

Our Canada

“This my Canada, this is your Canada, this is our Canada,” said knowledge-keeper Lyndon Linklater, speaking at a Treaty Elder Series event in Saskatoon. “Canada is the best place in the world, but it can be even better. It is up to us as Canadians to make that happen.” — page 3

Support and healing

Women have come together and said #MeToo. Men and women have come together



and said Time’s Up. Now, it is time to ask What’s Next? It could be an organization called Women of the Word. — page 5

Multi-Faith video

A video promoting Canada as a harmonious nation was premiered on World Religion Day Jan. 28 at Luther College, University of Regina. *Highway to a Harmonious Canada* featured children from a variety of cultures speaking about a welcoming and inclusive nation. — page 6

Hospital chaplains

Hospital chaplains in Saskatchewan remain on the job, despite provincial budget cuts, but obtaining their services is an awkward process and not always successful. — page 7

Prairie Catholic journalism

In the first of a seven-part series, St. Peter’s Abbey archivist Paul Paproski, OSB, examines the Prairie Messenger and more than 100 years of journalism by the Benedictine monks of St. Peter’s. — page 11

Benedictine values

The development of Benedictine values is “our social responsibility — not an excuse to withdraw from society in the name of false and fruitless piety in the face of the Jesus who says clearly: ‘By their fruits you will know them,’” says Joan Chittister, OSB. — page 12

Diversity a value, not a threat: Vatican

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — A rigorous defence of religious freedom around the globe must be accompanied by the efforts of religious

communities and governments to teach people to respect other faiths and to see diversity within a society as a value, not a threat, said a Vatican cardinal and a top British government official.

“The struggle for the affirmation of religious liberty is far from being won,” Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, told an audience at Rome’s Pontifical Grego-

rian University Jan. 30.

The cardinal shared the dais with Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the British minister of state at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Freedom of Religion and Belief. The conversation was sponsored by the British Embassy to the Holy See.

With his responsibility for the Eastern Catholic Churches throughout the world and for all Catholics in the Middle East, Sandri said he has seen beautiful examples not only of peaceful coexistence, but of real community-building and cooperation between members of different religions.

At the same time, he said, he has seen the “great suffering when some basic rights of the human person — and, first of all, that of religious liberty — are violated or insufficiently guaranteed.”

He told the story of a teenager he called Youssef. The young Iraqi was baptized and raised a Christian, but after his mother married a Muslim, the whole family was listed as Muslim in the government registry and on their identification cards. He cannot “correct” the listing, the cardinal said, “because in modern Iraq, after the two Gulf wars, the

— AHMAD, page 15



CNS/Philippe Vaillancourt, Presence

IN MEMORY AND SOLIDARITY — Public officials join a crowd of people gathered in Quebec City Jan. 29 to observe a moment of silence for the six Muslim men who were shot during an attack on their mosque in 2017. Pictured is Chief Konrad Sioui of the Wendake Huron Wendat First Nation, Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard, Quebec Mayor Regis Labeaume, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. More than 1,000 people gathered near the mosque on a freezing night to support the families and condemn Islamophobia.

Abundance of grace to be found in ecumenism

By Kate O’Gorman

SASKATOON — Rev. Susan Durber, moderator of the Faith and Order Commission for the World Council of Churches, presented the 2018 De Margerie Lecture Jan. 25 in Saskatoon, giving a talk entitled, “Surprised by unity — finding oneness in ways we hadn’t planned.”

Part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, this annual lecture sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, St. Thomas More College (STM), and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism (PCE), is part of a reconciliation and unity series named in honour of Rev. Bernard de Margerie, founder of the PCE and a lifelong leader in ecumenical and interfaith engagement.

“The purpose of the lecture series is to bring to Saskatoon internationally recognized voices in the ecumenical movement, to motivate, inspire, and nurture our own local ecumenical activity and awareness,” according to PCE executive director Darren Dahl.

“By inviting international leaders in ecumenism to our community during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the lecture series continues to affirm our desire to participate in God’s work of global, ecclesial, theological transfor-

mation,” Dahl said. “What we do here is part of a wider movement of the Spirit, and this series keeps us in touch with the depth and scope of that wider movement.”

In the 2018 lecture presented at STM, Durber reflected on the hope she has for the work of Christian unity, in the midst of both disappointment and surprise.

“I find myself constantly sur-

prised and delighted by the ways in which God comes to us, bringing transformation and life,” she said. “In my own life, and in the life of my church, I’ve come to know disappointment and pain, but even in the midst of such experiences, I’ve always found that God comes to surprise me. God is there, waiting for me.”

Durber said there is an abundance of grace to be found within the work of ecumenism, despite some seeming disappointments, such as a decline in ecumenical fervour, church structures struggling with numerical decline, and a lack of unity among churches.

The unity that was prayed and hoped for at the height of the ecumenical movement 40 to 50 years ago hasn’t happened as envisioned, admitted Durber. “We are left feeling bereft, facing a future we hadn’t expected.”

The publication

of the milestone document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), adopted by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches in 1982 brought high hopes, Durber said. “There was delight and optimism about how much the member churches (Orthodox, Anglican, Protestant, and Catholic) could say together, particularly on baptism and the eucharist. We expected and hoped that with the following wind of the Holy Spirit, we would move even further toward a more visible and tangible unity — the unity to which Christ calls us. We believed we were on a pilgrimage to unity that was gathering pace,” she said.

“But the walk is slower than we once imagined. Theological conversations have proved more difficult than we thought, and we are beginning to recognize that the way we once imagined visible unity would come doesn’t match the reality.”

Often today, Durber added, “I hear little curiosity from other churches, no urgency to overcome differences, as long as we can work together. I see (churches) making alliances and working together on particular projects, but not wanting to reflect on what it is that compels them to work together.”

— UNITY, page 7



Kate O’Gorman

DE MARGERIE LECTURE — Rev. Susan Durber presented the 2018 De Margerie Lecture Jan. 25 at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.

Trump's immigration plan 'troubling' for families

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chair of the U.S. bishops' migration committee said Jan. 30 that the Catholic bishops welcomed the Trump administration's proposal to give "Dreamers" a path to citizenship, but at the same time, they are "deeply troubled" about the plan's "impact on family unity."

On Jan. 26, the White House released a proposal offering a path to citizenship for approximately 1.8 million of the so-called Dreamers and asking for a \$25-billion investment in a border wall and other security measures. The plan also calls for an end to the diversity visa program, popularly known as the "visa lottery," and also a program that grants visa preferences to relatives of U.S. citizens or residents.

The administration said its focus for immigration policy is to

keep the "nuclear family" intact.

"We welcome the administration's proposal to include a path to citizenship for Dreamers. However, the proposed cuts to family immigration and elimination of protections to unaccompanied children are deeply troubling," said Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, who is chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration.

He made the comments in a statement released ahead of President Donald Trump's State of the Union speech. Immigration and border security were among the topics Trump addressed in the speech, in addition to the economy, tax reform and the country's infrastructure needs.

"Family immigration is part of the bedrock of our country and of our church," Vasquez said. "Pope

Francis states: 'The family is the foundation of coexistence and a remedy against social fragmentation.' Upholding and protecting the family unit, regardless of its national origins, is vital to our faith."

In September, Trump ended the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, known as DACA, and he called on Congress to pass a measure to preserve the program. The DACA recipients are called Dreamers, who are immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children by their parents. Under DACA, they are protected from deportation, but they have to apply to the program and meet certain criteria.

DACA ends March 5, unless Congress passes a bill to keep the almost six-year-old program in place.

"In searching for a solution for Dreamers, we must not turn our backs on the vulnerable," Vasquez said in his statement. "We should not, for example, barter the well-being of unaccompanied children for the well-being of the Dreamers. We know them all to be children of God who need our compassion and mercy.

The U.S. bishops "urge a bipartisan solution forward that is narrowly tailored" to keep DACA in place, the bishop said. "Time is of the essence. Every day we experience the human conse-

quences of delayed action in the form of young people losing their livelihood and their hope.

"As pastors and leaders of the church, we see this fear and sadness in our parishes and as such, continue to call for immediate action," Vasquez added. "Elected officials must show leadership to quickly enact legislation that provides for our security and is humane, proportionate and just."

The Trump administration's proposal to provide a path to citizenship for approximately 1.8 million Dreamers includes those currently covered by the program and more than one million who meet the DACA criteria but have not signed up.

Readings at mass offer God's 'real-time' help

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Listening to the Scripture readings at mass is hearing God speak directly to his people, offering spiritual sustenance and needed guidance for life's difficult journey, Pope Francis said.

For that reason, the prescribed texts should never be skipped or substituted during the mass, lecturers should read clearly and people should always listen with an open heart so that the words may eventually bear fruit in good deeds, the pope said at his weekly general audience Jan. 31.

Continuing his series of audience talks on the mass, Pope Francis spoke about the liturgy of the Word and the importance of listening to the Bible readings at mass.

"In the liturgy of the Word, in fact, the pages of the Bible stop being something written and become the living word, delivered by God himself," the pope said.

As the readings are proclaimed, people in the pews should be silent and receptive, opening their hearts and minds to what is being said, not looking around or making small talk and criticizing what other people are wearing, he said.

"We have to listen, open our hearts, because it is God himself who is speaking to us. So don't think about other things or talk about something else. Understood?" he asked the thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"We need to listen! It is a question of life," he said, because as Jesus told the devil in the desert, "one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God."

People can receive spiritual nourishment from the "table" of God's word, which is abundant and "rich" in so many biblical offerings, he said.

It is obvious then why "some subjective choices" are forbidden — such as omitting the prescribed readings or substituting them with non-biblical texts, for example, like the newspaper for bringing up a current event, he said.

"No. The word of God is the word of God. You can read the newspaper later. However, right there, the word of God gets read,"



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE AT GENERAL AUDIENCE — Pope Francis greets children who rode in the popemobile during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Jan. 31.

not something else, he said.

Substituting God's word with something else "impoverishes and compromises the dialogue between God and his people in prayer," the pope said, while sticking with the prescribed readings expresses and fosters ecclesial communion, helping everyone on their journey together.

The pope also insisted on choosing lecturers who are well-prepared and speak clearly, not people who garble their words "and no one can understand a thing."

"The Lord's word is an indispensable aid for not getting lost," he said. It is, as the psalmist says, "a lamp for my feet, a light

for my path."

"How can we tackle our earthly pilgrimage, with its trials and tribulations, without being regularly nourished and enlightened by the Word of God that rings out in the liturgy," the pope asked.

Also, he said, listening to God's word requires much more than one's ears. It must go from the ears, to the heart and then to the hands, resulting in good works in the world, he said.

"It's necessary to have an open heart to receive the word," Pope Francis said. "God speaks and we turn to him to listen so as to then put into practice what we have heard."

South Korean bishop hopes Olympics a step to peace

SEOUL, South Korea (CNS) — A South Korean bishop wants the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics to be a steppingstone for achieving peace in the region, reported ucanews.com.

Bishop Peter Lee Ki-heon, president of the Korean bishops' Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People, released a statement hoping "the Olympics, feast of peace, will be a turning point to reduce the uneasiness and to settle peace on the peninsula."

North Korea is sending a large team of athletes and an art company to the Olympics, which start Feb. 9.

Lee of Uijeongbu, which borders North Korea, said: "North Korea's participation is meaning-

ful as it is a step forward to a new era of peace by ending the long-lasting struggles. As Pope Francis stresses, we should welcome North Korean delegates based on fraternity full of love.

"We should make hay while the sun shines. We need to see this precious opportunity as a chance for coexistence and a new era where future generations freely go and come between the two Koreas."

Lee urged disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear arms, for the complete settlement of peace on the peninsula.

He also stressed the need for more meetings and dialogue between the two Koreas to recover trust and partnership.



CNS/Ignatian Solidarity Network

IGNATIAN MIGRANT LOGO — The Ignatian Solidarity Network, a coalition of Jesuit schools and universities, is encouraging those in the network and beyond to celebrate Valentine's Day Feb. 14 by sending cards to lawmakers asking them and others to "Love your neighbor" and to send "migrants welcome" Valentine's Day messages Feb. 11 - 18.

Pope asks Vatican abuse expert to review bishop

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis asked a longtime expert in handling abuse allegations to gather new information in Chile concerning Bishop Juan Barros of Osorno.

The pope was sending Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna of Malta to review the matter after the pope received "some information recently with regards to the case" of Barros, the Vatican said in a communiqué Jan. 30.

Pope Francis decided to send the archbishop to the Chilean capital "to listen to those who expressed a willingness to submit information in their possession," the communiqué said.

Scicluna is president of a board of review within the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; the board handles appeals filed by clergy accused of abuse or other serious crimes. The archbishop also had 10 years' experience as the Vatican's chief prosecutor of clerical sex abuse cases at the doctrinal congregation.

Some have accused Barros of having been aware of abuse per-

petrated by his former mentor, Rev. Fernando Karadima. The priest was sentenced to a life of prayer and penance by the Vatican after he was found guilty of sexually abusing boys.

Despite the claims against Barros, Pope Francis named him to head the Diocese of Osorno in 2015, saying he was "personally convinced" of the bishop's innocence after the case was investigated twice with no evidence emerging at the time.

The pope told reporters Jan. 21 that while "covering up abuse is an abuse in itself," if he had punished Barros without moral certainty, "I would be committing the crime of a bad judge."

Scicluna has often been called to look into allegations involving high-profile clergy. For example, after years of allegations about abuse committed by Rev. Marcial Maciel Degollado, founder of the Legionaries of Christ, in 2005, the Vatican sent Scicluna to listen to his alleged victims. Several months later, Pope Benedict XVI ordered Maciel to "a life reserved to prayer and penance, renouncing any public ministry."

‘This is our Canada’: knowledge-keeper Linklater

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Parishioners and visitors gathered in a circle at St. Joseph’s Parish Hall in Saskatoon after Sunday mass Feb. 4, sharing soup and bannock, listening to the experiences and the wisdom of two indigenous leaders.

Mike Broda of St. Joseph Parish offered a traditional welcoming gift of tobacco to knowledge-keeper Lyndon Linklater and Elder Agnes Desjarlais to open the gathering, part of a Treaty Elder Series in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Linklater and Desjarlais both work at the Regional Psychiatric Centre, where they provide traditional ceremonies as the path of healing.

Linklater, who is also a member of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner’s Speakers Bureau, described his background. Both of his parents, and their parents before them, attended residential schools — his Anishinaabe (Ojibwa) dad Walter Linklater in Ontario and later in Saskatchewan, and his Cree mother Marie in Saskatchewan, until she ran away, to be hidden by her grandmother.

“Like many First Nations people, we suffered as a result of these residential schools,” Linklater said. “There is a common

story that starts to emerge when you talk to those who attended them, when you talk to their children and grandchildren.” The aftermath has included damaged families and communities, addiction, and dysfunction.

“Today we recognize this illness, post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD,” said Linklater, noting that trauma will affect a person physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. “If you have PTSD, all these sociological factors will plague you,” he said. “And every single person that went to these schools suffered from PTSD in one form or another.”

Linklater described how his father was taught to reject his traditions, his language, and his identity, to the point that he did not even know he was Ojibwa.

Linklater also reflected on the damage caused by removing children from their families. “In the schools, they were very lonely. I can’t imagine what it must have been like, to be five years old and your mom and dad aren’t there for you, to comfort you, to care for you, to nurture you,” he said.

“We know what it is like to have children, to have grandchildren, and how important it is to have young children feel loved. It is so critical: if that child grows up without feeling loved, that

child is going to be messed up when they get older.”

In Saskatchewan, he stressed, residential schools were not around for just a few years, but for 122 years, “so it is multi-generational.”

The Truth and Reconciliation process has offered a path of healing, not only for residential school survivors and their descendants, but for the entire country, which made some profound historical mistakes, said Linklater.

“This is my Canada, this is your Canada, this is our Canada — Canada is the best place in the whole wide world, but it can even be better. And it is up to us as Canadians to make that happen,” he said. “How are we ever going to know where we are going as a country if we don’t know where we have been? How are we ever going to know not to make the same mistakes if we don’t know we made mistakes in the first place?”

