historians agree.

To the documentary’s credit, it also comments on John Paul II’s continuing prophetic voice in the post-Communist period in which he insisted that freedom must not fall prey to the temptations of secularism and consumerism but must be anchored in the moral foundations of a Christian Europe that upholds the dignity of the human person. The struggle is not over in which the force of faith has a central role to play, as was seen in Ukraine’s 2014 Maidan uprising that has been called a “revolution of dignity.”

\*\*\*  
Apart from big awards contenders, the new year tends to offer slim pickings at the multiplex. Here are several worth a visit. Director Theodore Melfi’s *Hidden Figures* tells the little-known story of the African-American women, employees of the National Aeronautical Space Administration (NASA), who played an important role in America’s emerging space program during the Kennedy era of the early 1960s when the Soviet Union’s successful launch of the first man to orbit the earth touched off a Cold War space race.

The narrative is anchored in a trio of strong performances by Octavia Spencer as Dorothy Vaughan who did the unacknowledged and uncompensated work of a supervisor; Janelle Monáe (*Moonlight*) as aspiring engineer Mary Jackson; and Taraji Henson as Katherine Johnson, a math genius whose calculations had a key role in John Glenn’s first American earth orbit on the Friendship 7 mission in 1962. (Glenn died in December at the age of 95.)

The women were part of a group responsible for the manual mathematical work required to back up the nearly all-male white-shirt-and-ties Space Group and its demanding boss Al Harrison played by Kevin Costner. Literally referred to as “coloured computers,” they worked in Virginia, a segregation state in which they faced daily discrimination and prejudice including inside NASA. That could have absurd results which the movie uses to melodramatic effect. It was no laughing matter, however, as the women’s persistence and strength of character makes clear. Ms. Vaughan saved jobs by anticipating the arrival of IBM mainframe computers. Ms. Jackson became NASA’s first female and African-American engineer. Ms. Johnson’s seminal contributions spanned decades and she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015.

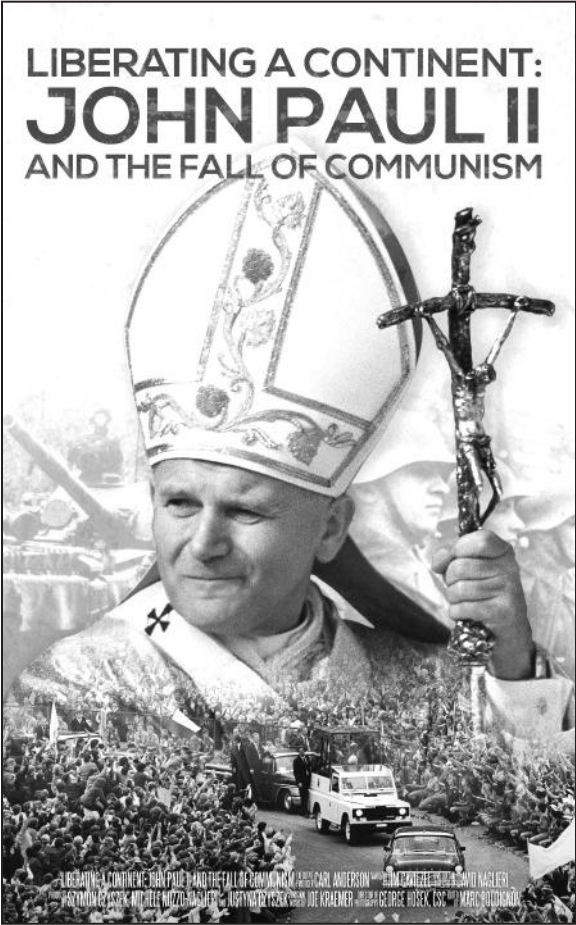
Their story deserves the overdue recognition (it has been nominated for three Oscars including Best Picture, Best Supporting

Actress for Octavia Spencer, and Best Adapted Screenplay, and the cast won a Screen Actors Guild Award Jan. 29). As Monáe puts it, “finally we’re going to have some true, new American heroes that just so happen to be black women.” As a historical footnote, a new book by Dava Sobel, *The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars*, tells how in the late 19th century another group of remarkable women — also called “computers” — were employed at Harvard College to do mathematical work in support of astrophysical observations.

\*\*\*  
J.A. Bayona’s *A Monster Calls*, a partly Canadian-financed U.S./Spain co-production, centres on a troubled 12-year-old British boy, Conor O’Malley (Lewis MacDougall), whose mother, Lizzie (*Star Wars* heroine Felicity Jones), is fighting terminal illness. The screenplay by Patrick Ness adapts his eponymous 2011 novel inspired by an idea from author Siobhan Dowd who died of cancer in 2004.

Conor is gripped by a fear of loss. He doesn’t want to live with his grandmother (Sigourney Weaver) and his father (Toby Kebbell) who now lives in Los Angeles and has another family. Bullied at school and emotionally conflicted over his mother’s condition, he has horrible nightmares when one night at 12:07 a.m. — a time with recurring significance — he is visited by an arboreal monster with fiery eyes emerging from an ancient Yew tree in a churchyard. The monster, voiced by Liam Neeson, will tell him three stories before forcing him to confront the truth of his own story. The moral of these tales is complex, even perverse, and in the throes of several of them Conor lashes out in a rage against circumstances that seem unfair. Yet through the anger, fears and tears of Conor’s visions, it is a mother’s enduring love that calms the storm.

MacDougall, who lost his own mother a year before filming began, is remarkable in the role. The animation and digital effects are a marvel. All told, this deeply moving story is highly recommended for family viewing.



**DOCUMENTARY** — The story of the first pope from a Communist country to be elected is told in an excellent new documentary, *Liberating a Continent: John Paul II and the Fall of Communism*.

how new popes have had a major impact on the Catholic Church and the world from Saint John XXIII to Saint John Paul II to Pope Francis.

Strongest in terms of geopolitical repercussions was undoubtedly the election of Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyla to the chair of St. Peter on Oct. 16, 1978, the first pope from a Communist country in the Soviet orbit. The story of these events is told in an excellent new documentary, *Liberating a Continent: John Paul II and the Fall of Communism* (<https://jp2film.com/>), written and directed by David Naglieri and narrated by Jim Caviezel, best known for portraying Jesus in *The Passion of the Christ*. Available on DVD, it was first broadcast last year on PBS in the United States and the Salt and Light channel in Canada.

