

Inspired by the Spirit

Members of the Catholic Women's League from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon engaged in discussion on a range of topics at the 82nd annual diocesan CWL convention held May 1 in Watrous, Sask. The 2017 theme is "Inspired by the Spirit, women respond to God's call."

— page 6

Science fair

Students from Manitoba's Catholic schools are off to the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Regina this week following their success at a regional fair that brought together Manitoba's independent schools for a science competition at Holy Cross School in Winnipeg.

— page 6

Protesters rally

A rally against the government of Saskatchewan took place in front of the Legislature in Regina May 3 to protest Bill 63, which organizers argue would give the education minister the power to control school board spending, determine salaries, reorder school division boundaries, and leave locally elected trustees essentially powerless.

— page 7

Understanding Francis

A veteran British Catholic journalist has produced the most insightful examination yet of the life and early papacy of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who brought a refreshing atmosphere to the Vatican from the moment of his election on March 13, 2013. Gerald Schmitz reviews.

— page 9

Ordination

One of the Catholic Church's traditional arguments against the priestly ordination of women says the priest must be "another Christ," a male other Christ. By definition, a female can't fill that role. The authors of the Christian Scriptures, however, would never have understood that logic.

— page 12

PM announces closure in a year's time

By Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, editor

The *Prairie Messenger* begins Vol. 95 with this issue. It will mark the last year the *Prairie Messenger* will be printed.

The PM board of governors, the monastic community of St. Peter's Abbey, decided recently to end publication of the *Prairie Messenger* in May 2018, after Vol. 95 is completed.

The main issue is finances. The community decided it could not carry a debt that has ballooned to more than \$200,000 a year.

We at the *Prairie Messenger* have much for which to be grate-

ful. We have been sustained by the generosity of countless donors over these past many years, and by the encouragement of our faithful subscribers who found weekly nourishment in the *Prairie Messenger*. As well, we greatly benefited from the annual grant provided by the Aid to Publishers of the federal government's Canadian Periodical Fund. We are especially grateful for the vision and efforts of former editor Rev. Andrew Britz, OSB, who established the PM Sustaining Fund in the 1990s. The fund has extended the life of the *Prairie Messenger* for several years.

However, like a number of other religious and secular

newspapers, we are affected by the changing times. The Internet and social media have changed the way people access news today. Our subscription base has fallen below 4,000 weekly subscribers.

It has not been an easy decision to terminate the *Messenger*. Our history extends back to 1923 when the English *Messenger* was started. The apostolate of the press goes back even further, to 1904, when the German newspaper, the *St. Peter's Bote*, was first published; the first year it was edited in Rosthern and printed in Winnipeg.

In 1968, the monastic community faced a similar critical point.

A lay board set up by the community advised that the paper be turned over to the laity, newly empowered by the Second Vatican Council. The monastic community decided not to follow its advice and to continue to edit and publish the paper.

In summary, the *Prairie Messenger* will continue to be published for another year, until May 2018. We thank you, our readers, for your support and "partnership" with us. We thank the bishops of Saskatchewan and Manitoba who contribute through their communications staff.

It certainly is with mixed feelings that we make this announcement.

Pope honours the tender Mary, not a 'plaster statue'

By Junno Arocho Esteves

FATIMA, Portugal (CNS) — Mary's example of believing and following Jesus is what matters most; she cannot be some image "of our own making" who Christians barter with for mercy, Pope Francis said.

On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions at Fatima, the pope asked tens of thousands of pilgrims May 12 to reflect on "which Mary" they choose to venerate, "the virgin Mary from the Gospel" or "one who restrains the arm of a vengeful God?"

Is the Mary they honour "a woman blessed because she believed always and everywhere in

God's words or a 'plaster statue' from whom we beg favours at little cost?" he asked.

As the sun set at the shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, pilgrims held thousands of lit candles, filling the square with a fiery light before Pope Francis led them in praying the rosary.

The pope already had visited

the shrine earlier in the evening, arriving by helicopter from Monte Real air base. Excited crowds, waving flags and white handkerchiefs, cheered as he arrived in his popemobile.

He then made his way to the Little Chapel of the Apparitions where Mary appeared to three shepherd children May 13, 1917.

The apparitions continued once a month until Oct. 13, 1917, and later were declared worthy of belief by the Catholic Church.

The festive cheering of the crowd turned to near absolute silence as the pope spent several minutes with his head bowed and

— CONSECRATES, page 15

Consultations underway for synod

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — With the ubiquitous use of smartphones and computer screens, today's youth face immense challenges and opportunities, say Catholic

youth leaders.

"They tend to struggle with real social connection that is not through a screen," Melissa Monette, youth co-ordinator at Ottawa's Blessed Sacrament Parish, told a consultation the

Ottawa archdiocese is holding for the 2018 Synod of Bishops on Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment. "If they feel awkward they do not push through those emotions, they turn on their phone. They don't deal with awkwardness or feelings anymore."

"Bullying has gone to a whole new level," Monette said. Because it has gone online, it affects youth 24 hours a day. "I don't think any youth gets through this without wounds," she said. The challenge is to help teens work through these wounds, and to help them from becoming bullies themselves. "It's everywhere, damaging them, and we don't know."

"The amount of sex and drugs is insane," Monette said. "I've met kids who said things at age nine that I had to look up. It starts way too young. There's a lack of interest in God, in church, and in religion."

For Michelle Miller, who serves as co-ordinator for young adults and faith formation at St. Joseph's Parish near the University of Ottawa campus, university students, graduates and international students face "huge" financial issues. They have concerns about what they will do when they get out of school; whether they will have to move out west to get a job.

— YOUNG ADULTS, page 4



CCN/D. Gyapong

MARCH FOR LIFE — Cardinal Thomas Collins told the 20th National March for Life in Ottawa May 11 that euthanasia and the crushing of conscience rights "brings shame to our country." Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu was the first of 14 sitting Conservative MPs to address the crowd, announcing the good news her private member's bill C-277, calling for a national palliative care framework, has gone to third reading with the unanimous support of all parties. It now goes to the Senate. Thousands joined the march on a cool, cloudy day. On the 20th anniversary, organizers had hoped for more.

Jesuits return land to Sioux

ST. FRANCIS, S.D. (CNS) — The Jesuits are returning more than 500 acres in South Dakota to the Rosebud Sioux. The formal return of the property is expected to be complete sometime in May.

The property had been given by the U.S. government to the Jesuits in the 1880s for use for churches and cemeteries, according to remarks in a YouTube video by Jesuit Father John Hatcher, president of St. Francis Mission.

“At the beginning of the mission, we had 23 mission stations,” Hatcher said. “But over the years as the people moved off the prairie and into cluster housing, those churches were closed because they were considered unnecessary.” Other properties never had churches built.

“It’s now time to give back to the tribe all of those pieces of land that were given to the church for church purposes,” Hatcher added. “We will never again put churches on those little parcels of land. But it’s an opportunity to return land that rightly belongs to the Lakota people,” of which the Rosebud Sioux are a part.

The property, totalling about 525 acres, is dotted throughout 900,000 acres on a Rosebud reservation in the south-central portion of the state, bordering both the state of Nebraska and the Missouri River.

Rodney Bordeaux, chief operating officer of St. Francis Mission, said that when he started work there five years ago, the land transfer, having been initiated by Hatcher, was “stalled.” He attributed it to finding the right office within the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs to follow through.

“It was just a matter of someone doing it,” Bordeaux told Catholic News Service during a May 4 telephone interview. “We did it on our end, but finding the right office to carry it out — it’s just a cumbersome process.”

With the land back in the

Rosebud Sioux’s hands, “it might just be used for agricultural purposes like it is now, for grazing. It might be used for community development. It might continue to be used for religious purposes,” said Harold Compton, deputy executive director of Tribal Land Enterprises, the Rosebud Sioux’s land management corporation. “It’s because they’re so scattered, I think each one will eventually evolve due to their own location.”

There are about 25,000 people enrolled with the Rosebud Sioux, 15,000 of whom live on the reservation.

Compton told CNS, “It’s the symbolism of returning. This land was categorically reserved by the government for the church’s use. So, the church returning this to the tribe is a plus for everybody.” He added, “The symbolism far outweighs” but then caught himself. “Land is valuable. Land everywhere is valuable. Land around here is worth \$1,000, \$2,000 or more an acre.”

Melkite patriarch quits; pope accepts resignation

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Two months after bishops of the Melkite Catholic Church declared they had reconciled with each other and found a way to move forward together, the Vatican announced Pope Francis had accepted the resignation of Melkite Patriarch Gregoire III Laham.

In a letter released by the Vatican May 6, Pope Francis said that in February, the 84-year-old Syrian-born patriarch “spontaneously presented me with his renunciation of the patriarchal office, asking me to decide the most favourable moment to accept it.”

“After praying and reflecting attentively, I consider it opportune and necessary for the good of the Greek Melkite Church to accept his resignation today,” said the letter addressed to Laham and all the bishops of the Melkite Church.

Pope Francis thanked the patriarch for his service and, especially, for his work to keep the suffering and the needs of the people of Syria in the public eye.

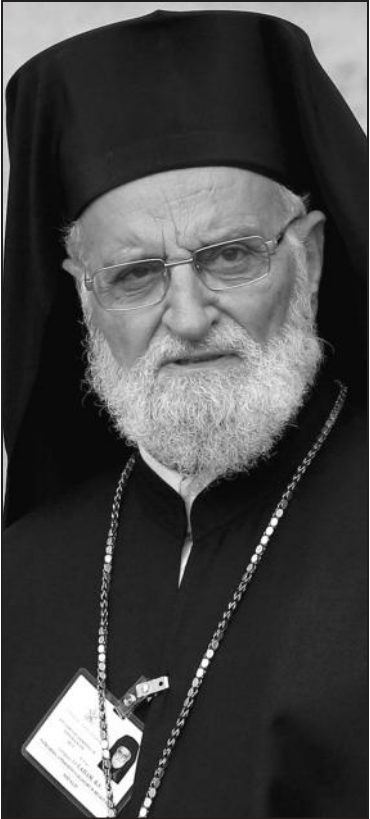
Laham had convoked a synod of the Melkite bishops in June 2016, but the meeting was postponed because half the Melkite bishops boycotted the gathering and called for the patriarch’s resignation. One of the main issues of contention was the management of church property, but also leadership styles.

At the time, the patriarch called the bishops’ absence a “case of open rebellion.”

After eight months, the synod met in February at the patriarchate in Rebweh, Lebanon. Afterward, the bishops issued a statement thanking God “for the spirit of reconciliation and renewed commitment to walk together in partnership to restore peace in the church.”

The bishops also scheduled another synod assembly for June.

Between the resignation of Laham and the election of a new patriarch by the synod, the church will be administered by the member who has been a bishop the longest, in this case Melkite Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, Syria, 74.



CNS/Paul Haring

MELKITE PATRIARCH — Melkite Catholic Patriarch Gregoire III Laham is seen at the Vatican Oct. 6, 2015. The Vatican announced May 6 that Pope Francis had accepted the resignation of the Melkite Catholic Church leader.

Mary teaches to hope in dark time: pope

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Mary, like many mothers throughout the world, is an example of strength and courage in accepting new life and in sharing the suffering of their children, Pope Francis said.

Although she had no idea of what awaited her when she accepted to bear God’s son, “Mary in that instant appears to us like one of the many mothers in our world, courageous to the extreme,” the pope said May 10 at his weekly general audience.

Her motherly love and courage is seen again at the foot of the cross, he said, where “she teaches us the virtue of waiting even when everything appears meaningless.”

Just a few days before he was to visit Fatima, Portugal, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions there and as people in many countries were preparing to celebrate

Mother’s Day, Pope Francis used his audience talk to focus on Mary and hope.

“We are not orphans, we have a mother in heaven,” he said. “In difficult moments, may Mary, the mother that Jesus has given to us all, always guide our steps.”

The Gospels portray Mary mostly as a “woman of silence,” but one who “meditated on every word and every event in her heart,” the pope said. “She is not a woman who is depressed in front of the uncertainties of life, especially when nothing seems to be going right. Instead, she is a woman who listens.”

Among the 15,000 pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square was a group from the pope’s native Argentina. Addressing Spanish-speaking pilgrims later, the pope greeted his compatriots who recently celebrated the feast of the country’s patron, Our Lady of Lujan.

“My heart was in Lujan in these days. May the Lord bless

you all,” he said.

Continuing his series of talks on Christian hope, Pope Francis reflected on Mary as “the mother of hope.”

“Don’t forget: There is always a great relationship between hope and listening. And Mary is a woman who listens, who welcomes existence as it comes to us with its happy days as well as its tragedies, which we never want to encounter,” he said.

Mary’s silence in the Gospel, the pope continued, is particularly evident in Jesus’ final moments

— GOD’S PLAN, page 3

Catholics, Orthodox to work toward unity

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In a letter to Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II, Pope Francis said he hoped that both their churches can continue along the path of true unity and communion.

The bond between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church is a reminder “to intensify our common efforts to persevere in the search for visible unity in diversity, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit,” the pope wrote in a letter to the patriarch May 10.

“Along this path, we are sustained by the powerful intercession and example of the martyrs. May we continue to advance together on our journey toward the same eucharistic table, and grow in love and reconciliation,” he said.

The letter commemorated the “Day of friendship between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church,” which marks the 44th anniversary of the first meeting between Blessed Paul VI and Pope Shenouda III.

Recalling his visit April 28 - 29 to Cairo, Pope Francis expressed his appreciation for the agreement he and Pope Tawadros signed ending a long disagreement between the two churches

over the sacrament of baptism.

In the joint declaration, the two leaders declared they “will seek sincerely not to repeat the baptism that has been administered in either of our churches for any person who wishes to join the other.”

Pope Francis said he was “especially grateful that we have

strengthened our baptismal unity in the body of Christ.”

He also assured Pope Tawadros of his prayers “for you, and for peace in Egypt and the Middle East.”

“May the Spirit of peace bestow on us an increase of hope, friendship and harmony,” the pope said.



CNS/Paulo Novais, EPA

FATIMA MIRACLE BRAZILIAN CHILD — Joao Baptista and his wife, Lucila Yuri, accompanied by Sister Angela Coelho, postulator of the Fatima miracle, left, attend a May 11 news conference at the Marian shrine of Fatima in Portugal. The couple’s son, Lucas, recovered from a severe brain injury after prayers to Blessed Jacinta Marto and Blessed Francisco Marto, two of the shepherd children who saw Mary 100 years ago. The recovery is being cited as the miracle needed for the May 13 canonization of the Marto children.



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‘Neglected diseases’ of the poor need attention

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Thana de Campos, 33, a law professor at the University of Ottawa, calls diseases such as Zika, Ebola, and leprosy “neglected diseases” because they afflict mainly poor people.

“Because they affect only the poor, pharmaceutical companies don’t have marketing incentives to do research for these populations and these diseases,” said de

Campos. “There’s an ethical problem and a legal problem.”

On May 5, de Campos launched her book *The Global Health Crisis: Ethical Responsibilities* that examines the problems from a Catholic natural law perspective.