Linklater expressed appreciation for the parish event, noting that “for too long we haven’t been able to do this. We talk about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the 94 Calls to Action: you are doing it right now.”

Recognizing the impact of residential schools and coming to a better understanding of the trauma

has enabled many to walk a long path of healing, Linklater described.

“What really helped us Linklaters, was that we found our culture, we went back to our traditions.”

Diversity is a gift from God, with peoples of many different appearances, languages, and cultures worshipping one Creator, said Linklater, describing the many connections and commonalities between Christianity and indigenous teachings.

“When I found my traditions, my culture, I could not believe the many similarities, the unbelievable parallels,” he said.

Desjarlais also spoke about trauma and healing. A member of the Muskowekan First Nation near Lestock, Sask., Desjarlais and her parents attended

Muscowequan Indian Residential School.



Kiply Yaworski

TREATY ELDERS — Lyndon Linklater and Elder Agnes Desjarlais were speakers at a Treaty Elder Series held Feb. 4 at St. Joseph Parish in Saskatoon. A second gathering is planned for Feb. 11.

Even though there were some positive things about her experience — she loved learning to read, for instance — the damage caused by the system resonated in

— HEALING, page 6

Faith groups must be free to shape world

Andrew Ehrkamp
Grandin Media

EDMONTON (CCN) — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signalled his support for faith groups in Canada, even though many are locked in a battle with his government over its controversial new Canada Summer Jobs attestation.

“We need to make sure that, whether it’s religious organizations or charitable organizations, that they are free to impact and shape the world around them as so many have done,” Trudeau told a packed forum Feb. 1 at MacEwan University in Edmonton.

“If someone is an anti-poverty activist or a charity, they shouldn’t be accused of doing politics simply just because they’re saying there should be less poor kids in our schools showing up without breakfast.”

Faith leaders have vowed to continue fighting the new requirement that they attest to government values all the way to the Supreme Court. Applicants for grants under the jobs program must attest that both the job and their organization’s “core mandate” support values that include the “right to access to safe and legal abortions,” as well as the Trudeau government’s interpretation of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Canada’s Catholic bishops, as well as Muslim, Protestant, and Jewish leaders, say the requirement is the equivalent of an “ideology test” that infringes on religious freedom.

Employment Minister Patty Hajdu has clarified the meanings of words in the attestation, such as “core mandate,” but any group that ticks off the box is affirming



Grandin Media/Andrew Ehrkamp

FORUM — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signalled his support for faith groups in Canada, even though many are locked in a battle with his government over its controversial new Canada Summer Jobs attestation. He spoke to a packed forum Feb. 1 at MacEwan University in Edmonton.

a so-called “right” to abortion. She has refused to change the attestation or extend the Feb. 2 deadline for funding.

“They (government) shouldn’t be trying to push their agenda on people,” said Brynna Robinson, a second-year communications student at MacEwan University, who identifies as Catholic.

“If you don’t believe in that, you shouldn’t have to check it off. It should be optional. That’s your religion. Especially abortion. People don’t believe in that . . . they don’t believe in killing babies.”

Even those who support abortion rights are panning what they describe as government overreach.

“Why push something like that? There are other issues. Again, you’re discriminating against a whole community that feels quite

strongly about that,” said Ralf Lemire, who says he’s not even a particularly religious person. “I think it’s a mistake, but I don’t think they’re trying to pick a fight.”

Sarah Shulist supports abortion rights, but doesn’t agree that faith groups should be denied funding under the Canada Summer Jobs program because they can’t sign an attestation they don’t believe in.

“I believe government funding should be allocated with human rights in mind, and I consider abortion to a human right,” said Shulist; however “if it were a Catholic charity that is feeding the poor, and has nothing to do with abortion in the work they are doing, I do believe that requiring them to sign something that says ‘I support abortion’ is not OK.”

— GOVERNMENT, page 4

Canadian bioethical centre cited by labour minister

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

The anti-abortion organization cited by the employment minister for questionable use of an employment subsidy refutes claims it provoked the government into forcing all Canada Summer Jobs applicants to attest that their “core mandate” supports a woman’s right to obtain an abortion.

A \$56,000 grant to the Calgary-based Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform was used to stuff mailboxes with colour pamphlets that showed graphic images of aborted fetuses. The same images were also shown on banners displayed by summer students at major intersections in downtown Toronto.

“Some groups, like the Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform, for example, were using those government funds in a way to create graphic pamphlets that featured aborted fetuses as a way to shame women,” Labour Minister Patty Hajdu told a news conference Jan. 25.

Asked whether the Centre for Bioethical Reform had poisoned the well for other organizations, CBR spokesperson Jonathon Van Maren told *The Catholic Register*, “Absolutely not.

“We’re not utilizing the bodies of children. We’re showing abortion victim photography,” Van Maren said.

The CBR uses graphic abortion images, “in the same way that the (American) civil rights movement was started by the photograph of a 14-year-old murdered boy in 1955 named Emmett Till,” said Van

Maren. “There’s quite simply not a single injustice in the history of social reform that was ended without first being exposed with imagery of the victims.”

He said “it’s understandable” for some people to be upset by the graphic images.”

Toronto NDP MPP Peter Tabuns received several complaints about the flyers distributed in his Toronto riding last summer. The images “cause a lot of emotional pain,” Tabuns wrote in an email to *The Catholic Register*. “The pictures do not make them oppose abortion. It makes them oppose anyone who would do what they see as violence to their state of mind or that would make their children distraught.”

At the deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research, co-president Martha Crean doubts that the CBR campaign is the true starting point for the Canada Summer Jobs controversy.

“Last year, we were refused in all the Liberal ridings we usually got it (money) from,” Crean said. “We even received a phone call from one of the ridings saying ‘Congratulations, you got your money.’ Fifteen minutes later they phoned back and said, ‘Oh, sorry, it really wasn’t your organization.’ So they had been reminded, I guess.”

Unlike the CBR, the deVeber Institute works on a wide variety of life issues from stem cell science through palliative care and euthanasia, with an emphasis on producing academically credible, original research.

— BRUSH, page 11

Catholic papers squeezed by U.S.-Canada tariff

By Mark Pattison

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A 10 per cent tariff slapped on imports of Canadian newsprint by the United States is playing havoc with newspaper budgets across the United States, and Catholic newspapers are no exception.

Press groups, one U.S. senator — and now a bishop — have appealed to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to get rid of the tariff, which took effect Jan. 11.

“They already passed a 6.6 per cent increase on to us,” said Carmella Weismantle, operations manager and director of advertising for the *Pittsburgh Catholic*, the diocesan newspaper. After experiencing no newsprint price hikes last year, Weismantle said in a Jan. 25 telephone interview with Catholic News Service, the increase comes to about \$6,700, based on the newspaper’s typical press run, page output and publication schedule.

Before the day was out, Weismantle got an email from her printer notifying her of a second price increase.

“As the publisher of the second-largest circulated newspaper in western Pennsylvania, I oppose these newsprint tariffs,” said Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh in a Jan. 31 statement.

“Newspapers provide the most reliable information and the greatest platform for genuine debate. Should they disappear, our ability to make wise decisions as a democratic society would be severely impacted,” Zubik added. With tariffs, he said, “newspaper workers will lose their jobs. No one will benefit. The tariffs are a lose-lose proposition.”

“The Catholic press is an essential source of information and formation for helping Catholics live out their faith. We are concerned about anything that makes this mission more challeng-

ing for our member publications, including the potential impact on printing costs and overall budgets that such a tariff could have,” said a statement by Joe Towalski, president of the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada. “At this time, the CPA is still learning about and monitoring the tariff situation.”

Towalski, who also is editor of *The Visitor*, newspaper of the Diocese of St. Cloud, Minn., and diocesan communications director, said he received an email Jan. 24 from his printing representative to plan on a three per cent increase for paper costs, but the increase could be as high as eight to 10 per cent. “We just do not know as of today,” Towalski said his printer told him.

The tariff was imposed after a complaint lodged by the North Pacific Paper Corp. in Longview, Wash., which goes by the name NORPAC. The company con-

tended Canada was illegally subsidizing its newsprint industry. The U.S. government investigated, sided with NORPAC and imposed the tariff.

NORPAC did not respond to an interview request by CNS. “This decision will protect American jobs in Washington, Mississippi and Georgia, and may even serve to create jobs in the U.S. as idled paper machines restart,” said NORPAC CEO Craig Anneberg in a Jan. 9 statement posted on the firm’s website.

But press groups warn that thousands of jobs in other industries are at risk due to the tariff ruling.

The Commerce Department “should find a new way forward that does not place such an unfair and unwise burden on an already at-risk and extremely vital American industry that provides so many jobs and so much value to New Yorkers from one corner of the state to the other,” said

Senator Chuck Schumer, D-New York, in a Jan. 26 letter to Ross.

“I am all for fair trade, and I lead that fight on many fronts — especially against China — but when the federal government tries to put in place duties that will lead to a loss of American jobs, a rise in prices and a diminution of top-notch journalism and information to residents across upstate New York it’s time to yell: ‘Stop the presses!’” Schumer said.

“This is something we don’t need,” said Mark Cohen, president of the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association. “We just think this is real troubling,” especially for an “industry that is in transition.”

There are “some incredibly big repercussions for our members and for the industry across the United States,” said Rebecca Snyder, executive director of the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association. “Newsprint prices are going to go up significantly, 10 per cent. That’s a pretty big cost to absorb,” she added. “It stresses an already-stressed industry.”

Canadian newsprint is being more sought by U.S. newspapers as U.S. mills have shuttered due to slow business. Newsprint usage is down by some estimates as much as 75 per cent from its peak due to fewer and thinner publications, operating on a reduced publication schedule and circulation. Despite the reduced demand, prices rose during the newspaper industry slump as mills converted to more profitable forms of paper manufacturing.

The newsprint tariff is another skirmish in trade battles between the United States and Canada over the past year.

Last year, the United States imposed tariffs of up to 18 per cent on Canadian lumber. Canada retaliated by sharply restricting imports of Wisconsin dairy products. The two countries are, with Mexico, trying to renegotiate the North America Free Trade Agreement, which took effect in 1994. Some progress in talks has been reported, but many big-ticket issues remain.

Healing spiritual suffering focus of new workshops

By Andrew Ehrkamp
Grandin Media

EDMONTON (CCN) — Richard Groves and his wife, Mary, had travelled the world teaching people how to alleviate the spiritual pain from all types of trauma — job loss, loss of a friendship, illness, life transitions, and death of a loved one.

Then, nine years ago, when Mary died, Richard Groves had to use those skills to heal himself.

“I thought, ‘I don’t know if I want to continue doing this.’ It was kind of my dark night of the soul. I could talk about spiritual suffering in the first person,” said Groves, an international speaker, author and co-founder of the non-profit Sacred Art of Living and Dying Institute in Bend, Oregon.

Groves’ Healing the Healers is a four-workshop series that integrates history, science, psychology and spirituality to addresses the issue of spiritual suffering, a reality faced by most people at various times, particularly toward the end of life.

The workshops will be held in Edmonton for the first time at

Providence Renewal Centre on four weekends over two years, starting April 6 - 7. Participants will be trained to diagnose, respond to and help heal spiritual suffering using 40 different tools including prayer, forgiveness, relating and being present with the person who is hurting.

“It’s part of life to deal with anxiety, with fear, with suffering, with disappointment,” Groves said.

“And you could call those just psychological issues or emotional issues or you could — like many wisdom traditions — see that there is a spiritual component underneath that.”

Spiritual suffering is as unique as each individual, Groves said, describing the skills he teaches as a “half step” in-between pastoral care and psychological counselling. They are a complement to parish ministry.

“We try to teach tools that help a person identify and diagnose the total person, and we particularly emphasize the spiritual part,” said Groves, a former Catholic priest, chaplain and bereavement counsellor. “You can’t unravel — and totally separate — body, mind and

spirit. They are all connected.”

Unlike physical wounds, spiritual pain is more difficult to define, and that’s where the workshops can help, said Debbie Doornbos, program director for Providence Renewal Centre.

“When you have wounds inside of yourself, they are not always visible. When we can understand what those wounds are, it’s a lot easier to both heal our ourselves, and then we can become more present to be a healing force for others.”

Groves hopes that graduates of his Healing the Healers series will pass their knowledge on to others, noting that the spiritual healing skills he teaches are not new. They have existed for centuries.

“It’s so old-agey. This came out of our monasteries 1,000 years ago. We’re not inventing this stuff. It’s totally based on a wisdom tradition that happens to go back to medieval Christianity and, by and large, was lost in the hospices. Regardless of a person’s religious background, we think these tools work.”

Christina Greene, who has signed up to take the Healing the Healers workshop, sees spiritual healing skills as “a way of relating to people on the same level.”

“It brings light, or another outlook, on how to help people who are palliative or are going through a different journey than what I am going through right now, how to allow them to express that and also how to help them move through that journey.”

Greene said the workshops will help her personally, and professionally as a team leader with Catholic Social Services’ St. Joseph residence, which provides comfort and care to terminally ill people who are homeless or difficult to house in Edmonton.

Groves and his wife developed their spiritual healing techniques decades ago when they were working as bereavement counsellors, and at a time when legislation for euthanasia became legal in Oregon. Both were working in hospices at the time.

“We found we didn’t have training in it. We were just hired because we had the degrees or the



Sacred Art of Living and Dying
Richard Groves

background. We thought we were very poor for not having specific training in matters of the soul.”

Greene calls the ability to heal spiritual pain, a basic life skill that many of us have forgotten.

Government obeying law

Continued from page 3

Debby Martin, who is Catholic, said the Trudeau government is simply obeying the law, and the larger question is Canada’s abortion law, which was struck down 30 years ago and never replaced.

“It doesn’t have a choice. Are they saying you must support the government’s view of abortion or are they saying that Canada, through the courts, has determined that abortion is legal and the government is enforcing that court ruling?” asked Martin, a member of St. Charles Parish who says she’s pro-life.

“If we really want to change things, then we have to change the law.”

Martin said her advice to faith groups is to let the government know that when they complete their application — including the attestation section.

“I would check off and say that ‘I’m doing it under duress’ beside it.”

Erik Yuson, a Catholic who supports abortion rights, said he can see both sides of the Canada Summer Jobs attestation argument but he notes that controversy points to Canada’s changing social fabric.

“I’d like for religious groups and organizations to remain autonomous, but at the same time in today’s kind of culture, with how Canada is progressing really liberally, eventually certain groups are going to have to understand that,” said Yuson, a third-year social work student at MacEwan University.

“With religion, it’s always a tough question, because it’s so important to many people. It’s the backbone of their beliefs.”

The federal government’s position was bolstered by a Jan. 28 statement supporting the attestation from 80 groups such as Planned Parenthood and abortion rights groups, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Oxfam Canada, legal rights groups, and women’s shelters.



Photo courtesy Paul Lauzon, Campaign Life Coalition

BUBBLE ZONES IN EFFECT — Temporary signs anchored with sandbags mark the 50-metre zones around the Morgentaler abortion facility in Ottawa. Pro-life demonstrators protested against Ontario’s Safe Access to Abortion Services Act, Feb. 1, arguing the new “bubble zone” violates rights to freedom of expression.

#MeToo: healing is important, prevention is key

By Meggie Hoegler
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Women have come together and said #MeToo. Men and women have come together and said Time's Up. Now, it is time to ask What's Next?

The #MeToo and #TimesUp movements have gone well beyond their Twitter beginnings, making sexual assault a hotbed topic in the media, toppling high-profile personalities in entertainment, sports, politics and corporate boardrooms. Though the campaigns were born in the U.S., Canada has not been immune — witness the headlines generated from accusations against broadcasters Jian Ghomeshi and Gregg Zaun, or more recently two provincial Conservative leaders, Jamie Baillie in Nova Scotia and Patrick Brown in Ontario.

Celebrity names may have pushed the issue forward with lightning speed, but it is certainly not just a phenomenon among those in a media spotlight. Well before allegations against men like Harvey Weinstein and Matt Lauer opened up the Pandora's box on sexual assault and harassment, Catholic groups were providing resources for prevention and rehabilitation for everyday victims.