The film opens with two contrasting messages. The first is Stalin’s famous retort: “The pope? How many divisions does he have?” The second is from John Paul II: “Darkness can only be scattered by light, hatred can only be conquered by love.” Those words still resonate today, and as we know, they invoked the Spirit that helped overcome the



**HIDDEN FIGURES** — Janelle Monáe stars in *Hidden Figures*. Based on a true story, a team of African-American women provide NASA with important mathematical data needed to launch the program’s first successful space missions in the early 1960s.

CNS/Fox



# To live life to the full, keep the new commandment



## Liturgy and Life

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI

Do you want to live an exciting, purposeful and joyful life?

Keep the new commandment that Jesus gave us. It is as simple as that.

The readings today show us how this is done. The psalmist starts it all off by proclaiming that they who follow God’s law, who do God’s will, who obey God’s Word with care and from the heart, will be happy.

St. Paul in the second reading entices us to enter more deeply into what he calls the mystery of a wisdom of God hidden through the ages, and that we will experience a joy beyond our imagining if we love God. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, explains that this secret wisdom is not like gnosticism, which posits that only a select group is in the circle of understanding. The secret, he explains, is the secret of the cross — that in dying for us, Jesus not only reveals God to us as totally vulnerable, humble and unconditional love, but also invites us to follow his example, to be his disciples, to love as he loved. Those who grasp this message are within the kingdom; those who do not cannot yet enter that reign of God that he came on earth to inaugurate.

Jesus in the gospel makes it clear that he did not come to change the law, but to fulfil it through his love. He then

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI, Archbishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-The Pas, is chaplain at the Star of the North Retreat House in St. Albert, Alta. He continues to live out his motto, *Regnum Dei Intra Vos* (the kingdom of God is among you), which is his overriding focus and passion.

gives us the key to keeping the law — our virtue must go deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees. To understand that comment, we need to review what the law entails.

We know that the Chosen People, through Moses, were given the Ten Commandments. The religious leaders then developed these Ten Commandments over the ages (from before the Common Era to the fifth century CE) into the Talmud, a collection of opinions and teachings of thousands of rabbis that became the basis for all codes of Jewish law widely quoted to this day. The people were obligated to keep all these laws if they were to consider themselves holy. Unfortunately, that plethora of laws led to a numbing and lifeless externalism that led the people down a path that could actually take them away from who God truly was — love and only love.

The newness of Jesus’ law lies in taking an obscure law from Leviticus 19:18, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself,” and putting it on an equal level with the great Shema from Deuteronomy 6:4-5, “Love God with your whole being,” that was the main focus of the Jewish effort to keep the law.

**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**February 12, 2017**

**Sirach 15:15-20**  
**Psalm 119**  
**1 Corinthians 2:6-10**  
**Matthew 5:17-37**

Then Jesus raised the bar even higher by asking us to “Love one another as he has loved us.” Finally, Jesus added the finishing touch that we are also to “Love our enemies, and do good to those who persecute us.” That pretty well summarizes the newness of the law of love that Jesus taught us. It is more about love than about what one has to do to be a good Jew, a main concern of many present-day Jews according to an Israeli guide to one group of pilgrims.

This is the gist of the comment by Jesus, that unless our virtue goes deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees and their focus on trying to keep all the laws, more so than loving others from the heart, then we will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

If this all sounds difficult, challenging and even

undoable, the first reading from Ecclesiasticus both reassures us (“It is within our power to keep the commandments”), and reminds us of the importance of living this new law (choose life or death, fire or water). This is a matter of life and death.

In the end, it is simple. We are to love God with our whole being; to love our neighbour as we love ourselves; to love one another as Jesus has loved us, and to love and forgive our enemies, those who hurt us.

This is the choice that Jesus would have us make, and invites us to make. The late psychologist Gerald May, in his book *Will and Spirit*, teaches that one of the greatest gifts God has given us, after life itself, is our free will. We can be willing, he points out, or wilful. That would be his way of saying, choose life or death, fire or water.

To be willing is to be humble and open to doing the will of God in our lives rather than our own will (that would mean choosing to make loving others from the heart our greatest priority in our lives). To be wilful is to be proud and stubborn and choosing to do our own will rather than God’s will (which for many might be to make following laws to make themselves look and feel holy their priority rather than loving from the heart).

Richard Rohr, OFM, points out this difference in his own unique way in his claim that Jesus rarely asked us to worship him; instead, he often invited us to follow him. There is a great difference here. Worship is relatively easy and usually risk free. Following Jesus is demanding and can get us into trouble. As the late peace activist Daniel Berrigan put it, “Before we decide to follow Jesus, we better consider how good we look on wood!”

Step 11 of the 12 Step program puts it well: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God, seeking only the knowledge of God’s will for me and the power to carry it out.”

The eucharist is a humble living out of this new law of Jesus. We listen to his Word, experience his forgiveness, receive his Body and Blood, experience healing, and are empowered to go out to share his love with the world.

So in the end, if we want to live a joyful, purposeful life, all we have to do is to keep the new commandment of Jesus, and love from the heart.

# Acedia is the body’s way of enforcing much-needed Sabbath rest

## In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



Early Christian monks believed in something they called *acedia*. More colloquially, they called it *the Noonday Devil*, a name that essentially describes the concept. Acedia, for them, was different from ordinary depression in that it didn’t draw you into the dark, chaotic areas of your mind and heart, to have you diseased before your own complex and infinite depth. It was more of a flattening out, a dearth of energy, that put you into a semi-vegetative state that simply deadened all deep feeling and thoughts.

The early church considered it one of the seven capital sins. Later it was renamed as *sloth*. There’s an abundance of good spiritual literature on the concept

Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website: [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com). Now on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser](http://www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser)

when they are not given something they need, sometimes forcefully shut us down, much like an ordinary depression shuts someone down; except that in the case of acedia, the shutdown of energy is for the purpose of health. Simplistically put, because we won’t sit down on our own and give our bodies and minds the rest, nourishment, and space they need, our bodies and minds conspire together to sit us down, forcibly. In essence, that’s acedia, and, in essence, it’s for our own health.

As a psychologist, she didn’t go on to draw out the potential ramifications of this for spirituality, particularly how this might relate to the practice of Sabbath in our lives, but all the implications are there.