The book, published by Cambridge University Press, examines whether wealthier societies have a responsibility to fight these diseases, “even though these people are far away from us.”

“Are they our neighbours

somehow?” she asked. “Because of globalization, the world is more united and interdependent, so it’s hard to argue we are not responsible for these people in Africa, Latin America or Asia.”

The book uses Catholic social teaching and the writings of Thomas Aquinas, “who would say we have a responsibility to help the poor, especially when we have a super-abundance,” de Campos said. “We have a lot more than we need, so we have a duty to give

what is surplus to help the poor.”

She said she made an effort to “give a natural law framework to what the United Nations would call global justice.”

“Catholic social teaching has a framework for justice, using subsidiarity and solidarity,” she said.

She examines the duties individual citizens, civil society, pharmaceutical companies and governments in wealthy countries have to the poor in other countries.

The book also examines the legal problem, because “there is a legal structure that kind of justifies the neglect,” she said. “The intellectual property rights system is not wired to incentivize this kind of research. It’s only linked to profit.”



CCN/D. Gyapong
Thana de Campos

“These diseases won’t generate profit,” she said. The inability to make a profit “justifies the companies’ not being interested,” something that in itself is “not wrong or sinful.”

De Campos’ interest in these questions arose when she was working on her master’s degree and teaching at the University of São Paulo in Brazil.

She applied for a research position at the United Nations in Geneva to learn about the differing positions at the UN.

The UN had a special rapporteur for discussing this issue, but people “couldn’t agree on what approach they should have,” de Campos said. “What was missing was conceptual clarity but not political will.”

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The UN had a special rapporteur for discussing this issue, but people “couldn’t agree on what approach they should have,” de Campos said. “What was missing was conceptual clarity but not political will.”

All agreed the issue of the “neglected diseases” was important, but they could not agree on “what is the responsibility, what is health, what is justice, what do we owe to each other,” de Campos said. “These are the kinds of things I try to address in the book.”

“I do hope to have an impact with my scholarship,” she said. “I

don’t necessarily see my work impacting the UN as much, but I would love to see some impact on the Holy See and the way the Holy See somehow tries to direct the UN.”

De Campos said she would love to see the Holy See be more active in shaping UN policy.

“Some of the policies that the UN implements and supports are very against what Catholics support and would agree with,” de Campos said. “I think the Holy See could have a more prominent role in shaping international human rights law and policy at the global level.”

“One of the aims of my scholarship in the future is to influence the UN through the Holy See,” she said, noting that the roots of international human rights law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are “very Catholic-based.”

It would be one of the goals of my scholarship to bring natural law tradition to where it belongs,” she said. “In other words, to bring human rights back to natural law tradition.”



Frank Flegel
CLERGY RETREAT — Bishop Pablo David (centre, with cross) of the Caloocan diocese in the Philippines poses with the Filipino priests currently serving in the Regina archdiocese. David preached the weeklong annual clergy retreat for the archdiocese at the Living Skies Retreat Centre in Lumsden, Sask., in early May.

Filipino bishop preaches clergy retreat

By Frank Flegel

LUMSDEN, Sask. — For Filipino Bishop Pablo David it was almost like speaking with his own priests at home in the Philippines as he delivered the annual archdiocesan clergy retreat at the Living Skies Retreat Centre (formerly St. Michael’s Retreat) in Lumsden.

At least 10 of the 55 priests in attendance were from the Philippines and serving in parishes throughout the Regina archdiocese. None of them came from David’s home diocese of Caloocan, but they had heard of him and were pleased that he was there to deliver the retreat. David also took time to celebrate the regular Saturday mass at Holy

Child Church, which has a large Filipino population.

David based his talks on the biblical passage in which Jesus joins two apostles on the road to Emmaus. There are several biblical references to this particular episode and the bishop chose the version in Luke’s Gospel as the basis for his talks.

Archdiocesan chancellor Rev. James Owolagba said the organizing committee wanted a scriptural scholar for this year’s retreat and David was recommended by an acquaintance. “I remembered that he spoke at the eucharistic congress in the Philippines last year, so I contacted him. Bishop David had visited Canada on previous occasions but this was his first visit to this area of Canada.”

Usually the priests provide the music for the masses and retreat, but this year the parish choir from Lumsden’s St. Jerome Church performed. The weeklong retreat included several talks by David and at least two masses. In-between sessions priests were asked to use the time for quiet reflection; conversation was encouraged at meal times.

Woman finds refuge in Winnipeg

ST. BONIFACE — Maria fled from her country in 2011. Thanks to the support of St. Alphonsus Parish in St. Boniface, Maria’s cousin was able to welcome her to Manitoba in 2014.

Born in Eritrea, Maria spent about 10 years of her youth hiding from her own government. In her country, there is a law that when one reaches Grade 11, in order to complete schooling and attend university, one must go to the Sawa military camp. It is compulsory for boys and girls alike.

The government states that this national service is for one year, but in reality it is for an indefinite length of time. Once you get there, there is no leaving. It is the government’s way of recruiting child soldiers.

Maria, like many other young men and women in Eritrea, refused to go to this military camp, even though that meant the end of her schooling. Her nightmare was just beginning. Maria explains that, even when you accept to quit school, the government forces you to have an identity card which you can only obtain at the military camp.

Government personnel often conduct random searches in the country. If they find someone without an identity card, they are sent to the camp in Sawa. Moreover, no one is authorized to leave the country, even those who have served. Maria had no other choice than to go into hiding for 10 years before being able to flee, on foot, with the help of a smuggler.

In her first attempt at leaving Eritrea, Maria was arrested and sent to prison for three weeks. She was fortunate that one of her friends was able to bribe the prison’s director, and that is how she was released.

Finally, in 2011, after having walked through hills and mountains for two nights while hiding in bushes during the day, Maria arrived, exhausted, in Ethiopia. But the journey — which had cost US\$3,000 (the smuggler’s fee) — was far from over.

Once in Ethiopia, Maria was safe from the Eritrean government, but there was still a river to cross. She knew people who had perished in the attempt. She survived being swept away by the river, and eventually received her

refugee card.

Although there was no need to hide any longer, living conditions in the refugee camp were difficult: no electricity, no schooling past the elementary level, no work (and therefore no possibility of earning money) and not enough food. Maria was dependent for help on relatives.

Finally, thanks to a private sponsorship, Maria’s cousin in Winnipeg was able to get her out of the camp. The young woman landed in the Manitoba capital in September 2014 after 13 years of hiding or living in deplorable conditions.

Maria points out that, in order to be sponsored, her cousin had to count on the support of her parish, St. Alphonsus. The parish became a co-sponsor by attesting to the fact that her cousin was a serious person who would be able to support Maria for a year. The parish priest helped fill out the necessary forms and submit them to Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Maria now has a steady job and is a tenant at a transition house. She says she is ready to start living again.

Mary faithful to God’s plan

Continued from page 2

where her presence during Christ’s passion is “eclipsed” until “she reappears at a crucial moment: when a good number of friends vanished because of fear.”

“Mothers do not betray, and in that instance, at the foot of the cross, none of us can say which one was the crueler passion: that

of the innocent man who dies on the scaffold of the cross or the agony of a mother who accompanies her son in his final moments of life,” he said.

Mary, he added, was “there” not just out of faithfulness to God’s divine plan but also because “of her instinct as a mother who just suffers” every time her child does.

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Pilgrimage follows ancient footsteps, feeds the hungry

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The way Chris Harshman figured it, if he was going to walk 2,700 kilometres anyway, he might as well help some people along the way.

If all goes well, more than 300 children in Africa will be better off because of his efforts.

Over the next four and a half months Harshman, a 30-year-old video game developer from Oshawa, Ont., will follow an ancient pilgrimage route from Rome to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, home of the shrine for St. James the Apostle. Starting at the Vatican, he will travel through northern Italy and across the France side of the Pyrenees Mountains to Lourdes before joining the well-known Spanish camino, following a similar route of many Christians in the Middle Ages.

"It is certainly going to grow and enhance my faith life for

sure," Harshman said May 3, the day before catching his flight to Rome. "But that is for me and I don't want to do something that is just for me. (So) let's raise money for a charity."

Harshman, who has spent more than a year training and preparing for the pilgrimage, began approaching charities which stood out to him. To his surprise, few were interested.

"The charities didn't quite understand why I'd want to raise money for them by doing a walk," he said. "I won't go too much into that. But then I ended up coming across Mary's Meals Canada."

Harshman discovered that for just over \$16 Mary's Meals Canada provides a schoolchild in Malawi a daily hot meal for a year.

"It is like an oatmeal gruel mix but it is very nutritious for the kids," he said. "The most important thing is that they offer a hot meal . . . to kids in Africa so that they can learn on a full stomach."

And for many of those children it is the only meal they eat each day, said Jill Mowser, fundraising co-ordinator for Mary's Meals Canada, which in 2016 raised about \$500,000, doubling their previous year's donations.

"These are children who are in pretty desperate circumstances," she said from her Calgary office.

There are more than 1.2 million children being served daily by Mary's Meals Canada and its 10 counterparts that include Mary's Meals USA, Mary's Meals France and the original, Mary's Meals UK.

The daily meal program is also an incentive for others to start attending school.

"What we find is that when we start providing these meals the enrolment in the school dramatically increases and the children's performance in school dramatically increases," said Mowser. "It is definitely very motivating for the children to go to school and for the parents to send them, if



Photo courtesy Harshman family

CAMINO JOURNEY — Chris Harshman is seen off by his father James at Toronto's Pearson Airport as he embarks May 4 on his fundraising trek from the Vatican to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Harshman's journey will raise money for Mary's Meals Canada to feed undernourished kids in Malawi.

they have parents . . . (because) there are a lot of orphans and a lot of child-led households."

Mary's Meals Canada gladly accepted Harshman's offer to donate the funds raised through his walk. "For someone to take so much time away from his personal life . . . and to do something this big, I think that people really respect that," said Mowser.

For Harshman, the fact that the charity ultimately helps educate kids "is the most important thing." "It is so important to the world and I see it done poorly so much throughout the world," he said.

Harshman decided to aim for a modest \$5,000 during the trip. But as word spread of his intentions, the donations began.

"Last I checked it was 33 per cent toward the goal," he said. "It's not that I intended to raise all the money before going on the trip. I really wanted to raise all the money during the trip so it is really inspiring and humbling that I've raised 33 per cent of the goal prior to even taking a step."

Much of the money has come from Harshmans' local parish, St. John the Worker, said his father, James.

"So many people have just stepped forward and said 'this is great, Chris, we are praying for

you,'" said the family's patriarch. "Our church, our priest, the CWL have all donated money. It is a wonderful feeling when all these people that you know in the church step forward and say that I wish I could go, this is a great idea."

That kind of faith-fuelled support from the community is comforting to the family.

"We are nervous that he is going on this huge adventure, but it is really an action of faith," said James, a father of three.

"Faith is essentially saying that we have to trust that he is in the Lord's hands and that Mary is guiding him. It gives you a feeling that you are doing something with a purpose even beyond the call of walking."

To keep the donations flowing Harshman intends to use a mixture of social media and a blog, <http://www.pilgrimformeals.com>

"The blog is going to provide people with an insight into my trip," said Harshman. "The blog will balance both on the spiritual aspects and the physical site aspects, kind of the trials and tribulations of walking such a distance."

"My hope is that if people don't donate right away that they'll be able to follow through the blog and become more inclined to donate."

Young adults 'can smell authenticity'

Continued from page 1

They also face the challenge of the relevancy and trustworthiness of institutions in general, not only the church, she said, noting the recent crumbling of the banking system during the last worldwide financial crisis.

"Young adults wear an armour around them and you have to get through that armour," Miller said.



CCN/D. Gyapong

Michelle Miller, co-ordinator of young adult ministry and faith formation at St. Joseph's Parish in Ottawa.

"They can smell authenticity a mile away. You won't get through that armour unless there is some authenticity."

Young people are used to being "seen as a commodity" she said, noting they are aware of how much everyone has an eye on their wallet.

While Miller agreed with the concerns about over-dependence on screens, the ability to connect online allows them huge opportunities as well. They are connected to people all over the world and have access to materials on faith and spiritual conversion that are "com-

pletely out-of-the-box," she said.

St. Joseph's offers a 7 p.m. Sunday mass for university students that offers low lights, candles and lots of silence, Miller said. Though at first she thought she would make changes to make it more lively, she soon realized this would be a mistake — the students craved silence.

They also seek out service opportunities, she said. In a narcissistic society, they "know it feels different" to help others.

"When they are convinced, they will do anything," said Rev. Vincent Pereira, pastor of St. Theresa's Parish. He noted how every year on the eve of the National March for Life, about 1,000 young people gather at his parish to march to the nearby Human Rights Monument to hold a candlelight vigil.

Though many young Catholics are no longer practising the faith, they still want to stay connected, and want their children exposed to the values they were raised with, Miller said. They plan to have their children baptized and confirmed.

Young people are also looking for tools to help them discern how to make good choices, she said.

"They are looking for a place to be accepted," Monette said, noting that sometimes a teen "just needs to vent, to sit there and be upset."

"This generation of young adults is the most accepting generation I've ever encountered," Monette said. "At least in Ottawa, on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation — a person is a person. It's beautiful how open they are to accepting people."

Both young leaders spoke of the importance of integrating young people with the parish as a whole. "It works when the priest is on-board," Monette said. "It makes them feel more involved with the parish — not like a ghetto."

Ted Hurley, director of family and youth ministry for the Ottawa archdiocese, facilitated the consultation, with Krista Wawrykow, who works with Hurley, record-

ing the results on a laptop.

The Ottawa archdiocese is holding four consultations based on a questionnaire the synod of bishops in Rome sent to episcopal conferences around the world. The questionnaire includes questions such as, "In what manner does the church listen to the lived situations of young people?" and "What do young people really ask of the church in your country today?"

"We've done well in programming," Miller said. "But we've done programming instead of listening."

Monette said that youth will "vote with their feet" if listening is not built into programming.

Hurley said the Vatican will soon have an online consultation available through a website. The results of the consultation will help shape the 2018 synod's working document, *Instrumentum Laboris*.

Bishops to reconsecrate Canada to Mary

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Catholic bishops will be reconsecrating Canada to Mary on July 1 to mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

The reconsecration will take place 70 years after Canada was first consecrated to Mary at a huge Marian Congress in Ottawa in 1947.

When the Canadian Catholic bishops gather for their annual plenary assembly in September, they will be invited to jointly reconsecrate Canada following a eucharistic celebration, said a recent news release from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB).

"Beginning with the early Jesuit missionaries who consecrated their missions to Mary Immaculate, a number of Canadian dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, cities and buildings have been named in her honour," the

CCCCB said. "The first time the country as a whole was consecrated to the Blessed Mother took place in 1947 during the National Marian Congress which was held in Ottawa."

"Ranked at the time as the largest religious gathering until then in North America, the celebration marked the centenary of the Archdiocese of Ottawa and focused on the hope for lasting world peace," the CCCC release said. "A message by Pope Pius XII was broadcast during the eucharist and was carried by a number of radio stations across the country."