"The focus of #MeToo was primarily on celebrities," said Sister Christine Minicucci, a Carmelite sister and spiritual director of Women of the Word, an organization that provides hope, healing and restoration to women who have experienced trauma. "We don't hear about the everyday women who go through the same thing."

"It's important that these high-profile women are sharing their experiences, but we cannot forget about the vulnerable women — the poor, the indigenous, who encounter the same experiences. We need to make sure these women are also getting the help they need."

Women of the Word was founded in 2009 by a group of Catholic women to provide support and healing for women of all faith backgrounds. The organization provides safe spaces for women to share their stories and listen to others in hopes that solidarity can lead to healing.

"We send the message that each and every one of us carries hurt or some kind of brokenness that affects our lives," said Mary Filangi, one of the founders of Women of the Word. "Sometimes women speak about having been raped or sexually assaulted, the wound that was created and how it changed who they were."

Participants range from young women in their early 20s to grandmothers. Despite the drastic age gaps, the women bond through shared experiences. According to Filangi, many of the stories of sexual harassment and assault are similar, whether they happened five minutes ago or 50 years ago.

"When we have grandmothers in the group and someone is talking about sexual assault, we just assume that they won't be able to relate," said Filangi. "But they are the ones nodding their heads

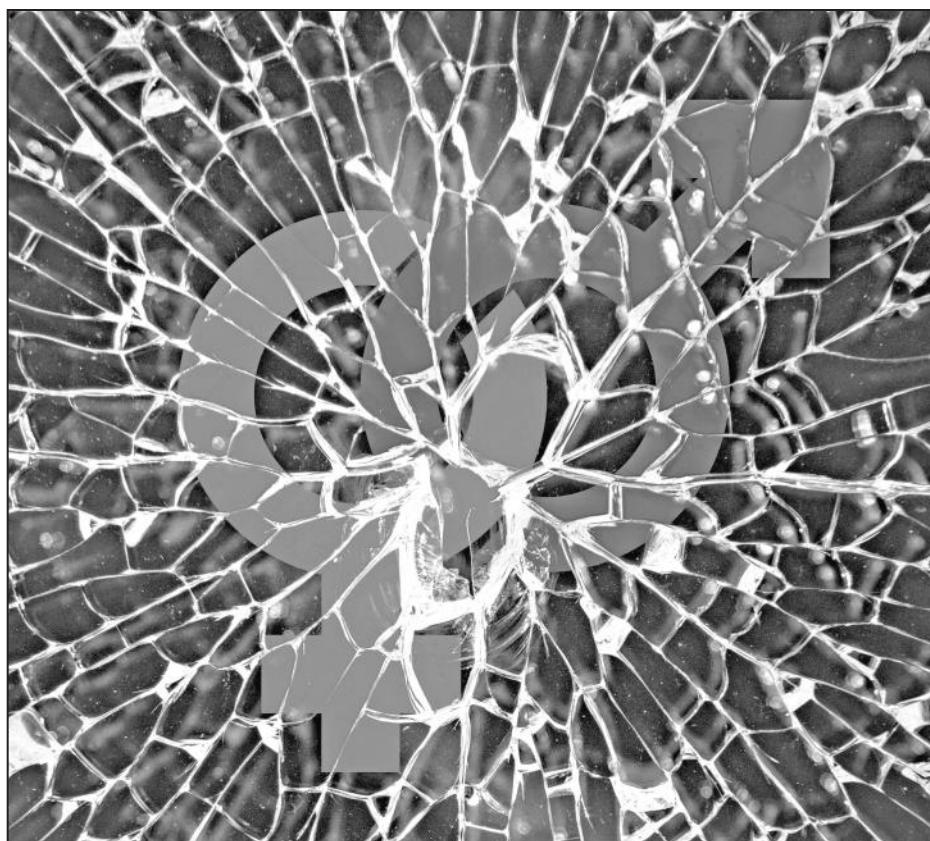


Photo illustration by Erik Canaria

POWERFUL OFFENSIVE — The #MeToo movement has created a powerful offensive to combat sexual assault and harassment. Catholic groups have long been involved in both helping victims heal and in changing attitudes.

the most and saying, 'Yes, I understand. I went through that too.' But many of these older women did not have an opportunity to speak up about what happened to them. For them to hear someone speaking about a situation they suffered through, they can finally know they are not alone."

Women of the Word hosts regular events with guest speakers who share their experience. In April, Catholic speaker, author and former America's Next Top Model contestant Leah Darrow will address the group. Darrow has been outspoken in the #MeToo movement and has publicly shared her experiences of sexual harassment, which she says is rampant in the modelling industry.

"She (Darrow) will talk about her experiences on the show and what she went through prior to her conversion," said Filangi.

Women of the Word also provides community resource information relating to a number of issues, including family, marriage, spiritual matters and women's issues.

"We try to cover as much as we can, but we encourage women to seek medical help if needed through doctors, psychologists and therapists," said Filangi.

Healing is important, but prevention is key. Several organizations have been calling for a change in the rhetoric surrounding sexual assault — instead of telling women "don't get raped," teach men not to rape.

A Catholic men's organization is doing just that. That Man is You!, which began in the United States, teaches men accountability, providing information and support on how to be good husbands and fathers. There are several groups in Canada, including one at St. Timothy's Parish in North York.

The program discusses how women are hyper sexualized generally in the media and particularly in the pornographic film industry. Among other things, they analyze these issues through a

scientific and biblical lens.

"I'm not a scientist, but I think pornography and how women are portrayed in the media have contributed to what we're seeing right now with so many women coming forward about sexual assault," said James Foronda, the co-ordinator for the program at St. Timothy's Parish.

Foronda, a husband and father, started attending meetings two

group for their wisdom, but it's not surprising for an older man to approach a younger man for advice if he is having trouble with his sons or grandsons."

Echoing Oprah Winfrey's Golden Globes acceptance speech, both groups operate on the principle of communication.

"It's time that we talk about these things and stop hiding under the covers," said Filangi. "The

years ago at his wife's encouragement.

"It's such a great program. They use medical and social science to illustrate their concepts along with church teachings and the wisdom of the saints."

Like Women of the Word, That Man is You! is for all ages.

"It's mainly geared toward married men and fathers, but we have quite a few young men who are fresh out of university and newly married," said Foronda, who believes the age gap provides even more opportunities for learning and sharing wisdom. "We look up to the older men in the

more we keep things locked up, the greater the wound becomes. There's no healing when someone is denied their truth."

Hollywood, which has fed the sexualization of society since its inception, is now trying to play a bigger role in healing the damage. Several films nominated for this year's Academy Awards deal with themes of sexual harassment, assault and the grey area of consent. *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, nominated for seven awards, including best picture, deals head-on with the horrors of rape. Other films like Greta Gerwig's *Lady Bird* deal with the complexity surrounding consensual sexual relations. Consent has become another hot topic following sexual assault allegations against comedian and outspoken feminist Aziz Ansari. The allegations spurred an outcry for more male education about consent.

"It's about men being better husbands and fathers," said Foronda. "If we do not teach our sons to respect women, it is likely that they are going to end up going down a bad path."

For Minicucci, the goal is to create a world in which the human body is considered sacred and sexual assault is eradicated.

"We've reached the point where women are getting tired and frustrated of hearing about sexual assault after sexual assault," said Minicucci. "It's time to start setting some standards for the treatment of women in our society."

Religious freedom is an ongoing struggle

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — There has been some positive news on the global religious freedom front over the past two years, but it is still far from peaceful.

"It's not getting better. Year after year, the situation is deteriorating," Aid to the Church in Need Canada (ACN) national director Marie-Claude Lalonde told *The Catholic Register*.

While the ACN's biannual global report *Persecuted and Forgotten?* is "qualitative" rather than "quantitative," the organization's monitoring of religious freedom issues and persecution of Christians gives the organization a solid basis for concluding that Christians across a wide swath of the world, from North Africa to China, are more oppressed today than they were two years ago, Lalonde said.

And in spite of improvements in countries like Iraq, violence against Christians has shot up in other areas, particularly India.

"We've seen the situation getting worse through the (ACN's annual) religious freedom report. The information in the past year doesn't tell us it has changed dramatically," she said. "I think we can still conclude it's not getting better."

While Christians still suffer massively in the Middle East, ACN acknowledges the picture is brighter.

"Fears that the Christians in Iraq are on the verge of extinction were, to some extent, alleviated at the end of the reporting period by news of thousands of families returning to their homes on the Nineveh Plains following the defeat of Daesh (ISIS)," reads the report.

ACN notes that the Iraqi Christian population dropped from 275,000 in mid-2015 to below 200,000 in 2017. The report quotes Chaldean Bishop Antoine Audo of Aleppo claiming that Syria's Christian population had declined by two-thirds over five years, to around 500,000 in 2016.

Aid to the Church in Need has shifted some of its focus to the plight of Christians in South and Southwest Asia, especially India.

The most recent U.S. State Department report on international religious freedom highlights a case of 30 youth armed with sticks and batons who beat a group of 20 Catholics (mostly women and children) in late 2016.

Since the rise of the Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party — now both the largest party in India's parliament and the party of President Narendra Modi — a strong, populist, right-wing movement has called for India to become an officially Hindu country.

"Seen from abroad, the foundations of Indian democracy and respect for minority rights seem

seriously threatened by the backers of Hindutva ideology, who are currently in power," reads the American religious freedom report. The ideology is a major challenge for India's bishops, said Lalonde, who travelled to India to witness the situation first-hand.

"The bishops, I can tell you, avoid politics. They definitely don't want to be on that ground," Lalonde said. "The idea is not to try to convince them that India shouldn't be fully Hindu. They don't even go to that extent, because it would create more problems."

ACN relays the report of India's Catholic Secular Forum, which recorded 365 serious anti-Christian incidents across India in 2016 — incidents that included 10 people killed and more than 500 clergy and lay leaders attacked for their faith. The problem is compounded by a government and judiciary that will not reign in extremist, religious vigilantes behind incidents such as the 2016 gang rape and murder of a 14-year-old Christian schoolgirl in Chhattisgarh State, 1,200 kilometres south of New Delhi.

The 2016 record of violent incidents against India's Christians was matched in the first five months of 2017, with 316 attacks. The ACN's plan for India is to continue funding inter-faith dialogue efforts spearheaded by Indian Catholics.

The ACN's full report is posted at acn-canada.org

Video premiered by Regina Multi-Faith Forum

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A video promoting Canada as a harmonious nation was premiered on World Religion Day Jan. 28 at Luther College, University of Regina, to an audience of invited guests. The Regina observance of World Religion Day was moved to Luther College from Beth Jacob Synagogue this year to accommodate the viewing of the video.

Initiated by the Regina Multi-Faith Forum and produced by Access Communications Regina, *Highway to a Harmonious Canada* featured children representing a variety of cultures speaking briefly about a harmonious and inclusive nation. Each held up a familiar highway sign with an inclusive message: a stop sign that read “Stop Racism,” a yield sign that read “Yield to the Rights of Others,” and so on. Segments of the video showed the children playing and participating in prayer together, and showed short performances, also by children, from a variety of cultural organizations.

Brenda Anderson of the Regina Multi-Faith Forum emceed the event. “We have all been inspired

by the children in the video,” she said. “This will be an education resource for schools. Access Communications will also be playing it, and we are planning a major event sometime in March to an invitation list that will include many dignitaries.”

Krishan Kapila, one of the founders of the Multi-Faith Forum and current president of Multi-Faith Saskatchewan, co-chaired the video project along with Gagan Deep Singh. Both said the road to getting the video produced was long and fraught with obstacles, but, Singh observed, “a divine hand kept us going.”

The video is 45 minutes long and will be made available to the public. “Access Communications is giving us 60 DVDs and we will give one to each school division,” said Kapila. The cultural organizations that took part in the project will each receive two DVDs for their own use. Access donated its services, some funds were received from the Canada 150 Communities Fund, and some from arts foundations. There was virtually no cost to the forum itself.

Speaking on behalf of Regina Multi-Faith Forum, Rev. Uttam



Frank Flegel

SILENT PRAYER — Participants at the Regina Multi-Faith Forum’s observance of World Religion Day Jan. 28 at Luther College, University of Regina, take a moment for silent prayer. “We are one tree with many branches,” said Rev. Uttam Barua, a Buddhist monk. “Our goal is one. We are all Canadian. We understand and respect each other.”

Barua, a Buddhist monk, said, “We are one tree with many branches. Our goal is one. We are all Canadian. We understand and respect each other.”

“Why did we come to Regina?” asked Kapila. “We are accepted; we can live together. We are one, maybe of a different colour. We must help and communicate with others. That is how we grow. Religion is very important to all of us.”

World Religion Day was es-

tablished in 1950 by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is in the United States. It has since

spread around the world, and is usually celebrated on the third Sunday in January.

Healing found in learning traditional teachings

Continued from page 3

her family and community, resulting in alcoholism and broken families. Desjarlais recalled the loneliness and fear of going to the school as a child of six, how students who spoke their own language were punished, and how everyone’s long hair was cut.

Now the mother of eight, the grandmother of 13 and the great-grandmother of three, Desjarlais said she found healing as an adult when she began to learn about her culture, and became involved in traditional teachings and ceremonies.

“Once I started attending some of the ceremonies, I started feeling better about myself and who I was,” she said. “A lot of my family are strong Catholics. We all have to learn to respect each other’s way; we all follow the same God.”

Today she offers traditional teachings and ceremonies to women at the Regional Psychiatric Centre, and has found herself reflecting on how similar the prison system is to the residential school system. “A lot of the men and women there have parents and grandparents who went to residential school. It is just one big cycle.”

The path of healing is not an easy one, she noted, and involves each new generation. “All my life I’ve tried to do what I can to help people.”

During the event at St. Joseph’s, Myron Rogal, who co-ordinates the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace and serves on the Diocesan Council for Truth and Reconciliation (DCTR), provided an overview of the Treaty Elder Series, which is a diocesan reconciliation initiative offered in collaboration with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

As one response to the Calls to Action by the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission, parishes have been invited to hold events to enhance awareness and understanding of treaty history and indigenous spirituality from the perspective of community elders, he explained.

“It is an act of reconciliation to be here today,” Rogal said.

The DCTR was established in the diocese in 2012 when then-Bishop Donald Bolen called together a group of indigenous and non-indigenous people to “begin to find a way forward, recognizing our treaty responsibilities and wanting to build relationships face-to-face,” Rogal said.

“Reconciliation is not something that can be delegated,” Rogal added. “As Christians, just as we cannot delegate the cross, we cannot pass it on. Reconciliation is something that is part of the community, something that the church is engaged in, but it is also the responsibility of each one of us.”



Rob Bredin

CONSECRATED LIFE — A group photo taken at the Regina Catholic School Division’s annual luncheon to honour those who have chosen to live a consecrated life shows the largest group ever to attend the function. This year’s lunch was held Feb. 1 in the Gratton Room at the school division’s office.

Luncheon celebrates consecrated life

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — For eight years the Regina Catholic School Division has hosted a lunch to honour those who have chosen to live a consecrated life. This year’s lunch was held Feb. 1 in the Gratton Room at the division’s office and attracted the largest group ever.

We have 38 people here today,” said Miles Meyers, the division’s co-ordinator for religious education. “It’s twice the number

we had last year. Some have even come from outside the city.”

Most who attended the luncheon were members of sisters’ congregations, but several members of the Madonna House Apostolate who operate the Marian Centre soup kitchen in downtown Regina were also in attendance.

School board chair Robert Bresciani welcomed everyone, explaining that the lunch is held each year as a gesture of thanks for the efforts of those living a

consecrated life who contribute to and support the division’s work of Catholic education.

Trustees and members of the division’s senior administration were then introduced, following which Meyers, who organizes the event each year, led the group in a communal prayer for consecrated life, which included a memorial section recognizing those who died in the past year. A group photo by division photographer Rob Bredin was taken to commemorate the event.

PRAIRIE MESSENGER PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY

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Visit to Prairies both informative and inspiring

By Amanda Thorsteinsson with files from James Kornelsen

WINNIPEG — For John Mbae, a Canadian Foodgrains Bank conservation agriculture technical specialist based in Kenya, a visit to the Canadian Prairies was informative and inspiring.



