

## Celebrating a new bishop

This week's *Prairie Messenger* congratulates the newly appointed bishop of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, Rev. Jon Hansen, CSsR.



— pages 10-14

## Prayer vigil

People of many faiths and backgrounds came together to pray for a community struggling and divided after two recent trials in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Events surrounding the deaths of two indigenous young people and the subsequent acquittal of those on trial have caused pain, racial tension, protests, and brought calls for justice reforms.

— page 3

## The lonely earth

"The earth is lonely for us," says Rev. Greg Kennedy, SJ,



this year's Nash lecturer at Campion College. Caught up with modern technology that we use all the time but know virtually nothing about, we're

"not spending enough time in the woods."

— page 6

## Eparchial pilgrims

The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon's fourth annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City recently concluded. The itinerary included cultural and religious stops to help participants comprehend the miracle on Tepeyac in 1531.

— page 7

## Doing harm

"LifeSiteNews manages only to prove capable of a distorted, malevolent worldview that they peddle to a small, but noisy, fringe of Catholicism," writes Michael Sean Winters.

— page 15

# For women, the world still a hard place

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

Does the church belong to women? Can the church be led by women? From a young women's perspective, those questions have already been answered.

"I can honestly say, through my many years of attending church every Sunday, being a student of two Catholic schools, youth groups, etc., I have thoroughly enjoyed my time and felt very included — never once dismissed or treated less because of my gender," Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board student trustee Grace Santin told *The Catholic Register*.

Though she doesn't graduate from St. Joseph's Catholic High School until next year, Santin is already a leader in a big and important Catholic institution. She just naturally assumes that's the way it is, the way it should be and the way it always will be.

"I intend to continue in this path and teach my children the same ways I have learned," she wrote in an email.

While Santin's Catholic school experience may be a foretaste of the kingdom of God and its promise of justice for women, the world

is still a hard place as the 109th International Women's Day dawns on March 8. The #MeToo movement has demonstrated that even for rich and powerful women, dig-

nity, equality and basic decency are never automatic. The church has not been immune to the struggle, which has to be seen through the lens of faith.

Nearly 20 years ago, in 1999, the very conservative Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic of Toronto

— BARRIERS, page 5



CNS/Edgard Garrido, Reuters

**SHARING IN THE CHURCH'S VOICE** — Indigenous women in Mexico City are seen during an International Women's Day celebration in this 2016 photo. International Women's Day is a chance to reflect on how women have grown in influence in the church.

# Bishops celebrate Catholica 200 in Western Canada

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — The Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops held its annual conference in the neighbouring Archdioceses of St. Boniface and Winnipeg this year, as the gathering became one of many events in the celebrations for Catholica 200, undertaken by the Archdiocese of St. Boniface.

In 1818, Bishop Norbert Provencher arrived at the Red River Settlement to establish the Catholic Church in the Canadian West and

became the first bishop of the Diocese of the Northwest, founded in 1847 in St. Boniface.

Two hundred years later, 25 bishops serving Canada's west and northwest came together Feb. 27 to March 1 to mark the anniversary, share brotherhood, and to discuss issues of importance to the church and society.

The current AWCB president, Archbishop of Winnipeg Richard Gagnon, said that the deliberations covered a range of topics, including: safe environments for children

and vulnerable adults, relations with indigenous peoples and efforts at reconciliation following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the difficulties for people of faith arising out of physician-

assisted suicide and euthanasia, youth ministry initiatives to form leaders, social justice concerns relative to the poor and the role of

— GAGNON, page 7

# Catholics arrested as they ask Congress to help 'Dreamers'

By Rhina Guidos

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Dozens of Catholics, including men and women religious, were arrested near the U.S. Capitol Feb. 27 in the rotunda of a Senate building in Washington as they called on lawmakers to help young undocumented adults brought to the U.S. as minors obtain some sort of permanent legal status.

Some of them sang and prayed, and many of them — such as Dominican Sister Elise Garcia and Mercy Sister JoAnn Persch — said they had no option but to participate in the act of civil disobedience to speak out against the failure of Congress and the Trump administration to help the young adults.

"I have never been arrested in my life, but with the blessing of my community, I am joining with two dozen other Catholic sisters and Catholic allies to risk arrest today as an act of solidarity with

our nation's wonderful, beautiful Dreamers," said Garcia. "To our leaders in Congress and in the White House, I say 'arrest a nun, not a Dreamer.'"

She said she was there to support those like Daniel Neri, a Catholic from Indiana who was present at the event and would benefit from any legislation to help the 1.8 million estimated young adults in the country facing an uncertain future.

"What are we doing to the Body of Christ when are hurting families? When we are hurting people?" he asked.

He also said, he wanted people to know that "we are not criminals, we are not rapists, we are good people."

Young adults called "Dreamers" — a reference to the DREAM Act, one of the proposed pieces of legislation that could help them stay in the country legally — have to go through extensive background

— DREAMERS, page 19



James Buchok

**BISHOPS' CONFERENCE** — Archbishop of St. Boniface Albert LeGatt, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, and Archbishop of Winnipeg Richard Gagnon.



# Advisers studying regional tribunals for abuse cases

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis and his international Council of Cardinals discussed the possibility of establishing regional tribunals around the world that would judge cases of sexual abuse allegedly committed by clergy, a Vatican spokesperson said.

Greg Burke confirmed a report published Feb. 27 on the website Vatican Insider that said the pope and his cardinal advisers were considering decentralizing the role of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in handling cases, but would not diminish the congregation's authority.

"I can say that this is one of the options. The pope himself spoke about this in one of his press conferences," Burke told journalists Feb. 28.

The Council of Cardinals,

often referred to as the C9, held its first meeting of the year Feb. 26 - 28 with Pope Francis. The pope appointed the council members five years ago to advise him on the reform of the Roman Curia and on church governance.

During his flight to Rome from Fatima last May, Pope Francis spoke to reporters about the possibility of establishing regional tribunals. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the pope told journalists, was overwhelmed with "many delayed cases because they have been piling up." He added that discussions on the regional tribunals were "in the planning stage."

"For this, we are thinking of providing continent-wide assistance, one or two per continent. For example — in Latin America — one in Colombia, another in Brazil. They would be continental pre-tribunals or tribunals," he said.

According to Vatican Insider, the establishment of regional tribunals also would resolve the complication of dealing with cases in various countries with different laws and customs, thus allowing for a faster process in examining those cases.

Burke emphasized that, if established, regional tribunals "would always be under" the authority of the doctrinal congregation.

Burke said the council also discussed the role of bishops' conferences and ways the conferences could contribute to discussions on theological issues in a more collegial spirit.

Pope Francis, in his 2013 exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, had written about the need for a greater role for bishops' conferences, asserting that "excessive centralization, rather than proving helpful, complicates the church's life and her

missionary outreach."

Among other documents, Burke said, the Council of Cardinals looked at St. John Paul II's 1998 apostolic letter on the theological and juridical nature of bishops' conferences.

"It is a question of re-reading the motu proprio, *Apostolos Suos*, in a spirit of healthy decentralization that the pope often speaks of (while) reaffirming that it is always he who guards unity in the church," Burke said.

The Council of Cardinals will meet again April 23 - 25. Its members are: Cardinals Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state; Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Sean P. O'Malley of Boston; Francisco Javier Errazuriz Ossa, retired archbishop of Santiago, Chile; Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India; Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising, Germany; Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya of Kinshasa, Congo; George Pell, head of the Secretariat of the Economy; and Giuseppe Bertello, president of the commission governing Vatican City State.

Pell, who is on a leave of absence while facing charges of sexual abuse that have been

filed against him in Australia, was not in attendance. Monsengwo was unable to attend the first day of the meeting because of a flight cancellation due to a rare snowstorm that struck Rome Feb. 26, Burke said.

## At mass, God accepts humble gifts

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — God asks so little of people, and yet he gives so much in return, Pope Francis said.

"He asks for our goodwill in daily life, he asks us for an open heart, he asks us to be willing to be better," the pope said at his weekly general audience at the Vatican Feb. 28.

Because of ice and unusual freezing temperatures in Rome, Pope Francis held the audience in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall. But the Vatican also opened St. Peter's Basilica to accommodate the overflow. Giant screens were set up in the basilica so the people could follow the audience, and later the pope went to the basilica to greet and bless those inside.

"It's better to be here than in the cold, right?" he asked those in the basilica.

In his main talk, the pope continued his series on the mass, focusing on the Liturgy of the Eucharist, which begins with the preparation of the gifts of bread and wine that are then consecrated and distributed to the faithful at holy communion.

During the mass, the priest represents Christ and does what the

Lord did at the Last Supper: takes up the bread and wine to give to his disciples, saying "this is my body, this is my blood. Do this in memory of me," the pope said.

It's good, he said, that the people of God present the priest with the bread and wine for consecration because the elements represent "the spiritual offering of the church." At the offertory, all the faithful are invited to present their own lives as a spiritual offering together with the gifts brought to the altar, he said.

"The centre of the mass is the altar and the altar is Christ. Always look at the altar," which also represents the cross where Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice, he added.

"To the altar of Christ, we bring the little (there is with) our gifts — bread and wine — and they become the plenty — Jesus himself, who gives himself to us" in the eucharist, the pope said.

"Of course, our offering isn't much, but Christ needs this tiny amount. The Lord asks for little and he gives us so much."

Catholics should experience the preparation of the gifts at every mass as an invitation to offer their lives more fully to the Lord so that they would receive from him the grace needed to

grow in holiness, encounter others with love and compassion, and to "build the earthly city in the light of the Gospel," the pope said.

After a summary of the pope's talk was read in Arabic, the pope asked everyone to pray for all the people of Syria and the Middle East — "a martyred land."

"We have to pray for these brothers and sisters who are at war and for the persecuted Christians — they want to expel them from that land. Let us pray for our brothers and sisters," he said.

## Court blocks Trump's effort to end DACA

By Rhina Guidos

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court has dealt a blow to the Trump administration's effort to end a program in March that protects young adults brought to the U.S. without legal permission as minors.

On Feb. 26, the court declined to hear and rule on whether the administration has the right to shut down the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA program.

In September, President Donald Trump announced his administration was ending the program, giving lawmakers until March 5 to find a legislative solution to protect the young adults benefiting from DACA.

Two federal judges have blocked the Trump administration's efforts to end the program, ruling the government must continue to accept renewal applications for DACA. In turn, the administration asked the Supreme Court to hear and rule on one of those decisions, from a judge in

California, in an effort to bypass the process of an appeal going through the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals based in San Francisco.

That means the March 5 deadline is essentially no longer of any significance, and those benefiting from DACA can keep applying to renew permits that protect them from deportation and allow them to have a work permit and other documents, as long as they meet certain criteria.

In a brief, unsigned comment, the court said it expected the Court of Appeals "will proceed expeditiously to decide this case."

The decision was announced the day the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called for a "National Call-in Day for the Protection of Dreamers," encouraging Catholics to call their representatives in Congress to urge support for the young adults called "Dreamers."

The name comes from the DREAM Act — the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act. The legislative proposal has explored allowing qualifying youth conditional residency and permanent residency down the line, but it has been repeatedly defeated in Congress.

The court's decision may delay the end of the DACA program, started in 2012 by President Barack Obama via executive order, but immigrant advocates continued to urge action to provide the youth with permanent relief.

Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration, said in a Feb. 27 statement that despite the delay in ending DACA, "the anxiety and uncertainty that Dreamers and their families face remain unabated. . . . My brother bishops and I continue to call upon Congress to work toward a bipartisan and humane solution as soon as possible."

He praised Catholics who took part in the national call-in day. "These faithful took action because they recognize that protecting these young people from deportation is an issue of human life and dignity, and that a legislative solution is necessary to make that protection durable," Vasquez said.

"Although the Supreme Court decision buys Congress time to address the situation of undocumented youth, it should not give them an excuse to delay action," said Kevin Appleby, senior director of international migration policy for the Centre for Migration Studies in New York. "These young people remain at risk and deserve permanent protection and a chance to plan their futures. Catholic advocates should continue to push Congress and the president to grant them a path to citizenship."

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, in a statement and via Twitter, warned Feb. 26 that



NS/Paul Haring

**MET EXHIBIT VATICAN TREASURES —** The mitre of Pope Pius XI is displayed during a press presentation for the exhibit, *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, at Galleria Colonna in Rome Feb. 26. The Vatican is loaning 40 vestments and sacred objects for an exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York from May 10 - Oct. 8.



CNS/Aaron P. Bernstein, Reuters

**GRAHAM FUNERAL CROWD —** Mourners line up Feb. 28 to pay final respects to Rev. Billy Graham, lying in honour in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington.



# Gender-based federal budget gets mixed reviews

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Liberal government tabled Canada’s first gender-based budget Feb. 27. While Citizens for Public Justice, a Christian social justice think-tank, applauded the move as a “step forward,” CPJ’s executive director Joe Gunn said the “ambition wasn’t huge in this case.”

“There are many more things the government could do to make a gender-based budget really sing,” Gunn said. One key element would be a universal daycare system, but CPJ’s budget analysis pointed out the \$7.5 billion allotted over 11 years “is far from the universal access required to ensure that women with children face fewer barriers when returning to work.”

CPJ also criticized the budget for not putting a “down payment on a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy.”

“This was not mentioned in the budget at all,” Gunn said.

“There’s no question at all that the current government over-promises and under-delivers, so Canadians beware,” said Gunn.

Cardus, a think-tank based on Christian social teaching, questions whether the goals the budget sets out to achieve can be reached by government.

“I think this budget overestimates the power of government to make change,” said Brian Dijkema, program director of Cardus Work and Economics, noting some of the differences between men and women are genetic, or are based on cultural traditions developed over a thousand years.

Andrea Mrozek, director of Cardus Family, said she believed the gender-based analysis is really a code to cover government goals of growing the GDP by getting more women into the workforce.

“They want the GDP to go up, so they’re going to use the power of the state to cajole more women into the workforce, basically allowing mothers fewer choices,” Mrozek said. “Low-income women are going to suffer the most,” she said. “If you have money, you can make a choice.”

While GDP promotion is a “legitimate goal of government, I don’t like dressing it up in equality language.”

Mrozek said she would have no problem with daycare programs targeted to support single moms, but she’s glad no new money was announced toward a universal childcare system. “With universal daycare you’re basically offering middle- and upper-class families a gift,” she said. The number of spaces will always be limited, and the higher-income families usually get first in line, so “low-income women can’t access the spaces.”

The government’s projected budget deficit for 2018 - 19 is \$18.1 billion, three times higher than the \$6 billion the Liberals had promised in allowing modest deficits of \$10 billion for two years; and \$6 billion in the third year. It has blown its budget projections each of the last three budgets — also tripling the promised deficit to nearly \$30 billion in 2016, and again in 2017.

“It’s a question of priorities,” said Gunn, who noted the govern-



CCN/D. Gyapong

**BUDGET DAY — Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer chats with Finance Minister Bill Morneau on Budget Day Feb. 27 on the set of CTV Power Play with host Don Martin.**

ment could look at cutting some of the \$25.5 billion that will be spent on National Defence in 2018 - 19. “Luckily our debt to GDP ratio (projected to be 30.1 per cent for 2018 - 19) is still falling. I think in 2019, everybody’s expecting an election budget, so that will probably not end the deficit at all,” Gunn said.

“It’s not fiscally responsible,” said Mrozek. “Families are going to end up paying for it eventually, perhaps generations down the road. There isn’t a country yet that hasn’t

had to face the music on this.”

“One person’s debt is another person’s asset,” Dijkema said, noting government debt is held by private bondholders. “Those people want to get paid, and the more money that goes to servicing the debt, the less money there is for government programs.”

Dijkema also challenged the Liberal government’s commitment to pay equity, which he stressed is different from equal pay for men and women doing the same jobs, which is a matter of justice.

“When you start talking about equal pay for work of equal value, you have to ask the question of who determines value,” he said. When the market determines value, it reflects the individual decisions of people. Having government determine the value of work in different industries traditionally dominated by women or by men “ignores the importance of the market,” he said. “It gives far too much power to the government.”

Both Cardus and CPJ applauded the expansion of the Working Income Tax Benefit, now renamed the Canada Workers Benefit. Dijkema noted the idea for this benefit has had all-party support and it is in these programs that cross partisan lines the budget does well.

The government recognizes it is inherently good for people to be working, so it is helping subsidize work by not clawing back welfare benefits, Dijkema said. “The government will give you money to top you up and help you over the welfare wall.”

Gunn gave high marks to the large amounts of spending on indigenous peoples in addition to the \$11.8 billion previously announced in 2016 and 2017. Included in this budget is \$5 billion over five years to help give “indigenous children and families an equal chance at life”; \$1.4 billion over six years to help First Nations Child and Family Services help at-risk families and children; and an additional \$172.6 million to provide safe

drinking water on reserves. “Those are huge gaps in Canadian society,” Gunn said. “That is funding that has to be there.”

On the promised study of pharmacare, Gunn said the churches have supported a drug program for 20 years, but how it will roll out remains to be seen. Canada Without Poverty (CWP), a coalition that CPJ belongs to, said the money is needed now.

“One in 10 people in Canada cannot afford their prescribed medications,” said Liz Majic in a CWP news release. “While an advisory council on this policy area may be a step in the right direction, we already know it makes financial sense to invest in pharmacare and we need action, rather than more research.”

Another disappointment for CPJ is the lack of any action in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Gunn said. “We need to bite that bullet and move forward.”

Gunn noted an important part of the Canadian climate framework the Liberals announced in 2016 involved provinces paying a carbon tax. “This has not come into being,” Gunn said. It was supposed to come into being in the beginning of this year, and now it’s postponed to the beginning of next year. The carbon tax will be a “revenue stream for the government,” he said. He noted the government is still providing \$1.6 billion in subsidies to the fossil fuel industry.

# Multifaith prayer vigil calls for healing and justice

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski and Myron Rogal

SASKATOON — People of many faiths and backgrounds came together Feb. 25 to pray for a community struggling and divided after two recent trials in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The events surrounding the deaths of two indigenous young people — Colten Boushie and Tina Fontaine — and the subsequent acquittal of those on trial have caused profound pain, fuelled racial tensions, prompted protests, and brought calls for justice reforms, said Rev. Scott Pittendrigh, dean and rector of St. John’s Cathedral, which hosted the event.

“Much of this has, once again, pointed to the larger story of the history of colonization; of residential schools and countless examples where indigenous people have been marginalized,” he said in his opening remarks, citing recent calls for justice, respectful dialogue, and concrete steps for peace and reconciliation.

Pittendrigh noted that community leaders had been consulted about the vigil, including Harry Lafond, executive director of the Office of Treaty Commissioner, and Shirley Isbister, president of the Central Urban Métis Federation. He acknowledged “the history, spirituality and culture of the peoples with whom Treaty 6 was signed and the territory and traditional lands where this cathedral resides — and our responsibility as treaty members.”

Mary Culbertson, Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan, pre-

sented a reading from the Book of Habakkuk, “written by a prophet of God while living in the midst of a time of confusion and pain, when the people feared they had been forgotten by God.”

Sarah Donnelly, pastoral assistant at St. John’s Cathedral, led a response after the reading: “Let us not rush to the language of healing, before understanding the fullness of the injury and the depth of the wound. Let us not speak of reconciliation without speaking of reparations and restoration. Let us not be afraid to sit with the ugliness, the messiness, and the pain that is life in community together.”