CCCCB communications director René Laprise said it was a decision of the Permanent Council and the Executive Committee to invite Canada's bishops and eparchs to reconsecrate Canada on July 1 and during the plenary.

The CCCC has also posted catechetical material for adults and children at cccb.ca to help them make a personal Marian

consecration. The adult resource explains consecration is a "renewal of our first consecration at baptism," in the "particular form of a personal pledge."

"Today, the Blessed Mother continues to shine forth in the community of believers as the perfect example, icon, and model of what it means to live by faith, to welcome grace, and to co-operate with the Lord in the fulfilment of his plan of salvation," the adult resource says.

"In entrusting ourselves to Mary's maternal care and protection, we benefit from her intercession, joining our feeble efforts to her powerful prayers and her closeness to Jesus," it says. "Mary helps us through her companionship and counsel."

On May 14, Mother's Day, the pilgrim statue was permanently installed at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Ottawa, the closest Catholic parish to the site of the historic Marian Congress.

Canadian Martyrs’ Shrine undergoes transformation

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

Mystics, missionaries and martyrs helped found the church in Canada. Their lives of faith, their dreams, their failures and successes set the template for who we are meant to be. Which is why a summer pilgrimage to the Martyrs’ Shrine in Midland, Ont., can be more than a pleasant Sunday outing.

When the 91-year-old shrine opened May 6, pilgrims were in for much more than a repeat of past years. St. Joseph’s Church has been restored, with its old high altar back in its central position. Relics of the martyrs will be displayed for adoration at a new side altar. There’s a new chapel, dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, in the basement and beside it a new meeting room outfitted for audio-visual presentations about the lives of the Canadian Martyrs.

In part, the changes are being financed by the sale of 21 Huronia paintings by Canadian master William Kurelek. Originally commissioned by the Jesuits to aid the educational program at the shrine, the illustrations of the life and mission of St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions each measure about 23 x 30 cm. The collection is expected to fetch between \$80,000 and \$120,000 at a Waddington’s auction June 19.

The decision to sell the paintings didn’t come easy, but in the end the Jesuits had to ask themselves what would serve their mission best.

“The paintings, in and of themselves, are not directly linked to our mandate,” said Martyrs’ Shrine director Rev. Michael Knox. “We are not an art gallery.”

Prayer, not resistance, must be response to God’s surprises

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — God, who created the world, continues to work in it, surprising people and making some of them nervous, Pope Francis said.

The phrase “it’s always been done this way” reflects an attitude that “kills,” the pope said May 8 at his early morning mass. “This kills freedom. It kills joy. It kills fidelity to the Holy Spirit, who always is at work, leading the church.”

In his homily during the mass in the chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, Pope Francis concentrated on the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, which recounts the heated debate in the early Christian community about Peter entering the homes of pagans, sharing the Gospel with them and baptizing them.

Peter is courageous, the pope said. “He was able to accept God’s surprise” and to move in a new direction under the guidance of the Holy Spirit while other members of the community “certainly were afraid of this novelty.”

“The Spirit is a gift of God, of this God our father who always surprises us,” the pope said. Because God is a living God, one



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

MARTYRS’ SHRINE — The 91-year-old Martyrs’ Shrine in Midland, Ont., has undergone some changes, with \$125,000 in upgrades planned for this year. Here, a statue of St. Isaac Jogues stands in front of the shrine’s church.

The Jesuits will retain high-quality digital reproductions of the paintings and the right to use them in programming at the shrine.

The \$125,000 in capital upgrades planned for this year are just the start.

On July 21, indigenous and Jesuit, French and English Canadian paddlers will embark from Martyrs’ Shrine on an 850-km canoe trip to the Kahnawake First Nation near Montreal. This 32-day journey is part of the Canadian Jesuit response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 “calls to action.”

By fall, a new, permanent, year-round residence for the Jesuits will be constructed at the shrine, completing a transforma-

tion from a part-time, summer-season ministry to a full-time Jesuit presence with a summer season dedicated to the pilgrim experience and a winter season filled with high school retreats, parish ministry in the Midland-Penetanguishene area and special events for the Christmas and Lent liturgical seasons.

The transformation of Martyrs’ Shrine will also extend to new opportunities for walking pilgrimages. In partnership with Georgian Bay Trails, this summer a new 89-km walking trail will be marked out between Barrie and the shrine and connect with the Trans Canada Trail in time for the 2018 season.

Knox has a clear and succinct formula that defines the Jesuit mission at the shrine.

“This is about walking with St. Jean de Brébeuf and the companions into a relationship with Christ. The holiness of this place is in who was here and what happened,” he said.

Knox would like pilgrims to the Martyrs’ Shrine to be able to dive as deeply into the history of the place as they can. He spent years at Oxford University completing his doctorate in the life, culture, politics and spirituality of the early Jesuit missions in Canada. Over nine months he read the 5,978 pages of the Jesuit *Relations* in their original 16th-century French three times.

He came away with a conviction that there’s more to the martyrs than their martyrdom.

“It’s crucial to remember that the holiness of the martyrs is rooted in a life of faith,” he said. “That moment of choice these individuals faced — to embrace Jesus in a moment of death — came from a life of faith.”

A new program of high school retreat experiences, which invites students to snowshoe into the shrine, learn about the lives of the martyrs and celebrate a fireside mass next to the graves of Brébeuf and St. Gabriel Lalemant, promises to make the story into something more than a history lesson for the next generation.

“The shrine is a landscape in

which people from other cultures come to celebrate who they are in a context of the history of Canada,” said Knox.

The largest annual pilgrimage in recent years has been the Tamil Catholic Community pilgrimage, scheduled for July 15. Last year it brought 15,000. The Filipino pilgrimage (Aug. 5) comes in at around 10,000. The Polish Pilgrimage (Aug. 13), with its heroic weeklong walk through southern Ontario to Midland, continues to be a major event.

There are 120,000 visitors per year to the shrine and since 1926 it has welcomed over eight million. Some of that more recent history will be on display near the new altar for the martyrs’ relics, where the abandoned crutches, wheelchairs and walking canes of pilgrims who found healing at the shrine will be on display.

The pilgrimage experience isn’t a holiday away from the daily grind of reality, but rather a deeper and more meaningful experience of reality, said Knox.

“It’s so real,” he said. “You get real people coming with their suffering, coming for an experience of God.”

Canadian Martyrs

The Martyrs’ Shrine honours the memory of eight men — six Jesuits and two laymen — who died for their faith in the mid-1600s:

— St. Jean de Brébeuf was the first Jesuit missionary in the Huronia district, not far from current-day Midland. He spent more than 20 years among the Huron people. He was captured during an Iroquois raid in 1649, tortured and killed. He was canonized in 1930.

— St. Gabriel Lalemant was ordained a priest at age 27 after spending his first years with the Jesuits as a teacher. Lalemant was sent to help Brébeuf in Huronia in 1648. He was killed a day after Brébeuf at the age of 37.

— St. Charles Garnier lived with the Hurons and Petuns for 13 years. Garnier died at the age of 44 after his mission was attacked.

— St. Antoine Daniel founded the first boys’ college in North America at Quebec in 1635 and later worked with Brébeuf in Huronia for 12 years. He died at age 48 during an Iroquois attack in July 1648. He was the first of the Jesuit missionaries to be martyred.

— St. Noël Chabanel arrived at Ste. Marie among the Hurons in 1644 and spent five years in mission work, struggling to master the language. He was killed near the Nottawasaga River by a Huron-Wendat convert who had turned against the Christian outpost.

— St. Isaac Jogues arrived in Huronia in 1636 and helped supply mission outposts for three years. Captured by the Iroquois in 1642, he was tortured and held captive. He eventually escaped to France, but returned that same year to help broker peace with the Iroquois. He was martyred at Auriesville, N.Y., at the age of 39.

— St. René Goupil left the Jesuit novitiate because of ill health and instead studied medicine and offered to help Jesuit missions. He and Jogues were captured and tortured. Goupil was killed while making the sign of the cross on a child in Auriesville, N.Y. He was 35.

— St. Jean de Lalande at 19 offered his services to the Jesuits in New France as a “donne” — giving his life as a gift to the Jesuit mission. He accompanied Jogues to the Iroquois mission in Auriesville, N.Y., in 1646, where he was captured and killed.



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

The Canadian Martyrs are immortalized in a stained glass window and an altar to display relics of the Martyrs.

CWL annual convention ‘inspired by the Spirit’

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

WATROUS, Sask. — Reflections, prayer, presentations, and reports were all part of the 82nd annual diocesan convention of the Catholic Women's League held May 1 at the Watrous Civic Centre and at St. Ann's Parish in Watrous.

Representatives of local CWL councils from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon joined special guests — including provincial CWL president Jean Reader and national president Margaret Ann Jacobs — in a convention focused on the 2017 CWL theme, “Inspired by the Spirit, women respond to God's call.”

In her keynote address, Jacobs explored the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit, using Scripture as a starting point to discuss inspiration and challenges for CWL members and local councils.

“There is no doubt that sometimes it is a challenge to work with so many women with so many gifts and talents; however, how we interact with each other is often what makes a difference in how vibrant our parish (CWL) councils

are,” Jacobs said. “Through our actions we can build God's kingdom.”

She encouraged members to reflect and pray on the purpose and mission of the league in light of the Holy Spirit's call. “As Catholic women, we are empowered by the Spirit to renew our commitment to the call to holiness through service to the people of God,” she stressed.

“We are the voice of Catholic women united in faith, promoting Christian values in the home and in the world. We offer hospitality, friendship, sisterhood, support and affirmation that empower women to reach their full potential. We provide faith-based opportunities for spiritual growth, leadership development, and many avenues for service, advocacy and social justice,” Jacobs said.

In addition to her keynote talk, the national president also informed CWL members about discussions with bishops and Catholic ethicists about how CWL councils at every level must discern their support (financial or volunteer) for health care facilities

that are involved directly or through referral in providing euthanasia or assisted suicide — known as Medical Aid in Dying, or MAID.

Providing support for a facility involved in assisted suicide or euthanasia could be a matter of “co-operating with evil,” she noted. Such co-operation would be morally wrong from a Catholic perspective.

“The charitable support that the Catholic Women's League provides for institutions that directly co-operate with MAID must be reviewed,” she said. “It is morally justified to withdraw financial support to such health care institutions and hospices . . . and we need to clearly state the reasons in the hope that they will reconsider their policies and procedures.”

It may be possible for CWL councils to ask that support be allocated to areas of the institution that are not directly involved in providing assisted suicide or euthanasia, she added. “We need to have dialogue with parishes and diocesan spiritual advisers and our bishops,” she said. “This is something that



Kiply Yaworski

INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT — Members of the Catholic Women's League from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon engaged in discussion on a range of topics at the 82nd annual diocesan CWL convention held May 1 in Watrous, Sask. The 2017 theme is “Inspired by the Spirit, women respond to God's call.”

we need to address. We can't pretend that it isn't happening.”

Support for palliative care, including a day of prayer organized nationally by the CWL on May 4, was one of the areas highlighted throughout the day.

The hall itself was decorated with lap quilts, prayer shawls, and handmade blankets for the sick and dying that were brought to the convention by local councils from across the Diocese of Saskatoon.

Saskatoon diocesan CWL president Marlene VanDresar presented a report highlighting a range of initiatives — such as the CWL day of prayer for palliative care; a series of videos about palliative care, suicide prevention, care for the elderly and L'Arche (found online at www.findingthegifts.ca) produced by the bishops of Saskatchewan with support from

— GREETINGS, page 12

Science fair recognizes students' efforts

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — Three students from Manitoba's Catholic schools are off to the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Regina May 14 - 21, following their success at a Bison Regional Science Fair that for the first time brought together all Manitoba's independent schools for a science competition at Holy Cross School in Winnipeg.

Danielle Marie Borbajo of Holy Ghost School won for her work on “The Effect of Electromagnetic Radiation on Living Organisms”; Jonah Norman of Christ the King School investigated “Speed vs. Mass”; and Grace Madden of Holy Cross School called her project “Got cow's milk alternatives?”

Other student projects received awards from sponsors in fields such as biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences, microbiology and chemistry, animal science, plant science, physics and engineering, social science and environmental science.

“I am always impressed by the quality of work and ingenuity our students display each year,” said the principal of Holy Cross School, Alexander Cap. “We are proud of all our participants, ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade. With the guidance and direction of our science teacher, Dr. Anju Bajaj, our school comes together as a community to celebrate this great learning experience and the children are all winners as they grow in confidence and their understanding of science.”

The students will be accompanied at the Canada-Wide Science Fair by Bajaj, the organizer of the Bison Regional Science Fair for independent schools. During the science fair, Bajaj was recognized by the governments of Canada and Manitoba for her efforts in promoting an interest in science among students and for continued excellence in her science program.



SCIENCE FAIR — Front row, from left: Winnipeg Science Fair winners Danielle Marie Borbajo, Jonah Norman and Grace Madden, with Holy Cross science teacher Dr. Anju Bajaj. Back row: superintendent of Manitoba Catholic Schools Robert Praznik, Winnipeg city councillors Dan Vandal and Matt Allard, and Dr. Pawan K. Singal, director of the Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences, St. Boniface Research Centre.

She also received a teacher appreciation award at the Manitoba Schools Science Symposium held at the University of Manitoba, where her students also received several awards. Outside of the school, she has organized events such as youth leadership workshops, speechcraft communication training courses, and a science fair at the community temple.

In Manitoba, the Catholic Schools Office is a department of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and provides administrative and support services to the 19 Catholic schools in the Archdioceses of Winnipeg and St. Boniface, and the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg.

The 56th annual Canada-Wide Science Fair is being held at the University of Regina, with approximately 500 of Canada's top young scientists from grades 7 - 12 and CÉGEP representing their regional science fairs with the opportunity to share in awards and prizes.

The national science fair recognizes students who have identified solutions to a local, regional or global concern through their project. Past projects have addressed issues from climate change and food security to declining natural resources and environmental degradation.

Students are competing for nearly \$1 million in cash awards and scholarships, and are assessed by volunteer judges, including professional scientists, researchers and engineers. Since 1962, Youth Science Canada, based in Pickering, Ont., has sponsored the Canada-Wide Science Fair for the promotion of innovation and the celebration of excellence in science, engineering and technology among Canada's youth.

Youth Science Canada is a national, registered charitable organization, and works with partners in programs aimed at increasing awareness and involvement of youth in science, engineering and technology to engage, mentor and recognize Canada's young scientists.

Synagogue vandalism not a hate crime

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A 13-year-old boy was arrested May 2 and charged with break and enter and mischief over \$5,000 following the discovery on April 30 of a break-in at Beth Jacob Synagogue.

“Neither we nor the police believe the break-in had anything to do with anti-Semitism or discrimination,” said Rabbi Jeremy Parnes. Most of the damage was suffered by the Montessori School that is housed in the building.

“No damage was done to any religious articles and there is no graffiti, racist or otherwise,” said Parnes.