Rick Block

KENYAN VISITOR — John Mbae, a conservation agriculture technical specialist based in Kenya, meets with Canadian Foodgrains Bank board member and Saskatchewan farmer Marion Ausmus.

“I had the privilege of staying with a farm family in Saskatchewan,” says Mbae. “Although their farm operation was very large and profitable, they were very approachable and hospitable to me, an African farmer. We shared with each other like colleagues.”

Mbae supports partners, farmers, and farm extension workers in Foodgrains Bank projects in Kenya that are teaching small-scale farmers how to implement conservation agriculture techniques on their farms.

The purpose of Mbae’s visit was to share with Canadians how assistance through the Foodgrains Bank and Global Affairs Canada is making a difference for people in Kenya experiencing hunger.

Although many Kenyans rely on agriculture for their livelihoods,

families struggle to produce enough food to provide for their families, and regularly experience hunger.

Over the course of about two weeks, Mbae travelled over 3,700 kilometres through Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, visiting a dozen communities and giving nine presentations to over 500 people.

Mbae specializes in training small-scale farmers in East Africa in how to implement conservation agriculture techniques, including minimal soil disturbance, crop rotation, mulching, and the use of cover crops, to improve the health of their soil, and ultimately, their crop production.

“The stories I shared of Kenyan farmers who have improved their lives through conservation agriculture projects — these were very well received by the Canadians in attendance. They are stories that are important for them to hear,” he says.

“Some people were very moved by the stories about women farmers, for example, asking what more could be done to help women in Kenya who face these major challenges.”

Mbae himself was affected by the stories and experiences of the Canadian farmers he met.

“It was impressive to me that farmers here have been using conservation agriculture techniques, like zero tillage, for 20 years or more,” he says.

“I was able to visit a potato farm that invested heavily in crop rotations. It was amazing to see how much farmers invest in cover crops, to manage the soil.”

He also noted how much technology is used on Canadian farms.

“The level of mechanization was amazing to witness,” he says. “In Saskatchewan, I visited a dairy farm with only a few people working. We went out to see the animals, and when we got there and turned on the lights, the cows were milking themselves, with the machines monitoring and controlling the milking.”

He was touched by the care and commitment shown by such farmers in helping others around the world.

“I was struck by the longevity of the growing projects, through which farmers and rural communities support the Foodgrains Bank,” he says. “They give of

their time, land and equipment. Some of them have been doing this for more than 15 years.”

Overall, the visit was a success, says Theresa Rempel Mulaire, who manages the Scaling-Up Conservation Agriculture in East Africa program to which Mbae provides technical support.

“It was important for John to see that conservation agriculture principles are applicable around the globe, and not just for small-scale African farmers,” she says. “It was also great for John to meet the community of support for this work.”

Along with Canadian farm supporters, he also met officials from Global Affairs Canada.

It’s through Global Affairs Canada that the Canadian government supports the Scaling-Up Conservation Agriculture program, providing a 3:1 matching grant totalling \$14 million over the five years of the program, which has a total value of \$18.6 million.

For more information, see foodgrainsbank.ca/campaigns/conservation-ag

Hospital chaplains still on the job, despite budget cuts

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Hospital chaplains in Saskatchewan remain on the job, but the process to obtain their services is awkward and not always successful. Nick Jesson is the Regina archdiocese ecumenical co-ordinator and one of a team of people trying to get the spiritual care office restored in the health district.

The office acted as the co-ordination centre for hospital chaplains. It used to be that, when patients were being admitted to hospital, they were asked if they desired the services of a chaplain and, if so, their faith community. Lists of patients requesting chaplaincy services were then prepared for each denomination and given to the spiritual care office, whose staff made the information available to the various chaplains.

“It was simple and straightforward,” said Jesson.

Previously, he explained, the staff of the spiritual care office were hospital employees, but those positions were cut in the last provincial budget. Now, if patients want the services of a chaplain, the only avenue available to them is to ask hospital staff on the ward to make the call to a chaplain for them. This is problematic for the patient.

With the elimination of the spiritual care office, some front-line hospital staff are telling patients that chaplains are no longer available. “That,” said Jesson, “is not true.” He emphasized that denominational chaplains of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United churches, plus one multi-faith chaplain, all remain available.

There was also some concern among hospital staff that asking patients for their religious affiliation might be a privacy issue, but the Privacy Commissioner’s office said that that is not the case.

“If spiritual care were made

part of clinical care, the information would not be shared outside the hospital, and privacy would not be an issue,” said Jesson.



PM file

Nicholas Jesson

The denominational chaplains are funded by their faith communities and remain on the job. The multifaith chaplain serves all Regina hospitals. That position is funded by Living Sky, a non-profit group — part of the larger group trying to have the chaplaincy office restored and, in the interim, trying to have a document included in the hospital’s paper work that would inform the patient of the chaplains available and for the patient to indicate a request for a visit. The group is also requesting that chaplain information be placed on the hospital’s closed-circuit television programming.

Representatives of all faith communities comprise the group meeting with the government in an effort to restore the chaplaincy office — so far without success. In the meantime, churches are being encouraged to inform their congregations that chaplains are available, but they have to ask for the service.

Unity is coming in unexpected ways

Continued from page 1

Durber voiced disappointment with ecumenical approaches that settle for what she referred to as “reconciled diversity.”

“Even within the heart of the ecumenical movement, I sometimes sense that the word ‘unity’ is out of favour. There is a reluctance to pray for unity without a thousand qualifications — an unspoken feeling that we were wrong once to hope for it,” she said.

However, in the midst of disappointments are positive realities that ring true both locally and abroad.

“Like a character in a fairy tale that suddenly discovers in the depths of the forest the hidden enchantment of the world, I have begun to see that while I’m mourning the loss of something, it is also being restored many times over. While I was looking for unity in one way, God was building and forming it in another, and I find myself having to reshape my hope.”

Citing an article by Will Adam and Graeme Smith titled, “Hidden Ecumenism”, Durber explained how “ecumenism is happening in all sorts of informal and unofficial, but nevertheless real ways: “We have moved from a time when Christians inhabited different worlds and different traditions to one in which many things are simply shared.”

She noted that there was a time when people from different sides of church divisions hardly ever met each other. “People were divided in ways that were literally visible and audible; they sang different hymns; had very different kinds of worship; even had different jobs or social standing. But

these different worlds have largely broken down,” Durber continued.

“Christians of different traditions now meet together not only in multi- or bi-lateral dialogues but in the workplace, in schools, in art and culture,” she listed. “We are inheriting, exchanging, and inhabiting each other’s traditions in a way that would have seemed unthinkable not many years ago.”

In response to a document called “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”x, published by the World Council of Churches in 2014, a successor to BEM, many have noted how a real form of unity is coming in ways that weren’t necessarily expected.

“For example,” said Durber, “it’s clear that Orthodox churches have a strong understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God, of the importance of Scripture, and the imperative to mission. It’s equally clear that Protestants value the traditions of the early church and have a growing sense of the importance of living tradition. We have come a long way in receiving the gifts of other traditions.”

Citing her personal experiences of ecumenical encounter, Durber affirmed that there is profound meaning in receiving the gifts of other traditions, and that “it is more than mere bricolage.”

Nevertheless, Durber expressed a need for continued and deeper reflection on the theological work of Christian unity.

“How can we receive each other’s gifts most fully — not as quaint customs unexplored but as practices deeply situated in theological soil and ecclesiological tradition?” she asked.

“A deeper ecumenism is still needed if we are really to receive the gifts we each bring to the

table of the one church.”

This deeper ecumenism, said Durber, will only come with further sustained ecumenical engagement and intentional understanding of the tradition and spirituality underpinning church practices: “With continued thought and awareness our gifts can truly enrich each other.

“The ecumenical movement has not taken the path that we first thought it would, and yet, despite ourselves, we are part of a church that is united in ways we could little imagine some decades ago. While we were looking for unity in one way, God was building it in another.”

For Durber, these ecumenical moves forward continue to heal that sense of disappointment around the search for Christian unity. “The church is a divine reality as well as a human one. Whatever is happening to the church in terms of its disappointments, the church is, first of all, God’s creation and its future is in God’s hands.”

This, she stressed, is a source of hope.

“The work of ecumenism is always being enchanted with God’s surprising grace. God is writing the story and the ending belongs to him,” she said.

If that is so, concluded Durber, quoting the English saint Julian of Norwich, then “all shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.”

Durber is a minister of the United Reformed Church in Taunton, Somerset, England. She is the former principal of Westminster College at Cambridge and has served as theological co-ordinator of the UK-based charity Christian Aid. Her books include *Surprised by Grace*, *Preaching like a Woman*, and a collection of reflections and prayers on the parables of Jesus.

Winter break in Ottawa not as enjoyable as it sounds

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



Anyone who knows me knows I've done my share of complaining about Saskatchewan winters. It's dark. The sun gets up late and lays low.

And it's cold. I resent the time it takes to look for layers of warm clothes, pull on boots that have to be laced and tied, find shoes to put into a bag to take to work and once getting there stripping off all the stuff before you can finally get to your desk. This infernal routine shreds my patience.

But it's a dry cold, they say. As if that's supposed to make one feel better.

I recently spent two weeks in Ottawa where a "dry cold" started to look pretty appealing. In Ottawa winter seeps into your bones and feels much colder than the temperature would indicate.

Grey clouds can hang low over the city for days, spewing forth large fat snowflakes that thud, pellets of ice that sting, and snow that alternates with freezing rain on a roller-coaster temperature ride. A +5 day can sink to a -14 night. It's called a flash freeze.

The day after one such flash freeze I took my usual 15-minute bus ride to my granddaughter's

daycare to pick her up at 3:30, as I'd been doing for the past seven days. I expected to see icy streets but, as is typical in a big city, everything was covered in salt and, apart from inches of slush, the streets were safe.

The day after that, the sun was blinding and I felt no hesitation in walking over to a nearby store to get some groceries. There's a major sidewalk that runs along a busy drive and when I turned onto it I was surprised to see what appeared to be a vast ice field. A clear seamless glaze covered curb, boulevard, sidewalk, and the open space in front of an apartment building. It shone with menace in the sunlight.

As I gingerly walked along the treacherous surface, I met a man who wondered if I needed help since I was walking so slowly. I said, more brightly than I felt, that I was just trying to be careful because "every time I fall it seems I break something."

Against my better judgment, I forged ahead and angled right to get a foothold into the snow on the side. The crust of ice was too thick to break into, and when my boot lost traction I became airborne for

what seemed a long time — enough time to think, *please don't fall on your hand* — before landing on my outstretched right hand.

This is the second time I've felt and heard the collapse of bone. Afraid to stand back up, I sat on the sidewalk watching the traffic whiz by and, in a fog of confusion and pain, phoned Russ who, since he was in Saskatchewan, suggested calling a cab. I didn't have to.

Everyone has stories about good Samaritans, the kindness of strangers, people coming to another's aid in a time of need.

Shock made thoughts come slowly, but I heard someone call, "Do you need help? We saw you go down and circled around just in case you were still here."

I squinted against the sun wondering if this young couple calling from their car was really there, or if it was the apparition of a desperate mind. The young man and his girlfriend left their vehicle on a busy road and came across the icy boulevard to help me to the car. "We could take you to the hospital."

I won't bore you with the details of a misshapen wrist, holding it still for X-rays, chatting with the radiologist who nonchalantly said I'd need a reduction. You probably don't want to hear about having a tourniquet applied to my upper arm to cut off circulation, then having a drug injected into my hand to freeze the bone (a procedure known as a "Bier block," which sounds like something you could order in a pub and after

which you definitely need a drink). Or how the orthopedic surgeon pulled on my arm as though playing tug-of-war while someone else applied the cast.

No. This story is about the kindness of strangers, from a selfless young couple who turned around and came back, to receptionists who clucked sympathetically, gentle X-ray technicians who smiled, a radiologist with a wry sense of humour, a talented orthopaedic nurse who managed to calm my anxiety while shoving an IV line into my hand. And a large, serious surgeon who brushed off my jokes like lint, and went about his work with serious determination and explicit instructions.

Queensway Carleton Hospital — I want to say the name — is filled with kind, compassionate, caring people. If only warm hearts could thaw icy streets.

Now that I'm back home, I wish I could button a warm shirt, tie boot laces, zip a jacket, or pull on some mittens. I'll never complain about a Saskatchewan winter again.



M. Weber

SASKATCHEWAN WINTERS — Tying boots, pulling on mittens and zipping heavy jackets are part of winters in Saskatchewan. Being able to do those things shouldn't be taken for granted.

Writer's work touches on ongoing search for personal moral standards

By Mike Mastromatteo

TORONTO (CNS) — Catholic writer Philip Caputo shot to literary prominence in 1977 with release of his Vietnam war memoir, *A Rumor of War*.

The no-holds-barred soldier's account of the horror, brutality, demoralization and pointlessness of combat in an ideologically murky war was one of the first notes of doubt and dissent about America's foreign policy objectives in that turbulent time.

After his discharge from the military, Caputo joined the staff of the *Chicago Tribune*, where he wrote about local and international events, culminating with his sharing of the 1973 Pulitzer Prize for reporting on Chicago city politics.

Caputo left journalism to begin a new career as a novelist and writer. By 2017, he had written 16 novels, memoirs, a travelogue and countless magazine and op-ed pieces in U.S. journals.

His latest novel, *Some Rise by Sin* (2017) may have more resonance with Catholic readers. It tells the story of American Franciscan Father Timothy Riordan serving as pastor of rural parish in the Sinaloa state, a rugged area dominated by the Sierra Madre Mountains that run along Mexico's West Coast. It's one of

the areas rocked by the ongoing drug wars involving cartel leaders, local vigilantes and hard-pressed military and police forces who make little distinction between the innocent and the guilty.

While struggling to remain true to his vocation as a shepherd of the flock, Riordan is coerced into acting as an informer, thereby compromising much of his priestly ministry.

"All my literary work — as opposed to my journalism — has been about God and the devil and people having to make hard moral choices in places or circumstances where the handbook for decent behaviour is out of print, leaving them to search their own depths for a moral standard," Caputo told CNS in a recent interview. "*Some Rise by Sin* is, however, my first book with an overtly Catholic protagonist."

Riordan is redeemed by the end, but it does not come without significant hardship and loss, and, in its own way, it echoes the musings earlier raised by *A Rumor of War*.

Describing some of the carnage he witnessed as a U.S. Marine in 1965, Caputo wrote in *A Rumor of War*:

"The sight of mutilation did more than cause me physical revulsion; it burst the religious myths of my Catholic boyhood. I could not look at those (dead) men and still believe their souls had 'passed on' to another existence,

or that they had souls in the first place. . . . There were other doubts which had made a mockery of all the Catholic theology the Dominican and Jesuit priests had preached to me in high school and college. Man's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; man is created in the image and likeness of God; have respect for the dead."

Caputo's witnessing of such grotesqueries, both as a soldier and as a foreign correspondent covering international hot spots in the 1970s and '80s, further shaped his outlook on the capricious nature of human life and where, in fact, the Spirit resides.

"I'm sure my Jesuit education had a lot to do with the themes that run through most of my literary work," Caputo said. "A former president of Loyola University in Chicago once told me that I was a very 'Catholic' writer, not only in the sense of being concerned with moral questions and dilemmas, but also in the sense that my mind seemed to hark back to an ancient, or at any rate a pre-modern, mode of thought."

But where some writers might turn their backs on faith and belief after witnessing war, brutality, corruption and incomprehensible suffering, Caputo is hanging on to core belief.

"Sustaining any kind of faith is a struggle, but faith, I think, is a *sine qua non* for survival, emotional and psychological," he told

CNS. "What I mean is, without the conviction that the human race has a purpose, that each of our lives has a purpose, granted by God, life becomes unbearable — the sound and fury signifying nothing."

Caputo suggested his own view is like his character, Riordan in *Some Rise by Sin*.

"As there can be no true courage without fear, so can there be no faith without doubt. Blind faith, as we see with the jihadists, leads to fanaticism and, paradoxically, ungodly acts. Faith requires us to question it."

Compare the above with the words of fictional Riordan on his decision to quit the informer role and return to his priestly integrity, even to his peril: "Grace is given to the undeserving," he thought. "But once it is, your actions have to show that you've received it."