Cecilia Rajanayagam of Emmanuel Baptist Church, and Seth Shacter of Congregation Agudas Israel both read selections from the book of Lamentations.

Myron Rogal, co-ordinator of the Office of Justice and Peace in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, offered a prayer after the first of the readings from Lamentations: “We mourn with those who are suffering the loss of precious members of their family. We pray for those whose lives have been irrevocably changed — those residents of the Red Pheasant and Mosquito communities, the communities of Biggar, and the Battlefords, and for all our communities, rural and urban, who live with suspicion, tension, fear and racism.”

Prayers were also said for those who serve the community — teachers, social workers, police officers, health care workers, politicians and other leaders. “Give them wisdom and strength

as those whom we rely on to maintain composure, fairness, and a commitment to the common good,” said Rogal.

“We pray for healing in communities that carry the weight of generations of broken relationships between law enforcement and the people they are called to serve. We lament our country’s history of racism and pray for love in the face of violence.”

Lyndon Linklater of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner offered a prayer after the second reading from Lamentations: “God of the reserve and the city, of the jail cell and the street corner, of the classroom and the police car, look upon the world you have made. See how hatred and violence mars your creation. Gunshots ring out under the heavens that declare your glory, singing the destruction of your children. The clanging of cell doors ring out, tolling the lives stolen by systemic

oppression and unspeakable violence.”

The assembly then prayed together: “Arise, O God, and defend the cause of your heart. Raise



Sarah Donnelly

**PRAYER VIGIL — Lyndon Linklater, cultural adviser and treaty presenter with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, was among those leading prayer at a vigil held Feb. 25 at St. John’s Anglican Cathedral in Saskatoon.**

up in us the cries of outrage. Raise up in us commitment to the long struggle for justice. Raise up in us the determination to drive out racism. Raise up in us the grief

— SPEAK TRUTH, page 6



# Neither side backs down on Summer Jobs controversy

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Neither the government nor parishes and charities opposed to the required pro-abortion Canada Summer Jobs attestation are backing down, leaving many scrambling to find alternative funding.



CCN/D. Gyapong

Patty Hajdu

"We're not seeking a war with the government or anything like that," said Cardinal Thomas Collins of Toronto in a Feb. 23 interview in Rome with Vatican Radio.

"We didn't start this controversy," he said. "We're trying to be cooperative, but we cannot check off the box" that says "I believe in abortion and a couple of other things, because we don't believe it."

"No citizen should be asked to pass a faith test or an ideology test," the cardinal said, noting the government "seems to be doubling down."

"We don't want to get into a dispute, so we're trying to give them a way out," he said, adding the groups would follow the laws of Canada. "If they still refuse us, we'll have to find a way" of funding the programs such as summer

camps for disadvantaged children.

In the Toronto archdiocese alone, the shortfall could be more than half a million dollars, according to communications director Neil McCarthy.

McCarthy said parishes and groups in the diocese had followed the lead of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC) that had suggested to groups that had received letters giving them 10 days to sign the attestation to send another letter requesting accommodation under the Charter on religious freedom, conscience rights and other grounds.

"We are waiting to see what the government response will be," said McCarthy. "There is also a need for us to begin looking at contingency plans should these applications be rejected. For parishes alone in the Archdiocese of Toronto, we are talking about a financial shortfall of \$500,000 - \$600,000."

This will likely be a special collection, though nothing is "firmed up yet," McCarthy said. "There may be some communities that can absorb the hit but clearly many can't."

Bishop Ronald Fabbro of London instructed his diocese not to apply for the Canada Summer Jobs grant under the new rules. Other dioceses had urged parishes to apply, but to send in a hard copy of the application with part of the attestation struck out, or with an attestation supplied by the diocese.

"I believe that we need to take a stand against the position of the Government of Canada and say that we will not be bullied into even the appearance of collusion on this issue," said Fabbro, who then set up a special collection to raise the \$40,000 to replace what the diocese would have ordinarily received from the summer jobs program to hire students to run summer camps.

"The response has been tremendous," said Nelson Couto, communications officer for the Diocese of London. "People have

appreciated the bishop has made a stand. Many people have written and phoned to lend their support."

The diocese began a collection in parishes the third week of February. "Already we have received many generous donations," Couto said. "People are identifying with the bishop's position."

"We hold that these programs are important for our young people and we don't believe they should suffer as a result of conditions required by the stand the government has taken."

"There's a lot of excitement," Couto said. "A lot of people have expressed their pride in their bishop."

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) had also advised its members to follow the CCCC's suggested protocol in requesting accommodation under the Charter.

"We've heard from many who have done this," said Julia Beazley, the EFC's director of public policy. "Yesterday, we were forwarded the first example of how Service Canada is responding to these requests, which is to state: 'Unfortunately, as the attestation has been altered, we remain unable to assess project number \*\*\*\*\*.'" Beazley said. "There was no acknowledgment in the response of the request for accommodation."

"This is just one example so far, but the previous responses from Service Canada seem to be fairly standardized. I anticipate this one will be as well."

Barry Bussey, the CCCC's director of legal affairs, said some of their members have received similar form letters.

"The government is simply not backing down on this," Bussey said.

Deacon Jeff Lebane said Divine Infant Parish in the Archdiocese of Ottawa applied at first using an alternate attestation suggested by the archdiocese. When that application was refused, they sent out a letter "asking them for consideration" because "we have a fundamental right to this under the Charter."

Divine Infant has hired one summer student a year for the past 13 years, Lebane said. "We helped many who were in real financial need, who needed this money to pursue post-secondary education."

Lebane said they are waiting to hear back from the government.

A spokesperson for Employment and Social Development Canada said the number of applications received by mail or online for the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) is not available yet, nor is the number that have been refused because the attestation was not filled out.

In response to a question regarding whether the government will consider the request for accommodation by groups under Charter rights to religious freedom, Josh Bueckert, senior media spokesperson for the ministry, said: "Faith-based groups are required to meet the same eligibility criteria as any applicant to CSJ 2018."

"CSJ applicants will be required to attest that both the job

and the organization's core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada, including the values underlying the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as well as other rights."

Bueckert said this is not a new requirement, since applicants always had to explain the core mandate or activities undertaken by the organization.

"Through the attestation, we are ensuring that applicants are both aware of the new eligibility requirement for the CSJ program and comply with it," he said. "This change helps to ensure that youth job opportunities funded by the Government of Canada take place in an environment that respects the rights of all Canadians. It also ensures that federal funding supports employment opportunities that respect existing laws, including human rights law and labour law, to which public, private and not-for-profit organizations are already subject."



## CWL adds voice against attestation

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The more than 80,000 members of the Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) have added their official voice to the outcry against the pro-abortion Canada Summer Jobs Attestation.

"Canadian citizens, not just those with a particular set of religious values, are outraged that the federal government would take steps to force the people they represent to conform to the belief system of those in power in order to access services," said a strongly worded Feb. 17 letter from CWL National President Margaret Ann Jacobs to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, with a copy to Employment Minister Patty Hajdu. "The League implores you to understand that to ask someone to deny their faith or their beliefs in order to receive funding from the government is simply undemocratic, unconstitutional and unethical."

In an interview, Jacobs said the CWL has been concerned about

the new Canada Summer Jobs policy when it was first announced in late December.

Though individual League members had written their MPs, in a recent meeting Jacobs said many of the women were "still concerned" about the issue.

"Some were in the position of hiring summer students and they didn't want to be in a position of violating their conscience," Jacobs said. The CWL is "in unison with what the bishops have been saying," in speaking up against the required attestation.

"This whole thing is counter to our beliefs as Catholics and as Canadian citizens," Jacobs said. "We should have the right to make decisions in accord with our conscience."

"If we only have the right to make an attestation in agreement with a particular stance, we aren't being able to express our own democratic rights," she said.

Jacobs said many of the League members who wrote the government about the attestation

received a "form letter" saying, "this is what we're going to do."

"It looks like the government isn't going to back down," she said, noting the government's resistance has fuelled the desire of League members to push back even harder.

"I can't even imagine the volume of responses they must be getting," Jacobs said.

"I don't know what we do except to continue to put pressure on," she said, adding she hoped members would continue to contact their MPs. "It's our right and obligation as Catholics and a Catholic organization. We want that viewpoint to be out in the marketplace."

The CWL is also concerned that many employers and groups will choose not to hire summer students without the government help. "They won't do the programming and it's going to harm some of the most vulnerable segments of our society," Jacobs said. "If we don't stand up for them, we're not reflecting the Canada I want to be reflecting."

### The Diocese of Nelson welcomes applications for the position of Diocesan Director of Faith Formation



The Director of Faith Formation is responsible to the Bishop in designing and implementing programs for adult faith formation, children's catechetics and sacramental preparation for use in the diocese and in supporting the ministry of the laity. The Office is based in Kelowna but will require travel to the various regions of the diocese.

*The Director works in collaboration with:*

- The Superintendent of Catholic Schools in the faith development of staff.
- Parish pastoral teams.
- The Diocesan Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation Committees.
- The Diocesan Finance Office (Budgeting).

*Requirements:*

- A Master's Degree in Religious Education or Theology or equivalent
- A demonstrated commitment to the Church, her teachings and authority.
- Familiarity with children's catechetics and adult models of faith formation.
- Steeped in the principles of The General Directory for Catechesis and On Good Soil.
- Evidence of effective leadership, communication and facilitation skills.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively for a common vision.
- Proficiency with technology, including Microsoft Office.

Contact Fr. Bart van Roijen, [bartvrijen@hotmail.com](mailto:bartvrijen@hotmail.com) for further information.

Please submit resumé with three letters of reference (one from your Pastor) by **March 31, 2018**. The position will commence July 1, 2018.



# Redemptorists leaving their Quebec monastery

By Philippe Vaillancourt

SAINTE-ANNE-DE-BEAUPRE, Quebec (CNS) — The Redemptorists are leaving their Ste.-Anne-de-Beaupre monastery, where they have been living since the 19th century.

The monastery is adjacent to one of Canada’s biggest shrines, both named after the mother of Mary. In a letter just sent to pilgrimage organizers and donors, the rector of the sanctuary, Redemptorist Father Bernard Gauthier, said most members of the community will now live in various residences, mostly around Quebec City.

He said the decision was made after “several months of studies and reflections on the current state of the buildings, the ability of the

Redemptorists to maintain a quality pastoral service, the financial resources available for the life of the sanctuary and for the life of confreres.”

“This means that the number of Redemptorists present in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupre will be very small,” said Gauthier. “We continue to be the guardians of the shrine but we will work, in the coming years, to have a team of Redemptorists, laypeople and other religious.” This will be done by collaborating with the diocesan authorities, he wrote.

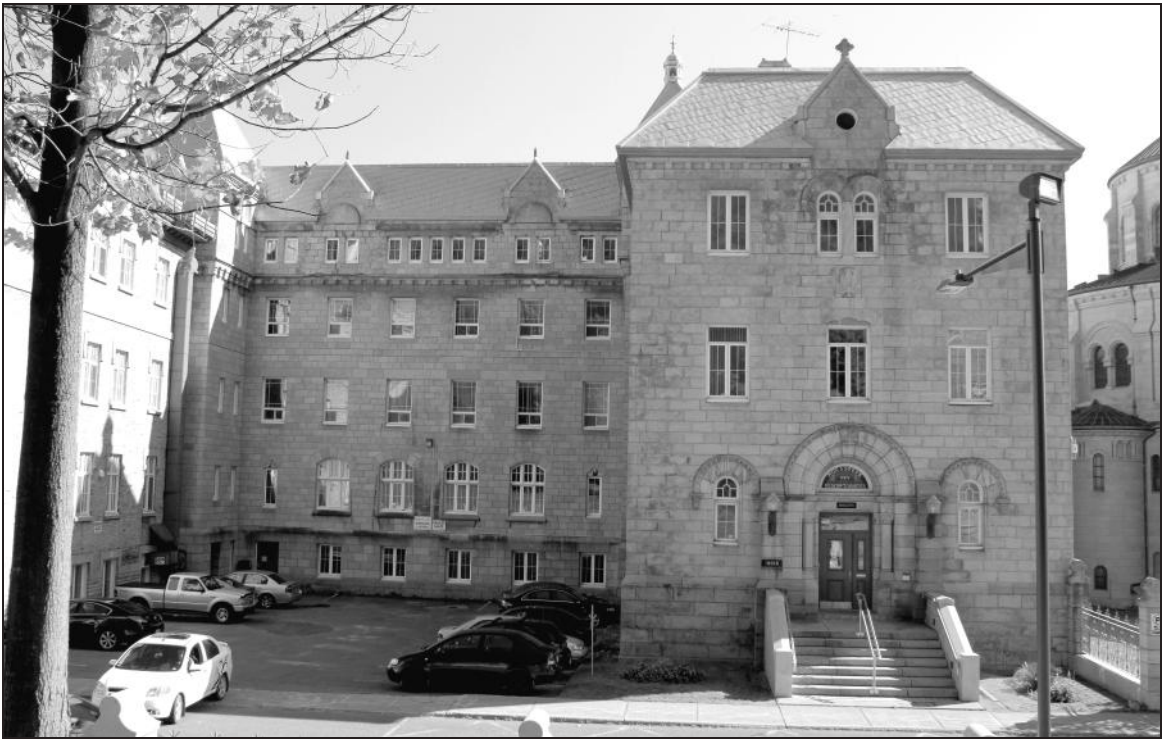
In December, the Redemptorists met with the Archdiocese of Quebec to make plans for the future of the sanctuary.

It should take less than two years for the Redemptorists to move out of their monastery.

Rev. Charles Duval, provincial superior of the Redemptorist province of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupre, confirmed that this process is happening faster than they originally thought.

“We thought we could spread it over a longer period,” he said. He explained that several confreres need medical care and that it became impossible to be able to provide them with care in the infirmary of the monastery.

“With relocation, what happens is that we find it important to build small communities where these confreres are. Some have already left the monastery, and we began to invite other members in



CNS/Philippe Vaillancourt, Presence

**MONASTERY CLOSING** — The monastery of the Redemptorists in Ste. Anne de Beaupre, Quebec, is seen in this 2014 file photo. The Redemptorists are leaving their monastery, where they have been living since the 19th century.

better health to live with them, to keep alive the spirit of community. That’s what’s going to happen right now,” said the superior.

Only 21 Redemptorists remain in the monastery. By May, only 10 of them will still live in their large home next to the shrine.

Duval said that the community will not be able to keep the monastery.

Gauthier’s letter specifies that the order will be selling “surplus

land and buildings.”

“The situation already shows us that it would be irresponsible not to act. For example, the seminary (Saint-Alphonse) is closed since 2001, the museum and the hostel are permanently closed, the monastery will become largely unused,” wrote Gauthier.

The Museum of Ste. Anne was closed last winter. The definitive closing of the Basilica Inn was announced at the end of 2017. The

former Saint-Alphonse Seminary, next to the monastery, shows signs of wear and tear.

“We must act quickly,” insisted Duval. “It’s clear that we will not keep these buildings. But at the monastery, we will have to keep a small place for the team that will continue to operate the shrine.”

The sanctuary of Ste. Anne de Beaupre was founded in 1658. The Redemptorists have been there since 1878.

## OBITUARY

**KOBELSKY, Sister Helen**  
(formerly Sister Lucy)

**School Sister of Notre Dame**

Died at Notre Dame Convent on Jan. 31, 2018, at the age of 92 and in her 67th year as a School Sister of Notre Dame. The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Helen was celebrated on Feb. 5, 2018, at Notre Dame Convent, Waterdown, Ont. The celebrant of the Mass was the Very Reverend Wayne Lobsinger, Episcopal Vicar for Consecrated Life and concelebrants were the Very Reverend Monsignor Murray Kroetsch, Vicar General and Chancellor of the Diocese of Hamilton, and the Reverend Pablito Labado, Chaplain, who was the homilist. Present in the sanctuary was the Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, OMI, Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton who offered the Commendation and Farewell Prayers. Predeceased by her parents, Ferdinand and Eva (Hiebert) Kobelsky, both emigrated from Russia, her brothers, Edward, Emmanuel, Nickolas, Leo, John, Paul and her sisters, Agnes Leidl, Frances Schermann, Philomena Schermann, Mary Sittler, Emilia Kobelsky, Monica Bauml, Elizabeth Stifter, Anne Schmidt, Angela Lesmeister. Following her profession of vows in 1950, she moved back to her home province of Saskatchewan, teaching in Leipzig until 1953. Again, in 1957 she returned to Leipzig. Here she taught many of the pupils she formerly had in primary grades. From 1960 to 1971 Sister Helen was both principal and teacher in the following schools, St. Joseph, Fergus; St. Thomas Aquinas, Hamilton; Canadian Martyrs, Hamilton; St. Clement, Cambridge; Notre Dame, Kitchener; St. Mary, Owen Sound, and Sacred Heart, Walkerton. Her next teaching assignment was in Edmonton. Sister Helen then focused her attention on social justice issues. In preparation for this she studied at Divine Word, London and St. Paul University, Ottawa. From 1978 - 1988 she was a member of the Social Awareness Office in the Diocese of Hamilton. On Oct. 21, 1988, she was awarded a Certificate of Recognition by the city of Hamilton for her contribution to the Mayor’s Race Relations Committee. In November 1992 Sister Helen was presented with the World Citizen Award in the city of Hamilton. This special recognition was for her years working for the poor and disadvantaged especially in her efforts toward global understanding and world peace. She was a member of several organizations advocating for social justice, human rights and world peace. She visited a refugee camp in Honduras, worked in poor sections in Bolivia and Peru. She valued this first-hand experience. In 1995 Sister Helen moved to Saskatoon where she was involved in prison ministry. She lived in Wilkie, Sask., before retiring to Notre Dame Convent in 2005. Interment at St. Pascal’s Church Cemetery, Leipzig Saskatchewan at a later date.

## Barriers to women in church leadership still exist

Continued from page 1

was asked to sum up what feminism is saying to the church and inside the church.

“Woman, like man, is a creature of God, made in his image and likeness,” he said during a meeting of bishops and theologians in San Francisco. “The domination of woman by man is not part of the Creator’s design but rather an expression and consequence of sin.”

The archbishop took time to point out to his fellow bishops that, “The first Christian communities included prophetesses and deaconesses, there were women scholars and foundresses in the patristic period and the Middle Ages: in modern times there has been no shortage of women who are religious and social activists and reformers.”

More than a half-century past the Second Vatican Council and more than 100 years after the first International Women’s Day, the progress of the women’s movement within the church has not been without its bumps.

“If I were to give you a litany of all the crazy I’ve had to deal with in my time in the church, I mean you would say, ‘Yes, I understand why you’re angry,’ ” said Catholic feminist theologian Doris Kieser of St. Joseph’s College in Edmonton. “There is a place for righteous anger. If we are angry, I think we have good reason for that.”

The primary perception that plagues Catholic feminists is the notion it’s OK to dismiss them as just angry, power-seeking complainers, Kieser said.

“When women speak powerfully and with authority about their faith and their church, that isn’t a power grab. I don’t know any woman whose ultimate goal is to be the pope — not one,” Kieser said.

“For anyone who says, ‘They just want power,’ maybe we do. Why do you have a problem sharing that power?”

This is something bigger than whether or not the church will ever ordain a woman. For St. Jerome’s University associate dean of religious studies Cristina Vanin, the women’s ordination question is far too narrow.

“It’s time to shift the question,” she said in a phone interview from Waterloo, Ont. “There are women sitting around the table, working and talking about issues facing the church and society with bishops, with priests, with people at the level of dioceses, women who have responsibility.”