Paint was spattered on the floors and inside the Montessori

School. The school suffered some broken materials, but there was no damage in the gathering area or the sanctuary of the synagogue.

Parnes said, “There is a lot of damage and it's going to take a while to clean up and it will be costly.”

It was apparent that a fire extinguisher was also discharged inside the school and gathering area. The rabbi said they are not allowing photographs to be taken inside the building.

The Montessori School is closed until further notice and school officials are making arrangements to continue classes in a temporary location. It is believed that the boy may have been a student at the school.



Kiply Yaworski

CRAFT GUILD — The Craft Guild at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon recently held a sale of items made by volunteers as a way to raise funds for the parish and support charities. Crafts are made mostly from donated or recycled materials.

Lay Formation fosters spiritual transformation

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

WATROUS, Sask. — The powerful spiritual impact of the Lay Formation program was described for CWL members from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon at their annual convention May 1 in Watrous.



Kiply Yaworski

LAY FORMATION — Connie McGrath and Mona Goodman described the Lay Formation program for delegates at a diocesan CWL convention in Watrous May 1. Lay Formation registration is underway for September 2017.

Co-ordinator Mona Goodman and CWL member Connie McGrath, a graduate of Lay Formation, presented an overview of the diocesan program. Launched in 1987, the program was part of the diocesan response to St. Pope John Paul’s request that the formation of lay people should be among the priorities of every diocese. “It was Vatican II’s call to the laity to be church,” noted McGrath. In response to the Holy Father’s call, the diocesan program was established to help adult

Catholics fulfil their baptismal commitment to the mission and ministry of Jesus through a process of formation and faith education. Some 900 people have graduated from the program in Saskatoon over the past three decades. The program is two years in duration, with participants meeting one weekend a month for 10 months from September to June. Queen’s House of Retreat and Renewal provides a beautiful and prayerful setting for the participants, said McGrath. “The Lay Formation program is not ministry training. It is a journey that fosters deep, spiritual transformation. It is designed to awaken, enrich and deepen our faith,” she said. “You grow in faith, deepen your spiritual life, understand the Gospel, expand your heart, mind and soul, and develop lifelong friendships,” she said. “I loved the lectures by top-calibre speakers who explained the history and teachings of the church and the Bible. I developed a deep respect for the huge organization of the universal Catholic Church.” Lay Formation provides an enriching experience of Christian

community as Catholics of many backgrounds journey together, praying, learning and sharing life, McGrath described. Lay Formation is a shared experience, with three streams: Diocesan, Eparchial and Aboriginal, she noted. In 1999, participants from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon joined participants from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon in the first experience of a shared formation program. Based on the success and the model of the shared diocesan/eparchial program, Lay Formation was expanded to include an Aboriginal Stream in 2007. Prince Albert, Keewatin-Le Pas and Saskatoon dioceses work together to provide the program for Aboriginal Catholics at Queen’s House. Roman Catholics — Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal — as well as Ukrainian Catholics, study common topics together while also meeting as separate streams to explore faith and spirituality in the context of their own traditions and cultures. “And there is lots of fellowship, lots of breaking bread together,” McGrath said, stressing how participants are all on the same spiritual journey. Areas of study include Scripture, theology, morality, liturgy, spirituality, justice and peace, as well as church history, Vatican II, Christology, ecclesiology, sacraments, church traditions, ecumenism, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Catholic social teaching, Canon Law and Mary.

Participants also explore Aboriginal spirituality, the medicine wheel, Aboriginal worldview/treaties, the healing journey, images of God, contemporary spirituality, spiritual pastoral care, youth ministry, stages of faith, adult learning styles, collaborative ministry and spiritual direction. Deepening a relationship with God through prayer is an essential component of Lay Formation. Participants engage in daily personal prayer and have many opportunities for communal prayer. The Liturgy of the Hours is said morning and evening, and the liturgical seasons are celebrated with special liturgies. The Lay Formation weekend concludes with the eucharist. Participants prepare and provide the lay liturgical ministries for the eucharist, and lead the Liturgy of the Hours and other prayer services. Lay Formation introduces participants to various prayer forms and the varied and rich ways of prayer that are part of the Catholic tradition — including centring prayer, Taizé prayer, Aboriginal prayer, the rosary, praying with icons, and praying with Scripture as well as Franciscan, Ignatian, Augustinian, and Thomistic prayer traditions.

Goodman described how the Bishop’s Annual Appeal pays for half the cost of the program, with each participant and their home parish splitting the other half. Bursaries are also available through the CWL and for teachers through Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. Registration is underway for September 2017, when a new session begins for all three streams: Diocesan, Eparchial and Aboriginal. For more information contact Goodman at layform@saskatoonrcdiocese.com or (306) 659-5846.



Kiply Yaworski

FATIMA MOVIE NIGHT — It was standing room only for a movie night held May 2 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family, the first of several events being held in Saskatoon to mark the 100th anniversary of the first appearance of Our Lady of Fatima to three shepherd children in Portugal. The movie night featured the 1952 feature film, *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*, which tells the story of Lucia dos Santos and her younger cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who witnessed the appearance of Mary once a month from May 13, 1917 to Oct. 13, 1917. A family movie afternoon was also held at St. Mary’s Parish the following week, featuring an animated video about Our Lady of Fatima.

Protesters rally against Bill 63

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Another rally against the government of Saskatchewan took place the afternoon of May 3 in front of the legislature in Regina. This one was protesting Bill 63, which would move much of locally elected school board authorities from the Education Act to Regulations. Protesters argued it would give the education minister the power to control school board spending,

determine salaries, reorder school division boundaries, and in general leave locally elected trustees powerless. Tara Jiajin is a parent who has children in the Catholic school system. She fears Bill 63 would take away her voice in education through the Catholic School Community Council of which she is a member. “I would also not be able to go to my board (locally elected school board) because the board would no longer be responsible

for decisions in education and that takes my voice away, not only the board’s voice but parents’ voices, the teacher’s voice,

— LOCAL BOARDS, page 13



Frank Flegel

PROTESTERS RALLY — A rally against the government of Saskatchewan took place May 3 in front of the legislature in Regina. Participants were protesting Bill 63, which would move much of locally elected school board authorities from the Education Act to Regulations.

Help offered to children in South Sudan

By Amanda Thorsteinsson

WINNIPEG — Leaving home with three small children in tow and walking for three days wasn’t an easy decision for Sarah. It was even harder knowing that making the journey meant risking being attacked by armed robbers or soldiers on the way, and only bringing what they could carry. But Sarah didn’t have a lot of choices. Sarah and her children live in South Sudan, a country that has been torn apart by conflict for the past three years. Sarah’s hometown of Leer has been torched, civilians have been hunted down and killed, cattle have been stolen, and women have been abducted and raped. Leer is also located in Unity State, where in February, 100,000 people were officially declared to be affected by famine by the United Nations. It was the first such declaration anywhere in the world in six years. With that in mind, Sarah’s decision to undertake a dangerous three-day walk with a baby on her back and two little ones behind her makes more sense.

The family arrived at a Protection of Civilians camp in the town of Bentiu in August 2016. Protection of Civilian camps formed spontaneously around United Nations bases when the conflict first began. They provide some protection to people who are scared for their lives. Sarah and the children stayed there for months, but the camp wasn’t home, and it had its own challenges so she brought her family back home to Leer, hoping things would be better. They weren’t. It was only a month before fighting in Leer was once again so severe that Sarah took her three children and went back to the protection camp. The three-day walk and continued lack of food took its toll on the family. When Sarah arrived back at the camp, she was deeply concerned for the health of her youngest child, Martha, only a year old. The girl was visibly suffering from malnutrition; without immediate help, she would soon die. That’s when Sarah was admitted to a program of Canadian Foodgrains Bank member World Relief Canada. The program, implemented locally

by World Relief South Sudan, provides Plumpynut, a special supplementary food that helps extremely malnourished children regain their health. The food is provided by the World Food Program free of charge. Through the project, which totals \$460,000, about 42,000 pregnant and lactating women and young children found to be below certain levels of malnutrition are receiving treatment through the specially designed high-nutrient foods. Over the course of eight weeks, Sarah brought Martha to the clinic for screening to see if she was gaining or losing weight, and to receive a weekly supply of Plumpynut specially designed to help children like Martha recover. After eight weeks in the program, Martha improved. She is no longer close to death. Sarah says she can see the difference in her daughter. “She is now happy and playful again, with an increased appetite. I fear what might have happened to my daughter without this program.” The Winnipeg-based Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working to end global hunger.

Prairie Messenger has long tradition of dialogue

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



The *Prairie Messenger* was a regular presence in our home from the time I was a child, so when longtime family friend and editor Andrew Britz, OSB, came to my door 23 years ago asking me to become part of the staff at the paper, it felt both strange and somehow right.

The monks of St. Peter’s Abbey have been publishing a paper since 1904, but the *Prairie Messenger* in its present form has been around since 1923. In 94 years much has changed. And in some respects, not so much.

A few weeks ago I happened to be doing some research in papers from 1967, and discovered Letters to the Editor pages in which lively debates took up much space from week to week. The letters were in response to challenging articles and commentaries.

Our editorial policy states, “In order to reflect truly the total mystery of the church, the *Prairie Messenger* offers opportunity for dialogue and discussion, knowing that the Word of God can be expressed only in limited human words, which means that disagreement, dissent and diversity will accompany all human efforts to reflect the unity, the faith and the charity the Spirit offers to the people the Father calls.”

The *Prairie Messenger’s* reputation for opening up tough issues for discussion was evident 50 years ago (and indeed from its beginnings). This was the year before Paul VI’s controversial encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, and I found it refreshing to read the discourse on birth control. Theologian Rev. Bernard Haering, CSsR, was quoted as saying, “In marriage today it is nonsense in an era of new scientific insights to insist that each conjugal act is a procreative act.” The Dutch Catechism stated that “Human procreation is not a family’s inexorable fate . . . There are — as anyone knows nowadays — several methods to achieve birth control. All methods converge in making the love relationship between man and woman possible without chance of conception.”

One year later when the encyclical came down, an overwhelming percentage of the laity rejected the decision and opted to go with conscience and lived experience instead (now said to be over 90 per cent). Even so, the issue still causes controversy.

Several years ago we got into trouble because of three articles we’d published. There had been complaints. It was disappointing, but not surprising, that in 50 years “the big three” of sex could still cause indignation: birth control, feminism, and now the treatment of gays in the church. In one case a piece deemed too feminist

could have been acceptable, we were informed, had I more judiciously edited a *couple* of sentences. In another, a headline on the church’s treatment of gays was judged to be inflammatory. And a critical look at *Humanae Vitae* was not welcome, especially when it was suggested in the article that condoms can help protect against disease and women suffer when they lack access to contraception. The article didn’t comment on the fact that where family planning and contraception are available, the abortion rate goes down (Canada has one of the lower rates of abortion in the western world, and the rate has been falling steadily for the past 15 years). But you’re not supposed to say that, either. What has happened to thoughtful discourse on these vitally important issues? It appears, given the articles I discovered in this paper, that discussion was more open 50 years ago.

I wonder how many complaints constitute trouble. My guess is, not many, but the voices demanding conformity are loud. It was only one year ago that the esteemed former editor of Catholic News Service in the U.S., Tony Spence, a man who was in 2010 the recipient of the highest honour in Catholic communications, the Frances de Sales award, was forced out because of a tweet: “LGBT protections get flushed as NC governor signs bill over #bathroom wars.” A statement of support for protective measures of a marginalized group of people is not against church doctrine, yet it was deemed to be over the line. “The far right blogosphere and their troops started coming after me again and it was too much for the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops),” Spence told the *National Catholic Reporter*.

In summer 1967, after a few weeks of heated debate on the letters page over a controversial commentary, editor James Gray, OSB, included the following boxed comment: “A columnist’s strong personal views may clash with the views of the reader. No problem there — argue it out in the letters column, or in an equally effective essay.”

In 1989 Andrew Britz, OSB, wrote in an editorial, “Whether we like it or not, there is a great variety of opinions in the church at large. A Catholic paper must reflect this reality to its subscribers — it is the only reality there is.”

We’ve been accused of going against church doctrine, and of course we’ve made mistakes — no human institution is free of that. But Andrew Britz also made the case in 1997 that “Rome is not the whole story. We must, for

instance, give solid theological weight to the church’s (lay and clerical) non-reception of many aspects of the natural law arguments against artificial contraception, to the faithful’s voting with their feet regarding the way the sacrament of reconciliation is practiced . . . and, though the jury is certainly still out, to the church’s reception of the current teaching of women and the priesthood. There is no way around the struggle. A new *sensus fidelium* is certainly coming to birth, not despite the struggle but precisely because of it and through it. . . . The first and last job of the bishop is to give focus to this *sensus* and make it at one and the same time the power of the church in the world . . .”

A church that ignores the wisdom of the faithful laity — wisdom gleaned through living in the messiness of the real world — does so at its peril. James Gray, OSB, wrote in November 1967: “Is it healthier, better for the growth of faith, that religion and religious rights and practices be forever rigid? taken for granted? never subject to growth? incapable of reflecting the culture and needs of local circumstances which themselves are changing? . . . Has unnecessary centralization of authority in ‘Roman congregations’ . . . not brought about the very complacency, the lack of vitality, that makes Christianity so superfluous and irrelevant to people living in an age that must constantly be adapting and adjusting to meet new challenges?”

Those engaged in the dialogue and discussion of 50 years ago could not have imagined the toxic environment in which debate takes place today. The advent of social media has entrenched battle lines and extreme positions are taken. The anonymity of the Internet emboldens some to resort to obscene personal attacks, and the *Prairie Messenger* has been on the receiving end of such attacks. Finding common ground is seen as an inconceivable compromise.

Especially in this current climate, it is vital that the Catholic press persist in its role to challenge people to think — not to tell people what to think. Dogmatic conformism, not thoughtful discussion, would be the role of the polarized blogosphere.

If any would doubt that circumstances in the church are changing, they need only absorb the words of Pope Francis from his 2013 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel): “I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a church concerned with being at the centre and then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. . . . More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which



LOOKING BACK — This is the *Prairie Messenger’s* front page from the June 28, 1967 issue, right before our country celebrated its centennial. The *Prairie Messenger* has been published since 1923. In 2018, its 95th year, this prairie institution will close.

make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: ‘Give them something to eat’ (Mk 6:37).”

As difficult as it has been, I am proud these 23 years to have been part of the *Prairie Messenger’s* tradition of struggling with complex questions rather than hiding behind the illusion of simple answers. To do the latter is a disservice to the People of God.

In 1968 the monks of St. Peter’s seriously considered closing the *Prairie Messenger*. The financial burden had become overwhelming. Some things don’t

change. This time there will be no reconsidering a difficult decision: in May 2018, with a completed Volume 95, the *Prairie Messenger* will close.

To me the coming year will not be a wake to mourn what is lost. We will not only honour the paper’s storied past, but will continue the faith-filled tradition of a call to renewal. It is an opportunity to celebrate the Good News, and to thank the monks of St. Peter’s Abbey for the gift of their courage and vision — a gift that has inflamed hearts with the Spirit that continues to blow across this beloved prairie.