When you read the Judaeo-Christian scriptures, particularly the early sections in Genesis which chronicle the creation of the world and how God “rested” on the Sabbath, you see that there’s a divinely ordered rhythm to how work and rest are supposed to unfold in our lives. Briefly stated, there’s to be pattern, a rhythm, to our lives that works this way: *You work for six days, and then have a one-day sabbatical; you work for seven years, and then have a one-year sabbatical; you work for seven times seven years, and then have a Jubilee year, a sabbatical for the whole planet; and then you work for a lifetime, and go on an*

*eternity of sabbatical.*

In essence, our lives of work, our everyday agenda, and our normal anxieties, are to be regularly punctuated by a time in which we lay down the hammer, lay down our agenda, lay down our work-a-day worries and simply sit, rest, vegetate, enjoy, soak-in, luxuriate, contemplate, pray, and let things take care of themselves for a while. That’s the biblical formula for health, spiritual, human, psychic, and bodily. And whenever we don’t do this voluntarily, in effect, whenever we neglect to do Sabbath in our lives, our bodies and minds are likely to do it for us by shutting down our energies. Acedia is our friend here: we will do Sabbath one way or the other.

It’s no secret that today the practice of Sabbath is more and more disappearing within our culture. Indeed, our culture constitutes a virtual conspiracy against the practice of Sabbath. Among the many culprits responsible for this, I highlight our addiction to information technology, our current inability to go for any stretch of time without being connected to others and the world through a phone, a tablet, or a computer screen. We are finding ourselves less and less able to step away from all that we are connected to through information technology, and consequently we are finding ourselves less and less able to simply rest, to let go of things, to be in Sabbath-mode. Perhaps the most important ascetical practice for us today would be the practice of Cyber-Sabbaths.

Already 700 years ago, the Sufi poet Rumi lamented: *I have lived too long where I can be reached!* That’s a cry for Sabbath time that went up long before today’s information technology placed us where we can always be reached, and that cry is going up everywhere today as our addiction to information technology increases. One worries that we will not find the asceticism needed to curb our addiction, but then acedia may well do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

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# Keep the fire burning for more visible communion

## Challenge of Ecumenism

Thomas Ryan, CSP



The ecumenical movement spread through Christian churches like a wildfire in the late 1960s, through the '70s, and into the '80s, fanned significantly by the entrance of the Roman Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council into the work for Christian unity.

Around the turn of the millennium, there was a substantive reshaping of relationship among a significant number of churches. In 1997 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the U.S. Episcopal Church judged that their process of growth in agreement had reached sufficient maturity to enter into full communion with one another.

The Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also entered into full communion with each other with mutual recognition of ministries, sacraments, exchangeability of ministers and members.

And in 1999 the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation signed a

Common Declaration on Justification by Faith, burying the hatchet on one of the core issues of the Reformation and creating a new context on the road to full communion between the Reformation churches and the Roman Catholic Church.

But in the first decade of the new millennium, one began hearing references to the “fire dying down” or to the “winter of ecumenism.” A variety of factors contributed to this shift in temperature: diminishing congregational numbers resulting in increasing denominational self-focus and self-definition for the sake of survival. The increasing religious pluralism of the country with its call to inter-religious encounter and engagement. The emergence from the culture wars of new church-dividing questions like the nature of sexuality and marriage, and who can be ordained.

What is needed in our time are reminders that the church’s mission for unity has not been and cannot be shelved. The thematic scriptural passage for the January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity provided that reminder: “God reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18).

In other words, the church is the community of those who,

because of Christ, are no longer separated. It is a contradiction in terms to speak of “separated Christians,” for reconciliation, unity, is the very nature of the church of Christ. To be in communion of life with one another as Christians and bring that message of reconciliation to others is our baptismal vocation. In short, the church we are called to be is the community of those who — because of Christ — are no longer separated.

Do we need energizing reminders in these turbulent times that this call to unity, this vocation, is more real and needed than ever? Yes, we do. And the signs are there that the Holy Spirit is

alive and active, lighting the fire in our hearts for more visible communion with one another as followers of Jesus.

Such signs were manifest in Boston during the Jan. 18 - 25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. There was a prayer gathering in a different denominational church each night of the week. On the opening evening, Wednesday, Christians from around the city gathered in an Evangelical church. On Thursday evening, people came together in an Eastern Orthodox church. And on Friday evening there was an energizing service of song and prayer in a Pentecostal church.

Then, on Saturday afternoon,

800 people from a broad spectrum of denominations came to a Catholic church to meet and talk over lunch, share faith in workshop discussions, and join their hearts and voices in a prayer service. The variety of music served as a symbol of the richness of gifts within the Christian family, led in turn by Pentecostals, an Orthodox Byzantine choir, Coptic chanters, and regular Catholic/Protestant hymnody. The service was co-presided by eight church leaders, and in his homily Cardinal Sean O’Malley reminded those present that we are all members of the one Body

— GOOD NEWS, page 13



Design Pics

**SEARCHING FOR TRUTH** — A post-truth culture in which objective facts and objective, divinely inspired moral principles no longer have any place or pull in people’s lives is not to be taken lightly, says Bishop Paul Tighe, adjunct secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture.

## Moral radar: papal media messages can cut through ‘post-truth’ fog

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With “post-truth” being crowned “Word of the Year” by Oxford Dictionaries, Pope Francis’ urgent call to communicate trust and hope could not have come at a better time.

Helping people see the world with “realism and trust” must be encouraged as well as fostering encounter, not exclusion, through constructive dialogue, the pope said in his World Communications Day message this year.

A post-truth culture in which objective facts and objective, divinely inspired moral principles no longer have any place or pull in people’s lives is not to be taken lightly, said Bishop Paul Tighe, adjunct secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture.

“One of the real risks at the moment is that if we become totally skeptical about all the (sources) of information, it will lead to a breakdown of the kind of trust that is necessary for society and indeed our own human lives to flourish,” he told Catholic News Service Jan. 24, (the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of writers and journalists), the day the pope’s message was

released to the public.

People need “good, reliable, trustworthy information” if they are going to make “responsible and dependable decisions in areas of politics, economics, health care” and other key concerns, he said.

The presence and primacy of truth and the dangers of relativism were a major hallmark of Pope Benedict XVI’s pontificate. He spoke of its impact on the media in his World Communications’ Day message in 2008 and even in his encyclical “Charity in Truth” in 2009. In his 2008 message, he called for a code of ethics for the communication industry.

It is “absurd to maintain that (mass media) are neutral,” he wrote in 2009, noting media are often under pressure to serve “economic interests intent on dominating the market” and to “impose cultural models that serve ideological and political agendas.”

Pope Benedict drilled down on the dangers foreseen by his predecessors, particularly St. John Paul II and Blessed Paul VI, who established the World Communications Day tradition in 1967.

While early papal messages dedicated to television, video and audio cassettes and cinema may seem antiquated, all 51 messages

have the same underlying purpose: to bring attention to the potential dangers and damage caused by swift technological changes in media communications and to best ways the new tools can promote truth, hope, joy and human life and dignity.