If you look at the church’s presence in health care, education, social services and culture you are bound to find women labouring, serving and leading, said Vanin. Over time women’s leadership has and will transform the church, she said.

There are Canadian women of influence who are consulted by the

Vatican. Sister Gill Goulding was there for the 2012 Synod on the New Evangelization. Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute director Moira McQueen sits on the 30-member International Theological Commission which advises the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Vatican has sought Sister Nuala Kenny’s advice on the sex abuse crisis. But the women who concretely shape the church in Canada are more likely to be Catholic school board chairs, superintendents of education, union leaders at the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association, Catholic hospital board members.

“The growth of the importance of the laity in the church is helping,” said St. Jerome’s University president Katherine Bergman. “There’s not just this sole focus on women as priests. If that’s what we come down to as leadership in the church, we’re really only talking about a very small portion of what Catholicism is and can be.”

The young women who graduate from St. Jerome’s will be leaders in the church, Bergman said.

“We provide role models for other young women who can see leadership roles within the broader church,” she said.

Vanin, Bergman and Kieser all cherish their role forming the young women who will eventually take their places as leaders in the church.

“To have some sense that I can actually speak to what my experience is rather than have someone tell me what my experience is supposed to be — that’s where the power is,” said Kieser.

Optimism about the future of women in the church doesn’t preclude realism about the present.

“I don’t think the barriers to women have been completely removed,” said Bergman. “But that’s not just a church thing. That’s a societal thing.”

Having worked in Rome for the Jesuit Refugee Service, having shaped policy for the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and now the boss at Canadian Jesuits International, Jenny Cafiso knows she has been privileged.

“I’ve done and seen and had a life full of meaning thanks to the church. I have been appreciated. I have been allowed to live out that faith,” Cafiso said.

At the same time, she knows it’s still too rare for women in Catholic institutions to be able to hire, fire and approve budgets.

For Cafiso, the search for a deeper Catholic feminism has to take the path through favelas, slums, barrios, drought-stricken villages and refugee camps — even the food bank lines in Toronto.

Early in her career, serving in impoverished villages in Peru, Cafiso saw women organize themselves to protect and feed their families.

“The feminist movement is already there, whether they call themselves that or not. It’s basically women who are fighting to live a life of dignity, having a voice in how their lives develop. . . . We just need to acknowledge it and join in, rather than oppose it.”

[www.prairiemessenger.ca](http://www.prairiemessenger.ca)



# 'The earth is lonely for us,' says Nash lecturer

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — "There is a contradiction in our relationship with modern technology," Rev. Greg Kennedy, SJ, said as he began to deliver the 38th annual Campion College Nash Lecture to a full Riffel Auditorium on Feb. 28.

"We have an attachment, an intimate connection to technology, but we know nothing about it." He was speaking primarily about the cellphone: "We don't know how it's made, or how it works."

The lecture was titled "Attached and Indifferent: Technological Living on a Lonely Planet." Kennedy's youthful appearance and jocular manner belied his 15 years as a Jesuit and the time involved in

earning university degrees in philosophy, theology and divinity.

He began the lecture by asking the audience to hold up their cell phones and describe in a word or two their relationship with it: "connected," "addicted," "painful" were some of the words that came back from the audience.

And how did they feel when the phone is not with them? "Lost," "out of the loop," "disconnected" were some of the responses.

Kennedy pointed out some other contradictions in everyday living and, with some humour, described offices he had seen in huge Toronto buildings that were air-conditioned to the point of feeling cold, yet individual offices

had heaters in them. He said he watched people through floor-to-ceiling windows on the second floor of a fitness club working out on treadmills and step machines, and in the next windows were people accessing the exercise floor using escalators.

"What's up with that?" he asked, laughing.

He admitted to a reputation of being long-winded and asked the audience to help him limit his talk to 45 minutes by setting their cellphone timers for 45 minutes, all together when he said "Go." Sure enough, 45 minutes later a cacophony of cellphone tones filled the auditorium. He begged for an additional five minutes to finish his lecture, then he continued.

Quoting several studies, including Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* and his own experience as a spiritual adviser to families and teens, he showed how young people especially are affected by their use of technology.

"The more screen time, the less self-esteem they have. There is loneliness because we are not in

the present. It leads to depression and suicide."

He connected it to the environment — "not spending enough time in the woods," as he described it.

He quoted the World Economic Forum that said in a report that by 2050 the seas will contain more plastic than fish. He also said that about 40 per cent of the earth's animals have disappeared in the 43 years since his birth. He talked about the spiritual peace people experience by walking through and participating in the organic garden maintained by the Jesuit community in Guelph, Ont.

"The earth is lonely for us," he said. "We have to associate with other species."

He ended by inviting everyone to join him in singing "The Lord of the Dance" with the words projected on a large screen. The audience complied with exuberance, closing the lecture in the light-hearted atmosphere that Kennedy had projected during his presentation.



Frank Flegel

Rev. Greg Kennedy, SJ

## Book chronicles journey with cancer

By Darlene Polachic

SASKATOON — In 2001, Francesca Iosca-Pagnin received the news that the breast cancer she'd been treated for seven years earlier had recurred.

The initial cancer was eradicated with a lumpectomy and a regimen of chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

Not being a person to sit back and simply endure, Iosca-Pagnin embarked on a program of information and education on the subject of breast cancer. "I felt I needed to do something constructive to make sense of what had happened to me," she says.

partnering with individuals and organizations in the community, Iosca-Pagnin organized the city's first public walk for breast cancer. Fundraiser walks of 1998 and 1999 were huge successes and unprecedented in terms of money raised, sponsors acquired and people participating. Some of the funds raised from the 1998 walk were used to buy an apheresis machine for stem cell transplants in Saskatoon.

In 2001, seven years later, Iosca-Pagnin was facing the same challenge. She made the difficult decision to have a mastectomy, but in the meantime, a woman she calls "a visionary with the gift of healing hands" was praying for her.

Iosca-Pagnin was healed from the breast cancer, and she knows exactly when it happened: March 8, 2001. She was lying awake in bed at 4 a.m. praying. "I felt methodical, deliberate heat surging through my body with movement so precise and calculated, I knew intuitively that something not-of-this world was taking place," she says.

It was the beginning of a physical and spiritual journey that would change Iosca-Pagnin's world forever and create an awareness of God's presence and power in her life.

Once again, she determined that the experience would not be wasted and that she would "make lemonade" from the lemons she'd been handed.

A former educator with the Saskatoon Catholic school district, Iosca-Pagnin documented her breast cancer journey and her story of healing in a book entitled *Reflections 'NPink On The Wings of Love*.

The book was an account of her journey taken from her recollections and the journal she kept throughout her breast cancer experience. It was published in 2004 and became a tool and a spring-

board for Iosca-Pagnin to speak about her experience and raise money and awareness for breast cancer initiatives in Saskatchewan.

With sponsorship, Iosca-Pagnin had 3,000 books printed and 5,000 crystal-encrusted butterfly pins (designed by her son Rob) manufactured and sold, raising over \$600,000. The money was donated toward the purchase of a Mammo-tome Vacuum Biopsy System, Mammo-vision Elite CCD Digital Imaging equipment, and a Mammo-sound Integrated Ultrasound Device for the Saskatchewan Breast Health Centre that was soon to open.

Iosca-Pagnin organized book launches and fundraising events, and accepted invitations to speak all over the province. Her presentations of hope, love, healing, and encouragement were eagerly embraced by her audiences.

"All the books sold," she says, "and all the money was donated to breast cancer initiatives. It was a totally non-profit venture. We estimate that for every one of the 3,000 books sold, 10 people read it."

Shortly after *Reflections 'NPink On the Wings of Love* was published, Iosca-Pagnin set up a website where people could learn about her breast cancer journey.

"Last year, in 2017, I decided I'd shut down the website," she says. "I figured it had outlived its usefulness. But when I checked the numbers, I was amazed to find that tens of thousands of people were still visiting the site. I realized I hadn't finished telling my story."

Instead of shutting down the website, Iosca-Pagnin had it updated to include her book, which people can now read for free.

"The book is a story of hope for anyone facing turbulent times, and if it gives someone a glimmer of light at the end of a dark tunnel, I'm happy. It's amazing how much it means when I can say to a woman, 'I'm a breast cancer survivor.' Her face lights up."

"I tell women that if they hang in there with faith, they can stay the course."

In 2005 Iosca-Pagnin was given the Commemorative Medal for the Centennial of Saskatchewan, and in 2015 she was inducted into the Saskatoon Council of Women Hall of Fame.

*This article first appeared in the Saskatoon StarPhoenix.*

## 'People's lives and families' futures hang in the balance'

Continued from page 2

the high court's decision "does not change anything."

"It is long past time for members of Congress to take their responsibilities seriously — seriously enough that they are willing to act with courage to negotiate and seek compromises and resist the temptation to keep using this issue for their political advantage," he said. "People's lives and families' futures hang in the balance."

Without legislative protection, "these young people will lose their permission to work in this country and face deportation. This is wrong and it is up to Congress to make it right," he said.

California's Catholic bishops sent a letter to their state's congressional delegation.

"Listen to these voices of reason this coming week. (The Dreamers) are valuable members of our neighbourhoods, our workplaces and our families," the bishops said. "They contribute to the common good and should be part of our common future as a nation."

Other bishops throughout the

country, too, voiced their support for the youth during the call-in day.

In an opinion piece for *The New York Times* titled "If You're a Patriot and a Christian, You Should Support the Dream Act," Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., wrote that "the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls on us to welcome and protect the stranger. This should not be hard to do when the stranger is young, blameless and working hard to make this country a better place."

On Feb. 27, the PICO National Network, a faith-based community organization based in California, has helped co-ordinate the "Catholic Day of Action with Dreamers" along with Faith in Public Life and a coalition of Catholic social justice organizations based in Washington. At least one Catholic prelate, Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Ky., will participate.

"The groups are demanding a new policy which protects Dreamers while not harming their families and communities," the groups said in a Feb. 26 statement.

## Speak truth to power

Continued from page 3

that cannot be comforted. Raise up in us the courage to speak truth to power, and hope to hatred."

After a time of silent prayer, Kumar Balachandran of the Hindu Society of Saskatchewan led a prayer for peace in Sanskrit and English, followed by a reading from the book of Micah by Sheila Cameron-Hopkins of Calvin Goforth Presbyterian Church.

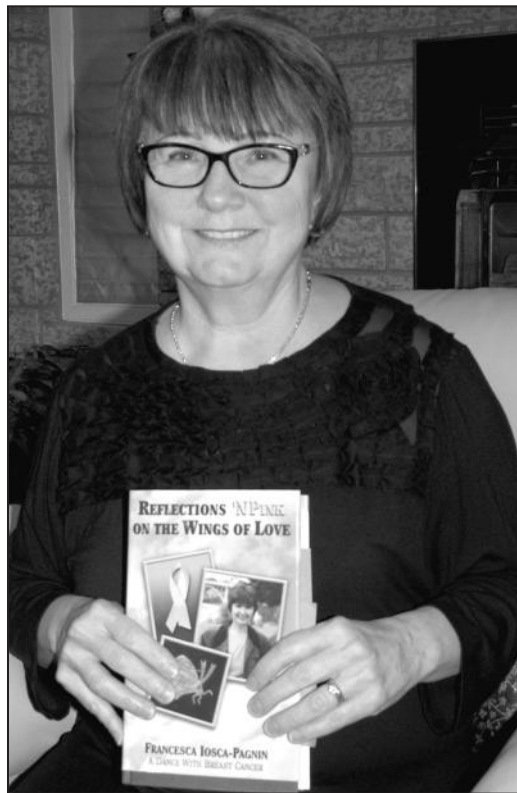
"And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" she concluded.

Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz, a Unitarian minister, led a prayer

calling on the Creator to "be near to us in our lament. We pray for all communities of faith in our country, that we may be a voice of peace, a light of love, working for reconciliation and unity, working for justice. May we stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters: all races, all skin colours, all ethnicities. May we stand against racism and injustice. May we stand for love."

The assembly asked God for forgiveness, followed by a traditional prayer song by Linklater.

At the conclusion of the vigil, those in attendance were invited to come forward and light a candle and to continue in silent prayer if they wished.



Darlene Polachic

**REFLECTIONS 'NPINK** — Francesca Iosca-Pagnin poses with the book she wrote chronicling her remarkable experience of healing from breast cancer. *Reflections 'NPink on the Wings of Love* is now available to read for free on her website, [reflectionsinpink.com](http://reflectionsinpink.com)

Iosca-Pagnin prepared a proposal entitled "Fighting Back Through Education" and presented it to the Cancer Society, the local Public Health Board, plus the Catholic and Public Boards of Education in Saskatoon. With the approval and endorsement of all these agencies, she began a schedule of public presentations on the subject of breast cancer.

After much networking and



# Eparchial pilgrims visit shrine in Mexico City

By Teresa Bodnar-Hiebert

SASKATOON — The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon’s fourth annual pilgrimage and tour to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City recently concluded for a group of 15 pilgrims.

Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR,

pointed out in his opening letter to the pilgrims that “St. Pope John Paul II’s first pilgrimage as the Holy Father included the country and city of Mexico, where he dedicated his pontifical service in the church to the Mother of God, entrusting to her protection the new evangelization.”

Bayda also said that “Pope

Francis has a tradition he follows when he makes a pilgrimage to a country: he visits the icon of Our Mother of the People of Rome, which is otherwise known as the World Youth Day Pilgrimage Icon, before he leaves Rome and upon his return.”

This year’s pilgrimage included Bishop Mykhaylo Bubniy, CSsR, from the Exarchate of Odessa (Ukraine).

The itinerary included cultural and religious stops to help participants comprehend the magnitude of the miracle on Tepeyac in 1531. Pilgrims learned more about the Aztecs, Teotihuacans, Nahuatl and the Spaniards to understand the tremendous cultural impact that the appearance and message of Our Lady of Guadalupe had simultaneously on many cultures.

The layers of symbolism in the image of Mary on the tilma of a

humble indigenous man spoke to these different cultures, and led hearts to Christ. The image evangelized the entire area, ending Aztec blood sacrifices and uniting Latin America at a time when the Reformation was dividing Western Christianity on the other side of the globe.

During Divine Liturgy on the first day of the pilgrimage, some swayed as they sang while others suddenly felt light-headed — then they realized that everybody was swaying and so was the building. An earthquake prompted the evacuation of the hotel, until all had settled and the pilgrims were cleared to return inside, where they resumed the Divine Liturgy.

The pilgrimage continued with many visits and prayer opportunities. The pilgrims attended masses at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe and at the Metropolitan Cathedral Zocalo, and

Divine Liturgies at the Mirador Room of the hotel, at Tlapacotal Basilica (site of the fifth apparition of Our Lady), and at the Temple of San Francisco Acatepec Church in Cholula.

The group also explored the underground ruins of the Metropolitan Cathedral Zocalo and the Bishop’s Crypt, visited the Great Pyramid of Cholula, climbing to Our Lady of Remedies Church at the summit.

The group spent time with the miraculous tilma of Our Lady of Guadalupe, led after hours through the sacristy to the private room behind. The relic was rotated into the room for the group’s private encounter.

The pilgrims returned Feb. 24. The next eparchial pilgrimage and tour will be in 2020, after a break in 2019 for World Youth Day in Panama. See [www.skeparchy.org](http://www.skeparchy.org) for further information.



Teresa Bodnar-Hiebert

**MIRACULOUS TILMA** — Pilgrims from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon stand before the tilma of Juan Diego, on which is imprinted an image of the Blessed Virgin. The garment is hand woven from the fibres of the Manguay cactus, and would normally have lasted about 30 years. The miraculous image remains intact after more than 470 years.

## Gagnon prays for courage and wisdom

Continued from page 1

*Caritas Internationalis* under the auspices of Development and Peace in meeting these needs, and, Gagnon added, “regional concerns from Winnipeg to Vancouver to the Arctic were discussed at length.”

Established in 1974, AWCBC gathers the bishops of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Catholic churches of the four Western Canadian provinces, the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut. It serves 18 Roman Catholic dioceses and four Ukrainian Catholic eparchies (Roman Catholic: Calgary, Churchill-Hudson Bay, Edmonton, Grouard-McLennan, Kamloops, Keewatin-Le Pas, Mackenzie-Fort Smith, Nelson, Prince Albert, Prince George, Regina, St. Boniface, St. Paul, Saskatoon, Vancouver, Victoria, Whitehorse and Winnipeg; Ukrainian Catholic: Edmonton, New Westminster, Saskatoon and Winnipeg).

A mass at which St. Boniface Archbishop LeGatt presided was celebrated at St. Boniface Cathedral Feb. 28 with all the bishops, many clergy and religious and laity. The homily was preached by Gagnon.

“This week has been a privileged moment in the life of the church in the west of our country,” Gagnon said. “It is a privileged moment because we as bishops from the western and north-western part of Canada, gathered in assembly, have had the opportunity to reflect on our vocation to serve the People of God and to collaborate with the ordained, the religious men and women, and the

faithful in this great task. What Jesus teaches about service in the Gospel today finds a direct connection with what we know and try to do through our ministry as bishops.

“We stand on the shoulders of the missionaries who came before us, facing different hardships, different challenges and yes, disappointments, but with the same call to mission. After giving his teaching on service, Our Lord also reminds us that he will give his life as a ransom for many. It is truly a humbling experience to read the historical accounts of many of these early missionaries — their witness through physical hardships, the difficulties they faced on the plains and in the north, the triumphs and disappointments. So many of them served with great faith and generosity of heart, sometimes giving up their lives for the Gospel so as to serve the many, before ever seeing the fruits of their labours.

“During this week of assembly we are sharing and dialoguing on many topics of concern, some of which are not only challenging but represent real difficulties and disappointments. There can even be a fear in our hearts about the future and what being faithful to the Gospel might mean for us and the church. Yet the Psalms, which the Jews believe King David wrote, represent attitudes of faith in different circumstances. David was a sinner and he certainly had difficulties, but he remained a remarkable man of faith. Today we hear him say, ‘But I trust in you, O Lord; I say: You are my

God. My times are in your hand, deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. Save me O Lord in your steadfast love.’”

Gagnon concluded: “We ask the Lord to bring much good fruit through our gathering this week and to give us the courage and wisdom necessary for these times.”

of us in the Incarnation,” said the archbishop. “It speaks of God’s desire to be profoundly near, to be where we are, to speak to us in a language that we can understand, and it’s the language of being one with us and living with us.”

The life, death, and resurrection of Christ “is at the very heart of who we are as a Christian community. It’s the mystery of the Word, the will to give everything, even himself on the cross, in order to communicate the radical depth of God’s love.”

Bolen said we are born into a mystery. “We do not really know who we are or what we are here for, but we believe we were created for a purpose, loved by God, who wants nothing more than to transform us into his beloved children with whom he will spend eternity.”

When you are baptized into the faith, Bolen told the catechumens, “you are being immersed in the

faith of which those two mysteries speak. We are grateful that the Holy Spirit has led you in this direction, and we are grateful for those who have helped prepare you for baptism and confirmation.”

He went on to describe the season of Lent in the church: “We are reminded each year that God’s transformative work within us isn’t finished yet. Lent is the last stage of a journey where you are invited to let the superficial things in life slide off to the side and immerse yourself in what God desires for you: to name you as one who is going to carry out Christ’s work in the world so that the world is transformed.”