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On current releases, Christ, cats, and the camino

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Few movies at the multiplex are worth the time, their screens dominated by commercial blockbusters, though the second volume of *Guardians of the Galaxy* is entertaining enough as popcorn

occupation of Poland by hiding them in their Warsaw Zoo would have been better served by a less Hollywoodized production (as the imitation accent of Jessica Chastain portraying the animal-

The Case for Christ (U.S. 2017)

Kedi (Turkey/U.S. 2016)

Looking for Infinity: El Camino
(UK/Spain/France 2017)

comic book fare goes. I gave one thumb up to the sci-fi thriller *Life*, a South By Southwest Festival premiere. Last month's Tribeca film festival also had several selections — *The Circle*, *The Dinner* — arrive in theatres, about which more next week. Before I get to films on Christ, cats and the camino, a few other recent releases are worth noting:

Logan: Sure it's the violent superhero genre but Hugh Jackman's swan song as the Canadian "Wolverine" gives a powerful almost elegiac twist to this franchise-closing episode. A young girl also stars but this is definitely not for children. (Nor is *The Fate of the Furious*, the eighth in that bombastic franchise which Charlize Theron makes almost watchable.)

Beauty and the Beast: I'm not sure we needed another remake but it's box-office gold and with Emma Watson as the beauty Disney serves up some enchanting moments.

The Zookeeper's Wife: The amazing true story of how Jan and Antonina Zabinski saved hundreds of Jews during the Nazi

loving Antonina kept reminding me). Still the narrative elements stand as a testament to the couple's remarkable courage.

The Last Word: The inimitable Shirley MacLaine is the reason to see this tale of a wealthy aging solitary woman, a former advertising executive who has soured on life, as she implausibly engages a young reporter (Amanda Seyfried) to create a flattering obit for her passing.

Maudie: Sally Hawkins inhabits the role of Maud Lewis in this biopic of the impoverished disabled self-taught Nova Scotia painter whose folk art gained international attention, and Ethan Hawke is convincing as her gruff antisocial husband Everett.

Born in China: Disneynature offers its annual Earth Day profile of adorable animals in the wild — featuring pandas, golden monkeys, and snow leopards. Take the kids.

The Lost City of Z: James Gray directs this epic account of the controversial explorations of British Col. Percy Fawcett (an excellent Charlie Hunnam) in the Amazon region in the early decades of the 20th century, an era of

imperial conceits and the exploitation of native peoples by rubber barons. Robert Pattinson is almost unrecognizable as right-hand man Henry Costin who also served with Fawcett in the First World War. Obsessed with finding a lost civilization, Fawcett and son Jack (Tom Holland) disappeared on his third adventure in 1925. See it for the fascinating true story and stunning cinematography.

The Case for Christ: Recent Easters have seen the release of "faith-based" movies that, usually lacking artistic merit, tend to preach to the converted. Sam Worthington's and Octavia Spencer's efforts can't quite save *The Shack* in which a grief-stricken man has a personal encounter with the Almighty. Fortunately director Jon Gunn's *The Case for Christ*, a dramatization of the eponymous book by former Chicago Tribune journalist Lee Strobel (who serves as an executive producer), takes a

more straightforward approach, one that's more effective than the "God's Not Dead" formula.

Strobel (Mike Vogel) is a hot-shot investigative reporter and confirmed atheist when a potentially fatal incident involving his young daughter Alison has life-changing consequences. Alison is saved by the intervention of a religious African-American nurse, Alfie (L. Scott Caldwell). While Lee puts it down to coincidence, his wife, Leslie (Erika Christensen), is drawn toward Alfie's belief that God meant her to be there. Gradually accepting Alfie's evangelical faith, Leslie becomes a baptized Christian over Lee's strong objections. A provoked Lee becomes obsessed with the historical Jesus, specifically with debunking the resurrection. That pursuit intersects with his coverage of a crime story involving a police shooting and wrongful conviction for which he feels responsible. The strains on the marriage grow intense. Lee is also troubled by an estranged relationship with his

father. When unable to definitively disprove the resurrection, Lee abandons angry atheism to take a leap of faith. He will become a pastor and author of bestselling Christian books. Converts can make the truest believers.

While I doubt skeptics of divine intervention will be swayed, the movie is well acted and offers a credible account. As Scott Kelly writes in *Reel World Theology*, "redemption is always possible, even for a studio like Pure Flix," given this production's careful factual presentation of how the Strobels' lives were indeed changed.

Kedi (<https://www.kedifilm.com/>): OK, I confess to occasionally watching cat videos . . . the furballs are just so darn cute. But Turkish director Ceyda Torun's wondrous documentary ("kedi" is Turkish for cat), which follows seven distinctive unowned felines through the streets of Istanbul, achieves a whole other level. No

— CATS, page 10



Courtesy of Kedi

A LOVE LETTER — Ceyda Torun, the director and producer of *Kedi*, says, "Cats have been a part of the city for thousands of years, and so, everyone who grows up in Istanbul or lives in Istanbul has a story about a cat. . . . Cats are as integral to the identity of Istanbul as its monuments, the Bosphorus, tea, raki and fish restaurants. This film is, in many ways, a love letter to those cats and the city, both of which are changing in ways that are unpredictable."

Veteran journalist brings deeper understanding of Pope Francis

By Gerald Schmitz

Veteran British Catholic journalist Jimmy Burns, who was a *Financial Times* correspondent in Buenos Aires in the 1980s, has produced the most insightful examination yet of the life and early papacy of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who

brought a refreshing atmosphere to the Vatican from the moment of his election on March 13, 2013. Burns is convinced of Bergoglio's "inner goodness" but, in light of the troubled record of the Argentine church, this is no hagiography of a "picture-book saint." Burns delves into the details of Bergoglio's reli-

gious formation and at times difficult clerical evolution to become a strong advocate of social justice. That background informs how Bergoglio, the only Jesuit cardinal, became Francis, the first Jesuit pope, and what to make of the transformative expectations that have accompanied the first non-European to occupy the chair of St. Peter.

The resignation of Pope Benedict opened the way for someone who would have a strong hand in reforming Vatican affairs and for someone from the Global South where the majority of the world's Catholics live. Neither a radical nor a rigid conservative, Cardinal Bergoglio also brought a pastoral approach to the position based on a non-dogmatic "theology of the people" that, in exercising a "preferential option for the poor," was critical of all forms of socio-economic exploitation and exclusion.

Burns provides a useful account of Bergoglio's youth, education and early years as a priest. He was born in 1936 to Italian immi-

grant parents who had fled fascist Italy in 1929. He grew up with an awareness of the inequities of Argentine society and was influenced by the populist Peronist movement. While studying chemistry at a technical college he felt the call of a religious vocation. After entering the Jesuit seminary in 1956 he suffered a near-death

for six years. Bergoglio has acknowledged that he often acted in an authoritarian manner that created discontent.

The 1970s were also very challenging times for the church, especially after the 1976 military coup and "dirty war" against dissidents that included exponents of liberation theology. In contrast to



Dennis M. Sabangan

INSIGHTFUL EXAMINATION — Pope Francis, the first Jesuit pope, is the subject of Jimmy Burns' book, *Francis, Pope of Good Promise*.

Jimmy Burns, Francis, Pope of Good Promise

(New York, St. Martin's Press, 2015, 432 pages)

experience, losing part of a lung to pleurisy. He was no political activist, but had read left-wing authors and learned a dialect of the indigenous Guaraní language.

Ordained in 1969, Bergoglio had wanted to be a missionary in Japan. Instead he became a university rector teaching literature and psychology. He was still very young when appointed in 1973 to be Jesuit Provincial by the order's progressive Superior General Pedro Arrupe, a position he held

the conservative church hierarchy's support of the junta, Jesuits were targeted among the priests, religious and lay people working with the poor. Controversy has dogged Bergoglio alleging that, in pursuing quiet interventions with the regime to try to protect his flock, he did not do enough to protest against grave human rights abuses. In examining this period in depth, Burns observes

— ROAD, page 10

Breathing through both lungs proof things can change

Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



On numerous occasions St. John Paul II exhorted all Catholics, and indeed all Christians, to appreciate that the church had to breathe through both lungs — East and West. The message was so important to him that the pontiff issued the apostolic letter *Orientalium Lumen* — the Light of the East. With a sense of the historic, the letter coincided with the 100th anniversary of *Orientalium Dignitas* — On the Churches of the East — issued by Pope Leo XIII in November 1894.

Both popes hoped that knowledge would lead to understanding, which, in turn, would lead to greater co-operation and even unity. They spoke not only about goodwill between Catholics of the Latin Church and the 23 Eastern churches, but also between all Catholics and members of those Eastern churches outside the Catholic fold. So passionate was St. John Paul II about this, he used the expression *breathing through both lungs* to show that the cause was vital. He saw the Christian church as one body that needed both lungs to be healthy and functioning. It was not a cold unfeeling metaphor, but one that evoked our own lives and the health we all cherish. Who cannot sympathize with the crisis, even panic, which ensues when

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

breath does not come easily?

That same emotion is evident in *Orientalium Lumen*. Far from being cold and dogmatic, the letter reveals St. John Paul II's deep feelings. "Our Eastern Catholic brothers and sisters are very conscious of being the living bearers of this tradition, together with our Orthodox brothers and sisters. The members of the Catholic Church of the Latin tradition must also be fully acquainted with this treasure and thus feel, with the pope, a passionate longing that the full manifestation of the church's catholicity be restored to the church and to the world, expressed not by a single tradition, and still less by one community in opposition to the other; and that we too may be granted a full taste of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal church which is preserved and grows in the life of the churches of the East as in those of the West."

A century earlier, in perhaps a less understanding era, Pope Leo XIII expressed a vital need for respect and mutual understanding when he wrote *Orientalium Dignitas*. "The churches of the East are worthy of the glory and reverence that they hold throughout the whole of Christendom in virtue of those extremely ancient, singular memorials that they have bequeathed to us. For it was in that part of the world that the first actions for the redemption of the human race began, in accord with the all-kind plan of God."

"We have begun to have hope, we are fostering it because its realization would be a great cause for



Brent Kostyniuk

EASTERN CHRISTIANITY — St. Josephat's Cathedral in downtown Edmonton is a symbol of Eastern Christianity.

joy, and, it is a fact, we are pursuing more strenuously this work so profitable for the salvation of many. Our goal is to discharge to the utmost degree whatever may be hoped for from the prudent direction of the Apostolic See. The reasons for rivalry and suspicion must be removed; then the fullest energies can be marshalled for reconciliation. We consider this of paramount importance to preserving the integrity proper to the discipline of the Eastern churches."

At times, the tone of *Orientalium Lumen* is almost one of desperation. Pope Leo XIII went so far as to include 13 protocols specifically designed to preserve the Eastern Catholic churches and protect them from Latinization or extinction.

So, after 125 years and two apostolic letters, have things changed?

Happily, the answer is yes.

There are numerous signs that we are learning from each other and realizing we all need to work at breathing through both lungs. Here are a few examples.

"Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ" is a new religious education program being prepared for Grade 5 students attending the Catholic school systems in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. The publishers have gone out of their way to ensure the catechism includes content explaining how Eastern theology and practice differs from that of the West.

In Winnipeg, the shrine that contains the relics of Blessed Martyr Vasyl Velychkovsky is visited by Christians from around the world, who come to pray and seek miraculous healing. Blessed Martyr Vasyl was a victim of Soviet torture for his faithfulness to the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Breathing with both lungs also means greater understanding and co-operation between the 23 Eastern Catholic churches. St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Church in Calgary is also home to St. Basil the Great Melkite Catholic Church, which celebrates mass in Arabic.

The Edmonton Catholic School's Ukrainian bilingual program welcomes not only children of Ukrainian descent, but those from a variety of religious backgrounds whose parents want their children to receive the benefit of learning about Byzantine spirituality.

St. Paul's Cathedral in London, a great symbol of the Anglican Church, displays Byzantine icons in its nave.

Finally, if you have read this article through, your interest in breathing through both lungs is proof that things are changing.

Road to becoming a bishop was rocky

Continued from page 9

that Bergoglio had "struggled over how best to put his faith into action," but that after being named a bishop in 1998 he became both more humble and stronger in admitting mistakes and conquering fear. As Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 2000 he stated forthrightly that the church had "to put on garments of public penance for the sins committed during the years of the dictatorship."

Father Bergoglio's road to becoming a bishop had been rocky. In the mid-1980s he pursued but abandoned doctoral studies in Germany. In 1990 he was removed from his teaching post and later transferred from Buenos Aires to Córdoba. Yet as bishop, then archbishop, of Buenos Aires he really came into his own. He tackled a banking scandal linked to the church and battled government corruption. He stood up to the populist presidency of Nestor Kirchner, later succeeded by his ambitious wife Cristina. That included confrontations on tradi-

tional moral issues like opposition to same-sex marriage. But it was as an outspoken advocate on social justice issues that his reputation grew. He became famous for his personal simplicity and direct ministry into the "villas" (shanty towns) afflicted by poverty, drugs and crime. His example became associated with that of priests like Rev. Carlos Mugica who had been killed there and were revered as folk martyrs for their work with the poor. Made a cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 2001, he was also described by one of his priests as "the least easily manipulated person in the world."

Bergoglio brought the experience of handling such challenges into the papacy, as explored in the book's later chapters. Pope Francis certainly needed resolve to begin cleaning up the problems of the Vatican Bank and reforming the sclerotic Vatican bureaucracy and clerical careerism of the Roman Curia. As evidenced in his global outreach and the enthusiastic warmth of the reception he has received on foreign travels, it's clear he is winning many hearts through

an approach of bringing the church to the people. That said, he faces internal opposition from conservatives while liberal Catholics have been disappointed that he hasn't done enough to deal with the sex abuse scandals or to elevate the position of women in the church.

Overall there's no question that Francis has invigorated the presence of the church in the world. Burns calls him a "pope for all seasons" and a "pilgrim at large" with a truly global vision that embraces 21st-century concerns. His socioeconomic and environmental critiques, his appeals for peace, justice and respect for human rights, have found a global audience. He has created an atmosphere of openness to discussion within the church (for example, bringing critical theologians like Hans Küng "in from the cold").

By his simplicity and admission of flaws Francis exemplifies the role of a penitent servant church whose mission is to bring the "joy of the gospel" to all people. Readers of this book will hope his papacy continues to make good on that promise.

Cats part of the culture

Continued from page 9

doubt too many unowned and feral cats (estimated in the millions in Canada) can become an urban problem (see the *Maclean's* magazine April 2017 feature "Cats Gone Wild"). But the vast numbers that roam Istanbul are appreciated as part of the city's culture. Says one resident, "Without the cat, Istanbul would lose part of its soul." And they are good to be around. Says another, "People who don't love animals can't love people either."

Kedi benefits from some remarkable cinematography and a beautiful musical score. I love the way its four-legged stars go about their real lives, contrasted with treacly fantasy like *A Dog's Purpose*. And as this felicitous film observes: "Dogs think people are God, but cats don't. Cats know that people act as middlemen to God's will. They're not ungrateful. They just know better."