Blessed Paul summed up the importance of truth in his communications message in 1972 — just a few months before the Watergate scandal began, leading to discoveries of government abuses of power and the 1974 resignation of then-President Richard M. Nixon.

“The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth” can be “safely transmitted” when the one providing the information and the one receiving it are both diligent and sincere, Blessed Paul said.

In this early communications’ day message, Blessed Paul, in essence, answers Pope Benedict’s wish for an info-ethics guide by saying:

— Giving information is much more than observing and reporting an incident. The reporter describes the context, searches for the causes, examines the surrounding circumstances, and tries to assess the possible effects.

— Reporting work can be

compared to scientific research, since it demands observing the facts carefully, checking for accuracy, critically evaluating the sources of the information, and finally, passing on the findings in a way that “nothing essential is overlooked or suppressed.”

— Similar respect for and diligence in seeking the truth is necessary for those receiving information.

— People should pursue the search for truth “actively and responsibly” in order to avoid a “passive and uncritical acceptance of whatever happens to be offered” by the media.

— It would be an affront to one’s own personal dignity if people, especially Christians, ever relinquished their right to contribute to the search for truth, which is “not only of abstract and philosophical truth, but also of the workaday truth of concrete daily happenings.”

— Let people “meet the assault of the mass media” with an awareness of their own human dignity, intelligence, and gift of “an independent personal judgment with the capacity to make its own decisions” and freely choose from the many opinions.

— Religion coverage demands

understanding events beyond “merely human implications,” but also the spiritual context, the “religious truth of particular happenings” and the “whole divine plan to which they must be related.”

— Reporting on religion “requires something beyond mere professional competence. It requires the illumination of faith” in order to offer fuller understanding.

— Fiction and entertainment provide relaxation but “it surely would be an unhealthy thing if the listener, or reader, or viewer, were to allow his critical faculty to be lulled to sleep. The truth remains a vitally important thing even in a recreational context, and he must remain sufficiently alert to recognize any deviation from the truth in what he reads, hears or sees.”

— Artistic freedom and fanciful creations are not expected to “portray concrete reality,” but they must not deny reality. “Even they have an obligation of fidelity to the truth and to the values inseparable from it.”

— True art helps people search for and stick to the truth, and never exploits — “for quick profits or other unworthy ends — either the ignorance or the human weaknesses of audiences.”



# Holy Trinity division introduces Christian meditation



## Catholic Connections

Bernadette Cey

*Be still and know that I am God.*

These words are a call for our present age. We live in a culture that pulls us outside of ourselves to our iPhones, iPads, computers and all the social media they offer. We now have a generation that will never know what it is like to not look at a screen to connect with their world.

Though there are many advantages to these technologies, they do have their downside. We have lost the ability to be comfortable with silence, to take the inner journey to the place wherein lies our true identity. That is why Holy Trinity Catholic school division has implemented the use of Christian meditation. This is very different from the mindfulness of Buddhist meditation or New Age relaxation or visualization techniques. Though they have their good fruits, Christian meditation is about connecting with a person, the person of Christ.

Christian meditation is not new, but rather has been part of the history of Christian prayer since the third and fourth centuries. Interestingly it started as a response to the assimilation of Christians into a soon-to-be collapsing Roman empire after the Edict of 313 CE, when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the empire. Christians lived in a hectic commercial world similar to ours today, and soon bought into the status quo.

But a group of Christian men and women fled this lifestyle and

*Cey is Religious Education Consultant for Holy Trinity Catholic Schools in Moose Jaw, Sask.*

entered the desert to seek a life of solitude, simplicity and community. It was out of this experience of the desert fathers and mothers that Christian meditation was born. St. John Cassian wrote instructions to his followers to repeat as a mantra a Sanskrit word meaning “that which clears the mind.” In this way, as they repeated it throughout the day, their whole life would become a prayer. He stressed contemplative prayer without words or images.

This prayer of the heart characterized the first 11 centuries of the Christian era. In the 12th century there was a marked development in religious thought. It was the time when the great schools of theology were founded. It was the birth of precise analysis in regard to concepts, definitions and classifications, or left-brain thinking. Unfortunately this analysis was later transferred to the practice of prayer and came to be called mental prayer, more complicated and systematized as time went on. Prayer of the heart was still presented as the ultimate goal of spiritual practice but gradually came to be seen as reserved for the so-called holiest people such as priests, monks, nuns or sisters.

Thankfully John Main, an Irish Benedictine monk, began the rediscovery of this ancient tradition of Christian meditation and it has been spreading throughout the world.

And how much it is needed. In its simplicity, anyone can do it. Through the information supplied on the Christian Meditation with Children website, it has been suggested to use the word *Maranatha* (Aramaic meaning *Come Lord Jesus*) as our mantra. It is the oldest Christian mantra

and one of the earliest Christian prayers. It is said silently within our hearts in four syllables of equal length: ma-ra-na-tha. Students are seated quietly in their desks or cross legged on the floor of the classroom with eyes closed as they repeat their word in silence. Should they get distracted they are encouraged to simply return to the mantra.

The period of meditation can last anywhere from three to 10 minutes depending on the age and makeup of the class. A lit candle representing the light of Christ, with lights off, can aid in this time of silence. Beginning and ending with some quiet reflective music can also help the students to enter into and come out of their Christian meditation.

The right side of the brain

processes our mystical experiences. Capacity for the mystical begins to fade or be devalued as the left brain gains dominance. From about age two onward, use of the left increases. Meditation helps children to reconnect with the right brain way of being and therefore increases a sense of balance. We misjudge children if we think they do not hunger for silence and enjoy it. They yearn for the experience of meeting God just as adults do. Teaching children to be silent is more than just being quiet. It is in the stillness, in being open, that God can speak to their hearts and they can discover the love of God for each of them personally.

For the teacher in the classroom using meditation to begin the day with their students, they notice many benefits: greater

focus in the face of distractions, greater ability to solve complex problems, making more confident decisions, improved self-awareness, a reduction in stress and anxiety, improved coping strategies, and a cultivating of acceptance and compassion.

Those who have used meditation in their classrooms find the children like it and ask for it, report feeling closer to God, feel comfortable and safe and sit still longer. They were more considerate and caring toward others and all of this builds a sense of community in their classrooms. Indeed, in our world of technology, Christian meditation can provide a much-needed balance where in silence, stillness and simplicity, students and teachers alike can hear the voice of unconditional Love.