Careful readers of Caputo's work will no doubt pick up his journalism experience as a source for lively, relevant storytelling. Two previous novels, *Crossers* (2009) and *Acts of Faith* (2005) fictionalize contemporary issues in social justice, illegal border crossings and humanitarian relief work in the Third World.

"Being a reporter has been very important in writing fiction," Caputo said. "The skills I acquired in journalism — digging into facts, interviewing people . . . have been a great help in my research."

After an impressive body of

work in fiction and journalism, Caputo could be forgiven for looking to slow down and enjoy the fruits of his literary labour. He retains two homes: in Norwalk, Connecticut, where he attends St. Mary's Parish, and Patagonia, Arizona, where he attends St. Thérèse of Lisieux Church.

But as a self-described "hack," Caputo isn't quite ready to put the writing tools away. He is working on a number of new writing projects, "hoping to find which one will work."

As for his ongoing faith influence, Caputo seems prepared to stick it out with the church he grew up with and never quite abandoned.

"Catholicism is the faith I grew up with and is the one in which I feel I belong, even if some of my views would not be approved by its theologians," he said.

Mastromatteo is a Toronto-based writer and editor.

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Taking seriously religion’s role in a connected world

Readings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Much secular scholarship has been dismissive of the role of religion. Although that has changed somewhat in recent years, as the co-editors of this important volume note, religious activists were often “written off as remnants of traditions” destined to disappear under “modernization” processes. Any residual religious activity that remained would be confined to the private sphere. I recall that in 1976 when I decided to do my political science doctoral dissertation on the political significance of liberation theology in Latin America, and specifically the role of Archbishop Helder Câmara in Brazil, it seemed a most unusual subject, one that challenged the dominant narrative in a number of respects.

Of course the forecasts of religion fading away proved to be famously wrong. There was the Islamist revolution in Iran, and the influence of Pope John Paul II in undermining communist rule in countries that had been officially atheist for decades. The resurgence of religion could not be ignored. Alarming, there was also the growing menace of terrorist groups claiming religious motivations however misconceived. And it is these extreme manifestations of a violent reactionary nature that have tended to get the most media attention.

This book is not about them. Rather it examines the role of religion much more broadly in contemporary societies in relation to the “neoliberal” international political economy that has spread across the globe. By “neoliberal” is meant an ideology that promotes market-oriented policies open to international trade and investment. The authors identify and analyze divergent forms of religious activism in relation to the forces of neoliberal globalization. Some are supportive of free markets and individualism. There are even “prosperity gospels” that link personal faith to successful capitalist growth. Some religious activism promotes a communitarian as well as individual ethics, seeking to reform capitalist economies: for example, through “fair trade,” debt relief, implementation of corporate social responsibility principles, redistributive taxation and welfare policies, etc. More radical is the emergence of religious activism that seeks a fundamental social-democratic and ecologically sustainable alternative to the prevailing system of globalized growth-oriented capitalism.

The co-editors find inspiration in the latter movement for change. Dreher in her introduction expresses a “hope that the religious resurgence sweeping through the planet may also support a necessary fundamental transformation of an economy that has taken on god-like features and whose criti-

cism is often presented as blasphemous by the defenders of the free market and private property rights.” This possibility is echoed and elaborated by Smith in his conclusion.

The book’s first chapters provide some historical context on the relationship between religion and modern capitalism, and some data on comparative demographic trends of religious adherence in different countries and regions. The next chapters then examine the three main forms of recent religious activism in turn. Chapters four through 10 look at the various ways in which religious ideas have promoted, or at least accommodated, capitalist systems of development. The most assertive and far-reaching are those of the “prosperity gospels” preached by American Protestant evangelical Christianity, which have generally been aligned with the conservative or right wing side of the political spectrum.

As Michael Wilkinson explains: “The prosperity gospel is characterized by themes of abundance, blessing, health, wealth, and victory. These cultural values have translated into specific economic action in the United States and throughout the world among millions of Christians.” That global spread has been facilitated by the influence of multimedia evangelists, “pastorpreneurs,” and the outreach activities of megachurches.

Examples in the Global South include what Asonzeh Ukah terms

“prosperity Pentecostalism” in Africa. Other religious traditions have also made business-friendly accommodations. A chapter by Surya Prakash Upadhyay looks at “Neoliberal Capitalism and the Emergence of Corporate Hinduism in Urban India.” Several chapters explore the complicated and contested relationships of Islam to neoliberal economic development. In addition to the cases of Tunisia and Lebanon, especially fraught is that of Turkey where the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has been in a power struggle with the quasi-religious transnational “Hizmet” movement based on the teachings of Fethullah Güllen. (The increasingly autocratic AKP government’s sweeping purge of Güllen followers took place after this book’s publication. Whatever the pro-development elements in the ideologies of both, a climate of instability is usually bad for business.)



Gerald Schmitz

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL — The 2018 Sundance Film Festival Jan. 18 - 28 screened 191 feature and short films from 29 countries. At the opening press conference, from left: Barbara Chai, Entertainment Editor, MarketWatch, and Head of Arts and Culture coverage, Dow Jones Group; Robert Redford, president and founder Sundance Institute; Keri Putnam, executive director, Sundance Institute; John Cooper, director, Sundance Film Festival. “From the beginning, the purpose of the Sundance Film Festival has been to support artists and their stories, and this year, our mission seemed especially relevant. Supporting independent voices, and listening to the stories they tell, has never been more necessary,” said Redford. Watch for highlights beginning the Feb. 15 issue.

Chapters 11 through 13 examine religious activism that advances a critique of capitalism and advocates reforms to mitigate its failings and negative effects. Particularly important have been campaigns for corporate social responsibility, for ethical investing and consumption, for fair trade, fair taxation, and the like. As Michael MacLeod observes: “In addition to the creation of many specific religiously motivated investment funds, faith-based activism has also been leading in the collective mobilization of resources to promote greater social responsibility of business.”

Interfaith ecumenical coalitions have led the way. In Canada the Taskforce on the Churches

caring for God’s creation is seen as a moral imperative, it affects lifestyle and economic choices. Ecological sustainability cannot be sacrificed for profits and growth as the measure of a good economy.

In chapter 14 Peter Smith and Elizabeth Smythe discuss the role of religion in global justice movements that, in putting forward a systemic critique of neoliberal global capitalism, make the case that “another world is possible.” Their main focus is on the World Social Forum which began in Brazil in 2001 as an alternative to the elite gathering of the World Economic Forum (WSF) in Davos. They argue that, while the WSF defines itself as a diverse “non-confessional” space for contesting neoliberal economics, religious actors (notably the World Council of Churches) have played a prominent role from its founding onward, and that, moreover, global social justice movements have made room for “spirituality with its emphasis on affect, emotion, authenticity, relating to others, and interconnectedness with one another and the Earth.” It is noteworthy that one of the originators of the WSF is a Brazilian Catholic, Francisco Whitaker, who “takes his theological inspiration from Archbishop Helder Câmara and Liberation theologian Leonardo Boff.” (He has served on the Brazilian Catholic Bishops Justice and Peace Commission which was among the organizers of the first WSF.)

The book does not neglect the increasing role of indigenous peoples who have been among the world’s most oppressed and exploited populations. As they engage in the struggle of decolonization they are recovering their own religious traditions and spirituality, bringing these to bear among the voices of resistance to the juggernaut of neoliberal globalization. A chapter by Marcos Scauso explores the decolonial project of “Indianismo” in Latin America, notably Bolivia where it has given rise to concepts of

comfortably accommodated within a neoliberal ideology of globalization. Religion and spirituality can be privatized and disconnected from broader societal concerns. By limiting the influence of faith to personal choices, in a kind of “religious supermarket” catering to “the individual need for meaning,” it loses any larger socio-critical potential. Religion, so conceived and circumscribed, poses no challenge to dominant ideological narratives.

By contrast, Smith emphasizes the emergence of a “spirituality of resistance” that confronts the inter-related ecological and economic crises facing the planet and that embraces a holistic vision of global justice for all. He devotes several pages to the seminal 2015 encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’* (On Care for Our Common Home), which “reverberated around the world” and from which he cites the following passage:

There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational program, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm. Otherwise, even the best ecological initiatives can find themselves caught up in the same globalized logic.

As Smith comments: “We need to go much deeper than what the ruling political and economic elites prescribe. . . . the pope’s encyclical is clearly political, suggesting the need for systemic change in the economy and in how we live and associate with one another.”

Secularists, including many academics, have tended to discount the role of religion or see it only in a negative light. To the contrary, what the above shows is the power of a religious and spiritual critique to be more relevant than ever in challenging the prevailing idolatries (with respect to money, markets, technocracy) that have characterized economic globalization in our time.

Sabine Dreher and Peter J. Smith, eds.,
*Religious Activism in the Global Economy:
Promoting, Reforming or Resisting Neoliberal
Globalization?*
Rowan & Littlefield, London and New York, 2016

To trust and repent is to put on our ‘highest mind’



Liturgy and Life

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI

Two movies speak to the readings today. *Noah* more or less literally portrays how Noah and his family are snatched out of a wicked world to hopefully begin anew, almost against Noah’s own worldview. *Hunger Games* — *The Mocking Jay*, featuring Jennifer Lawrence, touches on the archetypal themes of good versus evil, only in this movie, the non-ending implies that evil triumphs over good, as we hear the words, “There is no more District 12.”

Today’s liturgy invites us not just to believe that good triumphs over evil, but to live the Good News of a new life through faith and repentance.

The first two readings build on the story of Noah. In Genesis, God makes a covenant relationship with Noah and his family. They were to live with God in a new way, on a renewed earth. Interestingly, that covenant was made with all the animals and all of creation — a reminder that the original “bible” or revelation was the book of creation itself. Richard Rohr calls this the first religion, or “awe-ism.” The sign of this covenant would be a rainbow and the promise that there would never be another flood.

St. Peter in the second reading adds that the people of Noah’s day refused to believe. That is the same sin as the Pharisees and religious leaders of Jesus’ day, who refused to believe in him as Son of God. Their unbelief led to his innocent death for our sins; his descent into hell or Hades to bring salvation to the justified dead of the Old Testament, and to open up for us a new way of life that would be initiated not by a flood, but by the waters of baptism. The proof and the pledge of this is nothing other than the resurrection of Jesus, which fulfilled all the prophecies

Lavoie, 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.

of the Old Testament, and vindicated all of Jesus’ teachings in the New Testament.

In the Gospel, Jesus, the faithful one, the New Israel, is tested in the desert like the old Israel. Luke tells us that the Spirit drove Jesus there — it was something he had to do to be the new faithful Israel. The expression “forty days” means “the time that it takes to bring something to completion, to fullness.” Jesus stayed there until Satan had exhausted his efforts to tempt him to betray who he was, the divine Son of God, by using his divine power in a selfish way, and of course, Satan was unsuccessful — Jesus stayed true to his relationship with God and to his humanity.

Having proven himself to be the New Israel, the faithful Son of God by both his baptism and the temptations in the desert, Jesus went up to Galilee after John was arrested. Galilee in the gospels, unlike Jerusalem, symbolizes the time in Jesus’ ministry when all went well, when he was accepted by the people, performed miracles, healed the sick, raised the dead, preached and taught throughout the region.

His message is key to living in the reign of God: repent and believe. We are to put our total and complete trust in him as the Son of God, the New Israel who alone can give us that new life that the flood could only symbolize. We are to believe in him who is the true victor over evil. That is why the Gospel is good news, or *evangelion* in Greek. Warriors who were victorious in war used to send messengers ahead of them to announce the

First Sunday of Lent	Genesis 9:8-15
	Psalm 25
February 18, 2018	1 Peter 3:18-22
	Mark 1:12-15

good news, *evangelion*, of their victory in battle. Well, this is the true good news about the real victor in battle, Jesus the new Josuah, who brings his people into the Promised Land of a new life with God, free from sin and darkness.

We are also to repent. In Greek the word is *metanoia*, which means “putting on a higher mind.” It is the opposite of *paranoia* which means to have a “divided mind,” to be of two minds, to be confused and without direction. To repent means to change our whole way of being, to let go of any sin and darkness in our lives, to be the best person we can possibly be, to put on our highest mind.

This is an invitation to experience this good news, this new way of life, through faith and repentance, illustrated

by the following story:

A psychiatric nurse was told the lurid history of a certain patient who had committed a terrible crime, had served his time and now was sent to the hospital to die. He did not



want anyone to know what he had done and could not believe that God could forgive his crime, so he resisted any attempt at reconciliation. The nurse showed him every courtesy. She tucked him in at night, provided him with little favours, remembered his birthday, asked about his family, wrote him notes on her day off and developed a friendship with him. Near the end, his closest friend came to see him and begged him to be reconciled with God. He persisted in his belief that God could not forgive him. In desperation, the friend reminded him of the love the nurse had shown him and suggested that God could do the same. The man replied that if the nurse knew what he had done, she too would reject him. The friend confessed that he had told the nurse his whole story when he entered so she knew what he had done. The man was stunned and astonished. He broke down into tears, saying that if she could love him knowing all that he had done, then God too could love him.

The eucharist is a living out of our baptism, a renewal of our covenant with God through the Body and Blood of Jesus, an act of repentance, and a deep act of faith. It is also a celebration of the kingdom of God in our midst.

May our celebration deepen our faith, enhance our repentance, and help us to live and proclaim this Good News.

Jesus Christ is no ‘superstar,’ just a dying, rising Messiah



In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI

There’s an oddity in the gospels that begs for an explanation: Jesus, it seems, doesn’t want people to know his true identity as the Christ, the Messiah. He keeps warning people not to reveal that he is the Messiah. Why?

Some scholars refer to this as “the messianic secret,” suggesting that Jesus did not want others to know his true identity until the conditions were ripe for it. There’s some truth in that, there’s a right moment for everything, but that still leaves the question unanswered: Why? Why does Jesus want to keep his true identity secret? What would constitute the

right conditions within which his identity should be revealed?

That question is centre stage in Mark’s Gospel, at Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus asks his disciples: “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answers: “You are the Christ.” Then, in what seems like a surprising response, Jesus, rather than praising Peter for his answer, warns him sternly not to tell anyone about what he has just acknowledged. Peter seemingly has given him the right answer and yet Jesus immediately, and sternly, warns him to keep that to himself. Why?

Simply put, Peter has the right answer, but the wrong conception of that answer. He has a false notion of what it means to be the Messiah.

In the centuries leading up to the birth of Jesus and among Jesus’ contemporaries there were numerous notions of what the Christ would look like. We don’t know which notion Peter had, but obviously it wasn’t the right one

because Jesus immediately shuts it down. What Jesus says to Peter is not so much: “Don’t tell anyone that I’m the Christ,” but rather, “Don’t tell anyone that I am what you think the Christ should be. That’s not who I am.”

Like virtually all of his contemporaries and not unlike our own fantasies of what a saviour should look like, Peter no doubt pictured the saviour who was to come as a superman, a superstar who would vanquish evil through a worldly triumph within which he would simply overpower everything that’s wrong by miraculous powers. Such a saviour would not be subject to any weakness, humiliation, suffering, or death and his superiority and glory would have to be acknowledged by everyone, willing or begrudgingly. There would be no holdouts; his demonstration of power would leave no room for doubt or opposition. He would triumph over everything and would reign in a glory such as the world conceives of glory, that is, as the Ultimate Winner, as the Ultimate Champion — the winner of the Olympic medal, the World Cup, the Super Bowl, the Academy Award, the Nobel Prize, the winner of the great trophy or accolade that definitively sets one above others.

When Peter says: “You are the Christ!” that’s how he’s thinking about it, as earthly glory, worldly

triumph, as a man so powerful, strong, attractive, and invulnerable that everyone would simply have to fall at his feet. Hence Jesus’ sharp reply: “Don’t tell anyone about that!”

Jesus then goes on to instruct Peter, and the rest of us, he really is a saviour. He’s not Superman or a superstar in this world or a miracle worker who will prove his power through spectacular deeds. Who is he?