Looking for Infinity: El Camino (<http://lookingforinfinityelcamino.com/>): Aaron Leaman's

one-hour documentary about the ancient Way of St. James across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela gets to the heart of why it has become the world's most popular pilgrimage, each year attracting hundreds of thousands to follow the path primarily on foot. Readers may recall the series I wrote about my own camino experience in 2013. Providing simple direct and intimate testimonies from pilgrims along the Camino Frances — the most travelled route — the film is a great introduction to what makes the camino special as a form of spiritual seeking. For some it is life-changing. Many return. There's a young man who's decided to live beside the camino with only the bare necessities. In capturing the feeling of being there, the film's emphasis is on the inner journey. As one person puts it: "You walk the camino for your soul."

*For future review, also coming to theatres is Tristan Cook's feature-length *Strangers on the Earth: A Reflective Film Journey on the Camino de Santiago*.

Heads out of the clouds, we put faith into action

Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



There's a scene in the movie *Queen of Katwe* where the young Ugandan chess prodigy flies on a plane for the first time. As they ascend above the clouds, she asks her coach: "Is this heaven?" He replies, "No, heaven is higher."

This little interchange speaks volumes about what we imagine heaven to be. Heaven is portrayed as a place in the clouds, above us and "other-worldly." When we ponder ascension, we see how powerful these images of heaven are in our human psyche.

In the reading from Acts, Jesus is lifted up, raised up into the clouds as he returns to his Father in heaven. If we were to read the story of the ascension in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, we would again hear of Jesus being lifted up, up and away from his disciples. It's interesting, then, that Matthew's Gospel takes a more this-worldly approach. In Matthew, the focus is not on Jesus being lifted up into the clouds, but on the commissioning of the disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations." Matthew's

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Gospel clearly challenges us to move from being passive recipients of God's grace to active conduits of God's mercy.

In some ways the ascension is a bit like a high school graduation. The students (disciples) have spent four years in school learning from Jesus, their teacher and friend. It's been an intense journey. They've walked with him and witnessed miracles, they've seen him crucified and rise again from the dead. But, in all this, they have been relatively passive recipients of the experience. Now the rubber hits the road. Jesus is ascending into heaven and they are being called to take action. It's time for them to graduate and spread the good news to the nations!

In Matthew's Gospel consolation and commissioning walk hand in hand. First, Jesus consoles the disciples. He assures them the Spirit will be with them until the end of time. But that consolation quickly becomes an

Ascension of the Lord	Acts 1:1-11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1:17-23 Matthew 28:16-20
May 28, 2017	

invitation to share that message of joy with those who most need to hear it. This proclamation of joy lies at the heart of evangelization. Proclaiming the good news is not so much about making sure everyone looks and thinks and acts like we do, but much more about sharing the joy of God's mercy and consolation with all of humanity.

Pope Francis, in his Angelus message on Jan. 26, 2014, said it best: "Jesus teaches us that the Good News, which he brings, is not reserved to one part of

humanity, it is to be communicated to everyone. It is a proclamation of joy destined for those who are waiting for it, but also for all who perhaps are no longer waiting for anything and haven't even the strength to seek and to ask."

The Feast of the Ascension, then, asks us to ponder what exactly is at the source of our joy as Christians. Our encounter with a God who-is-with-us, Emmanuel, through all of life's ups and downs, changes our demeanour. Rather than coming down from the mountain of the ascension dejected and grieving, the disciples know the Spirit will animate them as they journey forth into the world. We, too, are called to embrace that same Spirit and bring forth a message of God's mercy into the lives of those around us.

This proclamation of joy is no trite, Pollyanna-esque sound bite. It's a hard-earned act of faith that emerges from our journey with Jesus through his life, death and resurrection. It's the assurance that comes from knowing death and evil will never have the last word, despite whatever the current level of geopolitical or personal angst we may be experiencing. Jesus' invitation to "go out and make disciples of all nations" is about claiming hope as our birthright as baptized sons and daughters of God, and then sharing that hope with those most in need.

The ascension is less about imagining a heavenly place above the clouds and more about putting our discipleship into action. It's about fully embracing the consolation of God's ever-abiding presence in our lives and then setting forth to share the joy. The ascension invites us to actively become conduits of God's mercy to all of humanity. Who in our lives, then, most needs to hear God's message of consolation today?

God's mercy and love reaches through to despair, and ours should too

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



Classically, both in the world and in our churches, we have seen despair as the ultimate unforgivable sin. The simple notion was that neither God, nor anyone

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else, can save you if you simply give up, despair, make yourself impossible to reach. Most often in the popular mind this was applied to suicide. To die by your own hand was seen as despair, as putting yourself outside of God's mercy.

But understanding despair in this way is wrong and misguided, however sincere our intent. What's despair? How might it be understood?

The common dictionary definition invariably runs something

like this: Despair means to no longer have any hope or belief that a situation will improve or change. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which sees despair as a sin against the First Commandment, defines it this way: "By despair, man ceases to hope for his personal salvation from God, for help in attaining it or for the forgiveness of his sins. Despair is contrary to God's goodness, to his justice — for the Lord is faithful to his promises — and to his mercy."

But there's something absolutely critical to be distinguished here: There are two reasons why someone might cease to hope for personal salvation from God and give up hope in having his or her sins forgiven. It can be that the person doubts the goodness and mercy of God or, and I believe that this is normally the case, the person is too crushed, too weak, too broken inside, to believe that he or she is lovable and redeemable. But being so beaten and crushed in spirit so as to believe that nothing further can exist for you except pain and darkness is normally not an indication of sin, but more a symptom of having been fatally victimized by circumstance, of having to undergo, in the poignant words of Fantine in *Les Misérables*, storms that you cannot weather.

And before positing such a person outside of God's mercy, we need to ask ourselves: What kind of God would condemn a person who is so crushed by the circumstances of her life so as to be unable to believe that she is loveable? What kind of God would condemn someone for her brokenness? Such a God would certainly be utterly foreign to Jesus who incarnated and revealed God's love as being preferential for the weak, the crushed, the broken-hearted, for those despairing of mercy. To believe and teach that God withholds mercy from those who are most broken in spirit betrays a profound misunderstanding of the nature and mercy of God who sends Jesus into the world, not for the healthy but for those who need a physician.

Likewise this too betrays a profound misunderstanding of human nature and the human heart. Why would a person deem herself so unlovable that she voluntarily and hopelessly excludes herself from the circle of life? It can only be because of a deep, profound wound to the soul (which no doubt is not self-inflicted). Obviously, unless it is a case of some clinical illness, this person has been deeply wounded and has never had an experience of unconditional love or indeed of faithful human love. We are facile and naive when,

because we ourselves have been undeservedly loved, we cannot understand how someone else can be so crushed and broken so as to believe himself or herself to be, in essence, unlovable. To paraphrase a painful question in the song "The Rose": *Are love, and heaven, really only for the lucky and strong?* Our common understanding of despair, secular and religious, would seem to think so.

But nobody goes to hell out of weakness, out of a broken heart, out of a crushed spirit, out of the misfortune and unfairness of never having had the sense of being truly loved. Hell is for the strong, for those with a spirit so arrogant that it cannot be crushed or broken, and so is unable to surrender. Hell is never a bitter surprise waiting for a happy person, and neither is it the sad fulfilment of the expectation of someone who is too broken to believe that he or she is worthy to be part of the circle of life.

We owe it to God to be more empathic. We also owe this to those who are broken of heart and of spirit. Moreover, we have a Christian doctrine, expressed inside of our very creed, that challenges us to know better: *He descended into hell*. What Jesus revealed in his life and in his death is that there's no place inside of tragedy, brokenness, sadness, or resignation, into which God cannot and will not descend and breathe out peace.

God is all-understanding. That's why we're assured that "a bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out." You can bet your life on that. You can bet your faith on that. And you can also live in deeper empathy and deeper consolation because of that.



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Risen Jesus experienced in everyone — even women

By Roger Vermalen Karban
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One of the Catholic Church’s traditional arguments against the priestly ordination of women revolves around Jesus of Nazareth being a man.

According to this “official” line of reasoning, the priest must be “another Christ,” a male other Christ. Such an individual must have a “natural resemblance” to the first Christ. By definition, a female can’t fill that role.

The authors of the Christian Scriptures would never have understood that logic.

In the 40-year period between Jesus’ earthly ministry and the writing of the first Gospel (Mark), his apostles certainly passed on many of the words and actions of the carpenter who lived between 6 BCE and 30 CE: the “historical Jesus.”

But while they did so, they also were convinced this particular itinerant preacher had risen into a “new creation” (II Corin-

Rev. Roger Vermalen Karban, a Catholic priest in the Diocese of Belleville, Ill., is a Scripture scholar and widely published writer.

Many bring greetings to CWL convention

Continued from page 6

the Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation; as well as Pope Francis’ call to welcome, protect, promote and integrate newcomers and refugees.

VanDresar announced milestone anniversaries for CWL councils across the diocese, including three that are celebrating 90 years: Immaculate Conception Council at Major, St. Michael Council at Cudworth, and St. Bruno Council at Bruno. Sacred Heart Council at Eston is celebrating its 85th anniversary, while St. Ann’s Council at Watrous and St. Patrick’s Council at Young are both celebrating 80 years, while Our Lady of Assumption Council in Kerrobert is celebrating its 75th.

In addition to CWL standing committee reports, the diocesan convention included presentations on the diocesan Lay Formation pro-

gram (see related story, page 7), and St. Therese Institute at Bruno, Sask., displays by the Saskatchewan Pro-Life Association, Development and Peace, and Universal Church Supplies, as well as mass with Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB, and a banquet.

Those bringing greetings to the delegates included Rev. Richard Meidl, OSB, pastor of parishes at Watrous, Imperial, Liberty and Young; Watrous mayor Ed Collins; Manitou Beach mayor Gerry Worobec; Knights of Columbus district deputy David Schaan; and representatives of a number of other Christian churches in the community. CWL representatives at the diocesan and provincial level also brought greetings, including Shirley Lamoureux, Prince Albert diocesan president; Marilyn Schuck, Regina diocesan president; and Jean Reader, Saskatchewan provincial president.

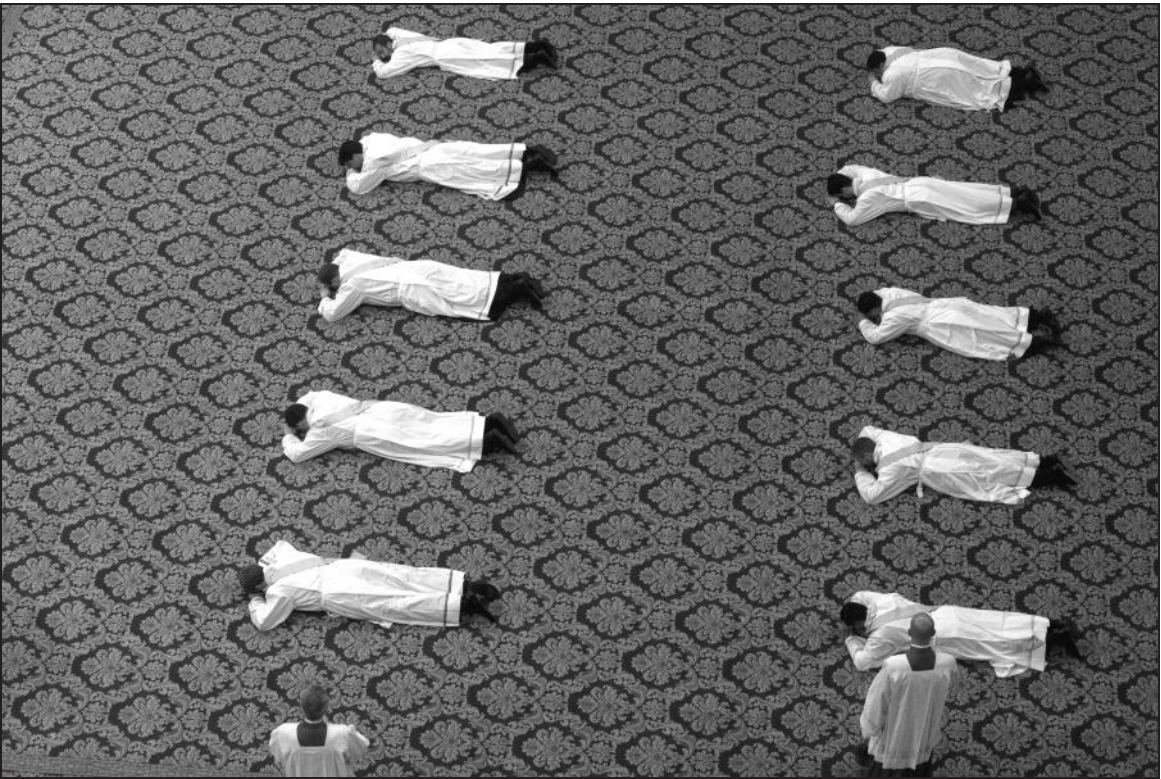
thians 5:17).

The person who rose from the tomb into a new creation on Easter Sunday was just as much a slave as a free person, a Gentile as a Jew and a woman as a man (Galatians 3:28). Jesus, now risen, could not be considered a first-century Jewish man.

Many of us make the mistake of confusing biblical resurrection with resuscitation. In the Gospel of Luke, Jairus’ daughter, the widow of Nain’s son and Jesus’ friend Lazarus, didn’t “rise” from the dead. Jesus simply resuscitated them.

Though I presume at one point they were clinically dead when they came back to life, they were still the same persons they were before they stopped breathing. If the widow’s son, for instance, enjoyed ball games before he died, he continued to like them when he returned home alive from his funeral procession. More importantly, all three died again. They’re no longer around today.

In Scripture, only Jesus of Nazareth rises from the dead. That unique person — not a resuscitated Jesus — is front and centre to both the first preachers and those who composed the Christian Scriptures; it is this risen Jesus, not a



CNS/Paul Haring

PRIESTLY ORDINATION — Nineteen new priests lie prostrate during their ordination by Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican.

“returned” historical Jesus, that they preach and eventually write about. They understand that if Jesus is now alive and present to the community of believers, what he is doing right here and now is the critical issue requiring attention.

That’s why, among other things, both mid-first-century preachers and the evangelists don’t hesitate to change the Aramaic the historical Jesus spoke into the *koine* Greek which the risen Jesus speaks in their sermons and writings. They do this for the sake of their Greek-speaking audiences, a group the historical Jesus never encountered.

Neither do the preachers or evangelists have any scruples adding to or changing the historical Jesus’ words. A classic example: his teaching on divorce. Matthew’s Jesus — in Chapter 19 — says only that a man may not divorce his wife. Women are off the hook! But Mark’s Jesus — in Chapter 10 — insists neither men nor women can divorce their spouses. What did the historical Jesus actually command? Given the early church’s belief in the risen Jesus, the answer is simple. Matthew’s Jesus — like the historical Jesus — addresses a Jewish-Christian audience that knows nothing about a wife divorcing her husband. Mark, on the other hand, writes for a Gentile-Christian

community in which women have the right to divorce their husbands. The historical Jesus said one thing; the risen Jesus says something else. Like any living person, the risen Jesus constantly modifies his message to meet the needs of new times and new audiences.