The Rite of Election is usually held on the first Sunday of Lent. It is the last step in the journey leading to the sacraments of initiation, which the catechumens will receive at the Easter Vigil in their home parishes.



Daryl Hasein

**KNIGHTS RAISE HOSPITAL FUNDS** — At a celebration Feb. 18 with Bishop Mark Hagemoen at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Landis, Sask., representatives of the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus presented the Mount Carmel Knights of Columbus council with a commemorative plaque recognizing their contribution to a recent Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus celebrity dinner, held to raise funds for the Children’s Hospital under construction in Saskatoon. Through the local Knights of Columbus council, the communities of Landis, Handel and area raised \$24,739 toward funding a Knights of Columbus room at the new hospital.



# In an interconnected world, global is now local



## Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

“I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.” The prophet Jeremiah, writing in what were some of the darkest days in the early history of Israel, inspires hope. A covenant had been broken, punishment brought down on a people’s collective house. Still the Lord said he would save them. Yes, their temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed. Yes, they had been forced into their long days of the Babylonian captivity. Still the Lord says, “I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.” Suffer, of course they suffered, but yes they were saved.

I have met Dr. Wayne Horowitz of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem several times. Most recently just a few weeks ago when I heard him speak twice. Normally he teaches Assyriology to students working on Sumerian and Akkadian texts and furthering the understanding of the traditions of these early Middle Eastern civilizations. He was here in the Yukon, though, exploring Athabaskan myth structures; how ancient tales are keep alive in the oral traditions of our First Nations.

Three years ago on an earlier visit I sat in on a presentation of some research he had then just completed. The Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem had accessed a trove of a couple of hundred cuneiform tablets dating from between 572 and 477 BC. This marked a time following the destruction of the first temple in Jerusalem in 587 BC by Nebuchadnezzar and the time up to and following the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire when Cyrus the Great conquered it. Jeremiah lived in the early part of this period.

The archive of cuneiform administrative tablets came from an archaeological excavation of a town identified as

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

Al-Yahudu, or the City of the Jews, in southern Babylonia. While exiled Israelite elites lived in Babylon, the common folk resettled in communities like Al-Yahudu. These tablets provide documentation of the actual life and times of this Judean community during their Babylonian exile. They describe the Judean exiles living peacefully with Arabs and other neighbours in a cosmopolitan atmosphere. They were tasked with rebuilding canals and the tablets document the business transactions key to their lives there.

Cyrus the Great allowed the first Israelites to return after his conquest in 539 BC. The temple in Jerusalem would be rebuilt. However, other external forces would intervene in their history. A Macedonian invasion, civil war, and Roman occupation all preceded the destruction of the second temple in AD 70. We see the repetition of a cycle of sin, suffering, reconciliation and redemption over and over again. As the psalmist says, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.”

Professor Horowitz noted that last remnants of that Israelite community dating from the Babylonian exile sought repatriation to Israel from mounting strife in modern Iraq in the 1950s. This movement continued up until just a few years ago, some 2,500 years after the events Jeremiah experienced. The cycle continued leading them to seek the semblance of a peaceful haven back in Israel.

<b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>Jeremiah 31:31-34</b>
	<b>Psalm 51</b>
<b>March 18, 2018</b>	<b>Hebrews 5:7-9</b>
	<b>John 12: 20-33</b>

In the second reading from the Letter to the Hebrews, which is attributed to Paul, we are offered another view of the humanity of Jesus. “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.” Through his obedient acceptance of his trials, his suffering, he “was made” perfect. This glimpse of his humanity presents us with a model. How should we respond to the suffering in our world today?

Over the millennia, I would like to believe that humanity has grown in an awareness and understanding of the salvific journey we are on. Albeit haltingly and with enormous pain, we struggle forward in the recognition and

acceptance of our oneness. Skin colour, language, religion, gender, class and a host of factors have divided us. Step by



step barriers have been hurdled. Slavery is no longer acceptable, though we know human trafficking still exists. The ideal of gender parity is taken for granted, but huge gaps in practice remain. The “divine” right of one people to rule over another is seen as ludicrous today, however, seemingly foreordained economic systems condemn former colonies to a grinding poverty still benefiting the far-off privileged.

Today is Solidarity Sunday. A national Share Lent collection will be taken as it has been for the last 51 years. The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace created by our bishops perceived the need decades ago to open our national church community to the world. If we could recognize the global root causes of the pain and suffering afflicting our sisters and brothers in the Global South, maybe the blinders would be lifted from our eyes to the suffering in our own communities as well.

Thinking globally and acting locally has been a mantra for many. In our increasingly interconnected world we cannot escape the fact that the global now is local. We, of necessity, share responsibilities such as ensuring the health of our environment. War in a distant corner of the planet eventually affects us all. People struggling to survive on \$2 a day in South Sudan can no longer be ignored, nor can those without clean drinking water on a northern reserve.

In John’s Gospel Jesus speaks of his impending suffering and also our salvation.

# In ache for earthly immortality we forget it is God who makes us special

## In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



We share the world with more than seven-and-a-half billion people and each of us has the irrepressible, innate sense that we are special and uniquely destined. This isn’t surprising since each one of us is indeed unique and special. But how does one feel special among seven-and-a-half billion others?

We try to stand out. Generally we don’t succeed, and so, as Allan Jones puts it, “We nurse within our hearts the hope that we are different, that we are special, that we are extraordinary. We long for the assurance that our birth was no accident, that a god had a hand in our coming to be, that we exist by divine fiat. We ache for a cure for

the ultimate disease of mortality. Our madness comes when the pressure is too great and we fabricate a vital lie to cover up the fact that we are mediocre, accidental, mortal. We fail to see the glory of the Good News. The vital lie is unnecessary because all the things we truly long for have been freely given us.”

All of us know what those words mean: we sense that we are extraordinary, precious, and significant, irrespective of our practical fortunes in life. Deep down we have the feeling that we are uniquely loved and specially called to a life of meaning and significance. We know too, though more in faith than in feeling, that we are precious, not on the basis of what we accomplish, but rather on the basis of having been created and loved by God.

But this intuition, however deep in our souls, invariably wilts in the face of trying to live a life that’s unique and special in a world in which billions of others are also trying to do the same thing. And so we can be over-

whelmed by a sense of our own mediocrity, anonymity, and mortality and begin to fear that we’re not precious, but are merely another-among-many, nobody special, one of billions, living among billions.

When we feel like this, we are tempted to believe that we are precious and unique only when we accomplish something that precisely sets us apart and ensures that we will be remembered. For most of us, the task of our lives then becomes that of guaranteeing our own preciousness, meaning, and immortality because, at the end of the day, we believe that this is contingent upon our own accomplishments, on creating our own specialness.

And so we struggle to be content with ordinary lives of anonymity, hidden in God. Rather, we try to stand out, to leave a mark, to accomplish something extraordinary, and so ensure that we will be recognized and remembered. Few things impede our peace and happiness as does this effort. We set for ourselves the impossible, frustrating task of assuring for ourselves something only God can give us: significance and immortality. Ordinary life then never seems enough for us, and we live restless, competitive, driven lives. Why isn’t ordinary life enough for us? Why do our lives always seem too small and not exciting enough? Why do we

habitually feel dissatisfied at not being special?

Why our need to leave a mark? Why does our own situation often feel so suffocating? Why can’t we more easily embrace each other as sisters and brothers and rejoice in each other’s gifts and each other’s existence? Why the perennial feeling that the other is a rival? Why the need for masks, for pretense, to project a certain image about ourselves?

The answer: We do all of these things to try to set ourselves apart because we are trying to give ourselves something that only God can give us: significance and immortality.

Scripture tells us that “faith alone saves.” That simple line reveals the secret: Only God gives eternal life. Preciousness, meaning, significance and immortality are free gifts from God and we would be a whole lot more restful, peaceful, humble, grateful, happy, and less competitive if we could believe that. A humble, ordinary life, shared

with billions of others, would then contain enough to give us a sense of our preciousness, meaning, and significance.

Thomas Merton, on one of his less restless days, wrote: “It is enough to be, in an ordinary human mode, with one’s hunger and sleep, one’s cold and warmth, rising and going to bed. Putting on blankets and taking them off, making coffee and then drinking it. Defrosting the refrigerator, reading, meditating, working, praying. I live as my Fathers have lived on this earth, until eventually I die. Amen. There is no need to make an assertion of my life, especially so about it as mine, though doubtless it is not somebody else’s. I must learn to live so as to gradually forget program and artifice.”

Ordinary life is enough. There isn’t any need to make an assertion with our lives. Our preciousness and meaning lie within the preciousness and meaning of life itself, not in having to accomplish something special.

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# Some film choices that rise above meaningless fare

## Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



A visit to the multiplex can be depressing beyond the overpriced snacks and “entertainment” options in the lobby. When bombarded by multiple noisy trailers for meaningless “coming attractions” before the main feature, I want to cover my eyes and ears. There’s a lot to avoid. (You couldn’t pay me to see soft-porn dross like *Fifty Shades Freed*.) That’s not to say that everything film festivals show is great. Sundance premiered a buddy “comedy,” *The Long Dumb Road*, that was, well, long and dumb. But their high-quality selections give one hope.

Where to turn? If you have not yet seen the Oscar nominees (for the full list see: <http://oscar.go.com/>) check your local listings to see if any are playing. (A few of the best picture nominees are available to rent on iTunes: *Dunkirk*, *Darkest*

*Hour, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, *Get Out*. Best animated film nominees available to rent include *Coco* and *Loving Vincent*. Some films in other categories can also be found to rent, on Netflix, or online.)

Several new films in wide release are worth a look. One is the latest from 87-year-old director Clint Eastwood, *The 15:17 to Paris* (<http://www.1517toparis.com/>), referring to the incident on Aug. 21, 2015, when, travelling on an Amsterdam to Paris train, three young Americans stopped a heavily armed terrorist from carrying out a massacre. That real life-and-death situation contrasts with the contrived mayhem aboard trains of the recent Liam Neeson crime thriller, *The Commuter*.

Unusually, rather than casting

the three — Spencer Stone, Alek Skarlatos, and Anthony Sadler — play themselves, reprising what brought them together on a European vacation, and re-enacting the fateful moments when, aided by a British passenger, they were able to subdue the attacker who had 300 rounds of ammunition. Consistent with Eastwood’s spare filmmaking style, sensitive without being sentimental, it’s an effective approach to dramatic recreation that captures the heroism of these ordinary young guys faced with a life-altering choice.

Except for a few flashes that prefigure the struggle on the train, Eastwood builds up to it slowly through the backstory of the trio as boyhood friends who meet at a Christian school in Sacramento. Anthony is African-American. Spencer and Alek are from single-parent families. They love “playing war” and sometimes get in trouble, though nothing too serious. Spencer and Alek both join the military. The chubby Spencer especially grows up wanting to prove himself and to “save lives.” It is he who will directly confront the shooter, Ayoub El Khazani (Ray Corasani), in the line of fire. Here is living proof of the movie’s tagline that “in the face of fear ordinary people can do the extraordinary,” fully deserving of the concluding tribute by former French president François Hollande in awarding the Americans the *Legion d’honneur*.

Eastwood tends to be regarded as a conservative icon, associated with movies about masculine action, violence and war. But that is a superficial assessment that ignores the compassionate, soulful quality with which this master filmmaker approaches his subjects. (See the fine appreciation by Calum Marsh, “Compassionate machismo,” in *The National Post*, Feb. 10.) It’s no accident that Eastwood twice has Spencer recite the Prayer of St. Francis on screen, and with obvious sincerity.

Paul McGuigan’s *Film Stars Don’t Die in Liverpool* gets terrific performances from Annette Bening as the aging American actress Gloria Grahame who, while working the Liverpool stage in England in 1979, attracted a much younger boyfriend, an aspiring actor named Peter Turner, played by Jamie Bell. Adapted from Turner’s memoir, we can see why he was smitten by Grahame’s vivacious if chronically insecure persona. The four-times-married Grahame was a screen beauty, best known for winning an Oscar for *The Bad and the Beautiful* in 1952, my birth year. The young Turner, in a vulnerable phase, bisexual and still living at home, was seduced by her charm. Bell is at his best since his breakout role as a teenage ballet phenom in *Billy Elliot* (2000) and still shows he has the moves in a great dance



Warner Bros.

**EASTWOOD’S LATEST — Alek Skarlatos, Anthony Sadler and Spencer Stone portray themselves in *The 15:17 to Paris*. While on a backpacking trip in 2015 through Europe, their Paris-bound train was attacked by a terrorist and the three childhood friends were able to subdue him, saving the lives of the more than 500 passengers on-board the train.**

sequence that wins his character’s heart.

Peter followed Gloria to sunny California, her funky beachside abode the site of a delicious dinner scene with Gloria’s mother (a cameo by the great Vanessa Redgrave) and sharp-tongued sister. Then it was on to New York City where, concealing a cancer diagnosis from him, her rebuffs ended the relationship. Back in England in 1981, she collapsed after a performance and was hospitalized. Desperate for respite, she reached out to Peter and his supportive family (especially the nonsense mother played by Julie Walters, who was also the mom in

authorities her legal name is still Daniel. Although Orlando’s brother, Gabo, is sympathetic, she suffers much worse treatment from the immediate family, especially ex-wife Sonia and son Bruno, who demand to take back anything the couple shared (car, apartment, a beloved dog) and try to exclude her from any memorials. There’s even a demeaning physical assault.

Through all these indignities Marina maintains her dignity and identity. She gets moral support in a scene with her singing teacher in which he cites from the prayer of St. Francis. The power of love proves stronger than prejudice.

- The 15:17 to Paris (U.S.)
- Film Stars Don’t Die in Liverpool (U.K.)
- A Fantastic Woman (Chile/Germany/Spain)
- The Party (U.K.)
- The Young Karl Marx (France/Belgium/Germany)

*Billy Elliot*). They stayed by her side when the truth could no longer be ignored. Gloria always wanted to play Shakespeare’s Juliet, and there’s a touching scene in this poignant romance when Peter as her caring Romeo arranges a parting wish fulfilment that is indeed such sweet sorrow.

Starting with the best of the following three features that premiered at the February 2017 Berlin film festival is Chilean director Sebastián Lelio’s multiple award-winning and Oscar-nominated *A Fantastic Woman* (nominated for best foreign-language film), which opens with a stunning image of the Iguazu Falls I visited over 40 years ago. Transgender actor Daniela Vega gives a brave, moving performance as a young transgender woman, Marina, who has entered into a loving relationship with an older man, Orlando.

While pursuing a singing career she waits tables. After celebrating her birthday joy turns to grief when Orlando suffers an aneurysm, collapses and dies in hospital. The bruises he suffered falling down stairs at their apartment bring on a police investigation. In the eyes of the brusque

There’s no visit to the falls but, as grace flows, Marina gets to say a last goodbye. She will get something back. She will be herself. She will sing. A fantastic woman indeed.

Writer-director Sally Potter’s *The Party* (<http://www.theparty-film.co.uk/>), filmed in black and white, is a brisk satirical romp that deftly skewers the elite London trappings, foibles and conceits of Britain’s political and chattering classes. The hosts are Janet (Kristin Scott Thomas), a rising politician celebrating being named shadow minister of health, and her arch academic husband Bill (Timothy Spall). Guests include April (Patricia Clarkson), a waspish old American friend of Janet’s who shows up with flaky German boyfriend Gottfried (Bruno Ganz), several university acquaintances of Bill’s — Martha (Cherry Jones) and pregnant partner Jinny (Emily Mortimer) — and a cocaine-snorting banker, Tom (Cillian Murphy), whose wife Marianne has yet to arrive.

The stage is set for this first-rate acting ensemble to deliver. Secrets are served up and the

— NETFLIX, page 17



Janice Weber

### Winter’s Night

My face pinched and tingling from a bitter cold  
and footsteps crunching on this night’s crisp snow.  
Under a sheer dark heaven,  
the sounds of life echo sharp and clear.  
Again, in the midst of this night,  
I ponder the road ahead,  
a pilgrim at a milestone.

Falling snow invites deep listening  
to the heart alone and adrift —  
but still open, still open  
to the vast spaces.

In the inner caverns, I quest  
with my miner’s light  
touching the walls of my soul  
to secure each ginger step  
and all the while, led in trust  
by the glow in the deep.

On this winter’s night  
the cold refreshes my spirit  
and wakens me to life  
as snow leads me home  
to rest by the fire  
with old friends,  
rum and eggnog  
in our hands.

By Michael Dallaire





# Reconciliation will be a priority

By Bishop-elect Jon Hansen, CSSR

In a few short days I will be ordained as the seventh bishop of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese. There have been many preparations to consider, one of which was coming up with a “coat of arms” and its accompanying motto. The motto is meant to be a mission statement in brief, signifying what it is that I see as the most salient issue as I begin my work in the diocese. For me, that would be the ongoing work of reconciliation between the church and the indigenous people of Canada.

My motto, “Truth and Reconciliation,” is the same as the name given to the commission organized by the parties of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The work of this commission inspired me but there is so much more to reconciliation and what it means for our diocese.

Since the time of the commission there have been great strides toward justice and personal heal-

ing. These are important and fundamental steps. But in order to truly get to the heart of reconciliation it is necessary to take the next step, which is about relationship. This is not an easy step because building and restoring relationships can be messy and the outcome of our efforts is not entirely in our control. We may get bruised and battered along the way, but the pains will be more than worth it.

In my two years as a pastor in the Arctic region of the diocese I have seen some wonderful steps being made toward relationship building. One example was a young missionary family moving into the rectory in Tsiigehtchic to look after the church for a year. The relationships between them and the community formed first and most quickly through their five children who made friends at the school. As the children of the community came over to play, the parents soon followed and the rectory became known as a place of joy and a safe place to be and where good memories could be made.



Hansen has a background in restoring buildings.

## Bishop Jon Hansen’s Coat of Arms

**Galero.** The ecclesiastical hat, called a galero, was originally a pilgrim’s hat like a sombrero. A bishop’s galero is green with six tassels on each side.

**Processional Cross** The display of a cross behind the shield is used to denote a bishop. The cross of an ordinary bishop has a single horizontal bar or traverse, also known as a Latin cross.

**Shield** The shield is the normal device for displaying a coat of arms. In this case Bishop Hansen has chosen the profile of a Norse shield as an homage to his Scandinavian ancestry.

**Tincture** Tinctures constitute the palette of colours and patterns used in heraldry. On Bishop Hansen’s shield, Silver (White) indicates the vast land of the Canadian north, frozen even in the height of summer. In heraldry silver represents Peace and Sincerity. Blue calls to mind the waters of the *Deh-cho* (Mackenzie River) and the Arctic ocean, the furthestmost extent of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese. In heraldry blue represents Truth.

**Symbols** The symbols on the shield point to unique identifying characteristics of its bearer such as family of origin, accomplishments and personal interests.



❖ **Julehjerte** The Danish Christmas Heart is a handmade, paper ornament traditionally hung on the Christmas tree and filled with candies for children to find on Christmas morning. The Julehjerte represents Bishop Hansen’s Danish heritage. The red and white bands mimic both the colours of the Danish national flag as well as the Canadian flag, which is the country of Bishop Hansen’s birth. In heraldry the heart is a symbol of deep affection.

❖ **Cross** The stylized cross, flanked by the instruments of Christ’s passion, is taken from the seal of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer and represents Bishop Hansen’s lifelong connection to the Redemptorists. The Redemptorists are a missionary order founded by St. Alphonsus Liguori dedicated to preaching the Gospel to the most poor and abandoned.