The Messiah is a *dying and rising Messiah*, someone who in his own life and body will demonstrate that evil is not overcome by miracles, but by forgiveness, magnanimity, and nobility of soul and that these are attained not through crushing an enemy but through loving him or her more fully. And the route to this is paradoxical: the glory of the Messiah is not demonstrated by overpowering us with spectacular deeds. Rather, it is demonstrated in Jesus letting himself be transformed through accepting with proper love and graciousness the unavoidable passivity, humiliation, diminishment, and dying that eventually found him. That’s the dying part. But when one dies like that or accepts any humiliation or diminishment in this way, there’s always a subsequent rising to real glory, that is, to the glory of a heart so stretched and enlarged that it is now able to

transform evil into good, hatred into love, bitterness into forgiveness, humiliation into glory. That’s the proper work of a Messiah.

In Matthew’s Gospel this same event is recorded and this same question is asked and Peter gives the same response, but Jesus’ answer to him here is very different. In Matthew’s account, after Peter says: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” rather than warn him not to talk about it, Jesus praises Peter’s answer. Why the difference? Because Matthew recasts the scene so that, in his version, Peter does understand the Messiah correctly.

How do we imagine the Messiah? How do we imagine triumph? Imagine Glory? If Jesus looked us square in the eye and asked, as he asked Peter: “How do you understand me?” Would he laud us for our answer or would he tell us: “Don’t tell anyone about that!”

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The PM: over a century of Benedictine journalism

This is the first of seven articles on the *Prairie Messenger* and the past 100 years of journalism by the Benedictine monks of St. Peter's Abbey.

By Paul Paproski, OSB

The closing of the *Prairie Messenger* in May of 2018 will signal much more than the end of a Catholic newspaper. This year brings to a conclusion more than a century of dedicated journalism by the Benedictines of St. Peter's Abbey. The Catholic weekly was born in a small German-Catholic colony in the Northwest Territories that was opening to settlers. The newspaper served the colony and later expanded to Western Canada and across the nation and its borders to touch the hearts of people struggling to live the message of the Gospel.

The Benedictines came to Canada in 1903 to provide German-speaking priests for second-generation German-Catholic settlers. Only one year later, after barely getting a foothold in their new land, the Benedictines agreed to establish a newspaper. The newspaper, one of the apostolates of the monks, was more than a local source of news. It was an instrument for promoting St. Peter's Colony and German-Catholic traditions. On Feb. 11, 1904 (114 years almost to the day), the first issue of the German-Catholic weekly, *St. Peter's Bote* (*Bote*), rolled off the press in Winnipeg. The printing operation moved to Muenster in 1905 when the Benedictines purchased a printing press.

Another newspaper, *St. Peter's Messenger*, was established 18 years later to meet the needs of the readership who were speaking English. The first issue of *St. Peter's Messenger* was published on May 24, 1923. The *Bote* continued publishing until July 31, 1947.

The Benedictines were grounded in a faith tradition that prepared them for their new life in Canada.

Paproski is a monk of St. Peter's Abbey, a pastor, an archivist and a historian.

They were members of a religious order that had a history of struggle and perseverance. The first photographs of the monastery display a pristine land which was largely prairie and wilderness. Many of the first buildings were made of logs and the roads were primitive trails used by horses and buggies. The Benedictines needed to overcome many obstacles to get their newspaper off the ground. Subscribers, advertisers and correspondents had to be found and they would be among pioneers who were struggling to build their own homes, homesteads, churches, schools and communities.

The coming of the railroad in 1904 - 05 made it possible to haul a printing press to St. Peter's Colony. It was more convenient to print the *Bote* locally and printing costs were lower in Muenster than in Winnipeg. Meanwhile, there were other apostolates to build that would help ensure the success of the *Bote*. The Benedictines began a mixed farming operation and garden. They provided pastors for churches and strongly encouraged colonists to build separate and private Catholic schools.

The dream of building a monastery and German-Catholic colony could only happen through hard work and income. Prior Alfred Mayer and his successor, Prior Bruno, in 1906, became experts at borrowing from colonists and banks and begging for funds and mass stipends from Abbot Peter Engel of St. John's Abbey in Minnesota. The American abbot was amenable to the requests for financial help. Thousands of dollars in loans, gifts and mass stipends from St. John's ensured that the Benedictines would have a foothold in Canada. The monastic community was grateful for the support of Engel. St. Peter's Colony and St. Peter's Abbey were named in honour of the abbot, as well as Englefeld, a community to the east.



SPA Archives

COLONY PIONEERS — Parishioners of St. Peter's Parish in Muenster stand in front of the second Benedictine monastery of St. Peter's Abbey. St. Peter's (log) Church is to the left and the printing press building stands next to the church. The Benedictines of St. Peter's Colony opened their first newspaper in 1904, one year after arriving in Canada. The printing operation began in Winnipeg and moved in 1905 to the colony.

The editors of the *Bote* and its English successor were all Benedictines. (During a few transition years there were non-Benedictine editors.) All the Benedictine editors had a common baptism and vocation in a religious congregation famous for its promotion of church life and education. The men had an understanding of events within and outside the colony and they illustrated this knowledge in editorials and articles. The monks were united in a common zealotry for journalism and promoting the Gospel. The zeal of the editors also set them apart. They had strong convictions about church life and politics that were shaped by their environments and the outside world. The formative years of the Benedictines defined how they understood the Gospel and their mission in the church and colony.

The Benedictines came to Canada to live in a monastic community that was immersed in German-Catholic traditions and supported a German-Catholic colony. The Catholic weekly was an important instrument in upholding these traditions. The monks soon realized that the local community was intertwined with the outside world. It was impossible to ignore the rest of the country and the nations beyond Canada's borders when outside events and decisions affected issues important to the local colony. The vision of each editor was transformed as he came to see the church and its mission in a new light through each passing decade.

There was one issue that united all the editors and journalists from the very beginning and it was "money." The German and English newspapers were always short of cash and in need of new subscribers. The Benedictines could only keep their publications above ground if they subsidized it. Prior Bruno soon realized income from subscriptions and advertising would be insufficient, not only to meet printing expenses, but also to pay press staff the wages to which they were entitled.

With the inauguration of *St.*

Peter's Messenger in 1923, there were two newspapers in St. Peter's Colony, one in English and one in German. The Benedictines did change their German newspaper into an English publication previous to the inauguration of *St. Peter's Messenger*. The *Bote* was printed in English near the end of the First World War in obedience to an Order in Council under the War Measures Act. The Order required that any publication in the language of a country at war with Canada would need a licence to continue publication. A request by the *Bote* to continue in German was denied, so the Benedictines published in English under the name of *St. Peter's Bote* until Dec. 30, 1919, when the Order in Council was revoked.

Canada had a strong British heritage with close ties to England. The dominant Anglo-Saxon Protestants wanted all immigrants to become British. The establishment was suspicious of everyone who was not British and tensions were heightened with people of German heritage during the First and Second World Wars. The Benedictines were proud of their German-Catholic heritage and were loyal Canadian citizens. The monks exemplified their loyalty by sending the first copy of *St. Peter's Messenger* to Regina where it was delivered, May 22, 1923, to Premier Charles A. Dunning, the lieutenant-governor and members of the cabinet. The premier responded, in kind, by a congratulatory letter, but was mildly critical of an editorial taking to task the provincial government for its lack of support for farmers.

The May 22, 1924, issue marking the first anniversary of *St. Peter's Messenger* proclaimed that the newspaper was continuing to grow "sturdy and strong." Its four pages had developed into eight, and the number of subscribers had increased from 37 to many times that number. "The watchword of the *Messenger* is 'Service' — in defence of the church, and the advancement of her interests," a front-page article read. In 1928, the

name of the newspaper was changed to *The Prairie Messenger*.

Rev. James Gray served as editor from 1962 to 1972. He wrote in his final editorial, "Words become flesh," his understanding of the mission of the Catholic newspaper: "From the beginning the PM has been its own master, paying court to no power but the power of God's Word become Flesh. . . . The single and simple objective of the editors of the PM has always been to bring Christ and the Gospel's themes into the day to day life of the Christian people."

'The brush is too broad'

Continued from page 3

Crean speculates that a book of ethics and epidemiology essays called *It's Not That Simple*, which the deVeber Institute distributed to all MPs during the assisted suicide debate, may have landed them on a Liberal blacklist.

"A party platform is being put forward for the disbursement of public funds," said Crean. "The brush is too broad. The brush that is painting us out of the picture, that brush that is painting any Canadian in any organization that does not agree. . . . The government is really playing politics with voluntary organizations across the country; silencing legitimate conscience objections."

Michel MacDonald, executive director of the Catholic Organization for Life and Family, said the problem is that "other pro-life groups can be painted with the same brush."

Campaign Life Coalition's youth arm stopped using graphic abortion imagery in 2015, but the organization doesn't condemn randomly stuffing mailboxes with abortion photos.

"I think they're a necessary evil, if you will," Gunnarson said. "A necessary part because they're showing the evil of abortion."



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7 p.m. Friday, April 27 to 1 p.m. Sunday, April 29
Live-in: \$250; Commute: \$190

Oblate programs carry values beyond the monastery

Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister delivered a keynote address at the Fourth International Oblate Congress, which took place Nov. 4 - 10 in Rome. The following is Chittister's address, "Let the call be heard." It was published on National Catholic Reporter (<https://www.ncronline.org>) Jan. 9, 2018, and is reprinted with permission. This is the last of three parts.

By Joan Chittister

Finally, Oblate programs seen as both consumers of the tradition and as part of its present carriers, as well, enable both its body of oblates and the religious community itself to strengthen the gifts of the other and to learn from the gifts of the other at the same time.

As Abba Arsenius and the old

for their labour, monastics educated the poor to prepare them to make the leap from serfdom to self-direction.

It is a cry to us to participate in the renewal of our own societies still caught in the materialism that dries out the soul and to engage ourselves, as well, in modelling other, deeper, longer lasting values.

When religion failed itself and spawned national divisions instead of peace, Benedictines struggled to create rule for war and sought to bring spiritual discernment to the intricacy of human relationships.

That model is a cry to us to see the development of Benedictine values as our social responsibility — not an excuse to withdraw from society in the name of false and fruitless piety in the face of the Jesus who says clearly: "By their fruits you will know them."

When family industries broke down, and family farms disappeared, when the new industrialization herded men into factories giving men money but women nothing, women monastics opened schools for girls and boys alike so that the seeds of a world without sexism would someday be not only possible but imperative. They began to provide women, too, with the education, and the child care, and the health care and the status their lives would depend on in coming generations.

It is a call to us, too, to gather up the forgotten again, to speak for the muted again, to paint across the sky again with our own lives the vision of a brighter, more just and equal world once more.

It is the depth of those spiritual traditions, the courage of those spiritual histories, the commitment of those monastics who brought us to this day, that monastic communities hold in trust for those who seek to find.

How can we fail, then, if we are truly forming strong Oblate programs, if we are truly seeking to be part of the spiritual tradition we treasure, to form justice-seeking people, strong and independent women and men, holy and spiritual laity for our own time?

Otherwise, how can we hide in our spiritual jacuzzis, our pious spas and say that we carry the charisms of those before us?

Oblate programs are not simply there for monastics to strengthen an Oblate's special gifts but for the monastery to learn from the wisdom and knowledge that single life and married life of our oblates are offering us, as well.

And Oblates for their part must learn the pervasive power of age-old spiritual traditions and truisms for the quality of life today.

Monastics, who are accustomed to the security of group projects, must learn the breathtaking impact of the kind of independent and individual actions that lay associates, in their isolated lives, risk every day, take for granted every day, brave without end every day.

We must look to one another for the wisdom of experience each of us brings to the table from a different part of life, another facet of living, a completely distinct perspective on being Christian, on being whole.

There are challenges, of course; it is an adjustment period for us all. In the first place, monastics and religious at large are just learning to learn from the laity. Religious are coming to a sense of a wisdom beyond the conventional.

We are discovering that with the open door that characterized the foundresses of our mission monasteries goes their own sense of perfect privacy and antiseptic control of circumstances and physical environments and regular schedules and sanctifying seclusion.

We are learning that life itself is not neat and that neat can be a trap that swallows us into the middle of ourselves where nothing grows but narcissism.

Religious are finding that what the lay seeker, and most often lay women lack most, is space. They need space for the quiet that a clinging child does not give for one moment a day. They need space to talk about their own dreams and hopes and questions.

And they need someone to talk to. They need connectedness — a sense of being part of something larger than themselves, something that enables them to know that on the wide stage of the planet, they too count on the issues that make the Gospel real and the beatitudes true and the resurrection possible for everyone.

They are finding out that lay men need a sanctuary where being macho and tough, where inflicting pain and taking pain are not the measure of a man. They are coming to realize that lay men need a place where the spiritual life is nurtured in them, not derided or considered weak.

They are beginning to understand that there are lay men out there who want to learn from the spiritual wisdom of women for whom force and power, money and profit are not the goals of life.

They are coming to understand that both women and men need to be invited, to be companioned into the soup kitchens and peace vigils and social justice groups that confront the state on behalf of the poor and cry out to the church on behalf of women and contradict the powers that chain the oppressed, and so renew the world with the message of the Christ.

They need monasteries that will lead them to take a monastic

heart into a world in chaos.

They need, most of all, an opportunity to make a faith-journey that is regular and deep and tried and true — and they need someone to walk the journey with them. To teach them the way, to point out the path, to monitor the going, to applaud the efforts, and to care about both them and the tradition enough to walk the way with them.

Oblate programs are not meant to be this decade's substitute for ladies aid societies or monastery guilds or alumnae programs or community auxiliaries.

Oblate programs need to be the spiritual ripple, the life companion, and the support of the monasteries to which they belong — a call to community that is so rare in a world of isolates.

They need to extend the outreach, the depth, and the breadth of monasteries that built the last era and, now smaller, must begin to build again.

They are the hope that in this century, too, the life and values and spirituality of the Benedictine vision — now centuries tried and true — can be born in us again.

And most of all, if our Oblate programs are to be authentic, let there be Oblates who will carry these values beyond the monastery to corporate offices and city streets — even, if necessary, into monasteries themselves that have become too quiet, too comfortable with the world as it is, rather than committed to shaping a world as it must become.

In this most violent of centuries, the blood of our children runs in our streets because we have taught them violence well.

If our Oblate programs are to be authentic, let there be peacemaking Oblates, with the peacemaking charism of a Benedict of Nursia who put down weapons in order to do battle for Christ the King.

In this most sexist of worlds, women to this day are raped, beaten, bought and sold around the world, left to face widowhood without adequate resources, invisible in all the major decision-making arenas of both church and state, deprived of both equal pay and meaningful promotions.

If our Oblate programs are to be authentic, let there be associates with the spirituality of a Benedicte Riepp and Hildegard of Bingen who call the men of the world to conscience and accountability in both church and state.

Oblate programs are not meant to be pious additions to a string of private devotions. Benedictinism is a journey into the depths and demands of the contemplative life, into a prayer life that is real not simply ritualistic.

Benedictines stand on a mountain top of prayer immersed in the cries of the psalmist, challenged daily by the prophets, touched to the core by the demands of the Gospel and called by Jesus — liberator, redeemer, healer, and lover — to "Come follow me!"

And so Benedictine prayer leaves us with the questions: As a Benedictine, who are you struggling to liberate from the chains of rejection, poverty and greed? What have you redeemed in a world full of its own destruction? Who do you love? Only the self

or also the other and how would we know it if we ever saw it?

Now is our time to carry these vibrant and world-changing charisms back into a world that needs them so badly now.

For many, the pious image of Cluny and its 24-hour prayer schedule remains. But the Cluny who refused starving peasants the harvest in their barns is an aberration of a great tradition of care and service, education and healing, justice and peace. And so the peasants of the day tore it down.

Cluny is at best a warning of what happens when a religious order goes sour.

Instead we are at a common table, you and I, called the church. We are called to share a common feast, with the world around us. We bear a common responsibility to bring the bread of life to every dying thing we see. We owe to the world now the cup of blood that is our own.

We are companions on the way and keepers of a great spiritual tradition, born in times of stress and discord, inheritors of merciless war and death, healers of spiritual poverty and physical pain, rampant oppression and great human need.

This is not a time to mistake the first great cenobitic tradition of history for some kind of spiritual spa, where we can burrow in and ignore the call of Jesus to hear the call of the poor.