Perhaps one of the most insightful biblical passages revolving around the risen Jesus is in Acts 9, the narrative of Paul’s conversion. This zealous disciple of the Mosaic law is on the road to Damascus, bent on bringing back to Jerusalem “in chains” those Jews who “belonged to the Way,” when he’s knocked to the ground by someone claiming to be “Jesus whom you are persecuting.” Much to Saul’s surprise, this confrontative risen Jesus identifies with all his followers. This is significant, since the author just told us Saul was going to “arrest any men and women” who followed that Way. According to Luke’s theology, not only were the Christian men in Damascus other Christs, so were the women!

Reflecting on Galatians 3, spiritual author Michael Crosby once mentioned it took 30 or 40 years before the church overcame the Jew/Gentile issue, and almost 1,900 years before it finally settled the slave/free question. Then he pointed out the obvious:

“We’re still dealing with that male/female thing!” Just as the church once struggled to surface the risen Jesus in Gentiles and slaves, it continues to struggle with experiencing that same unique person in women, especially in women who have a calling to preside at the eucharist.

Perhaps during this Easter season, as we contemplate the historical Jesus’ transformation into the risen Jesus, it might be helpful for us Christians to deliberately go back to our biblical roots. After all, we can best show our faith in Jesus’ resurrection by simply looking around and experiencing him/her in the person next to us — especially these days if that person is a woman.

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Anniversary is a year of unparalleled opportunity

Challenge of Ecumenism

Thomas Ryan, CSP



In his new book, *Martin Luther: An Ecumenical Perspective*, Cardinal Walter Kasper notes that our ideas about Martin Luther have undergone transformations in a number of ways over the past 500 years. Historically, for Catholics, Luther was the church father of Protestantism, the heretic to blame for the division of the western church.

But in the 20th century, Catholic scholars made a notable shift in their research on Luther. They recognized his genuine religious concerns and came to a more balanced judgment with regard to his responsibility for dividing the church. Even recent popes have adopted this new perspective.

Luther's concern was the gospel of the glory of God's grace. While he was a reform-minded person, it was not his intention to become the founder of a separate Reform church. His goal was the renewal of the Catholic Church from the perspective of the Gospel.

A complex and conflicted era

The 14th and 15th centuries, the period known as the Late

Thomas Ryan, CSP, directs the Paulist North American Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations in Boston, Mass.

Middle Ages, was a period marked by major crises which led to radical changes in all areas of society: demographic collapse due to a series of famines and plagues; popular revolts leading to civil wars within countries as well as international conflicts between countries such as France and England in the Hundred Years' War (1337 - 1453); and religious upheavals with three church leaders simultaneously claiming to be the true pope (the Western Schism, 1378 - 1417).

Reform was needed. The church held great political power in addition to ecclesiastical power. The pope was also a king (of the papal state). The bishops were also princes and secular rulers. It was a financial boon to become a bishop because it brought with it lots of land and money. And princes were allowed to elect the emperor. Church and state functioned in a symbiotic relationship.

So it's not surprising that in the view of contemporary scholars, the Reformation period was marked by a complex series of interdependent religious, social, and political movements. And Luther's call for reform was not heard by pope or bishops. He was answered with polemic and condemnation.

His posting in 1517 of the 95 theses titled "Disputation on the

Efficacy and Power of Indulgences" was intended as an invitation to an academic discussion. But it never happened. And today, notes Kasper, "Rome bears its fill of complicity in the fact that a church-dividing Reformation developed out of the reform of the church."

Seeing one another in a new light

Common historical studies now enable us to recognize Luther as a teacher of the Gospel. Many aspects of Catholic life now find better expression because the Second Vatican Council responded at last to many of Luther's appeals for reforms.

Examples: the priority of grace over works; the centrality of Scripture; an ecclesiology based on the church as the People of God; the priesthood of the faithful; a vernacular liturgy; communion under both species; a renewed emphasis on preaching; the active participation of the laity in worship (hymnody); an understanding of ministry as service; the principle of religious freedom; the need of continual reform in the church.

And as the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* co-signed in 1999 by officials of the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation indicates, there is now a consensus on a truth central to Christian faith: "By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works" (par. 15).

The *Joint Declaration* was a decisive step forward in overcoming division within the church.



CNS/Paul Haring

TRANSFORMATIONS — In his new book, *Martin Luther: An Ecumenical Perspective*, Cardinal Walter Kasper notes that our ideas about Martin Luther have undergone transformations in a number of ways over the past 500 years, writes Tom Ryan, CSP.

The experience of speaking the truth of the Gospel together is helping us to see one another in a new light. The past 50 years of dialogue enable us to see history anew and to heal our common memory. We share the same DNA.

A new era of unparalleled opportunity

In the fall of 2016, the North American Academy of Ecumenists met at the Candler School of Theology in Georgia under the theme of "Commemorating the Reformation: Churches Looking Together Toward 2017 and Beyond."

One of the speakers, Dr. Catherine Clifford, a Catholic theologian from St. Paul's University in Ottawa, noted that this anniversary is an unparalleled opportunity to enter into the process of healing and reconciliation.

It's an occasion that can have profound implications for our future together if we approach it in the right spirit.

"We need to make 'new memories' together," she said. "This anniversary is an occasion to receive the fruits of our dialogue — fruits of the last 50 years together. To see our relationships with one another in a new light. To discern the presence and action of God's Spirit in each other's communities. The healing of memories is an essential and necessary step on the way to full and mutual recognition."

"We must move once and for all beyond the conflictual dynamics of the Reformation era. For the first time we will commemorate the anniversary of the Reformation together."

'We need our local boards in place': rally organizer

Continued from page 7

programming and student support is all going to be lost."

Carie Nobert, one of the main organizers of the rally, said, "When we remove the local boards, we are not having our voices met in the community. We need our local boards in place. There is no way we can let it go forward into the government's hands."

She was one of a string of speakers who voiced similar sentiments to the more than 200 estimated crowd. One speaker complained that the government did not listen when the voters "overwhelmingly supported our elected trustees. We said no to school board amalgamations but Bill 63 gives the government the authority to change school board boundaries — which means amalgamations, direct school divisions on how to spend their funding — which overrides our rights when we elect school board trustees, which means the government will have absolute power over our schools, our staff and our children's learning. This is wrong, absolutely wrong."

There were no speeches from government or NDP opposition MLAs, but interim NDP leader Trent Wotherspoon was in the crowd, as was Opposition education critic Carla Web. Teachers,

students and several trustees were also part of the crowd.

There have been a series of protests and demonstrations against the government since the March 22 provincial budget which cut spending to school divisions, post-secondary education institutions, and libraries, and shut down the Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation which provided bus service to rural Saskatchewan. The government has since restored library funding following a series of province-wide "read-ins" in front of MLA constituency offices and in front of the legislative building.

The evening of May 3, the government made some changes to Bill 63 that met some of the concerns expressed by school boards, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, and protesters.

"We appreciate the government has listened to the boards and the public, and has now made some amendments to Bill 63," said SSB president Shawn Davidson, but he said concerns remain about the bill.

"Much work remains ahead as boards seek to collaborate with the government on the future of the province's education system," said Davidson in a prepared release. "We would like to see an entirely new Education Act introduced next year, based on collaboration."

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A visit to Fatima

Pope Francis visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in northern Portugal to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first appearance of the Virgin Mary to three shepherd children there on May 13, 1917.

He canonized two of the children — Jacinta and Francisco. Jacinta was seven years old and Francisco nine, and their cousin Lucia dos Santos was 10 at the time of their visions. Jacinta and Francisco died a year later in the Spanish flu epidemic. Lucia joined a Carmelite convent and died in 2005 at age 97.

The children said Mary appeared to them six times that year, on the 13th of the next five months. In one appearance, Mary said a miracle would occur on Oct. 13, 1917. Initially the children were scolded and even threatened with death for spreading what were considered baseless stories. But pilgrims from all over the world gathered in Fatima on that date and awaited Mary's appearance.

In what came to be called the "Miracle of the Sun," many reported seeing visions in the sky while others reported miracles of healing. A newspaper of the day reported, "Before their dazzled eyes the sun trembled, the sun made unusual and brusque movements, defying all the laws of the cosmos, and according to the typical expression of the peasants, 'the sun danced.'"

Two years earlier, in 1915, the children had seen a strange sight while praying the rosary in the field. Lucia wrote later: "We had hardly begun when, there before our eyes, we saw a figure poised in the air above the trees; it looked like a statue made of snow, rendered almost transparent by the rays of the sun."

In 1916 the mysterious figure appeared again, this time approaching close enough "to distinguish its features."

"Do not be afraid! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me," Lucia recalled the angel saying.

Thirteen years after Mary's final apparition at Fatima, the bishop of Leiria declared the visions of the three shepherd children "worthy of belief" and allowed the veneration of Our Lady of Fatima. However, the bishop did not recognize the "dancing sun" as miraculous.

Today, Fatima attracts between five million and six million pilgrims a year, making it one of the most popular shrines in the world. The largest numbers come on May 13 — the anniversary of the first apparitions.

Jacinta and Francisco are the first children to be canonized by the church without having suffered martyrdom. — PWN

How apparitions are approved

Mary seems to be appearing frequently these days. More than 1,500 visions of Mary have been reported around the world, according to a Catholic News Service report. But in the past century, fewer than 20 cases have received church approval as worthy of belief. Even the reputed apparitions at Medjugorje have not been judged authentic, after several years of investigation.

When it comes to Marian apparitions, the Catholic Church takes a prudent approach that focuses more on the message than any miracle. Supernatural phenomena, like the alleged miracle of the sun in Fatima, are not the primary factors in determining that an apparition is worthy of belief.

The Vatican's "Norms regarding the manner of proceedings in the discernment of presumed apparitions or revelations" were approved by Pope Paul VI in 1978. An official English translation was released in 2011.

As with Fatima, responsibility for determining an apparition's veracity lies with the local bishop,

according to the norms established by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The process is never brief, with some cases taking hundreds of years. Visionaries and witnesses must be questioned and the fruits of the apparitions, — such as conversions, miracles and healings — must be examined.

According to the norms, the local bishop should set up a commission of experts, including theologians, canonists, psychologists and doctors to help him determine the facts, the mental, moral and spiritual wholesomeness and seriousness of the visionary, and whether the messages and testimony are free from theological and doctrinal error.

A bishop can come to one of three conclusions: he can determine the apparition to be true and worthy of belief; he can say it is not true, which leaves open the possibility for an appeal; or he can say that at the moment, he doesn't know and needs more help.

In the last scenario, the investigation is brought to the country's bishops' conference. If that body cannot come to a conclusion, the matter is turned over to the pope, who delegates the doctrinal congregation to step in and give advice or appoint others to investigate.

The Catholic Church does not require the faithful to believe in apparitions, even those recognized by the church.

Church recognition of a private revelation, in essence, is just the church's way of saying the message is not contrary to the faith or morality, it is licit to make the message public "and the faithful are authorized to give to it their prudent adhesion," now-retired Pope Benedict XVI said in his 2010 apostolic exhortation, *Verbum Domini* (The Word of the Lord).

The original message of Fatima was for peace. There is no simple solution in today's complex world. But, it has to begin in each person's heart. — PWN

Sask. bishops write pastoral letter on the Theodore school ruling

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As many of you will know, on April 20, 2017, Justice Donald Layh ruled on the Theodore Court case that the Government of Saskatchewan could no longer

fund non-Catholic students attending Catholic schools in Saskatchewan, starting June 30, 2018. This judgment protects the rights of the Catholic school system to continue; but it would remove funding for our ecumenical and interfaith brothers and sisters whose children

have been granted permission to attend Catholic schools.

This has raised many questions and created a large degree of uncertainty for students, parents, staff and other members of the Catholic school community.

Soon after the decision was

announced, Premier Brad Wall and Minister of Education Don Morgan both publicly stated their support for Catholic education and their disappointment with the court's judgment. On May 1, the premier signalled that that government would be invoking the "notwithstanding clause," which effectively gives the province five years to discern how to respond to the court's ruling. The Leader of the Opposition, Trent Wotherspoon, noted his party's agreement with the use of the notwithstanding clause in this case. For all of this, we are deeply grateful.

Meanwhile, the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association (SCSBA), with the unanimous endorsement of all eight Catholic school boards in the province, announced on April 28

that it would appeal the recent decision in the Theodore court case. The government has not yet indicated whether it will also appeal the decision.

The outcome of the current tensions regarding funding for faith-based education will have a deep, lasting impact on the Catholic Church in Saskatchewan, its role in education, our relations with our ecumenical and interfaith partners, and with the community at large. Living in a pluralistic society requires dealing with difficult decisions.

As leaders of the Catholic churches in Saskatchewan, it is our strong hope that our society will allow religious faiths to play a constructive role in education as

Universities are increasingly intolerant

By Robert McGarvey, Edmonton

New York Times columnist David Brooks, in his April 21 piece *The Crisis of Western Civ*, has opened a serious debate on the collapse of confidence in western civilization. His stunning conclusion: "These days, the whole idea of Western civ is assumed to be reactionary and oppressive."

Brooks notes that this cultural pessimism is most fully developed in our institutions of higher learning. For several decades, our universities have stopped teaching western history as a progressive narrative of human liberation and begun blaming the West for all the ills of the world.

He points out that students in our universities are increasingly intolerant, indoctrinated with a poisonous cocktail of negativity. They are taught that western civilization is immoral, the source of colonial oppression, and directly responsible for spoiling the envi-

ronment as well as creating all manner of economic, social and gender inequality.

A few decades ago, westerners believed themselves to be the forefront of a new humanistic world order. The western cultural narrative, dating from Classical Greece 2,500 years ago, through the Roman Republic, England's Magna Carta and the Enlightenment, was championed as a unique fount of liberty and individual freedom.

What's happened to demonize the West?

The truth is demonization of the West is nothing new. The problem began with the Enlightenment. The 18th-century Enlightenment was an intellectual transition point, an ideological bridge between the despotic feudal past and the modern world. The Enlightenment awoke a sleeping populist giant by painting a futuristic picture of society in liberty and freedom.

Yet, however liberating the Enlightenment may have been in the realm of thought, at the time it instantly created an intellectual gap, between the world as was (monarchical despotism) and what ought to be (Enlightenment's ideal).

Three major Enlightenment philosophers tried to fill this intellectual gap. In doing so, Thomas

Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau essentially cast the modern world's intellectual frame of reference. Their perspectives continue to influence public debate in the 21st century.

Rousseau (1712 - 1778), the famous French philosopher, is responsible for much of the nega-

— CIVILIZATION, page 15



CNS/Christinne Muschi, Reuters

FLOODING IN QUEBEC — A car is seen submerged in front of a home May 9 in the flooded Montreal suburb of Pierrefonds, Quebec. A mix of heavy rains and melting snow caused the situation. Flooding has hit a number of provinces across Canada this month.