❖ **Umbo** The Umbo or shield boss is multivalent representing the Midnight Sun of the Arctic summer solstice. During this time the sun never sets, like the heavenly city “that has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and there will be no night there.” (Rev 21:23, 25) As a symbol of light, it also ties Bishop Hansen to the papacy of Pope Francis, referencing the Holy Father’s first encyclical *Lumen Fidei*, which describes the Light of Faith which leads to truth. From the umbo water flows referencing the river flowing from the temple where everything, “will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes.” (Ez 47)

**Motto** Bishop Hansen’s motto translates into English as “Truth and Reconciliation.” It was inspired by the commission organized by the parties of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The commission was part of a holistic and comprehensive response to the abuse inflicted on indigenous peoples through the Indian residential school system, and the harmful legacy of those institutions. The commission was officially established on June 2, 2008, and was completed in December 2015. The motto is a reminder that, though the commission has ended, the Calls to Action must not be forgotten and the ongoing work of reconciliation must continue in the North and across Canada. This work continues the labour of Christ who said of himself, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” (Jn 14:6) and through whom “God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” (Col 1:20)

Reconciliation is made known by its fruit which is sometimes visible: when the phone is ringing, or people are knocking at the door looking to come in and visit. More often the signs of reconciliation are subtle and hard to quantify. It is like beautiful art which is hard to describe, but you know it when you see it. There will also be effects of our reconciliation efforts which only God will know.

Reconciliation is not something that we can put on a timeline and schedule but, rather, it requires patience and perseverance on our part. It is also not something that we do through our will alone, but it requires God’s grace and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We don’t control the outcome but can only make ourselves open and available to God’s help and the people around us.

As I make the transition from a pastor to a bishop I am already very encouraged by the signs that I see, the first being the graciousness and welcome that has been shown to me by so many people in the diocese. It will be my joy to continue working on strengthening these relationships and forming new ones in my role as bishop.

I will do this to the best of my ability by going out to meet with the people wherever they are. Please do

come and visit the church on Sunday but expect that the church will also come and visit you.

The church will help you to share your faith with your children in a way that honours both God and the culture in which you were raised. At the same time, I hope that you will share your culture with me too.

The church will walk with you as you journey through your life sharing the gift of the sacraments and will also join with you joyfully in your own family celebrations and milestones.

The church will be there to celebrate with you at weddings, baptisms and feasts and will also suffer alongside you at funerals and at the bedsides of your sick and elderly.

The church will continue to build with you as we restore beloved old churches and, where necessary, build new ones so that there will always be a place of welcome and worship in the communities.

There is much to be done but it is a work of love and meaning that will serve us now as well as future generations. Let us continue this work together moving forward with hope.



Baptism makes us “living stones” in God’s building.



# Reflections on gaining, and then losing, a new pastor

By Sheila O’Kane

Our pastoral lives were turned upside down by an announcement from Rome: “His Holiness Pope Francis today named Father Jon Hansen, CSsR, Bishop of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith.” At the time of his appointment, he was pastor of Our Lady of Victory parish in Inuvik, Northwest Territories.

Our Lady of Victory is a small little parish situated on the east bank of the “big” or “great” river (“The Mackenzie” “*Kuukpak*” in Inuvialuktun and “*Nagwichoonjik*” in Gwich’in). We mostly have had the benefit of a resident pastor — but not always — which means we’ve grown to be an independent and self-reliant little faith community, as have those living in the neighbouring missions of Paulatuk, Tsiigehtchic, and Tuktoyaktuk.

In the summer of 2015, we were on our own again as our most recent pastor, Fr. Magnus Chilaka, was reassigned to St. Joseph’s Cathedral Parish in Fort Smith. Then we heard that a certain Fr. Jon Hansen, from St. Mary’s Parish in Saskatoon was to be our new pastor. Some of us immediately Googled as much as we could about both this Fr. Hansen and his Saskatoon parish.

Fr. Jon (“Fr. John” for those of us whose anglo-tongues have difficulty navigating Danish sounds) arrived early in August 2015 in what has become a legendary

*O’Kane is a parishioner and neighbour.*



Our Lady of Victory Parish, Inuvik, Northwest Territories

manner . . . driving a modest little vehicle with a *qajaq*, or more specifically a *qajavialuk*, (translation: kayak) strapped to its roof.

My first impression, past the kayak, was “Wow, this fellow sure knows how to live minimally.” He immediately connected with many of the local citizenry via our local “Inuvik Buy Sell Trade” Facebook page and held a yard sale. A good way to “downsize stuff” and raise a little money for the parish and also a novel way to meet the local citizenry. For several days the rectory yard was full of cars and pickup trucks with local folk seeking

yard sale bargains, and coincidentally meeting the new Roman Catholic pastor.

In preparing to write this article, I contacted a good percentage of the parish and missions faithful, and to a person everyone commented on how they were immediately struck by Fr. Jon’s easy-going, friendly manner (and while everyone is happy to have him as a bishop, *everyone* expressed how much they will miss him).

As a parish we very quickly settled into a comfortable relationship with our new pastor. Same for members of our three neighbour-

ing mission communities which are also included under the Inuvik pastor’s pastoral care. As someone said, “He fit like a glove.” Again, and again, members of our local parish and the missions remarked on how quickly Fr. Jon adapted to the people and the land. Everyone was awed by the fact that Fr. Jon had actually journeyed north two years earlier, driving the length of the Dempster Highway, up and back, with his father. It is said that as he stood at the ferry crossing at Tsiigehtchic, he looked up at Our Lady of Grace Mission Church perched on a bluff overlooking the Arctic, Red and Mackenzie Rivers and voiced his desire to return — which he did — and now he is leaving.

We recognize the hand and grace of the Great Almighty is leading Fr. Jon to a higher, wider calling — and we give thanks for being blessed to have him as our bishop. But, oh, are we ever going to miss him as our pastor! Let me “count the ways”:

- his friendly smile, his kindness, his warm and accepting ways, his sense of humour;
- his sermons — mentioned frequently and described as “heartfelt,” “inspiring,” “meaningful,” “practical,” “reflective”;
- his commitment to the whole region as evidenced by his regular contact with the mission communities, and the way he brought many of his Redemptorist confreres to help in this regard;
- the way in which he so immediately embraced the land and the people, walking about, visiting and having tea, visiting camps

(reminiscent of the old missionaries who embraced local cultures and built intercultural bridges);

● the way in which he quietly slipped into the rhythm of the communities, gardening at the local community greenhouse (we won’t go into detail regarding almost infesting the local post office with escaping, mail-ordered, composting worms), displaying his Arctic photos at the Image Festival, visiting camps (he made good use of his kayak and new-to-him Ski-Doo), advising at the local Emergency Warming Centre, visiting Elders in their homes and at the Inuvik hospital’s long-term care unit, maintaining a parish Facebook account and parish website;

● his help with, and support of, our weekend community lunches (Saturday and Sunday lunches for those without kitchens or homes of their own). We’ll especially miss his potato salads!

● his help with, and support of, our local Saint Vincent de Paul initiatives, doing the “heavy lifting” — manhandling the heavy doors of the sea cans, building storage shelves within the sea cans; lugging bins in and out of these same sea cans;

● his fundraising initiatives, which really helped the parish pull back from the brink of financial distress.

In summary, “Fr. Jon was a true gift to the church and the community. He will certainly be missed, but we know he will do a great job in his new position as bishop for the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese.”

## Vocational background to newly appointed Bishop Hansen

By M.C. Havey, archivist, Edmonton-Toronto Redemptorists

Since moving to Inuvik as pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish in 2015, Fr. Jon Hansen has raised the awareness of the missions of western Canadian Arctic on many aspects.

Through superb photographs and captivating updates, he has chronicled lyrically about the mission territory, describing glimpses of daily life, the contrasts of scenery, weather and the culture, intertwining the contemporary social, environmental, political issues with spirituality.

From the July 2017 update, Fr.

Hansen described the annual Great Northern Arts Festival, which encompassed painting, carving, music and dance performances, noting that the Inuvik church, known as the “Igloo Church,” hosts many music concerts due to the seating capacity and domed ceiling. The arts scene in the north, he wrote, “truly is multi-hued canvas influenced both by and in reaction to the extremes of nature found here. . . . Through creativity of our imaginations and the work of our hands we bless God through the beauty of our art.”

Besides Inuvik, he provided care for the missions of Tsiigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk. Of these communities, he wrote in “Com-

munity Connections” in 2015.

“What these communities share is the friendliness and welcoming attitude of the people. While there is a real sense of independence and self-reliance, it does not hinder the desire for relationship and community-building. . . . There is also pain here. Social issues and addiction are evident. The legacy of the residential school system is a memory that is not very distant and although there is deep spirituality among the people, resistance and a cautious attitude toward the church is sometimes apparent.

“Ministry here requires more listening and less talking, more time spent being present with and less presiding over, more consoling and less cajoling, taking the time to first listen, learn and discern what the Spirit is asking while I am in this magnificent land among these wonderful people.”

His profound passion, appreciation and understanding of the North may be rooted in Danish ancestry and a childhood in Northern Alberta. Although born in Edmonton at Misericordia Hospital on Feb. 18, 1967, Jon grew up in Grande Prairie, where the family moved for his father’s work in commercial construction. His parents, Paul Hansen and Karen Falkenberg-Anderson, both immigrants from Denmark and Lutherans, converted to Catholicism in the absence of the

Lutheran presence in their area.

The family attended the Redemptorist parish of St. Joseph’s, where Jon remembered a young Redemptorist Fr. Dino Benedet and Brother Leo Insell, visiting school talking about vocations. Jon attended the local schools of St. Gerard’s, St. Patrick’s Junior High School and St. Joseph’s High School before enrolling in a pre-med program at Grande Prairie Regional College and working at Sports World and the Stuart Olsen Construction Co. In the spring of 1986, he attended a vocation retreat led by Fr. David Purcell at the Redemptorist Clement House in Edmonton.

For the next eight years, he experienced different aspects of life as a philosophy student at the University of Alberta while living at Clement House, a student and graduate of Building Construction Engineering Technology at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, an employee of the



Archbishop Arthe Guimond ordained Fr. Jon to the priesthood on April 24, 2004.



Hansen was part of the Redemptorist novitiate class of 1997 - 98.

Flint Engineering Co., and of McLean-Young Construction (1990 - 1993), where his father also worked, and a traveller on a

— LONG HISTORY, page 14



# Hansen spent six years at St. Mary's in Saskatoon

By Eileen Provost, Saskatoon

I shared parish ministry with Fr. Jon for six years at St. Mary's Parish in Saskatoon. Together, we prepared children and older students for the sacraments of initiation, reconciliation, confirmation and eucharist. St. Mary's had the honour of being one of the parishes to pilot the "New Restored Order" of these sacraments. As a catechist, Fr. Jon made sharing the "good news" joyful and easily understood for the children. They loved his stories and his steadfast faithfulness by being present to them, their parents and sponsors. We created a small community within our larger parish community.

After settling into his new home, I invited Fr. Jon to speak with the children at our "Welcome Celebration." One could tell the children were drawn to him as he shared with us how he discerned through prayer, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to say "yes" to the call to come to St. Mary's. That reflection and personal sharing told me that God had called a "diamond — albeit a bit "in the rough" — into our midst. We were indeed blessed.

We were drawn to Fr. Jon because of his expression of joy in serving us. This made it so easy to approach him. Being an attentive listener, Fr. Jon was a person who

*Provost is catechist at St. Mary's Parish, Saskatoon.*

walked with us and among us. He was a good shepherd caring for each one as needed.

As time went on Fr. Jon's many "gifts" continued to reveal themselves. One had to listen and watch because he taught by personal example. In this sense Fr. Jon was a teacher and one could miss that due to his humble and honest approach and because of that approach it was easy to work with him. Additionally, Fr. Jon was a man of few words, and the few words that were spoken, compelled one to think, and to re-examine situations in the light of his insights.

Many parishioners and guests to our parish often remarked on the uniqueness of Fr. Jon's homilies; and, like Jesus who inspired and guided his chosen, Fr. Jon was able to take the "good news" and relate it to life and daily living. We loved his storytelling, especially when he shared his own experiences.

In his pastoral ministry, there were always "elements" of surprise and the "unexpected," which never allowed us to "label" him or put him in a box. I remember one day looking for Fr. Jon to review and prepare our next celebration for the children and there he was on the roof of the church repairing a leak. Another time I found him busy rebuilding an enclosure on the back entrance of the rectory. But it didn't stop there. He could be found chopping and removing trees that were blocking a side-



Hansen poses with the confirmation class at St. Mary's Parish, Saskatoon.

walk, discussing with the maintenance committee what to do about the puddles of water in our basement or just "hanging out" with the "homeless" at the back of the church.

Bottom line, Fr. Jon would see something needing to be done and

he would do it! He was a man of action.

Being a lover of silence, one felt a peace in Fr. Jon's presence. He was at home and very in tune with himself so there was no doubt in my mind that he was a man of prayer. Out of this came good coun-

sel. Many friends shared with me how his homilies, his conversations with them and his reflections at retreats helped them heal as they walked their own personal journeys. I have often thought to myself that to touch people, like Jesus did, one must pray because "Christian discernment" and "decision-making" are not possible without prayer as their foundation and it was eminently clear that prayer was the substance of Fr. Jon's work.

Pomp, formalism and parades were not his style. At times, he would be "playful" and "full of fun" and this brought out the beautiful child in him. We loved that side of him too especially when he was with the children.

In 2015, Fr. Jon was called to a new mission in Inuvik. While there may have been sadness in our hearts we knew that he was needed elsewhere, and God was calling him, perhaps "preparing" him, for a new mission that he had yet to reveal. That Fr. Jon has been missed as St. Mary's is an understatement, but we celebrate with him as he embraces this new undertaking God has called him to.

In closing, Fr. Jon, please know that we will always carry within our hearts the richness that you brought to our St. Mary's Parish community. Specifically, your spirit of "wisdom" which enabled us to make good decisions; your spirit of "understanding" in helping us love one another (especially those less fortunate than ourselves); your sense of "right judgment" and "leadership" that helped us remain strong in our Catholic values and our faith, and your "spirit of courage" that helped us to remain brave when sharing the "Good News."

You reminded us also to carry our everyday crosses proudly. Fr. Jon, you shared with us the "spirit of knowledge" as you taught us to love, and learn, and how to better imitate Christ. Thank you for these and for sharing your gift of "awe and wonder" and your love of God's great creation.

## Overview of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith

By Jim Lynn, chancellor of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese

To truly appreciate the long and momentous history of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith one really has to go back to Fr. Alexandre Taché, OMI, who in 1847 made the trip from Saint Boniface, Man., to Fort Chipewyan Northern Territory. After three weeks of intensive religious instruction, some 194 baptisms were celebrated.

These first fruits led many native people of Northern Canada to adopt the Catholic faith. Hundreds of missionaries (priests, sisters and brothers) would follow Fr. Taché in crossing lakes, rivers, forests and tundra, in all conditions, to as far as the Arctic Circle by 1857.

These priests, brothers, and religious served under a number of bishops as the boundaries of the Vicariate transformed with the "changing of times." They established many missions throughout the territory, building churches, hospitals and schools and bringing people to the Lord.

In 1967, the Vicariate of Mackenzie became the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. Under the leadership of Bishop Paul Piché, OMI, it was clear "these times they are a changing." Mission schools and hospitals were now government-run and there was a lack of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

In 1960 the diocese was composed of 60 Oblate priests, 40 brothers and 112 Grey Nuns. These religious men and women did everything from running hospitals, to building and maintaining mission buildings and institutions to

instructing the faith and celebrating the sacraments.

In 2018 there are two Polish Oblates, one Oblate brother, one Redemptorist (our bishop-elect), one priest on loan from New Brunswick and three priests from Nigeria (one religious and two

diocesan priests) and five religious women.

An important fact to be noted is that some 40 missionaries died in tragic circumstances (lost in storms, drowned, shot or frozen) since the early days of the northern church.

Just as the church has changed, so have society and the people the church serves. Life in the north has gone from isolated remote communities where everyone lived off the land to today, where many are working two weeks out at one of the mines and then home for two weeks. This new environment and lifestyle is taking a toll on faith and family life.

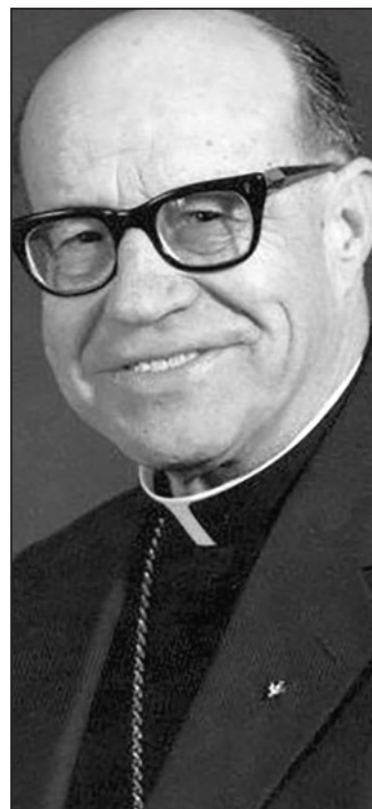
The church continues to adapt to these "changing times." Vatican II clearly acknowledged the place and role of ordinary lay Catholic. In the late 1980s Bishop Denis Croteau wanted to hear from the people what their needs were. A Diocesan Synod was envisioned and over three years Croteau listened with his heart to the needs and wishes of those he served. As a result, at the conclusion of the Diocesan Synod in July 1991, many — mainly Aboriginal people — stepped forward to assume leadership roles as pastoral leaders.

These pastoral leaders were trained and supported to lead the Sunday liturgy of the Word and communion services. Many of these same pastoral leaders continue today to gather the faithful on Sundays and assist with sacramental preparation as well as marry and bury members of their community.

Most of the 35 native missions have a lay-led celebration every Sunday, with the bishop or priest



Fr. Alexandre Taché, OMI



Bishop Paul Piché, OMI

making a visit every three or four months. This is hardly the ideal for a church, where the role of the priest (eucharist and reconciliation) is so essential. It is, however, good that the church has recognized and encouraged the laity to exercise the priesthood of their own baptism.

Where to from here in the life of the northern church? More of the same may be the case for some time. However, this commitment to faith and community becomes more difficult as many young people do not have the same dedication

— CREATOR, page 13



# Redemptorists celebrate ordination of Hansen

It is with mixed emotions that the Redemptorists of the Edmonton-Toronto province celebrate the ordination of their brother, Fr. Jon Hansen, CSsR, as bishop of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. However, those mixed emotions flow for the very best of reasons!

We celebrate with joy the choice of Jon for this office; as the church has discerned his qualifications and called him forth, we Redemptorists — our ordained members, lay missionaries and our associates — take great pride that one of our own is entrusted with the episcopal ministry to serve as shepherd, brother, companion and friend the people of Mackenzie-Fort Smith.

However, in truth, we are saddened to see him depart from among us Redemptorists in the way we have known him. Jon will always be a Redemptorist in his heart as well as ours. As Redemptorists we have studied, worked and lived with him for the past few decades, and it has been a blessing to share life and ministry with him. We will miss him because his presence with us has been a true gift; however, it is the nature of a gift that it be shared. We have shared in the gift of Jon, and now the people of his diocese will share in that same gift.