Now is our time to carry these vibrant and world-changing charisms back into a world that needs them so badly now.

Let us then with Ruth and Naomi, Elisha and Elija, Judith and her maidservant, Timothy and Paul, as Oblates and monastics companion one another again to prophetic truth, to gospel voice, to brave witness, to contemplative courage to risk the new life everywhere.

Let us, in other words, be true to the tradition we hold in common.

Once upon a time a disciple asked the holy one, "Holy one, what is the difference between knowledge and enlightenment?" And the holy one said, "When you have knowledge, you use a torch to illuminate the way. When you are enlightened, you become the torch to lead the way."

Where do you come from? You come from the heart of the Spirit.

Who are you? You are monastic gifts given by God for today.

What must you do? You must embody and extend the charisms or gifts of the Spirit long embedded in this great monastic tradition in new and even richer ways.

So, why do you exist? For one reason, and one reason only: to become, like the great monastics before you, the blazing, flaming, searing light to others that you are really meant to be.

Finally, the truth is that the call to wisdom, to witness, and to oneness in community is common to us both: Oblate and monastic alike, and the call must be heard. Together you and I must make it happen.

May you, I, our monasteries and our Oblate programs everywhere companion one another, listen to one another's wisdom and so become even a stronger part of the tradition — both of us — than we can ever be alone.



CNS/Paul Haring

GIFTS — Oblate programs are not simply there for monastics to strengthen an Oblate's special gifts but for the monastery to learn from the wisdom and knowledge that single life and married life of our oblates are offering us, as well, says Joan Chittister, OSB.

peasant knew, it is the wisdom we seek together that will be most likely true.

Oblates bring to the monastery the gift of immersion in another whole dimension of life with all its insights, all its understandings, all its muddy, complex complications, and its cry for our awareness our understanding, our involvement, and our voice.

Monastics bring to Oblates the lived experience and real witness of a long-standing spiritual tradition that has withstood the test of time over centuries of challenge, stabilized whole layers of people in the midst of grave dangers and given direction to whole bodies of seekers at times of great darkness.

In the fifth century, when the Roman Empire broke down and Europe lay in ruin, Benedictinism was there to give both spiritual meaning and social organization to a people left without either political centre or spiritual guidance.

It is a cry to us to continue to bring Benedictine values to the centre of every system.

When the emerging mercantile society began to consume the lives of the poor for the sake of a new economic system that robbed the poor of land and paid nothing

Chittister is a Benedictine sister of Erie, Pennsylvania.

European Catholics grapple with the Lord’s Prayer

By Tom Heneghan

PARIS (RNS) — The Lord’s Prayer has a reassuring ring for Roman Catholics who recite it in English. The Shakespearean style of its opening lines — “Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name . . .” — suggests something ancient and unchanging.

In other languages, however, translations of the prayer Jesus taught to his disciples are now the subject of lively debate. The French recently updated theirs, and the Italians will opt for their own new version later this year, while the Germans have just said a firm “*nein*” to any change.

Pope Francis, who in his native Spanish prays a version that is slightly different again, encouraged proponents of a new translation in December when he praised the changes made in French.

But another reform the Argentine pontiff has championed — giving local church hierarchies a greater say in how the original Latin texts of prayers are translated — gave the German bishops the leeway to refuse to follow the suggestion he made.

Welcome to the confusing world of Catholic translations, where linguistics, theology, ecumenism and power politics clash despite the church’s claim to universalism. (The term “catholic” comes from the Greek word for universal.)

The problem arises from the fact that Jesus would have recited his prayer in Aramaic or Hebrew, but it was reported in the Gospels in Greek and later translated into the Roman church’s official language, Latin.

A key point of discord: The Latin text of the prayer’s sixth petition to God is “*ne nos inducas in tentationem*” (“lead us not into temptation”), while the Greek original, which ends with the word “*peirasmos*,” can also be translated as a “trial” or “test of faith.”

Some non-Catholic churches have been more flexible with that line and focused on the Greek version. An ecumenical translation by liturgists from around the English-speaking world translated it as “save us from the time of trial.”

But Catholic congregations, which recite the prayer at mass, want to avoid straying too far from the Latin. Theologians disagree on how to transfer that phrase from a dead language into living modern tongues.

The current confusion began when Catholic bishops in France switched to a new translation on Dec. 3, changing the sixth petition from “Do not submit us to temptation” — the wording they have used since the 1960s — to “Let us not enter into temptation.”

They argued that God would not tempt his faithful into sin, so a new translation was needed to avoid the impression that he would willingly do the devil’s work.

French-speaking Catholics in Belgium and Benin had already introduced the change in June 2017, but seeing it happen in



CNS/Gregory A. Shemitz

LOST IN TRANSLATION — Worshippers recite the Lord’s Prayer during mass. The Italian and English translations of the “Our Father” can give believers the wrong impression that God can and does lead people into temptation, Pope Francis said.

much larger France attracted attention in the wider Catholic world.

In an interview with the Italian Catholic television station TV2000 a few days later, Pope Francis approved the French move and agreed the older version was faulty.

“(God) is not the one who pushes me into temptation,” he said. “A father does not do that. . . . The one who leads into temptation is Satan.”

Francis actually misquoted the new French translation, explaining in Italian that it said “do not let us fall into temptation.” That is the way this line is translated in Spanish and Portuguese.

The Catholic Church in Italy proposed almost a decade ago to replace “do not lead us into temptation” with the phrase “do not abandon us to temptation,” but only announced recently that its bishops would meet in November to approve its use at mass.

Italian theologians began working on the change as early as 1988 and its bishops approved it in 2002, Cardinal Giuseppe Betori of Florence told the Italian daily *Avvenire* in December.

But a Vatican directive in 2001 titled *Liturgiam Authenticam* stated that all translations of prayers must be as close as possible to the original Latin, which forced local churches to review all the work they had recently done and get approval from Rome for the slightest change.

Denounced by critics as a bid by conservatives in the Vatican to exert control over national churches around the world, this led to years of haggling between Rome and commissions of bishops from the major language groups.

Vatican authorities insisted on translations that critics in several language groups, especially English, thought sounded stilted to native speakers and were hard to recite out loud.

Pope Francis, who frequently criticizes Vatican centralization, acted to end this tension in September by issuing an edict saying that national bishops’ conferences would from now on decide how

to render prayers from Latin into their own languages.

Cardinal Robert Sarah, the conservative head of the Vatican department that oversees translations, claimed in October that his office still had the power to impose its versions on recalcitrant bishops. A week later, the pope took the unusual step of publicly telling Sarah he was wrong.

One effect of this devolution of responsibility became clear last week when the German bishops conference, an influential subgroup within the world Catholic hierarchy, announced it did not

agree with the objections that others — including the pope — had to the traditional translation of the Our Father.

“The petition ‘lead us not into temptation’ . . . does not express the suspicion that God could want people to fail, but the belief in his justice and mercy,” it said in a five-page statement explaining why it would not change its translation.

The statement mentioned ecumenical reasons for sticking with the old version. Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), had said a week before

the face of the earth” (Gen 11:9). Could it be, I wondered, that God wanted to test how human beings might find better ways to communicate at a deeper and more substantial level, by removing the easy tools of speech?

Certainly, for my parents, language was eventually no boundary at all. Through love, they learned to hear each other for decades until their death. Since then I have comforted myself with the thought that the Word is about the importance of communication and translation. And I remind myself that for the Bible itself — however translated, in whatever language or form — the essence of the work is deeper and more mysterious than we can ever fully comprehend. And so understanding must always be a journey.

I once asked Mom if the mystique of my father disappeared as she learned his language. “No,” she answered shyly, “because his accent always reminds me of that other world.” Perhaps, in the end, that’s what we should always listen for whenever the Bible is read: the echo of a greater mystery — call it the accent of God — which is always compelling and just out of reach. For that reason faith must always be actively pursued rather than passively received. That, surely, should be clear in any language.

Compelling mystery: the accent of God



Figure of Speech

Dr. Gerry Turcotte

. . . the Lord confused the language of all the earth . . . — Genesis 11:9

As someone who grew up between languages, I have always been fascinated by the idea of translation. With a father who didn’t speak English and a mother who didn’t speak French, I was a verbal bridge between them for a very long time. Admittedly, in the course of their marriage they learned to mangle each other’s language, yet it remained true that I largely only spoke French with my dad, and English with my mom, and Franglais when they were both together. “Can you pass *le sel*?” I’d say, or “*la poutine* is great!” Unilingual friends often felt at sea at my place. “It was like being on the border of two countries,” a classmate once grumbled, “and not belonging in either.”

Turcotte is president of St. Mary’s University in Calgary.

Heneghan is a Paris-based correspondent for Religion News Service.

Overlooked countries

Every day the news media report on disasters around the world, but humanitarian crises are soon forgotten as the media move on to the next major story. The public seems unable to sustain prolonged interest in bad-news stories.

CARE International recently released a report titled “Suffering In Silence: The 10 most under-reported humanitarian crises of 2017.” Seven of the top 10 countries were in Africa, where internal turmoil, severe weather disasters, and malnutrition have all contributed to desperate crises.

North Korea’s starving population topped the list for receiving the least media attention globally. Attention is limited mainly to Pyongyang’s weapons program — and now North Korea’s participation in the Olympics.

“People (in North Korea) urgently require food . . . medical and health services, water and sanitation facilities,” CARE reports.

About 18 million people — 70 per cent of the population — are food-insecure and rely on government food aid, according to UN estimates. CARE International said two in five North Koreans are undernourished: “The impacts of the country’s political regime, together with global warming and frequent natural hazards, such as floods, rising temperatures or prolonged droughts, exacerbate the dire humanitarian situation.”

Next on the list is Eritrea. This eastern African nation is cut off from the outside world, but a severe drought, lack of food, and water shortages affect more than 700,000 inhabitants. In addition, a 2015 UN human rights inquiry said the Eritrean government may have committed crimes against humanity, describing extrajudicial killings, widespread torture, sexual slavery, and enforced labour.

“Half of all children in Eritrea are stunted and cannot achieve their full mental and physical potential,” CARE International reported, “simply because they do not have enough food to develop and grow.” Eritreans are among the largest group of migrants arriving on Europe’s doorstep.

Burundi has a history of political unrest, which is fuelling its humanitarian crisis. CARE International cited reports indicating that more than 2.6 million people — 27 per cent of the population — did not know how to feed their families: “With political unrest and significant human rights concerns persisting, the crisis in Burundi enters its fourth year.”

In Vietnam the most powerful storm in a decade, Typhoon Doksuri, ravaged the country’s long, exposed coastline in September, triggering widespread power outages and inflicting damage on 1.5 million people. The UN reported more than 11,000 hectares of rice and other crops were ruined following the storm. An

estimated 14 people were killed, 112 injured, and hundreds of thousands of homes were flooded.

Conflict in Mali, particularly in the northern and central areas of the country, have left more than 900,000 people without clean drinking water or sanitation facilities, according to CARE. This has resulted in outbreaks of diseases that pose major risks to the population.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, more than 1.7 million people — 5,500 per day — fled their homes in 2017 as a result of violence that has been ongoing for two decades. This has left two million children acutely malnourished and four million displaced.

Starvation, extreme weather conditions, poverty, and war have all contributed to the dire humanitarian crisis in Sudan. Of the five million Sudanese living in poverty, 88 per cent are women and children.

Violence and political turmoil in Burundi since the 2015 election have seen hundreds of thousands forced into exile. Human rights groups fear for the future of the country, with escalating violence resulting in nearly 2.6 million people — 27 per cent of the population — uncertain how to feed their families.

With 24-hour newscasts on multiple platforms seven days a week, people can easily become saturated, and many global crises are missed. Media outlets discontinue coverage, or it is forbidden by national governments. CARE International seeks to bring these stories to our attention. — PWN

Catholics need critical skills to help create a true culture of life

Soul Mending

Yvonne A. Zarowny



“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” — Matthew 19:24

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” — Matthew 6:10

Have you thought about where you get your understanding of our actual Official Church Teachings (OCT) or sacred Scripture? Or the sources for your understanding of the life-threatening social

issues confronting us? These include the root causes of the unprecedented number of internal and international refugees, wars, structural deficits that deny the poor and marginalized life with dignity, the increasing concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few, and our development mode’s wanton destruction of Earth — one symptom of which is the climate chaos we are experiencing.

A critical educator, writer and engaged citizen living in Qualicum Beach, B.C., Zarowny is also on the leadership team for her parish’s Justice and Life Ministry.

Are you aware of the numerous viable alternatives we could be putting into place that would significantly lessen their generation — including the demand for abortions and euthanasia?

“Social” in this sense refers to anything co-created by humans or that flow from human decisions — whether or not they are made consciously or in a critically informed manner.

Any arrangement or issue co-created by humans can be changed by humans.

Since St. John XXIII’s 1963 *Pacem in Terris*, Catholic Social Teachings (CST) assume this and

provide direction for us to be prayerfully, reflectively engaged.

St. John Paul II states in his 1991 *Centesimus Annus* (61): “After The Second World War, she (the church) put the dignity of the person at the centre — insisting that material goods were meant for all.”

In this encyclical, as with his 1987 *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, his criticisms of capitalism and the American form of “free enterprise” or “market economies” are scathing compared to his criticism of communism and socialism.

It is in this encyclical St. John Paul introduces the term “struc-

tural/social sin” and “the ecological question” into our highest level of official teachings.

Both he and Pope Emeritus Benedict in his 2009 *Caritas in Veritate* make it clear it doesn’t matter if it is governments, corporations or “markets” shaping our development modes, including our economies. If dignity for all people impacted and respect for all aspects of God’s Creation doesn’t flow, they constitute structural or social sins.

“Good” Catholic formation/education needs to provide us

— POLITICS, page 15

Stop flushing resources down the drain

By Cheryl Croucher
Troy Media

Once you learn what Dr. Nicholas Ashbolt does for a living, you’ll never look at plumbing the same way again.

Ashbolt believes it’s time for a paradigm shift in the way we think about water, sewage and public health. From his perspective, wastewater has value and we should stop flushing money and resources down the drain. And he questions the wisdom of providing treated potable water for everything, including fighting fires.

Ashbolt is a world-renowned environmental microbiologist. Before coming to Alberta in late 2013, he worked as an academic and research scientist in Australia and Sweden, followed by seven years with the American Environmental Protection Agency. Today, he’s a professor in the

School of Public Health at the University of Alberta, where he holds the Alberta Innovates Translational Health Chair in Waterborne Disease. His multidisciplinary perspective intertwines new approaches to public health, water conservation and resource recovery.

Take the urine diversion toilet, for example. “Eighty per cent of the nitrogen that we consume in our diet ends up in the urine stream,” says Ashbolt. “Why dilute that one per cent of the urine stream with 99 per cent of what else is in the sewer? It’s not a very sensible approach.”

And what does a urine diversion toilet look like?

As Ashbolt explains, “If you look into the little bowl of a urine diversion toilet, it looks like a conventional pedestal, except at the front there’s a little bit of a weir and a second hole if you like so that the urine can go down a separate bit of plumbing to a storage tank where it can either go in a vacuum or pressure sewer, pumped out to a central location where it can then be taken out to agriculture and injected into the

ground as a high-grade fertilizer.”

The new concept here is to separate toilet water, what Ashbolt calls blackwater, from greywater, the water we flush down the sewer after bathing, washing clothes and so on. New systems can recover and recycle this spent water.

Waterborne pathogens constitute another aspect of Ashbolt’s investigations. His research suggests our current plumbing supports the growth of some pathogens that cause respiratory disease. Also, fecal germs can be propelled into the air like a giant sneeze whenever the toilet is flushed. People breathe in or pick up these germs by touching surfaces and then spread them around. Switching from our gravity system to vacuum toilets like those in planes, trains and boats could eliminate that problem.

“With a vacuum flush toilet, only half a litre or so of water, along with 60 litres of air, is needed to move that residual down the sewer,” Ashbolt explains. “That’s a much, much safer scenario because there are no leaks to the environment.”