Holy Trinity Catholic School Division

**CHRISTIAN MEDITATION** — “We misjudge children if we think they do not hunger for silence and enjoy it,” writes Bernadette Cey. “They yearn for the experience of meeting God just as adults do.” Learning the practice of Christian meditation has enormous benefits.

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# In times of darkness, this feast floods world with light

## Soul Searching

Tom Saretsky



More than a month after what most think of as the end of the Christmas season, some, especially Eastern Catholics, are still in celebration mode, right to Feb. 2.

In the church, the feast of Christmas *begins*, on Christmas Day. It doesn't begin a week after Thanksgiving, or the week after Remembrance Day.

It's sad that on Boxing Day many people take down their trees. The decorations are put away and all remnants of the most festive day of the year, celebrated a mere 24 hours earlier, are all but forgotten.

I'm not sure why some are so quick to extinguish Christmas festive light right after the season commences, especially given the darkness of January. Maybe it's because the commercial season starts so early and by the time Christmas Day finally arrives people are "Christmased" out. The exhaustive preparations, the buying and wrapping, the gatherings, the familial demands and the general stress of the holiday finally reaches its peak on Dec. 25. After the weeks of celebrations are over, many people are simply done and the decorations come down.

I love the Christmas season and of course I too decorate early, but the lights and decorations are not dismantled after the 25th.

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

Even now there is still a reminder of the Christmas season: the Nativity set. The Nativity can remain until Feb. 2, when the church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. As Both Lungs columnist Brent Kostyniuk has said, in the Eastern Church, Feb. 2 is the official end to the Christmas season. On that day, the Nativity's Christ Child is replaced with fresh-cut flowers, symbolizing that new life will spring alive soon. That's a more consoling sign than waiting for a groundhog to see its shadow!

Our Nativity set, complete with a small battery-powered lamp overhead the crib, sits as a serene presence on one of our tables. It's a testament to past days of comfort and joy and a reminder of the word made flesh — the gift of new life given to the world.

As peaceful as the Nativity scene appears to be, it was not quite like the carols and cards would have us believe. The stable was smelly, crowded and uncomfortable — not the most desirable place to have a baby, yet it was the place that welcomed the prince of peace and it was here that foreigners, the poor, the lonely and the outcasts came to pay him homage.

Evelyn Underhill maintains that "human nature is like a stable that is inhabited by the ox of pride and the ass of prejudice. These are animals which need a lot of space, and I would suspect that many choose to feed these animals on the side."

Whom do you choose to feed? The Christ Child, or these ani-



Feast of the Presentation by C. Pastro

**FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION** — Nativity sets in the home can remain on display until the "official" end to the Christmas season, the Feast of the Presentation, Feb. 2. On that day the Nativity's Christ Child is replaced with fresh-cut flowers, symbolizing that new life will spring alive soon, writes Tom Saretsky.

mals? Pride and prejudice are insidious beasts. They represent what is wrong with the world. One look south of our border, with the newly elected President Donald Trump taking power, and we witness the beasts being fed.

For the past 18 months the world has been privy to Trump's public and divisive diatribe against women, foreigners, and people of other faiths. His pugnacity, belligerence, and overall disdain for anyone who thinks or believes differently than he does is met with derision and subjected to insults and ridicule via his Twitter account and even in his press conferences.

Unfortunately, Trump has difficulty swallowing his pride and he makes no attempt to mask his prej-

udice. His behaviour has given permission for others to come out of their shadows to display their own pride and prejudice.

All the while, the Prince of Peace — the personification of love and acceptance — slowly starves to death. It would appear that many seem far nearer to the beastly animals than to Jesus.

Back in the time when Jesus was born, there was no room for him at the inn. In our calendar, Jesus is barely one month old. We made room in our hearts during the many weeks leading up to the celebration. How are we doing now? Is there still room for the infant child? Or have we run out of welcomes and placed a brightly lit "no vacancy" sign in our hearts?

Jesus was born amidst great pride and prejudice. Our current time in history has no monopoly on that, yet Jesus welcomed the lowly to the manger, the sinners became his friends, the outcasts and the poorest of the poor were his worshippers, and foreigners brought him extravagant gifts. As well, let us never forget that this child, who

began by receiving these outcast guests, also had a prostitute as his most faithful friend, and two convicted criminals were crucified with him at the end. When you look at these two extremes, the height and the breadth and the depth of his love is clearly evident.

Good will ultimately have the final say. Light will triumph over darkness, and love will drive out hate. Our current political climate makes it difficult to believe that. It would appear we are in need of another deliverer, another saviour to usher in a new age.

What do we do in the meantime? We wait. But it is not good enough, as the writer of Lamentations would say, "to put our mouths to the dust and wait." We must wait with purpose and action by living the same kind of goodness, light and love in our own lives. It makes our waiting much more bearable, and our saviour much more present. This kind of active and purposeful waiting promises to shine Christmas light into the darkness of our lives throughout the entire year.

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## We need to hear good news to keep fire for unity alive

Continued from page 11

of Christ through our common baptism.

On Sunday evening, students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology led an evening of sung prayer in the style of the ecumenical community of Taizé. On Monday evening, Asian Evangelicals hosted a prayer gathering. On Tuesday evening, Catholics and Lutherans co-hosted a service in the Paulist Center chapel commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. And Episcopalians brought the week to a close in their church with an Evensong service for all.

We need to hear good news like this and draw inspiration

from such events to keep the fire for Christian unity alive and well in our own towns and cities. All these events were stimulated and overseen by two new local ecumenical networks founded in 2012 by individuals in whose hearts the fire for unity burns: UniteBoston (Kelly Steinhaus), and the Ecumenical Institute (Vito Nicastro and Scott Brill).

"God reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. . . . We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us" (2 Cor 5:18, 20). When we accept our role as ambassadors for unity, the Holy Spirit will use us in ways unimaginable to keep the fire burning.

What might you do?



## Trump creates controversy

President Donald Trump continues to make waves, and to dominate the news, with his almost-daily executive orders. Most of them are issued to fulfil campaign promises, and most of them are changing the order of business in America.

In addition, his decisions are sparking large protests not only in the United States but around the world.

His Jan. 27 executive order to restrict the entry of all citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries into the U.S. brought a large outcry of opposition from Catholic leaders across the U.S. It also created a state of confusion for officials at airports and elsewhere who are in charge of deciding who can now be allowed to immigrate to the U.S.

The Protection of the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States suspends the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days and bans entry from citizens of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia for 90 days. It also establishes a religious criteria for refugees, proposing to give priority to religious minorities over

others who may have equally compelling refugee claims.

Giving priority to Christian refugees, however, is opposed by religious leaders in the Middle East.