McGarvey is chief strategist for Troy Media Digital Solutions Ltd., an economic historian and former managing director of Merlin Consulting, a London, U.K.-based consulting firm. www.troymedia.com

Pope Francis consecrates himself to Mary

Continued from page 1

hands clasped in prayer, occasionally looking up at the statue of Mary venerated by his predecessors and millions of devotees across the globe.

Pope Francis then recited a prayer he wrote, an expanded version of the traditional *Salve Regina* (“Hail Holy Queen”).

Alternating his verses with a choral refrain venerating the



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE VISITS FATIMA — Pope Francis visits the Little Chapel of the Apparitions at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, May 12. The pope was making a two-day visit to Fatima to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions and to canonize two of the young seers.

“Queen of the Rosary of Fatima,” the pope consecrated himself to Mary and entrusted to her intercession a suffering humanity where blood “is shed in the wars tearing our world apart.”

Begging Mary’s assistance, the pope prayed that believers would “tear down all walls and overcome all boundaries, going to all peripheries, there revealing God’s justice and peace.”

“In the depths of your being, in your immaculate heart, you keep the sorrows of the human family, as they mourn and weep in this valley of tears,” the pope prayed.

He also presented himself before the image of Mary as “a bishop robed in white,” a reference to the third secret revealed to the children at Fatima. Published 83 years after the Fatima apparitions, the vision described the image of a “bishop dressed in white” shot down amid the rubble of a ruined city.

The official Vatican interpretation, discussed with the visionary Sister Lucia dos Santos before its publication, was that it referred to the persecution of Christians in the 20th century and, specifically, to the 1981 assassination attempt on the life of St. John Paul II.

As Blessed Paul VI and retired Pope Benedict XVI did before him, Pope Francis placed a small silver vase containing 24-karat gold roses at the foot of the statue. Embedded in the statue’s crown is one of the bullets used in the assassination attempt against St. John Paul II on the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, May 13, 1981.

Returning to the little chapel for a nighttime vigil, Pope Francis reminded pilgrims to pray, as Mary taught the children at Fatima, for “those most in need” of God’s mercy.

“On each of the destitute and outcast robbed of the present, on each of the excluded and abandoned denied a future, on each of the orphans and victims of injustice refused a past, may there descend the blessing of God, incarnate in Jesus Christ,” he said.

Pope Francis held up Mary as a

“model of evangelization,” particularly because Christian men and women can look at her and see that “humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong.”

Those who emphasize God’s punishment of sinners, he said, commit “a great injustice” to him by not recognizing that sinners “are forgiven by his mercy.”

“Mercy has to be put before judgment,” he said, “and, in any case, God’s judgment will always be rendered in the light of his mercy.”

“With Mary, may each of us become a sign and sacrament of the mercy of God, who pardons always and pardons everything,” he said.

On the actual anniversary, May 13, Pope Francis canonized two of the three young seers, Blessed Jacinta Marto and her brother Blessed Francisco Marto, making them the youngest non-martyred saints in the Catholic Church.

Arriving at the military Monte Real air base, about 40 km from Fatima on May 12, the pope was welcomed by Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and held a brief private meeting with him at the base. He also visited the base chapel and blessed sick members of military families.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state and the pope’s closest collaborator, said Pope Francis’ visit to Fatima would “express his own love and devotion to Mary” and his great respect for the Marian devotion of Catholics around the world.

In the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima to the three shepherd children, Pope Francis sees an example of the Mary described by the Magnificat, the biblical hymn of praise for the great things God has done through her, Parolin told *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper.

At Fatima, “Our Lady of the Rosary appeared not to the rich or powerful, nor to people who were influential, but to children,” he said. The children were from simple families and were illiterate,

“like the least of society or, to use the terminology of the pope, the ‘discarded’ of society. And Mary wanted to favour this category of people, giving the little shepherds a countercultural message.”

In 1917, the First World War was raging and people and public

discourse was filled with words of hatred, vengeance and hostility, the cardinal said. “Mary, on the other hand, spoke of love, forgiveness, self-sacrifice and giving oneself to others. It was a total reversal of all the values, or anti-values, that prevailed at that time.”

“oh, no I forgot!”
scrambling for her oven mitts
bumbleberry pie

By Marion Young

Civilization is oppressive in historic Romantic view

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tivity about western civilization, then and now. Rousseau was a tormented soul, crushed by the inequality and cruelty of pre-revolutionary France. The father of Romanticism, he’s famous for saying, “Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains.”

In Rousseau’s “state of nature,” humanity is all innocence and social perfection. But this Romantic perspective also implies a dark certainty. If the natural state of humanity (in the absence of restraint) is perfect liberty, then society itself must, by definition, be the source of human suffering — the oppressor of humanity’s natural freedom.

For Rousseau, the very presence of inequality implies restraint, in fact, active oppression. Romantics feel morally compelled to right the wrong, which means attacking the oppressive establishment. True Romantics are driven by passion, deep emotions uninformed by thought. For instance, a Romantic would be reduced to tears by the sight of a lonely street kid but would be completely indifferent to well-considered programs for improving the lot of the homeless.

Regrettably, this philosophical disease has infected many university professors, environmental activists and stridently intolerant youth.

Locke (1632 - 1704), on the other hand, had a more pragmatic perspective on the “state of nature.” Far from being a state of perfection, Locke appreciated that in the absence of society, humanity descended into chaos.

For Locke, society, as imperfect as it may be, was the source of order, from which social improvement was possible if individuals were allowed to pursue their self-interest in consort with the uniquely human capacity for reason. Locke has been called the father of Liberalism; his ideas laid the groundwork for the modern progressive agenda, which has facilitated the advance of democracy and social equality.

Regrettably, it seems our modern philosophical orientation has shifted from the pragmatic Locke to activist Rousseau. What happened?

Perhaps we’ve become too technocratic, trapped in the digital present. We seem to have lost our historical memory and degraded the study of real philosophy. The bad news is that we’ll be forced to repeat the mistakes of the past because we refuse to acknowledge our history.

Young Romantics will soon discover a hard truth: civilizations need reinforcement and the sober application of reason. In demonizing western civilization so readily, they could be extinguishing the very foundations of their future.

Families want faith-based education

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in other areas of our common life; and that Catholic schools might continue to welcome the children of families who aspire to faith-based education.

We have much to offer, and society has much to lose if religious faith is marginalized and our values are not able to contribute to the common good.

We encourage you to let your elected officials (your MLA, Minister of Education Don Morgan, Premier Brad Wall, and Leader of the NDP Trent Wotherspoon)

know that you endorse the government’s decision to invoke the notwithstanding clause. You might also wish to express your hope that the government joins in appealing the recent Theodore court ruling.

A list of MLAs can be found at <http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/mlas/>. Additional information is available at <http://www.scsba.ca/theodore-case>. You might choose to write your own letter, to send an email using the electronic submission form provided at <http://www.catholicedspririt.ca/>, to send a letter signed by your

parishioners. . . .

Thank you for your continued support of Catholic education. Please keep our students, teachers, and all associated with our Catholic schools, in your prayers at this critical moment in time.

Yours in the Risen Christ,

Most Rev. Donald Bolen, archbishop of Regina; Most Rev. Albert Th  venot, bishop of Prince Albert; Most Rev. Murray Chatlain, archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas; Very Rev. Fr. Kevin McGee, Saskatoon diocesan administrator; Most Rev. Bryan Bayda, Ukrainian eparchial bishop of Saskatoon

Pope tells Quebec bishops: share the Gospel, get messy

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Without waiting for some well-researched, detailed plan with action items and measurable goals, Catholics in Quebec must go out and share the Gospel, Pope Francis told the bishops of the province.

Meeting the 29 bishops of Quebec May 11, Pope Francis said, “You’ve got to go, and it’s going to be messy,” according to Archbishop Paul-Andre Durocher of Gatineau, former president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The two-hour meeting was the second the Quebec bishops had with Pope Francis during their *ad limina* visit to Rome to pray at the tombs of the apostles and to discuss the situation of their dioceses with the pope and Vatican officials.

The Quebec bishops also had met with the pope for three hours May 5 at an evening meeting that included the prefects or secretaries of the Vatican offices for bishops, clergy, religious, laity and family, Catholic education and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Pope Francis hosted a similar meeting with curial officials and the bishops of Chile during their *ad limina* visit in February.

The bishops have been in Italy almost three weeks because their two-week *ad limina* pilgrimage was preceded by a weeklong retreat. Although it has been 10 years since the bishops had made an *ad limina*, Durocher said his “heart is torn” because so many people back home are suffering the effects of severe flooding.

Returning to the conversations



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE AD LIMINA QUEBEC BISHOPS — Pope Francis meets with Canadian bishops from Quebec during their *ad limina* visit to the Vatican May 11.

with the pope and Vatican officials, Durocher told Catholic News Service that Quebec has gone from being “one of the most homogeneously Catholic societies to one of the most secularized societies.”

Pope Francis “realizes we’re not alone in that” and mentioned similar situations in the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland and parts of Spain, the archbishop said.

Before the great changes in Quebec in the 1960s, he said, the Catholic Church and its religious orders operated almost all the schools and hospitals — there was not even a provincial government department of education. The

church was “omnipresent and omni-invasive,” the archbishop said.

Sensitivity to the benefits of church-state separation and a Catholic-inspired push to strengthen civil society combined with secularism have led to a situation, he said, where the church is pushed almost completely out of most people’s lives.

Evangelization and the need for full involvement by lay Catholics in the church’s mission were the key concerns of the pope during both meetings, Durocher said. Evangelization also is a priority for the bishops, he said, and they all

are working on ways to implement a document they published in February 2016, “The Missionary Shift of Christian Communities.”

Pope Francis, he said, urged the bishops to start immediately and be creative, even without detailed plans and even knowing that some of what they try will fail.

“It fits in with what I’ve told priests when I’ve said, ‘We’re going to try this’ or ‘We’re going to try that’ and they say, ‘We tried that before and it didn’t work,’ ” the archbishop said. His response is a hockey reference: “You don’t score every time you shoot on goal,” and if you stop trying after

three failures, you might as well put away your skates.

Durocher said he left the meeting with Pope Francis convinced that “in Quebec we are not about rebuilding what was there in the ’40s and ’50s. It was a style of church that is, as far as I’m concerned, dead and does not need to be resurrected. What needs to be resurrected is faith in Jesus Christ.”

The church must be at the service of the Gospel and the people of the province, he said. It makes no sense, for example, to rebuild hospitals and schools when the government is providing health care and education, he said. The church must meet unmet needs and preach the Gospel to a population that mostly considers God and faith to be unimportant.

Pope Francis’ responses to the bishops’ questions and his comments on what they shared emphasized the need to step out, to listen to people, to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading the church and to promote the “full blossoming” of laypeople’s involvement in the church and its mission, Durocher said.

The role of women in the church, he said, was discussed “in the context of where is the Spirit pushing the church.” Pope Francis told them it is “vital” that more women be involved, including in decision-making, “but the problem is that we cannot reduce it just to a question of function” — offices they can and cannot hold — although that is important, too.

“He was very clear that we need to bring the voice of women into the responsibility structures of the church,” the archbishop said.

Quebec Trappists renew spiritual life in their eco-friendly abbey

By Philippe Vaillancourt

SAINT-JEAN-DE-MATHA, Quebec (CNS) — When the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance left Oka, Quebec, to escape suburban sprawl, they left behind an oversized, aging building.

Their new Trappist abbey, nestled in the forests and rolling hills of the Lanaudiere region and known for its cutting-edge ecological architecture, has been heralded as the 21st-century monastery. But, more importantly, it has become pivotal in the monks’ sweeping spiritual renewal.

“We wanted to reconnect with the monastic foundations of our way of life,” said Dom Andre Barbeau, Val Notre-Dame’s abbot. “Here, you can hear silence.”

“Monastic life has always had the same purpose: becoming new men by following Christ, who has made everything anew. Our monastic journey hasn’t really changed. But (moving here) allowed us to experience a refoundation (of our spiritual life),” said the abbot.

Their new home embraces simplicity, with its straight lines. Inside, the smell of freshly cut wood perfumes every room, while

the ecological approach is embodied in geothermal heating, triple glazing, water recovery and vegetated roofs. In the church, they chose to have the entire wall behind the altar in glass. While praying the holy offices, they contemplate the mountain, the trees and the animals.

“Solitude and communion are in balance. Silence and speech are in balance. There’s always a tension between two values, two poles. And one isn’t more desirable than the other,” said Dom Andre, as he is known.

The relationship between the abbey and its natural surroundings also cherishes this balance. The omnipresent, oversized windows give a feeling of permanent communion with the surrounding forest.

“That opening allows us to develop a different relationship with the Creator,” said Dom Andre.

Each monk contributes to the abbey. In the main hall, near the entrance, Brother Jean-Marc, who used to be the community’s cook, greets the visitor jokingly.

“Do you want to spend the rest of your life here?” he asks, a mischievous smile on his face. He seems heartened by the recent

arrival of a new brother, a man in his mid-40s.

Down the hall, Brother Bernard puts the finishing touches on a few embroidered bags he has crafted, one of the numerous creative projects he works on. These items are designed for sale.

Moving here has made the Trappists rethink their relationship with their environment, as the community must earn its living from manual work. It’s no longer possible to take care of 3,000 apple trees or 2,500 sugar maples like they used to do in Oka. The monks have instead learned to tap the nurturing powers of the surrounding 187-acre forest.

Since 2014, they have transformed and commercialized edible forest products. With some of his fellow monks, Brother Bernard has discovered the riches of the abbey’s backwoods. At the monastery’s gift shop, one can find larch needles, marinated fiddleheads and products made from milkweed, next to the more usual chocolates and caramels. For the Val Notre-Dame monks, the forest holds a precious bounty. Occasionally, they even share a meal made entirely of ingredients harvested on their estate.

At the gift shop, Brother Emmanuel shows off local cheese and honey prepared by nearby producers, calling them signs of the community’s integration to the regional rural economy. In just eight years, the Trappists have



CNS/Philippe Vaillancourt

TRAPPIST ABBEY IN QUEBEC — Abbot Andre Barbeau of Val Notre-Dame Cistercian abbey in Saint-Jean-de-Matha, Quebec, holds a jar of larch needles, used in salads and soups produced at the abbey and sold in its gift shop.

become the main distributors of locally grown foods in Lanaudiere.

Pope Francis’ environmental encyclical, “*Laudato Si’*,” on Care for Our Common Home,” struck a chord in the monks’ renewal process. In this new natural and human environment, the idea of a “common home” put forward by Pope Francis in his encyclical has a tangible meaning.

“We must rethink everything,” said Dom Andre. “We must revis-

it and rethink everything, even our own institutions. By revisiting our conceptions of God, we necessarily revisit our solidarities and our human mediations.”

“We live in an era in which our institutions no longer meet the deepest human aspirations. Neither the family, nor the church (achieves that). The monks must thus find new ways to create a new society, a new community, a new brotherhood,” he said.

Lighthouses don’t go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining.

— Anne Lamott