Jon has always been a person of a simpler life and style. It is one of the reasons why he resonated with the religious life shaped by the vow of poverty. Jon's quiet way showed us that a simpler, uncomplicated attitude in a complex world is a strength and blessing. It has guided him in his own life and it helped us in the many Redemptorist ministries that Jon participated in during his years with our province. For those who know Jon, you have come to learn that his quiet simplicity brings with it not only confidence in him, but also wisdom. We Redemptorists can say with sincerity, this confidence and wisdom will now serve the people of Mackenzie-Fort Smith well.

We have also seen Jon's great love for the poor and the marginalized. It was for the poor and marginalized in the hills of Scala, Italy in 1732 that the Redemptorist founder, St. Alphonsus Liguori, founded the Redemptorists. Since we have come to know Jon, he has heard and treasured that same charism.

When Jon was at St. Patrick's Church in Toronto, he became closely involved with Out of the Cold program hosted by our parish to provide a hot meal and a warm, safe shelter to people who lived on the street during the winter months. Also in Toronto he was

part of an effort called, "Becoming Neighbours" which helped refugees settle and find community in a new city and country. His time as pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Saskatoon saw him care for the poor of the parish in the many ways that parish does. But it was his call north that perhaps stands out above all.

Jon has always had a deep love for northern Canada, its land, its waters, and its people. When he sought to minister up there, we Redemptorists sent him there with our support and blessing because we saw in this effort our own charism, as well as hearing a call from within Jon that had to be followed. We see that in a real way, Jon has found his home among the land and peoples of northern Canada. We see his call to serve as

bishop to be a natural consequence of this most recent call, and of his Redemptorist heart.

And so we let go of him with, yes, a sense of sadness, but it is consoled by the joy of knowing that he is following the call of God and the call of Alphonsus to this next chapter in his life. As Redempto-

rists, we know that we and Jon will always be bound together by the Alphonsian charism we share.

To the people of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, we entrust our brother to you and we know that you will be as blessed by his presence among you, as we were while he was among us.



Tuktoyaktuk Drum Dancers at a community feast.

## For untold generations, native peoples had relationship with Creator

Continued from page 12

to the Lord and church as did their elders. The culture of the Dene people considers a man incomplete without the companionship of a woman. For this significant reason and others, there

have been no vocations or ordinations to the priesthood in the nearly 175 years of church presence in the territory.

As other rites in the Catholic faith, and now our rite accepts married priests from our Anglican brothers, maybe it is time to reach

out and open the doors and prayerfully foster vocations from our Aboriginal people, who are a very spiritual people.

In summary, the words of St. John Paul II, speaks to the background and history of the diocese as well as the hope for the future.

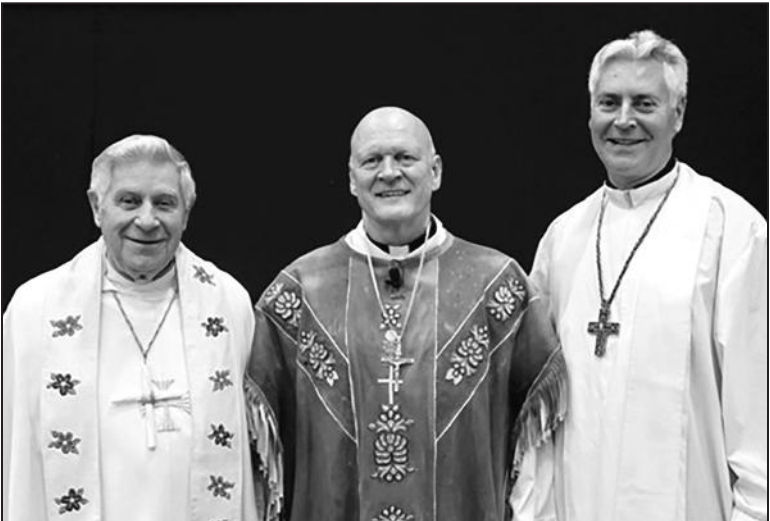
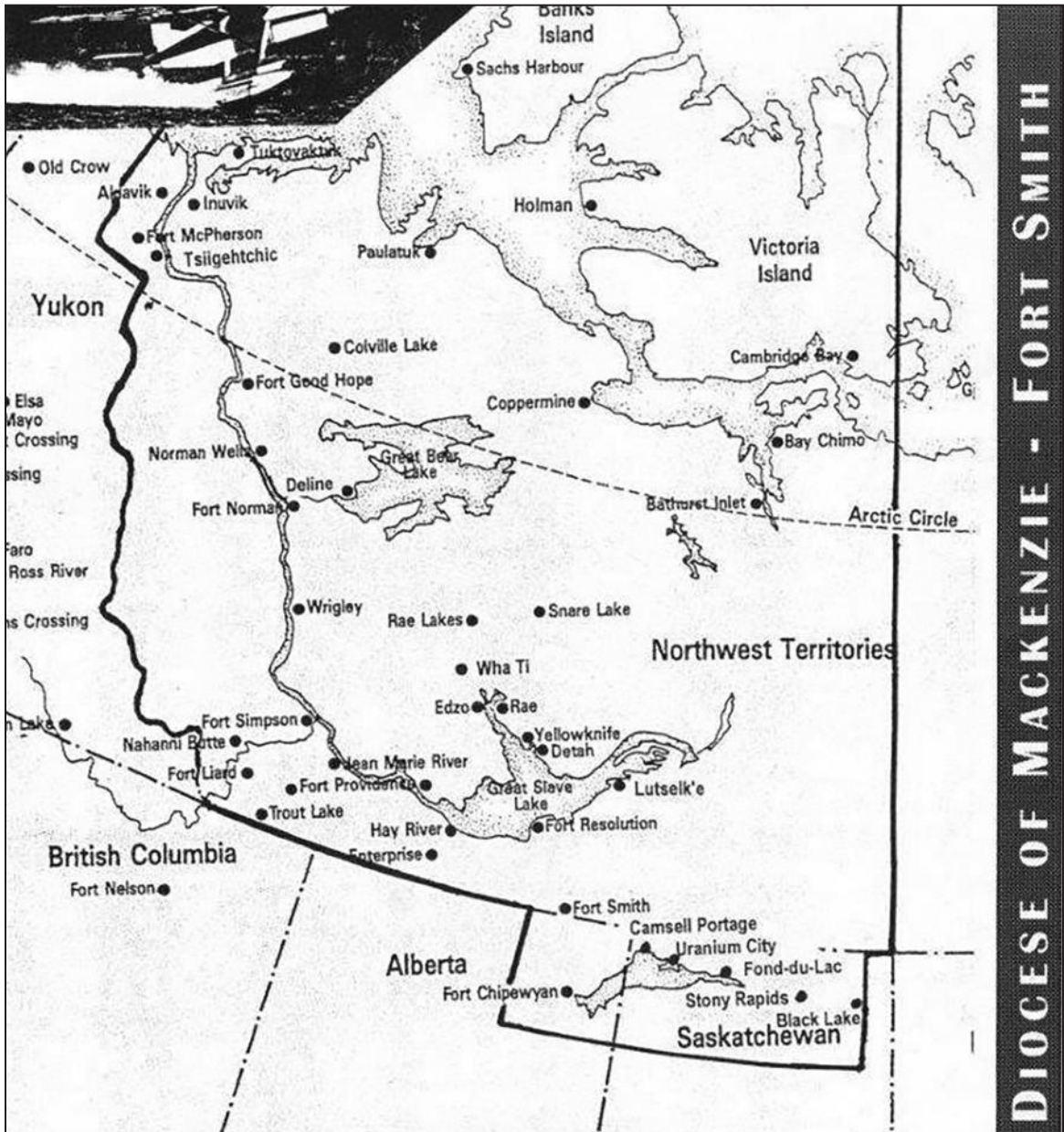
"For untold generations, you the native peoples have lived in a relationship of trust with the Creator, seeking the beauty and the richness of the land as coming from his bountiful hand. . . . In contact with the forces of nature, your ancestors learned the value of prayer, silence, fasting patience and courage. . . . When the faith was first preached among the native inhabitants of this land, the worthy traditions of the Indian tribes were strengthened and enriched by the Gospel message. Your forebears knew by instinct the Gospel, far from destroying their authentic values and customs, had the power to purify and uplift the cultural heritage which they had received."

Such is the dream, vision and hope of the diocese as we move forward in "these times which are a changing." We move forward under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the shepherding of the Most Rev. Jon Hansen, CSsR, with the



Bishop Denis Croteau, OMI

northern people of God exercising their priestly role as bestowed by baptism.



Bishop Croteau, left, retired in 2008. Bishop Murray Chatlain, right, replaced him in 2008 and was transferred in 2012 to the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, Bishop Mark Hagemoen, centre, replaced him in 2013 and was transferred in 2017 to the Diocese of Saskatoon.



# The Jon that the family knows

By Gerry Marcotte

It is a great opportunity as a family member to share a few memories, stories and life events that will give a bit more insight into the Jon that we know. We have been blessed to enjoy having Jon as a very integral part of our family life. He is a great brother, a great brother-in-law and an even better uncle to our children. His family would echo the same comments as Jon loves to immerse himself in family and friends.

Jon's calling to his ministry goes way back to when he was still in a high chair at the kitchen table. He was devoutly holding potato chips while saying "the body of Christ, Amen." And then promptly eating them. Yes, strong parental examples do come home to roost.

After high school Jon followed a diverse exploratory path that took many unique twists and turns as he was discovering his many passions. While Jon had many



Jon as a cowboy.

As he was exploring his paths, Jon always had the inclination, or an inner voice, telling him to explore his faith side a bit deeper. What was this calling he was feeling and hearing? Apparently the only way to find out was to quit the day job and cycle across Canada. What better way to hear and discover yourself!

He allowed his inner voice to percolate and started to explore the call to his ministry. His theological studies took him to Toronto, Philadelphia and Chicago and ended with his ordination in Toronto in

2004. Without a doubt Jon will always listen first, think second and respond with insight and wisdom that, coupled with his natural compassionate virtue, leaves me both humbled and inspired. Jon is also a very hands on and practical individual and this quality will lend itself perfectly with his northern ministry vocation.

Jon has always been keen to helping people wherever possible, with one of his favourite being that of applying his talented carpentry skills of which we have been a grateful recipient many times. He likely developed this passion by watching and helping his dad who worked in construction. With a keen eye and visionary mind Jon will gladly hoist a hammer and saw and get the project done to perfection.

Jon is and always has been an adventurer at heart: epic cycling trip, hiking, kayak adventures and skiing to name a few. Jon is very well suited for the Far North. On one of our hikes in Banff National Park climbing Mt. Chephren he found the day rather warm, whereas I was quite comfortable. On the descent Jon and his brother Colin ran and plunged into the glacier-fed lake and luxuriated in the nice freezing water. Yes, the North is for Jon!

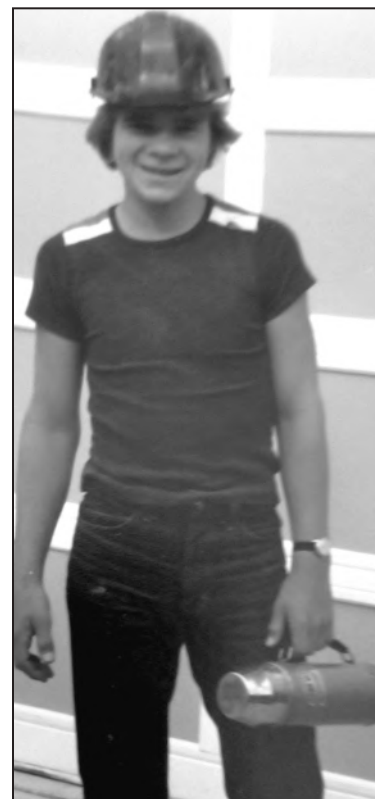
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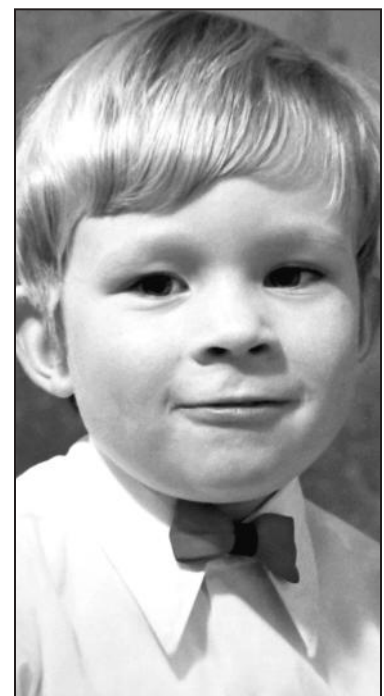
Cycling across Canada helped Jon discern his vocation.

Caution to all, one must be wary of Jon's conniving ways we discovered. Our kids were wishing for a DVD player but we had many other priorities as a growing family so it wasn't happening. Subsequently he came to visit at Christmas and with a big smile he gave our kids a DVD movie. Guess where we went on Boxing Day? Know that when he approaches with that nice warm congenial smile of his, be wary.

Meshing all the above traits and events together give us an idea of who Jon is, but doesn't yet complete the Jon we know. The most important side of Jon is his truly felt compassion and sensitivity to the underprivileged, the destitute and the homeless. This is his longed-for environment, his true calling and we wish him every success as he continues walking down the many paths, and he is always open to paths.



Jon the construction worker.



Jon as a child

## Hansen has a long history of working with marginalized people

Continued from page 11

cross-Canada bicycle trip, where he decided on a Redemptorist vocation.

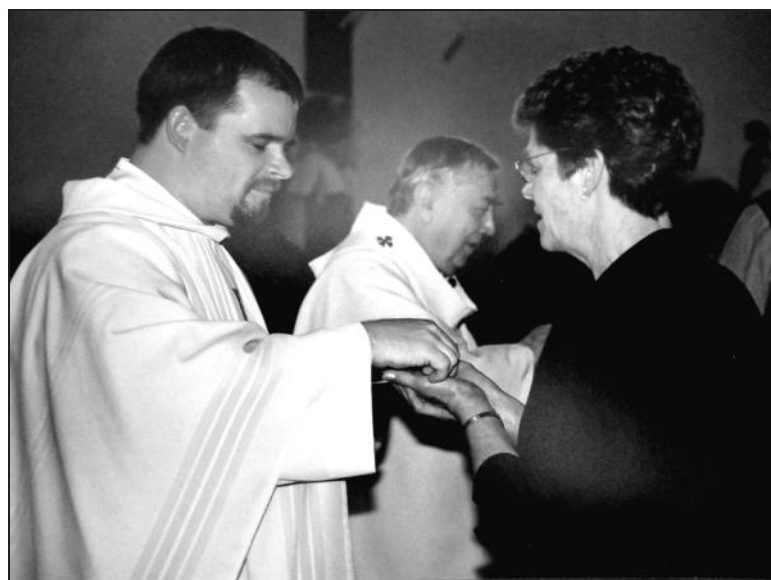
In the spring of 1994, Jon worked on the Redemptorist SERVE program in Edmonton

and returned to Clement House and to the University of Alberta on scholarship, graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in 1997. A few months later, he entered the Redemptorist North American novitiate in Chicago, making first profession on Oct. 16, 1998, in St.

Patrick's church, Toronto. While studying for a master of divinity degree at the University of St. Michael's College, he also volunteered at the parish's winter Out of the Cold program for the homeless in the inner city, at L'Arche in Richmond Hill, Ont., and on the SERVE team at Gerard House. Besides taking a unit of clinical pastoral education at Vancouver General Hospital in 2001, he also lived at Sarnelli House, Philadelphia, where the students worked with street people, living on the edge.

After completing the graduate degree in 2003, a diaconal appointment followed at Holy Redeemer Parish in Sudbury, Ont. On April 24, 2004, he was ordained by Grouard-MacLennan Archbishop Arthe Guimond in his home parish of St. Joseph's, where a day later he celebrated his first mass.

Redemptorist assignments have been varied, including postings as associate pastor at St. Teresa's, St. John's (2004 - 2005) and St. Patrick's, Toronto (2005 - 2009), where he also directed the Out of the Cold program and the formation program for Redemptorist



Newly ordained Fr. Jon giving communion to his mom, Karen Hansen.

students as well as participating in Becoming Neighbours, which assisted immigrants.

Returning to Western Canada as pastor at St. Mary's, Saskatoon (2009 - 2015), Fr. Hansen balanced the care of an ethnically diverse parish and its outreach initiatives with service on the Saskatoon diocesan Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the bishop's council of priests and with the diocesan offices of

migration and justice and peace.

Upon his episcopal ordination and installation in 2018, the new bishop will bring his wisdom and experience to guiding the second-largest diocese of over 1.5 million square kilometres with its boundaries from the Alberta border in the south with parts of northern Saskatchewan, Nunavut to the east, the Yukon to the west and north to the Canadian border.



Hansen was ordained to the priesthood on April 24, 2004. From left, Rev. Michael Brehl (present general superior of the Redemptorists), Paul Hansen (Jon's dad), Jon, Karen Hansen (Jon's mom) and Archbishop Guimond.



# LifeSiteNews does harm with extremist stories

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By Michael Sean Winters

Recently, LifeSiteNews, a website known for its extremism, pushed a story about a “new Vatican financial scandal,” one that would “raise serious questions about” Pope Francis’ reputation as a “pope for the poor.” They claimed to have leaked documents that proved there was some kind of malfeasance afoot. And, they repeated the allegation in one of the documents that the Papal Foundation and its chair, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, had failed to exercise due diligence in the matter.

To which I reply: Bosh! As a columnist, it is difficult to know whether to even call attention to this kind of nonsense. You hope it will be seen for the ludicrous ranting that it is. But, then you see people like Samuel Gregg, research director of the Acton Institute, retweeting an article in the increasingly fringe-prone *Catholic Herald*, and you realize that someone has to expose this fraud for what it is.

The allegations surround the decision of the Papal Foundation to award an unusually large grant to the Holy See for purposes of helping a church-owned hospital in Rome through a difficult transition period. I would not be able to conduct a site visit of a U.S. hospital, let alone an Italian one, but the “leaked documents” indicate Sister Carol Keehan, president of the Catholic Health Association, conducted such a visit and if Sister Carol gives something the thumbs up, that’s good enough for me. Despite the charge in the LifeSite story that this grant was made without proper documentation, they also report that Sister Carol presented a two-and-one-half-inch binder of information that one member of the foundation described to me as looking “like the Gutenberg Bible it was so big.” Which is it?

When I first read this “breaking news” I smelled a rat, and not just any rat but a very wealthy, self-satisfied one. The quotes from a member of the Papal Foundation who objected to the grants and reportedly quit the foundation include sentiments like this: “Had we allowed such recklessness in our personal careers we would never have met the requirements to join The Papal Foundation in the first place.” And, “And on this data, our

*Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.*

Board of Directors voted to grant this failing hospital \$25 million of our hard-earned dollars” (emphasis mine). You can almost hear the chest-thumping at the end of both sentences, no? I thought once you gave to a charity, the money was no longer really yours, but theirs. Silly, working-class way of thinking I suppose. If the person quoted had gone into politics, he would have a Louis XIV, “*L’etat c’est moi!*” air about him.