It would be “a trap” that discriminates and fuels religious tensions in the Middle East, said Iraq’s Chaldean Catholic patriarch. “Every reception policy that discriminates (among) the persecuted and suffering on religious grounds ultimately harms the Christians of the East,” said Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad. He added that any preferential treatment based on religion provides the kind of arguments used by those who propagate “propaganda and prejudice that attack native Christian communities of the Middle East as ‘foreign bodies’ ” or as groups that are “supported and defended by western powers.”

“These discriminating choices,” he said, “create and feed tensions with our Muslim fellow citizens.”

Commenting on the effects of the presidential memorandum locally, Jeanne Atkinson, executive director of Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., said the order erodes the United States’ commitment to the protection of refugees, weakens America’s security and harms its standing in the international community. “At a time when war and

persecution have driven more people to flee in search of safety than any other time in modern history, we need to protect refugees rather than reject them out of misplaced fear,” she said in a press release from Silver Spring, Maryland.

Among other effects, she said, the order would halt the refugee resettlement program for 120 days, reduce by more than half the number of refugees resettled in 2017 to 50,000, suspend the resettlement of Syrian refugees and suspend immigration from several Muslim majority countries.

“Operating out of fear does not serve the nation’s interests,” she commented. “In fact, refugee resettlement serves the nation’s security interests. In addition to intellect, ambition, and an ethic of hard work, refugees often bring language and cultural skills needed by our national security agencies.”

The refugee resettlement process includes extensive security checks performed by the Department of Defense, the FBI, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State, she pointed out.

Trump says he wants to end terrorism, not help it spread. Hopefully, saner heads will prevail in his administration. — PWN

## Canadian indigenous people are not the ‘ghosts of history’

By Len Flett  
with Nicole Letourneau,  
Winnipeg

Canadian indigenous people have been described as “ghosts of history.” To a great extent, they have been ignored, even though Canadians are fully aware that indigenous people were here long before Europeans. Canadians know that indigenous people have been mistreated — their lands and culture stripped away through questionable means, leaving generations traumatized.

But for many Canadians, ignorance is bliss — it’s easier to ignore this unpleasant chapter in history and pretend that the displacement, oppression and trauma of indigenous people never happened.

In the short run, ignoring this history may make it easier to be proud of being Canadian. In the long run, ignoring this history will weigh heavily on the Canadian psyche.

The eclipse of the indigenous people by English and French settlers by the time of Confederation has left present day Canada floundering with its identity — and even affects us on the world stage. Canada’s attempts to be a global champion of human rights are often ridiculed as the result of its treatment of its indigenous population.

A 2014 United Nations report showed that, of the bottom 100 communities in Canada on the Community Well-Being Index, 96

were indigenous communities. In 2015, the Conference Board of Canada ranked 117 health regions in Canada and found that indigenous communities were at the bottom, mostly affected by social problems affecting health. That’s the impact of systematically undervaluing a whole group of people. That’s trauma in real life.

But history also shows us how important indigenous people were to the founding of Canada. Philosopher and writer John Ralston Saul argues that Canadian identity extends beyond the French and English and actually rests on a triangular foundation that includes indigenous peoples. Early exploration and settlement by the French and English would not have been possible without the assistance of indigenous people.

Indigenous people taught newcomers how to exist on the land. Indigenous participation in the fur trade enabled the establishment of the first major economic activity in this country. Solutions and newfound pride in the Canadian identity can be found by looking honestly and responding appropriately to the lessons of history.

The social problems facing many indigenous people because of intergenerational trauma are large. But the indigenous population is the youngest demographic group in Canada. That means we can support change in a large generation of young people that could cascade forward into generations to come.

If we ignore the problems, the trauma will grow exponentially. If we address the problems, the healing will grow exponentially. So what are the solutions?

Many come under the reconsideration of treaties. Rather than keep our treaties hidden under a cloak of shame, we should acknowledge and celebrate them with pride by focusing and emphasizing their original intent: an agreement between peoples about the peaceful sharing of lands in exchange for security from hunger, disease and obsolescence.

Recognizing the value of indigenous people, inherent in the

intent of treaties as agreements between two peoples, will reduce the societal push for assimilation. If you value someone, you don’t

see a need to assimilate that person. Indigenous people have always resisted being absorbed into larger society through forced

assimilation. Chief Sitting Bull once said, “If the Great Spirit had

— INDIGENOUS, page 15

## Severe food shortages in Africa ‘alarming’

By Amanda Thorsteinsson,  
Winnipeg

After responding to prolonged drought conditions in parts of Africa last year, Canadian Foodgrains Bank is gearing up to help more people affected by

*Thorsteinsson is Communications Co-ordinator of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which is a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working together to end global hunger. In the 2015 - 16 budget year, the Foodgrains Bank provided over \$43 million of assistance for over one million people in 40 countries.*

erratic weather conditions in eastern Africa in 2017.

The erratic weather — too much rain in some places, not enough in others — is hitting countries such as Somalia, Malawi, and parts of Ethiopia and Kenya the hardest.

The weather conditions are part of a particularly harsh El Niño weather event that began in 2015. Through its members, the Foodgrains Bank has so far responded to the El Niño crisis with nine projects, totaling \$4.4 million.

“Such erratic weather conditions could be disastrous for vulnerable communities struggling to recover,” says Barbara

Macdonald, who directs International Programs for the Foodgrains Bank.

“We are deeply concerned about the situation,” she says. “That so many people are again being affected by erratic weather is very alarming.”

Currently, the Foodgrains Bank is responding through its member World Renew in south-eastern Kenya with an emergency food project for 1,500 drought-affected households.

The project, which totals \$495,000, is providing rations of maize, beans, oil and salt for four months, as well as a seed distribu-

— CHRONIC, page 15



CNS/Khalil Ashawi, Reuters

**SIBLINGS WITH BELONGINGS IN SYRIA** — A brother and sister transport their salvaged belongings from their destroyed house Jan. 2 in Aleppo, Syria. Conveying Pope Francis’ closeness to the Syrian people, a Vatican delegation visited Aleppo Jan. 18 - 23 following the end of the hostilities that left thousands dead and the city in ruins.

*This article was based on a keynote speech delivered by Len Flett at the Indigenous Healing and Trauma conference in Calgary. Flett is the author of From the Barren Lands and a member of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation (Big Trout Lake, Ont.). Letourneau is the author of Scientific Parenting and a professor at the University of Calgary’s Owerko Centre focused on children’s neurodevelopment. Both are expert advisers with EvidenceNetwork.ca. www.troy-media.com.*



It’s time to talk so that we can have peace

**The Editor:** I write this on Jan. 25, the feast of St. Paul’s conversion. What brought about the radical change in this unstoppable missionary of God’s unquenchable love?