A vacuum flush sewer system also facilitates the separation of greywater from blackwater and allows for the recovery of imbed-

— HEAT PUMPS, page 15



CNS/Kenny Katombe, Reuters

CONGO PROTESTS ELECTIONS — Protesters and clergy march during a Jan. 21 protest organized by Catholic activists in Kinshasa, Congo. Parishioners and clergy planned the march to demand that Congolese President Joseph Kabila hold fresh elections in line with a church-brokered accord.

Croucher is a veteran broadcast and online journalist. www.troymedia.com

Issues with converting ‘dirty’ feedstock into fuel

The Editor: The article “Bio-conversion technology is viable” (*PM*, Jan. 24) by Cheryl Croucher reminded me of a series of articles that I read in *Discover* magazine more than 10 years ago.

Between 2003 and 2008, *Discover* published four articles examining a new process for transforming agricultural, industrial, and municipal waste into usable fuel, other useful products, and sterile, easily disposed waste.

Changing World Technologies, beginning in 1999, developed and commercialized a high temperature “thermal depolymerization” process that could deal with plastic bottles, used car tires, slaughterhouse offal, municipal liquid waste, and refinery residues that separated out the water and mineral content and produced a light fuel oil and natural gas.

Links to these *Discover* articles can be found at the end of the company's Wikipedia entry: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Changing_World_Technologies

The 2008 *Discover* article detailed the problems Changing World Technologies unfortunately had in scaling up the process to be commercially successful, in terms of market price and desirability of the final products. The use of turkey offal feedstock in the first large scale plant led to it being closed due to complaints about odour, as stated in the Changing World Technologies’ website: Changing World Technologies | The Solution for Energy Independence

The company opened a new plant using different feedstock

(used fryer oil) in 2011. Both were sold in 2013 to a Calgary-based company, Ridgeline Energy Services. The plant now appears to be operating successfully.

It should be noted that demand for such “renewable fuels” stems largely from government-mandated reductions in new carbon production.

I would be surprised if the University of Alberta spinoff company, Forge Hydrocarbons Corp., which your article reported on, was not aware of the U.S. history with converting “dirty” feedstock into fuel, and I would be interested to know if the process they use is similar to that developed by Changing World Technologies, and more economical. — **Roger Schmitz, Saskatoon**

Ahmad urges ‘intolerance of intolerance’

Continued from page 1

possibility of changing religions is not foreseen.”

Sandri also insisted that full religious freedom includes the right to conscientiously object to abortion and other “biomedical practices that go against one’s deepest convictions.”

At the same time, the cardinal said, Catholics must remember how many centuries it took the church to recognize religious freedom as a basic human right for all people of every faith or no faith.

Such recognition came only in 1965 with the Second Vatican Council’s declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, the cardinal said, so instead of condemning others who struggle to recognize the rights of others to believe differently, the Catholic Church must patiently encourage them.

Ahmad urged “intolerance of intolerance,” but also pointed to education as the key in promoting respect and inter-religious harmony.

A Muslim educated in Anglican schools, Ahmad now has two children in Catholic schools, because of the way those schools teach “the ethos of faith as a force for good,” he said.

“Children learning from other faiths doesn’t dilute their faith; it doesn’t make me or my children less Muslim,” he insisted. “It makes us more rounded, it makes us more passionate and it develops a deep-rooted understanding that faith is a route that we follow.”

“Intolerance is something that is learned,” he said. “We must educate children to understand other religions in the hope that the next generation will be wiser than those that have come before them.”

But for governments, he insisted, a lack of religious freedom must not be tolerated whether it is Myanmar’s treatment of the Mus-

lim Rohingyas, Iran’s treatment of Baha’is, China’s treatment of all believers, Saudi Arabia’s treatment of all but Muslims or Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, which can be manipulated to punish anyone who is not Muslim.

“It would be wrong to suggest that it always has been easy to integrate religious minorities into a society” where there always has

been a dominant religious tradition, he said. “When we promote religious tolerance in other countries, we know from experience how challenging this really is.”

“When a temple is built on your street or a halal butcher shop opens in the market,” he said, “it forces you to accept that your religion is one of many and not the only one.”

Politics is about the shaping of nations

Continued from page 14

with the critical skills and information so we can be part of an effective political force capable of transforming our grotesque culture of death into a variety of cultures of life.

Downey’s Dec. 13 article in the *Prairie Messenger* touches on this with respect to Pope Francis and Canadian Catholic higher education. It is to be neither ideological nor partisan.

It is definitely political, moral and cultural — just as our investment and purchase choices are.

“Political,” a grossly incorrectly used word, is from the Greek “polis” which means “city.”

In his 2012 book *Speaking Christian*, American Episcopal theologian Marcus J. Borg states: “Politics concerns the shape of how we live together in large populations. Politics is about the shape and shaping of societies, nations, and the world itself. What should the humanly created world look like?” (p. 49).

As outlined above, CST, a constitutive or essential part of our official teaching, tells us.

I was bewildered when they were referenced in the 2016 American presidential campaigns. I was horrified when at the October 2017 Catholic University of American’s (CUA) Tim and Steph Busch School of Business and


Economics “Good Profit and Catholic Social Teachings” conference, Busch stated Charles Koch “embodied the teachings of St. John Paul II’s (1981) *Laborum Exercens*.”

If you are not familiar with the stealth and multi-faceted political network of which the “Kansas” Koch brothers are a vital part, read Jane Mayer’s 2016 *Dark Money*. If you care about all those who have suffered and died for democracy, truth, life with dignity from conception to natural death or getting a timely hip replacement, read Nancy MacLean’s 2017 book, *Democracy in Chains*.

MacLean builds on Mayer’s work, providing missing links to Mr. Trump and the integrated, comprehensive, covert strategy of “Koch et al.”

She outlines James Buchanan’s “public choice” theory which underpins the Virginia School of Political Economics. It frames governments as “the” problem and public sector workers, including scientists, as only being about narrow self-interest, not the common good.

In his Jan. 22, 2015, article in *The Wall Street Journal*, “Teaching Capitalism to Catholics,” Busch states CUA’s president and business school dean’s response to letters questioning the ideological bent of its school as: “returning the grants would ‘stifle debate by pre-



Cat in the Window

Perched in the window
while blust'ry blizzard rages . . .
Cat dreams of Springtime!

By Jeanette Martino Land

Heat pumps can recover energy from wastewater

Continued from page 14

ded energy in residual waste. “If we connect kitchens to the black-water system, for example, it’s a far more efficient way of recovering the imbedded energy in food and fecal residual, which can supply more than the total amount of energy used to treat all drinking and waste water services in a community,” says Ashbolt.

Using heat pumps, we can recover thermal energy from the greywater, says Ashbolt. We can also reclaim methane from the organics, as well as precipitate ammonium and phosphorus that can be returned to the earth as fertilizer. According to the professor, countries like Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands are experimenting with vacuum flush black-water community systems.

Thanks to funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, Ashbolt has constructed a premise plumbing lab at the University of Alberta. Instead of using more chlorine to treat water, he suggests it may be possible to harness the microbiomes in pipes to fight pathogens. “In the future, we may have an upstream plastic pipe filter — we call it a selector — that selects for the right probiotic microorganisms, to see whether we can deliberately colonize building pipes with preferential organisms that will suppress the growth of these opportunistic pathogens.”

The idea is not unlike eating yogurt with probiotics to restore balance to your intestinal tract, thus preventing ill health.

There remains, however, a significant challenge to adopting these new technologies: municipal bylaws stifle innovation.

But Ashbolt is already working with provincial authorities to reform the regulatory framework for water services and assess with local councils its implementation.

tending that genuinely controversial positions are official church teaching.’”

Except, as affirmed by St. John Paul II, they are not just part they are the centre of our official teaching and have been for seven decades!

My understanding of Matthew 19:24 deepened. Be prepared to enter into the Passion of Jesus.

As I unpacked the involvement of a small group of multimillionaire Catholics in American “Catholic” education — both formal and informal — I felt as if my heart was being squeezed by an icy skeletal hand and my essential organs dissolved in toxic sludge.

They are involved in all parts of the EWTN global media conglomerate, the Acton and NAPA Institutes, and much more.

I prayed: “Let this cup pass from me!”

I learned about Thomas Monaghan, his formation of *Legatus*, a by-invitation-only organization of “top tier” — i.e. multimillionaire — Catholics and its influence on Busch.

This small group of the super-rich are inhibiting our capacity to know our official teaching and our freedom to contribute to co-creating cultures where all have life with dignity for the full continuum.

Aren’t you glad Easter is coming!

U.S. Congress ‘targeting children and families’

By Rhina Guidos

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Hours before President Donald Trump’s first State of the Union address Jan. 30, immigrant supporters said they were concerned with his administration’s “systematic targeting of vulnerable populations.”

In particular, they were bothered by the portrayal of migrant children, youth and families as gang members and criminals.

The president and Congress are haggling over a plan about how to fix some of the country’s most urgent immigration woes in which immigrants, legal and otherwise, have been caught in the middle of verbal fire.

The most urgent includes finding a solution for some 800,000 young adults brought into the country illegally as minors by their parents and who now face a March 5 deadline for the end of an Obama-era protection that granted them some legal relief to remain in the country.

In September, Trump announced the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, and charged Congress with passing a bill to save the program.

Wendy Young, president of Kids in Need of Defence, or

KIND, moderated a Jan. 30 panel that included representatives of faith communities who say the administration and “anti-immigrant members of Congress are relentlessly targeting children and families in a cynical, cruel strategy that plays politics with the lives of the most vulnerable.”

The rhetoric being used to talk about the immigration deal is harmful to communities, they say, but that it also is dangerous to form policy based on what they consider scare tactics.

Trump and Republican members of Congress have asked for curtailing family reunification visas, which they refer to as “chain migration,” an end to lottery visas, also known as diversity visas, and want up to \$25 billion for a border wall with Mexico in exchange for providing a path to citizenship for 1.8 million young adults who were brought illegally into the country as children.

In his address, Trump spoke of gang members who had entered the country using a “deadly loophole” and then went on to kill two teenage girls. The “loophole” must be closed, he said.

Along with money for the border wall, the administration keeps bringing up the vague term “loophole,” an apparent reference to curtailing policies for those seek-

ing asylum and which would include turning away unaccompanied minors who come to the U.S. fleeing violence.

The proposal is not just about a border wall and technology, said Kevin Appleby, senior director of international migration policy at the Centre for Migration Studies, but it’s about changing long-standing U.S. policies that allow people in dire circumstances to come in.

The plan amounts to a “calculated attempt to undermine protections for unaccompanied minors, families and asylum seekers,” said Young, adding that those protections have long been carefully incorporated into U.S. law and policy over the years.

“The protection of people who arrive at our border seeking safe haven from war, human rights abuses and human trafficking has long been a cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy,” she said. “These policies are not loopholes and they are not risks to U.S. border security, as some would characterize them. Instead, they are programs that represent the best humanitarian and democratic traditions of our country.”

But in the framework of negotiations over immigration policy, Young said, “we are concerned that this pillar of our immigration

system may be sacrificed.”

Panelist Ashley Feasley, policy director for Migration and Refugee Services at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, said the Catholic Church long has made clear its support for those who seek refuge from dire situations in their home countries, particularly children.

“We need to see each child as a gift to be welcomed, cherished and protected,” she said.

That’s why many took issue with the way the president portrayed immigrants, painting them as criminals to be feared.

Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, characterized Trump’s remarks as a “false narrative.”



CNS/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier

NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK IN U.S. — A couple processes out of Our Mother of Sorrows Church in Greece, N.Y., at the end of their wedding ceremony. Feb. 7 - 14 marks the annual celebration of National Marriage Week in the U.S.

Vatican, China nearing agreement on bishops

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Multiple news reports indicate the Vatican has made substantial progress in reaching an agreement with China’s communist government on the naming of bishops for several dioceses.

The news agency Reuters and *The Wall Street Journal* both reported Feb. 1 that the deal would involve two bishops recognized by the Holy See stepping aside to make way for two bishops chosen by the government-controlled Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association; the new bishops would have to recognize the authority of the pope and ask forgiveness for having accepted ordination without papal approval.

Both articles relied on unnamed sources at the Vatican. Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, would not comment when contacted by Catholic News Service Feb. 2.

However, the reports coincide with claims made by Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kun, retired archbishop of Hong Kong, who announced in late January that he had met personally with Pope Francis to express his opposition to the plan and to deliver into the pope’s hands a letter from one of the bishops involved.

Ucanews.com reported Feb. 1 that 88-year-old Bishop Peter Zhuang Jianjian of Shantou confirmed in a telephone conversation that he had met with Vatican officials in Beijing in December.

Earlier, ucanews.com had reported that Zhuang, who is recognized by the Vatican, was asked to retire to make way for a bishop

who was excommunicated by the Vatican after being appointed by the patriotic association and illicitly ordained. Reuters reported that under the agreement, the government would recognize Zhuang as the “emeritus” bishop and his successor would reconcile with the Holy See.

Also under the agreement, according to Reuters, Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin, 59, of Minding, another Vatican-recognized bishop, would become the auxiliary bishop of the diocese and serve under the government-approved bishop of the diocese, Bishop Zhan Silu, 57.

According to Reuters’ source, both Vatican-backed prelates recognized they would be making sacrifices for the greater good of the church. In addition, the source said, there was “a gentleman’s agreement” on seven government-backed bishops who would be made legitimate after seeking a papal pardon but that it still had to be formalized.

The overall agreement foresees the patriotic association choosing bishops, but submitting the names to the Vatican for final approval.

“It is not a great agreement, but we don’t know what the situation will be like in 10 or 20 years. It could even be worse,” the source told Reuters.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, noted in an interview Jan. 31 that “communion between the bishop of Rome and all Catholic bishops touches the heart of the church’s unity: it is not a private matter between the pope and the Chinese bishops or between the Apostolic See and civil authorities.”

Religious life always countercultural

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Lift up your eyes from your smartphones and see your brothers and sisters, those who share your journey of faith and those who are longing for the Word of life, Pope Francis told consecrated men and women.

“Today’s frantic pace leads us to close many doors to encounter, often for fear of others,” the pope said in his homily for the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and the World Day for Consecrated Life. “Only shopping malls and Internet connections are always open.”

Yet believers’ hearts must be open as well, because every believer receives the faith from

someone and is called to share it with others, the pope said at the mass Feb. 2 in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The feast day commemorates the 40th day after Jesus’ birth when, in accordance with ancient Jewish practice, Mary and Joseph took him to the temple and presented him to the Lord. The feast’s Gospel reading from St. Luke recounts how the aged Simeon and Anna, who were praying in the temple, recognized Jesus as the Messiah.

The mass, attended by thousands of women and men belonging to religious orders, began with the traditional blessing of candles and a prayer that God would guide people toward his son, “the light that has no end.”

In his homily, Pope Francis focused on a series of encounters: between people and Jesus; between the young Mary and Joseph and the elderly Simeon and Anna; and between individuals and members of their religious communities or their neighbourhoods.

“In the Christian East,” the pope explained, “this feast is called the ‘feast of Encounter’: It is the encounter between God, who became a child to bring newness to our world, and an expectant humanity.”

The pope, himself a Jesuit, told the religious that their own journeys were “born of an encounter and a call” which, while highly personal, took place in the context of a family, a parish or a community.

Members of religious orders must realize that they need each other — young and old — to renew and strengthen their knowledge of the Lord, he said. They must never “toss aside” the elderly members because “if the young are called to open new doors, the elderly have the keys.”

One’s brothers or sisters in the community are a gift to be cherished, he said before adding a plea: “May we never look at the screen of our cellphone more than the eyes of our brothers or sisters, or focus more on our software than on the Lord.”

Pope Francis said strengthening the intergenerational bonds in a religious community also is an antidote to “the barren rhetoric of ‘the good old days’ ” and the only way “to silence those who believe that ‘everything is going wrong here.’ ”

Religious life, with its vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, always has been countercultural, he said.



CNS/Kim Hong-Ji, Reuters

OLYMPICS TORCHBEARER IN SOUTH KOREA — Wearing traditional clothing, a man carries the Olympic torch Jan. 13 in Seoul, South Korea. Bishop Peter Lee Ki-heon, president of the Korean bishops’ Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People, wants the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics to be a steppingstone for achieving peace in the region.

Gratitude is a flower that blooms in noble souls.

— Pope Francis