The second thing that tipped me off to the reality that this story was nonsense was the suggestion that the Papal Foundation’s chair, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, had failed in his duty to conduct due diligence. People who know Cardinal Wuerl will tell you that he conducts due diligence on his breakfast. He is one of the most hands-on bishops in the country. Wuerl is not only a stickler for detail, he is the kind of churchman whose reputation for thoughtful, deliberative interventions at the bishops’ conference makes our job as journalists easier: When Wuerl goes to the microphone at a USCCB meeting and recommends the body go down a particular path, it is almost always a safe bet that his brother bishops follow his direction. LifeSiteNews has long written disparagingly of Wuerl’s leadership. In fact, he has been a voice of sanity at the conference for 30 years. Those two facts are linked: Being attacked by LifeSiteNews is a badge of honour for the sane.

Now, I do not entirely want to let the bishops off the hook here. You assemble a bunch of zillionaires (you need to promise a million-dollar donation to join the Papal Foundation), people whom the *Zeitgeist* tells that they are masters of the universe, you let them select some of their own as board members, you allow those same board members to publicly revel in an anti-Christian ideology — free-market libertarianism — at the university you bishops own, an ideology that helps these rich folk confuse their material worth with their moral worth, you show up at their conferences and appear to bless their every effort. What could possibly go wrong?

When LifeSite started pushing this story with a flood of emails, I called a bishop who related that when he was a young priest, his archbishop explained that there were three types of Catholic donors. The first, and largest, group consisted of those Catholics who love the church and simply want to assist in its mission. The second group is more or less interested in the church’s mission, but they really value the acclaim that philanthropy confers, the picture with the bishop, their name on some building. They, too, are not really problematic. The third group does not actually seek to give, it seeks to buy. They want control. They will make a bishop’s life hell.

And so it is. The LifeSite story did not mention which foundation board members started this ruckus. Smart money would attend to one of the board members of the Papal Foundation: Tim Busch. The found-

er of the Napa Institute, a conservative group that is not really a think-tank but which hosts pseudo-academic conferences, Busch’s comments at an event last year celebrating the work of Charles Koch were highlighted in a story last year by Tom Roberts. The event was co-sponsored with the Catholic University business school that bears his name. Roberts reported:

*In introducing Koch, whom he described as an inspiration, Busch said the “nearly \$50 million” gift that he and Koch helped arrange had “re-energized the Catholic University of America. We made it great again. We are the Catholic University of America and we have educated half of the bishops in this country.*

*“We can be the teaching pulpit for the American church, but also the teaching pulpit for the Vatican and for the global church,” he said, without distinguishing whether he was referring to the Napa Institute, the university or both. “We can be that. And we will be that going forward, especially on the issues and topics of business.”*

QED (*quod erat demonstrandum* — that which was to be demonstrated). No one should be surprised that the man who thinks — and says publicly — that his institute or his school would “be the teaching pulpit for the Vatican” is a man capable of creating difficulties at a foundation established to help the pope, especially when we have a pope whose views on economic and business matters are just a tad different from those of Busch, Koch, and their ilk.

The other reason none of us should be surprised at this boorish behaviour by these rich folk is that the last year we have all had a chance to learn something about the world of CEOs and uber-rich

capitalists. Donald Trump did not learn to be a thin-skinned, narcissistic bully with a penchant for misogyny, xenophobia, conspiracy theories, and cronyism last Jan. 20. Yet, these distinguishing characteristics did not prevent him from achieving success in the world of business.

I do not mean to suggest that all CEOs are creeps like our president or whichever member of the board of the Papal Foundation is leaking documents, and giving a distorted story, to LifeSite. I do suggest that the culture of mega-millionaires easily supports political candidates who want recipients of food stamps to undergo mandatory drug tests before qualifying for assistance but does nothing, absolutely nothing, to restrain outrageous behaviour by those with enough money to join their clubs.

Just as Hannity and Ingraham

at Fox News rant about manufactured controversies, and traffic in viciousness toward the poor and the stranger, so LifeSiteNews manages only to prove capable of a distorted, malevolent worldview



CNS/Matthew Barrick

**TARGETS — Pope Francis greets Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl outside the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington in this 2015 photo. In perpetuating fraud, LifeSiteNews “manages only to prove capable of a distorted, malevolent worldview that they peddle to a small, but noisy, fringe of Catholicism,” writes Michael Sean Winters.**

that they peddle to a small, but noisy, fringe of Catholicism. They cause harm, and people have lost their jobs on account of their witch hunts. They are not going away. It is time the bishops stood up to them more forcefully.

## My short-lived career as an altar boy



### Figure of Speech

Dr. Gerry Turcotte

*... with many golden bells all round, to send forth a sound*  
— Ecclesiasticus 45:9

When I turned nine I became an altar boy at the local church. I remember the lovely uniform I got to wear, and the exquisite smell of the incense in the change rooms. On my first day the priest explained that I would lead the procession out into the church, carrying the gold crucifix on a long silver pole. “Hold it up proudly,” he said, but he forgot to warn me about the low archway.

I was demoted to the bell ringer. “Don’t worry,” he said, “I’ll tell you when you’re meant to ring them.”

At the altar, during the most sacred ceremony on my first day

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

of serving mass, I looked out at the four people in the congregation. Two of these were my parents, who had fought their way through the worst snowstorm of the year to watch their son’s great triumph. They were smiling up at me, waving surreptitiously. I was about to wave back when I felt the priest’s foot poking me in the ribs. I looked up at him and he stood with the oversized host raised in his hands. He was looking up toward the ceiling but his mouth was angled down.

“Now, boy. Ring the bell!” I started ringing for my life. The sound was magical. It reminded me of Christmas — of sleigh bells. I lowered my head and shut my eyes so tightly that I actually saw stars. And I rang those bells. I thought to myself, “No one will ever ring these as well or as loudly.”

The priest kicked me sharply in the ribs and knocked the breath

out of me. “For goodness sake, knock it off!” he said. I stared up at him through watery eyes. “But you said . . .,” I began.

“Shh!” he whispered, slipping briefly into Latin, and then, correcting himself, repeating the words in English. He nudged me again, gently this time, and I let forth with another tremendous ring of the bells that he cut short with such a sharp jab of his foot that I let out a yell. Make up your mind, I thought angrily.

Later, because of my unfamiliarity with the vestments, I found that I was the last one in the change room. The priest seemed pleased to find me there. He moved in and poked his flushed face in my vicinity. He seemed terribly uncomfortable. I watched his mouth, as he said, “Well, that wasn’t so bad,” and then only half understood as he explained that perhaps I wasn’t cut out for this. Years later, when I thought about this time, I wondered insecurely if I was the only altar boy ever to be fired. At the time, though, I only felt relief.

Outside the church, in the blistering winter air, my mother hugged me tightly. She was crying. “You were *so* good,” she said. “I’m sure you could hear those bells all over town.”

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# Prairie Messenger goes through conversion in 1960s

This is the fifth 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

St. Paul is famous for going through a conversion on the road to Damascus where he made a dramatic change in his way of thinking. The *Prairie Messenger* went through a transformation in its Jan. 25, 1962, edition, a special feast day of St. Paul.

"The feast of the Conversion of St. Paul marks the conversion of The *Prairie Messenger* also," editor Augustine Nenzel, OSB, said in the headline story. "And almost as radical a conversion, at least so far as outward appearances go!"

The weekly went from an eight-page broadsheet to a trim 16-page tabloid. The pages, once seven columns wide, were now five columns. The decision to change the newspaper came after much discussion and careful preparation, and "some pressure from within the Benedictine community," Nenzel wrote. The change in appearance was approved to help the newspaper better serve the readership and make it easier to read, he said. Abbot Jerome Weber urged readers to support The *Prairie Messenger*, which was modified, he said, to present the newspaper "in a more pleasing form, and with a content which will help your knowledge and love for your Catholic faith increase."

The new look gave a new appearance to the masthead where the article ("the") was dropped from *Prairie Messenger* and the letters P and M were transformed. The "P" became a monogram for Christ and "M" a symbol for Mary. The Catholic weekly was dedicated to Christ and his Blessed Mother.

The Archdiocese of Regina, the Diocese of Saskatoon and the Abbey of St. Peter were given their own separate pages, and the dioceses of Prince Albert and Gravelbourg shared a page. Nenzel announced that a new columnist was added to the "already rather imposing list of good columnists." Among the columnists were Rev. Leander Dosch, OSB, who answered questions on church teach-

ings that were sent by readers. And readers could now express their opinions in a new Letters to the Editor column next to the editorial page. The page included book reviews.

Columnists provided insight into church teachings, family life and issues affecting community and rural life. A bishop and two clergy provided regular submissions on spiritual and moral issues. Two laypersons were among the columnists and both were women. One wrote about traditional family life and another answered questions on the Youth page. Bro. Ben answered letters of children on the Junior page. Noted columnist Grant Maxwell gave a layperson's perspective on church life. A columnist wrote about rural issues while movie and television reviews were submitted by another.

The change in the look of the *Prairie Messenger* was the second most important story for the newspaper in 1962. The first edition on Jan. 4 announced that Pope John XXIII was convoking the Second Vatican Council. The pope, in announcing the council, spoke of his desire for the sanctification of

church members, Christian unity and world peace. Pope John made a dramatic gesture to Christians, asking both Catholics and non-Catholics to pray for the council's success. He welcomed visits from Protestant leaders and told Jewish leaders he was their brother. Pope John had been elected pontiff in 1958 and was transforming the way the church looked on the world. He was ecumenical, a proponent of church unity, peace and social justice. Other church leaders shared the pope's openness to church unity.

Headlines in the *Prairie Messenger* featured Pope John appealing to the nations to embrace peace and co-operation to end hunger and unemployment. Pope John expressed these desires in his groundbreaking encyclical, *Mater and Magistra* (Mother and Teacher). Published a year earlier, it spoke of the dignity and rights of all persons and the importance of carrying out social progress in a Christian spirit. His next encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), issued in 1962, reiterated his desire for peace. The encyclical illustrated the pope's desire for ecumenism by reaching out to not only Catholics, but "all men of goodwill."

Rev. James Gray, OSB, was associate editor when the *Prairie*

*Messenger* underwent a facelift, and he became editor several months later. Gray expressed his support for Pope John's call for renewal and change in the church and world. He embraced the pope's invitation to the clergy and laity to re-examine their roles in the church, and their relationships among Christians and non-Christians. He encouraged laity to become involved in the church.

The *Prairie Messenger* made everyone aware of the preparations for the ecumenical council through its stories and in-depth articles on the history of church councils and preparations of the upcoming council. New papal encyclicals and documents were discussed or published.

The attitude of the Catholic weekly toward the new face of the papacy was expressed when John XXIII died in June of 1963. The headline story and front-page editorial spoke of the pontiff as "the people's pope" and "a man who had won the hearts of all." He was praised for his mission of justice, truth and fraternal charity. The election of Pope Paul VI was greeted with enthusiasm, since he was a progressive who would continue in the mission of his predecessor.

"Renewal" was in vogue and it

was embraced wholeheartedly by Gray who, in his editorials, encouraged the clergy and laity to dialogue and re-examine their relationships and roles in the church. Gray went against the tradition of previous editors by boldly criticizing officials in the curia who were opposed to change, reminding them that the Vatican offices do not have a monopoly on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The church was becoming visionary thanks to its openness to renewal, he noted.

A strong proponent of social justice and peace, the editorial page became a voice for the poor, forgotten and exploited. Closer to home, Gray supported the concept of universal health care, co-operatives, justice and reconciliation. He was outspoken against those in power who used their positions for selfish purposes. Headline stories brought forth the social conditions of the poor and exploited, and the suffering caused by the evils of communism and atheistic socialism, dictatorships and unbridled capitalism.

The 1960s ushered in a new age of renewal and optimism and the *Prairie Messenger* became part of that, in 1966, by revamping its masthead. It dropped the religious symbols on the P and M and enlarged its name to *Prairie Messenger*, Saskatchewan Catholic Weekly.

Everyone in the church was affected by change and the most notable change was in the celebration of mass, which was now in the vernacular, and invited public participation. The laity were invited to have leadership in church ministry and administration. A new rite was adopted to accommodate mixed marriages. In 1969, the first "ecumenical wedding" at St. Augustine Parish, Humboldt, Sask., took place. Many expressed their surprise that such a wedding was possible.

Along with the optimism of the era were new challenges and struggles. Traditional moral values were being rejected by a new generation that was losing interest in religious institutions. The priest, once looked upon as a moral leader, now had an uncertain future as the value of the celibate, all-male priesthood began to be questioned. Church attendance was dropping and vocations to religious life and the priesthood were on the decline. Current vocation trends pointed to a future shortage of clergy.



Paul Paproski, OSB

**PM HAS CONVERSION** — The *Prairie Messenger* underwent a conversion in its Jan. 25, 1962, edition, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. The weekly went from an eight-page broadsheet to a trim 16-page tabloid. The pages, once seven-columns wide, were now five-columns. Rev. Augustine Nenzel, OSB, editor, said the newspaper was reduced in size to make it easier to read.

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# Conductor captures an orchestra of commuters

## Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



When my children were small one of our favourite songs to sing was “Wheels on the Bus.” I even remember it from when I was little.

My kids grew up in a small town, so they could only imagine what it might feel like to ride on a bus, but since I’d spent a year living in a city when I was in Grade 2, riding the bus was a regular part of my existence. I even took trips alone that no parent would allow today.

I love the jostling that happens on a big-city bus route, and the challenge to stay upright during turns or when the driver unexpectedly puts on the brakes. On one Ottawa morning in January I found myself standing on a crowded bus in the midst of the early commute. When someone got off, a woman who took up a little more than her own seat motioned for me sit down beside her. I was sandwiched in-between her and a skinny weathered man with a sharp face.

The woman said she was from Haiti, and her robust presence took up as much room as her girth. She launched into a spirited conversation, only snippets of which I could understand given her pronounced accent. All I could do was nod and smile as she spoke with gusto, punctuating her story with laughter and the occasional elbow to my ribs,

as though we shared an inside joke.

I was disappointed when she got off. The thin man on the other side of me asked where I was from, and when I said Saskatchewan, he said he was originally from Manitoba, but had been through Saskatchewan some years ago. “I hated it. Nothing to see.” I was going to express my sympathy for his blindness, but I didn’t want to provoke another negative response, so I kept my feelings to myself.

If you enjoy people watching, there is no better place than the bus. Even better, though, is watching people on the bus watching a baby. During my January trip to Ottawa, I would take the 3 p.m. bus from home to pick up my now 17-month-old granddaughter Anissa at the Montessori school where she goes when her parents are at work.

It was the same routine every day. After I reached the school I’d pack Anissa into her stroller and walk over to the bus stop a block away. My granddaughter loves the bus. When she sees it coming down the street, she throws her arms into the air: “Bus! Bus!” Seats fold up at the front to allow for a stroller, and when manoeuvred into the space, Anissa faces the rest of the riders.

On the first trip with her, and every one thereafter, I noticed immediately how people instinc-



M. Weber

**THE WHEELS ON THE BUS — Small children have the power to command the attention of an orchestra of commuters.**

tively looked at her. On the bus Anissa smiles at everyone. She is a conductor, her hands waving in the air, commanding the attention of her orchestra of commuters.

Some are reserved and speak to her softly. *Sotto voce*. Elderly people are particularly attentive, speaking to Anissa in the flowing *cantabile* of those who know the score most intimately, because they have been practising it for years.

One man was so attuned to his conductor that he actually called out, from a few rows back, to ask if I was her grandmother and then shared comments about his own grandchild, which I could barely hear above the roar of the engine. During a red light he got out of his seat to show me a picture of her on his phone. In a multicultural, multigenerational environment,

“baby,” as well as music, is the universal language.

“Tween” girls in the commuter orchestra were the most dynamic, leaning close to Anissa with staccato questions and exclamations. “She’s so cute!” was the refrain.

As is the case with any orchestra, some players don’t pay attention or are easily distracted — especially those with their phones. They’re always the ones who miss the beat.

When Anissa wants “more” — more of anything — she says, “encore!” I could imagine the players on the bus, now spectators as we exited, wishing for an “encore” from this joyful little one who has the power to hold a diverse audience in rapt attention with only a wave and a smile.

“ . . . and a little child shall lead them” (Is 11:6). If only such harmony among people could last longer than a city bus ride.

## Two docuseries on Netflix are worth consideration

Continued from page 9

Marx could also be arrogant and short-tempered. Watching the unruly passions of Marx and Engels as twenty-somethings, it seems unbelievable that they would become secular saints (or bogeymen) and their ideas warped into next-century totalitarian ideologies imposed on much of humankind. Surely they would be appalled at the prospect.

Haitian-born Peck’s sympathetic treatment never hints at that while sketching a complex intellectual evolution hard to translate in a few minutes onscreen. The result is still engaging, if less compelling than his acclaimed Oscar-nominated 2016 documentary, *I Am Not Your Negro*, which explored the influence of American African-American author and critic James Baldwin.

\*As a final note, let me recommend two excellent docuseries streaming on Netflix. In *Wormwood* master filmmaker Errol Morris delves into the murky circumstances surrounding the 1953 death of defence scientist Dr. Frank Olson with links to biological weapons development. Was it suicide or a CIA execution? Another renowned documentarian, Alex Gibney, is the force behind *Dirty Money* with episodes on: corporate cheating; predatory payday loan scams; Big Pharma and outrageous drug pricing; bank involvement in money laundering; producer monopolies and black-market thefts (Quebec maple syrup!); above all, the skinny on Donald Trump as the ultimate shamelessly self-promoting business conman.

Marx was chronically short of money with a young family to support, his devoted wife Jenny (Vicky Krieps, excellent more recently in *Phantom Thread*) having cut ties to her wealthy family.

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## New bishop ordained for Mackenzie-Fort Smith

This week’s *Prairie Messenger* is pleased to focus on a northern diocese that is about to receive new leadership.

On March 16, Redemptorist Father Jon Hansen will be ordained the seventh bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories. He replaces Bishop Mark Hagemoen who was installed as bishop of Saskatoon on Nov. 23, 2017.

Hansen has two year’s experience in the Territories as pastor of Inuvik, Paulatuk, Tsiigehtchic and Tuktoyaktuk. It is clear that he loves the north and its people. Readers of the *PM* know him from his monthly articles about life in communities above the Arctic Circle.

The Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith is one of the world’s largest in geographical area (1,523,400 square kilometres). It is home to about 28,000 Catholics — more than half the Northwest Territories population — primarily Dene, Métis and Inuvialuit peoples. Distances in the diocese are great, as can be seen in the map on page 13. Travel

is expensive, and personnel and resources are limited.

The first missionary outreach to the area of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese was by Oblate Father Alexandre Taché who went to Fort Chipewyan in northern Alberta from St. Boniface, Man., in 1847. Ten years later, missionaries had reached as far north as the Arctic Circle.

In 1960, the diocese had 60 Oblate priests, 40 brothers and 112 Grey Nuns. They did everything from staffing hospitals and schools to helping build the infrastructure of northern towns and celebrating their faith.

Today, there are two Polish Oblate priests, one Oblate brother, two Canadian priests, three from Nigeria and five religious sisters. There are 35 Native missions in the diocese and most have a lay-led celebration every Sunday, with the bishop or a priest being able to celebrate with them only every three or four months.

However, the beauty of the land and sky (see the picture of northern lights on page 11) can be overwhelming. It is the land of the midnight sun in summer and a month of near-total darkness in winter. It is also a territory threatened by climate change and

resource development.