It was encounter. Meeting the risen Jesus transforms everything. From killer to one pouring out his last ounce of energy; he then meets Ananias, the Christian community and on to the world’s edge. All his letters are about relationships.

Now compare what Russia and Iran are doing to stop the Syrian conflict. All the combatants are at the table, even if they risk jumping over it to pummel the opponents! They are risking dialogue. As Pope Francis is always urging us, they are daring to meet, talk, relate.

Recently a former member of the IRA told CBC how for years the powers refused to talk to them. They were terrorists! Finally, after decades of carnage, invited to dialogue, they were heard and the warring was soon over.

Remember that old Latin say-

ing about our sacraments? “*Ex opere operato*,” just do it with faith and it happens. If we really dare to dialogue the results will be nothing short of miraculous.

So what are we waiting for? Are we encouraging the peace-keeping movement? Where is *Pax Christi*? What’s stopping the creation of a Ministry of Peace? Why do we cling to an undemocratic UN Security Council veto? Are the arms sellers the only ones who dialogue? — **Rev. Lawrence DeMong, OSB, Muenster, Sask.**



Design Pics

End of the Rainbow

My God is not at the end of the rainbow but now dwelling in stillness between the proton and the nuclei — being that love that holds it all together in a crazy sort of way — calling me to listen to that silence when my heart beats with the rhythm of the earth and my hands reach out in service to the ‘edge ones’ who purify my sense of God and draw me forth to life.

By Michael Dallaire

Indigenous not ‘stone-age people’

Continued from page 14

desired me to be a white man, he would have made me so in the first place.”

Indigenous people should not be written off derisively as a stone-age people who couldn’t develop the wheel, as opined by Conrad Black and others. In fact, Canada is criss-crossed by rivers and lakes that were in summer traversed by light, efficient birch bark canoes by indigenous people and by voyageurs after Europeans arrived. In winter, snowshoes and toboggans were the only modes of transport over the deep snow. The wheel was useless during this period. Valuing indigenous people also means that we are compelled to help them.

Only a handful of reserves, the lucky few adjacent to mainstream markets, have reached standards equivalent to the rest of society.

Canada needs to pay attention to the Shamattawas and Attawapiskats of this country, which are plagued by suicides, drugs and alcohol, among other issues. Forced relocation is not an option, although valuing people by enabling them to relocate if they want to, with government assistance, should be available.

Economic corridors linking isolated communities to the nearest regional centres need to be negotiated — because jobs are lifelines to human purpose. Any new resource developments in these areas must include some ownership by the communities. Most importantly, treaty rights need to be portable, no longer used to restrict and confine indigenous people within the boundaries of their designated reserves.

These are only starting points. But indigenous people need to be recognized as a people who once had independence, territory, com-

munities, governance, trade, culture, traditions and spirituality.

Rather than focusing on the shameful outcomes, recognizing and acting upon the original intentions of treaties will go a long way toward restoring pride, respect and dignity to indigenous peoples. We can help indigenous peoples assume their rightful place as one of the three pillars in Canada’s foundation.

Together we can bring indigenous people out of the shadows — they will cease to be ghosts of history and can assume their rightful place as valued citizens of Canada.

Chronic food shortage due to drought

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tion packet aimed at helping families regain their livelihoods.

In another project, through its member Presbyterian World Service & Development, with financial support from The United Church of Canada, the Foodgrains Bank is providing emergency food for 3,470 households in southern Malawi for five months.

The assistance, which totals \$762,000, will provide relief for families already struggling due to drought-induced crop failure in 2016.

“Through all of these projects, we are continually hoping and praying the rain will come to drought-affected areas at its usual time, and people can return to

their normal activities,” says Macdonald.

“We do know, however, that more help is urgently needed,” she adds, noting that drought across Africa is expected to continue in the coming months.

One example where drought may have extreme consequences in the coming months is in Somalia. According to a report from the Inter Agency Working Group on Disaster Preparedness for East and Central Africa, a coalition of large international humanitarian agencies, famine is a possibility in Somalia, where five million people currently need humanitarian assistance.

This isn’t the first time the region has been impacted by severe weather. In 2011, famine was declared in Somalia, where 260,000 people died as a result of a prolonged drought and subsequent hunger crisis.

A lot of progress has been made since then, but this current crisis has potential to set back some of the gains that have been made.

“One of the things we learned from the 2011 crisis is that responding earlier is more effective than responding later,” says Macdonald.

“When you wait too long to respond, people have already sold off their livestock in exchange for food, or have already been forced to eat seed they could have used to plant when the rains come again,” she says. “This makes it doubly hard for them to regain their livelihoods when the crisis is over.”

Journey of reconciliation

Continued from page 1

own prayer for the unity of his disciples.

“With patient and trusting hope that the Father will grant all Christians the gift of full visible communion,” he said, “let us press forward in our journey of reconciliation and dialogue, encouraged by the heroic witness of our many brothers and sisters,

past and present, who were one in suffering for the name of Jesus.”

Echoing a call he made during major ecumenical meetings in 2016 with Lutheran and with Anglican leaders, Pope Francis prayed that Christians would “take advantage of every occasion that providence offers us to pray together, to proclaim together and together to love and serve, especially those who are the most poor and neglected in our midst.”

Speaking at the end of the service, Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, said, “We must commit ourselves to promoting reconciliation among Christians, and we must let ourselves be compelled by the love of Christ.

“In fact,” he said, “love is the motor of any ecumenical effort. True love does not erase the legitimate differences among Christian churches, but leads them together, reconciled, to a deeper unity.”

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# Trump's action banning refugees meets opposition

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Donald Trump's executive memorandum intended to restrict the entry of terrorists coming to the United States brought an outcry from Catholic leaders across the U.S.

Church leaders used phrases such as “devastating,” “chaotic” and “cruel” to describe the Jan. 27 action that left already-approved refugees and immigrants stranded at U.S. airports and led the Department of Homeland Security to rule that green card holders — lawful permanent U.S. residents — be allowed into the country.

“This weekend proved to be a dark moment in U.S. history,” Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich said in a Jan. 29 statement. “The executive order to turn away refugees and to close our nation to those, particularly Muslims,

fleeing violence, oppression and persecution is contrary to both Catholic and American values. Have we not repeated the disastrous decisions of those in the past who turned away other people fleeing violence, leaving certain ethnicities and religions marginalized and excluded? We Catholics know that history well, for, like others, we have been on the other side of such decisions.