The dioceses of the north have limited resources, so they rely on support from southern dioceses, for both finances and personnel. In 2014, for example, the archbishop of Edmonton and the bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith signed a covenant to formalize a relationship between the two dioceses, with the goal of sharing their mutual gifts and needs. This helps support positive projects that build the spiritual health of the community, whether it’s building or restoring churches, training and supporting pastoral leaders, or helping to fund programs that bring young people, families and communities together.

As well, Catholic Missions in Canada raises money to support programs and personnel in Canada’s northern dioceses. The CMIC website notes that costly utility bills, leaky basements, mould infestations, and clearing massive amounts of snow are just some examples of how CMIC funding is needed.

Bishop-elect Hansen has chosen reconciliation and building relationships as his priorities. The *Prairie Messenger* wishes him well and a fruitful ministry. — PWN

## Building a passion for STEM studies among women and girls

By Senator Art Eggleton and Senator Raymonde Saint-Germain

We recently celebrated International Day of Women and Girls in Science — and there’s much to celebrate. But there’s much work to be done, as well.

It’s a day to celebrate just how far we’ve come since Elsie MacGill, aircraft designer and Canada’s first female engineer, was asked to leave the University of British Columbia in 1921 because of her gender.

If that accomplished entrepreneur and eventual Massachusetts Institute of Technology PhD grad-

uate were alive today, almost 100 years later, would she be impressed that 20 per cent of Canada’s post-secondary STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) students are female? Or would she wonder why the ratio wasn’t better?

We think MacGill, the undersung “Queen of the Hurricanes,” would be shaking her head, alongside many Canadians, at our discouraging stats.

While jobs in STEM-related domains are growing three times faster than other parts of the economy and paying 12 per cent higher, fewer than 25 per cent of those who hold these jobs are women. Only 13 per cent of professional engineers are female.

And while a broadening swath of industries demand STEM knowledge, only 20 per cent of Canada’s post-secondary STEM students are female. Meanwhile, other countries surge ahead: in India, 33 per cent of STEM students are female; in Jordan and Tunisia, 38 per cent.

More alarmingly, new reports

are finding even more inequities that go unnoticed. TD Bank chief economist Beata Caranci, in *Women and STEM: Bridging the Divide*, found that while more women are getting STEM degrees, they’re still disproportionately slotted into their companies’ lower-paying technical roles, rather than professional roles.

The reasons for the disparities are myriad and complex. But in the interest of action, let’s focus on solutions. A recent open caucus in Canada’s Senate included panelists who are business leaders, academics and teachers. They pointed to three main ways Can-

ada can improve its STEM gender deficit.

**1. Girls need more active female STEM role models at a much younger age.**

Anjali Agarwal, professor and associate chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Concordia University, maintains that Asia is ahead of North America because families encourage both boys and girls into STEM fields for the promise of higher wages, security and prestige. “It starts at home, with our parents,” says Agarwal.

And it continues in the earliest grades. Statistically, girls tend not to choose the more math-intensive

STEM paths due to math anxiety, discovered Ismael Mourifié, assistant professor of Economics at the University of Toronto. This springs from gender stereotyping, not lack of math ability.

How to fix this?

“We need to invest in our elementary teachers’ abilities and love of math to energize girls at a very young age. We must also show children that math ability is not innate: it’s just hard work,” says Mourifié.

**2. Public elementary schools must do even more to fuel young**

— CHILDREN, page 19

Eggleton is a member of the Canadian Senate from Toronto. He serves as chair of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. Senator Saint-Germain was appointed to the Senate in 2016, after two terms as the Quebec ombudsman and a distinguished career in public administration.



WORLD MEETING FAMILIES — A woman reacts to Pope Francis’ final words during the closing mass of the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in this 2015 file photo. The next meeting will take place Aug. 21 - 26 in Dublin.

## Mental health programs help students

By Mike May

OMAHA, Neb. (CNS) — Catholic schools in the Omaha archdiocese are taking seriously the problems of student anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.

One effort to help is a pilot program providing counselling to students at six Omaha-area Catholic schools.

Through a partnership with archdiocesan schools, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Omaha is supplying a licensed mental health therapist to provide direct therapy services at each school one half-day per week, said Theresa Swoboda, clinical nurse manager and co-ordinator of the program.

“Our intent was to begin this for the second semester, but there was so much need expressed by the schools, that we

began in October. Anxiety is the number one problem,” Swoboda told the Catholic Voice, Omaha’s archdiocesan newspaper.

In addition to the demands of school, students may struggle with family problems or divorce, and the impact of increased social media activity.

“Since 2008, the youth suicide rate has continued to increase, correlating pretty closely with the increasing availability of smartphones and social media,” she said.

An on-site therapist eliminates barriers to access and makes available the specialized counselling that school counsellors are unable to provide.

“Research shows that students’ mental health, social and emotional balance, and academic performance improve if you can go to the kids in their own environment,” Swoboda said. “And students don’t have to leave school to see a therapist.”

Catholic Charities also has now begun an outreach to rural schools through a tele-health option with online resources, she said.

Swoboda said Catholic Charities hopes to obtain funding to expand the program, making it available to any Catholic school in the archdiocese that requests it.

Schools involved in the pilot program are St. Mary in Bellevue, and Ss. Peter and Paul, St. Vincent

de Paul, Mary Our Queen, Roncalli Catholic High School and Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, all in Omaha.

In addition to the counselling services, Duchesne Academy makes mental and physical health information part of the curriculum through healthy living classes, said Laura Hickman, principal.

“We want to provide (students with) deeper education on what a healthy lifestyle looks like, signs of depression in themselves and their peers and ways to deal with anxiety,” she said.

The school also created a Facebook page to inform parents about youth mental health issues and foster an exchange of information.

Duchesne also helps students find time for quiet reflection through prayer services and guided meditation during classes, and is considering small-group sessions with adult moderators, Hickman said.

“For students to learn, their basic needs have to be met, but when we have students dealing with debilitating anxiety, depression or other emotions they don’t know how to express, learning becomes difficult,” she said.

“Everything we can do as a school to help students feel healthy and in control of their emotions makes a difference.”



Editor not afraid to confront critics of Catholicism

**The Editor:** The Feb. 2, 2018, issue of the *Prairie Messenger* was one of the most informative and interesting to read since I have received the paper.

It was most interesting to read how the *PM* was started and the publication fought for, to support the cause of the Catholic faith. It was also interesting to read how

the editor of the day was not afraid to confront those who criticized the Catholic Church, and even the politicians.

Again, I'm sorry that the *PM* cannot find a way of maybe cutting back the number of issues it produces, and increasing the amount for subscriptions and continue to print the newspaper.

Unfortunately I don't think the younger generation realizes the benefits of the *PM*.

In the meantime, God bless you for the years you provided us with the *PM*. — **Gerry Gauvin, Swift Current**

Proud to be a lifelong subscriber

**The Editor:** With the upcoming close of your paper, it is good to remember some of the highlights of the past 100 years or more.

Your paper was recognized by many great publications. For instance, in the January 1989 issue of the Reader's Digest under the title "Laughter, the Best Medicine" was

the following story.

Boss: "Young man, you should have been here at nine o'clock!"

New employee: "Why, what happened?" — *Prairie Messenger*

I'm proud to have been a lifelong subscriber. Wishing you the best. — **Walter Sarauer, Humboldt**

Show children math ability not innate

Continued from page 18

**people's STEM understanding and passion.**

Caranci, who had one female professor in her six years of post-secondary economics education, wants to see public schools light STEM passion.

With much of our STEM interventions based in camps that are too expensive for many Canadians, Caranci is concerned that these efforts may be creating more inequity. Placing them within the public school system would help all children see the arc and possibilities of an education and career in STEM fields.

**3. We need to examine and change how we teach STEM topics.**

Agarwal wants to see engineering education embrace more social aspects like the human factors and societal benefits of good design.

Doug Dokis, senior adviser in the National Indigenous Youth in STEM Program at the national charity Actua, agrees. "When we

can connect modern western knowledge with the cultural contributions of ancient technology and architecture, healing botany, original mathematics and astronomy, we'll be able to show our students the interconnectedness of the physical world of science with the human."

When STEM education can embrace a wider world view, it will interest a broader range of students, including indigenous women and girls.

The youngest participant in the Senate's open caucus on Feb. 7 echoed these three recommendations. Nine-year-old Sophia, an entrepreneur and girls-in-STEM advocate, wondered what we adults could do for her generation and what they could do for us. Then she gave us old folks a hint: "The problem is bigger than we think. Young girls need more active role models who can take down the barriers for us."

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is an opportunity to take a stand for all women and girls in sci-

ence. But in another 100 years, we hope this day will continue to be a celebration of successes, because Sophia, her daughters and her granddaughters will be free from gender biases and barriers, doing what they love and accomplishing great things in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

'Dreamers' plight a moral, justice issue

Continued from page 1

checks, he said, and they wouldn't pass those checks if they were troublemakers.

Jesuit Father Thomas Reese said he was representing Jesuits from the West Coast and other Jesuits, who know exactly who "Dreamers" are.

"They are our students, sitting in our classrooms, they are our parishioners, kneeling in our churches," he said. "They are our friends, they are our colleagues who have invited us into their homes."

Pointing to the U.S. Capitol building, where lawmakers gather, he said, "it is time for the people who work in that building to realize that this is a moral issue. It is a justice issue, and the political gamesmanship must stop."

Persch said she was there, too, to support Dreamers. She took part in what was billed a "Catholic Day of Action With Dreamers," organized by the PICO National Network, a faith-based community organization based in California, largely out of frustration, she said.

"My prayer, my work for comprehensive immigration reform has had no impact on this administration," she said. "I stand with Dreamers now at this moment of truth, which to me is a moral issue. When these traditional strategies we have used have no impact, we have to move to action that could involve taking a risk to disrupt this unjust system in some way."

And if that meant being arrested, she was willing to do so, she said.

"As a woman of faith, I am called to be wise . . . courageous,



Swallows at Our House

Their wings glisten like salesmen's shoes,  
but unencumbered, itinerant swallows  
have nothing to sell.

No need to keep a hand on your wallet  
when they come around. In fact,  
their bright song scatters coins

that some of us disdain,  
too proud to pick up a penny,  
but others gather, eager as children.

By Don Thompson

a prophetic voice," she said. "That is a challenge to every person who says they are a Catholic, a Christian, a person of faith. And this applies to Paul Ryan as well as all those in Congress."

House Speaker Ryan, R-Wisconsin, is Catholic and many said they took issue with what they see as his lack of action on several issues involving immigrants. At various moments, including one near the U.S. Capitol, the crowd chanted, "Paul, Paul, why do you persecute me?" referring to the speaker.

In the rotunda, many of those who risked arrest, began by joining hands, singing hymns and praying "Hail Mary." They included Reese, along with Garcia and Persch. U.S. Capitol police began warning them repeatedly to stop or be arrested. Of the 30 or 40 arrests, eight were Mercy Sisters.

Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Ky., extended his hands in the air and said: "We stand with the Dreamers, we are one with the Dreamers. And now I ask God's blessing upon those who are acting in civil disobedience, part of a long-standing tradition of not supporting unjust laws."

The bishop was not among those arrested. He and the others who did not engage in civil disobedience fell back from the centre of the rotunda as the arrests began. Those being arrested were asked to put their hands behind their

backs. Police placed plastic handcuffs around their wrists and the protesters were led away, some in prayer, some singing. They were charged with disorderly conduct, crowding, incommoding and obstruction.

The 40 or so who were arrested paid a \$50 fine and all were released by late afternoon. Just as those who were arrested at the Capitol were stepping out of their comfort zones, so, too, the young adults they were advocating for are facing an even greater discomfort, the bishop said, as they face their greatest moment of uncertainty.



CNS/Bob Roller

**CATHOLICS SUPPORT DREAMERS — Dominican Sister Elise Garcia speaks during a Catholic Day of Action for Dreamers protest to press Congress to protect "Dreamers" outside the U.S. Capitol Feb. 27 in Washington.**

**A message to our subscribers . . .**

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

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

For any readers who are interested in a new subscription until May 9, 2018 (our closure), we will charge a fee of \$15 to help offset administration and mailing costs.  
[pm.circulation@stpeterspress.ca](mailto:pm.circulation@stpeterspress.ca)

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



# Sisters can be exploited and underappreciated

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Misunderstanding the generous service and obedience of women religious leads to their being exploited and underappreciated, according to an investigative report in a Vatican magazine.

“Sisters are seen as volunteers that one can have available as one wishes, which gives rise to genuine abuses of power,” said a nun identified only as Sister Cecile.

Her testimony appeared in the monthly magazine, *Women Church World*, published March 1 in conjunction with the Vatican newspaper, *L’Osservatore Romano*.

Sister Cecile was one of three women religious interviewed — and given pseudonyms — by a French journalist based in Rome for the exposé titled, “The (almost) free work of nuns.”

The article described how religious women often are chosen to provide the domestic services of cooking, cleaning and laundering for cardinals, bishops, parishes and other church structures, but with little or no financial compensation to their religious orders, no contractual arrangements and no formal work schedule like laypeople would have.

“The idea that religious women

don’t work with a contract, that they are there for good, that conditions are not stipulated,” Sister Marie said, creates situations marked by “ambiguity and often great injustice.”

The long history of religious congregations built on the spirit of freely serving and giving oneself for others has created for some people in the church the belief that compensation has no place “in the natural order of things for whatever service we offer,” Sister Cecile said.

The lack of financial compensation is a real and urgent problem, Sister Paule said, because how else are women religious communities to find the resources needed to support their members, their formation and health care.

Even priests ask the sisters for a nominal donation for saying mass at their chapel, Sister Cecile said, noting she now specifically requests compensation for speaking engagements.

A lack of recognition or respect is also a problem, the three women said, as it often seems their work is considered less valuable or appreciated than that of consecrated men.

Sister Marie asked how a priest can let a woman religious serve him his meal at a table and then “let her eat alone in the kitchen once he has been served.”



CNS/Sivaram V, Reuters

**ABUSES OF POWER** — A group of sisters stands on a beach in Cochin, India, in this photo. Misunderstanding the generous service and obedience of women religious leads to their being exploited and underappreciated, said an investigative report in a Vatican magazine.

“Is our consecration not the same as theirs,” she wondered, noting how consecrated women and nuns “almost always” end up as the domestic workers for consecrated men.

“Behind all of this, unfortunately, there is still the idea that women are worth less than men and, especially, that a priest is

everything while a sister is nothing in the church. Clericalism kills the church,” Sister Paule said.

She recalled a sister who served one place for 30 years and when she fell ill, “not one of the priests she served went to visit her,” adding that often the women are moved around “as if we were interchangeable.”

Assignments also may not take advantage of a woman’s qualifications, Sister Paule said, explaining that she knew sisters with doctorate degrees in theology who were assigned cooking and cleaning jobs “without explanation.”

The women’s orders themselves can contribute to the problem, Sister Marie said. For example, she said, mother superiors sometimes keep a sister from advancing in a particular profession as a way to head off an emphasis on an individual and reinforce the importance of the community.

Women religious from poorer countries may be afraid to speak up, Sister Marie said, if they feel indebted to their community for its support of them or family members back home.

“Sometimes people criticize religious women, they look closed off, their personality. But behind all of that are many wounds,” Sister Cecile said.

Sister Marie said it can be a spiritual struggle for some women because “Jesus came to free us and we are all children of God in his eyes.”

“But some sisters don’t live this in real life and they experience great confusion and deep discouragement,” she said.

The author said some religious women think their vows of poverty and obedience could become a richness for the church only if “the male hierarchy would see this as an occasion for a true reflection about power.”

## Pope visits group home of women prisoners

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Listening, playing and having an afternoon snack, Pope Francis spent time March 2 at a group home for women prisoners with small children.

He also left as a gift for the kids large, hollow chocolate eggs, each with a surprise inside. They are a standard part of Italian Easter celebrations.

The pope left the Vatican about 4 p.m. and “without any advance notice” arrived at the *Casa di Leda* in Rome’s EUR neighbourhood, the Vatican press office said. The group home is located in a building confiscated from the mafia under an Italian program to turn former mafia properties into socially beneficial enterprises.

*Casa di Leda* is the first group home in Italy for incarcerated women with small children. The Vatican press office said some 4,500 Italian children have a mother in prison; some 90,000 have a father incarcerated. Italian law

allows children to live in prison with their mothers until the age of six, although the law allows the use of house arrest or group homes for mothers of small children.

Pope Francis’ visit was part of an ongoing “Mercy Friday” initiative he began in the 2015 - 16 Year of Mercy.

*Casa di Leda* currently is home to five mothers and their children. Volunteers help staff the home, and other prisoners sentenced to community service work there as well.

After playing with the pope, the Vatican said, the children invited him to have a snack with them.

The mothers talked to him about the opportunities that come with being able to raise their children in the home, the Vatican said. Even though there are limits on what they can do, they are allowed to accompany their children to school in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon, and they have opportunities to learn skills that will allow them to get jobs

once their sentences are completed.

Lillo Di Mauro, a Rome city official, read Pope Francis a letter describing the horrors to which children of detainees, whether in jail with their mothers or just visiting, are subjected: pat-downs, searches of their undergarments, their stuffed animals and toys for contraband.

“We are fragile flowers in the desert of bureaucracy and security measures,” the letter said.

## Women need to make decisions in church

By Junno Arocho Esteves

ROME (CNS) — The fuller participation of women in decision-making in the Catholic Church is a continuing process that still needs time, Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell said.

Speaking during a question-and-answer session in Rome March 1 after the presentation of the book, *A Pope Francis Lexicon*, Farrell said that a greater role for women in the church “is going to take more than just issuing a decree.”

“It’s a question of changing a culture, and I believe that will take time, but I think that Pope Francis — more than anybody — has tried and continues to try and continues to bring about that change each and every day,” he said.

The book features a collection of essays edited by Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service Rome bureau chief, and Joshua McElwee, Vatican correspondent for *National Catholic Reporter*.

Responding to a question regarding an essay written by Tina Beattie, a theologian, in which she noted the exclusion of women “from many offices of Catholic teaching,” Farrell said the pope

would not totally agree that “he has not tried and is not bringing women into positions of authority in the church.”

Some dicasteries once led by cardinals are now led by bishops and priests and, thus, pave the way for more participation by laypeople, especially women, in church decisions, said Honduran Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, who also spoke at the conference.

“Every day, more and more, the presence of the laity is taking place,” the cardinal said. “It’s a process of changing the culture, but I can assure (you) it’s taking place.”

Maradiaga, a member of Pope Francis’ international Council of Cardinals, also was a contributor to the book, writing an essay on reform.

Farrell also was asked about reports that he prevented a conference on women in the church, Voices of Faith, from meeting in

the Vatican March 8, although the conference had been held for the past four years in the *Casina Pio IV*, a villa located in the Vatican gardens.

Organizers of the conference said they had to change locations after the cardinal rejected the participation of several speakers, including former Irish President Mary McAleese, an advocate of gay marriage and women’s ordination.

Events held within the Vatican, Farrell explained, are “presumed to be sponsored by the pope” and people assume that “the pope is in agreement with everything that is said.”

After being told “what the event was about, it was not appropriate for me to continue to sponsor such an event,” he said.

However, Farrell said that while he could not sponsor the event, the church is “always open to listening and we are always open to dialogue.”



CNS/Vatican Media

**POPE VISITS WOMEN PRISONERS** — Pope Francis visits the *Casa di Leda*, a group home for women prisoners and their young children, in Rome March 2. The visit was one of the pope’s Friday works of mercy.

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

— Martin Luther King Jr.