“Their design and implementation have been rushed, chaotic, cruel and oblivious to the realities that will produce enduring security for the United States,” he said. “They have left people holding valid visas and other proper documents detained in our airports, sent back to the places some were fleeing or not allowed to board planes headed here. Only at the 11th hour did a federal judge intervene to suspend this unjust action.”

“The Protection of the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States,” which suspends the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days, bans entry from all citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries — Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia — for 90 days. It also establishes a religious criteria for refugees, proposing to give priority to religious minorities over others who may have equally compelling refugee claims.

“We are told this is not the ‘Muslim ban’ that had been proposed during the presidential campaign, but these actions focus on Muslim-majority countries,” said Cupich. “Ironically, this ban does not include the home country of 15 of the 19 Sept. 11 hijackers. Yet, people from Iraq, even those who assisted our military in a destructive war, are excluded.”

The cardinal quoted Pope Francis' remarks to Congress in 2015: “If we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities.”

He said Pope Francis “followed with a warning that should haunt us as we come to terms with the events of the weekend: ‘The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.’”

Bishop Robert W. McElroy of San Diego said the executive action was “the introduction into law of campaign sloganeering rooted in xenophobia and religious prejudice. Its devastating consequences are already apparent for those suffering most in our world, for our standing among nations, and for the imperative of rebuilding unity within our country rather than tearing us further apart.”

“This week the Statue of Liberty lowered its torch in a pres-

idential action which repudiates our national heritage and ignores the reality that Our Lord and the Holy Family were themselves Middle Eastern refugees fleeing government oppression. We cannot and will not stand silent,” he said in a statement Jan. 29.

Shortly after Trump signed the document at the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes, Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, said the bishops “strongly disagree” with the action to halt refugee resettlement.

“We believe that now more than ever, welcoming newcomers and refugees is an act of love and hope,” Vasquez said.

Around the country, people gathered at airports to express solidarity with immigrants and green card holders denied admission, including an Iraqi who had helped the 101st Airborne during the Iraqi war.

## U.S. March for Life more upbeat

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Tens of thousands of pro-lifers filled the grounds near the Washington Monument and marched up Constitution Avenue to the U.S. Supreme Court Jan. 27 as both a protest of legalized abortion and a celebration of successful pro-life efforts across the country.

In years past, the March for Life — which takes place on or near Jan. 22 to mark the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decisions in Roe vs. Wade and Doe vs. Bolton that legalized abortion virtually on demand — has been almost a battle cry for the uphill and constant fight faced by those in the pro-life movement hoping for more abortion restrictions and ultimately an end to abortion.

This year's March for Life, under mostly sunny skies and 40-degree temperatures, was decidedly more upbeat, in part because one of the first speakers was Vice-president Mike Pence: the first time a vice-president attended the rally.

Pence, who has marched at the event before as a participant and addressed it as a congressman, repeatedly told the crowd — huddled together in winter coats and hats in front of the stage — that

“life is winning” and assured them the Trump administration was behind them.

Kellyanne Conway, special adviser to Trump, and the first on the speakers' list to address the group — holding aloft placards but none of the usual giant banners, which were banned for security reasons — similarly got plenty of cheers when she said: “This is a new day, a new dawn for life.”

The scheduled presence of the vice-president, only announced the day before, required the rally perimeter to be fenced in and the crowd to enter through long lines that had formed at security checks. Participants seemed unfazed by the required wait, taking it in stride with the day. Some pulled out their pre-packed lunches and started eating, others prayed the rosary. These marchers are used to plenty of hardships from weather conditions alone at the annual march.

Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life, noted that the group has been marching in all types of bad weather over the years. She also pointed out that amid recent discussion about crowd size at events in Washington, it was hard to measure the number of people that day or for the total who have

come out for the annual march over the past four decades. “The only number we care about is the 58 million” lost to abortion since it was legalized, she said.

As in years past, the crowd was primarily young, with a lot of high school and college-age groups. It was something the speakers took note of, saying this generation would not only keep the pro-life movement going but bring about changes.

Some noted that the march had a distinctly different tone than the Women's March on Washington six days before. Two sisters who stood on the sidelines with some of the few handmade signs at the march, described themselves as feminists and said they found the pro-life march more positive and less angry.

## Hyde Amendment made permanent

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. House passage of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, making the 41-year-old Hyde Amendment permanent, puts the country “one step closer to getting the federal government out of the business of paying for abortion once and for all,” said the president of National Right to Life.

“Over two million Americans are alive today because of the Hyde Amendment,” Carol Tobias said in a statement.

By a 238 - 183 vote Jan. 24, House members passed H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017. It was sponsored by Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus.

A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Roger Wicker, R-Mississippi. President Donald J. Trump indicated before the House vote he would sign the measure if it comes to his desk.

“Two million people who would have been aborted instead survived because public funds were unavailable to effectuate their violent demise, while their mothers benefited from prenatal health care



CNS/Jim West

**REFUGEES REACTION IN MICHIGAN** — People in Hamtramck, Mich., participate in a Jan. 29 protest against President Donald Trump's travel ban.



CNS/Tyler Orsburn

**WASHINGTON LIFE RALLY** — Pro-life advocates celebrate the annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 27.

and support,” Smith said in a statement. “Two million survivors have had the opportunity to live and enjoy the first and most basic of all human rights — the right to life.”

The two million figure he and Tobias cited comes from a report issued late last year by the Charlotte Lozier Institute on more than 20 peer-reviewed studies indicating that many lives have been saved since the Hyde Amendment was introduced in 1976.

“As hundreds of thousands of Americans flock to Washington for the March for Life (Jan. 27), we must never forget that defending all of our people — especially the defenceless — must be our top priority if we want to be a good and moral nation,” House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, said in a statement.

“By passing this legislation, the House has taken a decisive step toward respect for unborn human life, reflecting the will of the American people,” said Deirdre

McQuade, primary spokesperson on abortion for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. In a Jan. 25 statement, she said the USCCB “hopes that the U.S. Senate will take up this vital legislation soon.”

H.R. 7, which is identical to bills that passed in 2014 and 2015, make permanent the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits tax dollars from paying for abortion except in cases of rape, incest or threat to the woman's life. The amendment, which covers programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, has had to be renewed annually by Congress in its appropriations bill.

“Polling consistently shows that a supermajority of Americans — 61 per cent, according to a Marist poll released Jan. 23 — oppose taxpayer funding of abortion, and eight in 10 Americans think laws can protect both the well-being of a woman and the health of her unborn child,” Smith added.

Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.

— Albert Schweitzer