



Battling poverty

With submissions to the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy due June 30, Catholic leaders and ecumenical organizations are pushing federal politicians hard to produce a serious legislative plan to lift nearly five million Canadians out of poverty — one that includes targets and timelines. — page 3

Spirit-inspired

Sacred Heart Parish in Virden, Man., hosted the 69th annual convention of the Manitoba Provincial CWL June 2 - 3, with the theme, “Women Inspired by the Spirit Respond to God’s Call.” — page 6

Lay Formation

Graduates of Lay Formation programs were recently anointed and sent forth in several celebrations in Saskatoon and Regina. — pages 6 and 7

STEM scholarship

Regan Wilson, a Grade 12 student at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon, has been awarded a prestigious STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) scholarship to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at the U of S. — page 7



Challenge and hope

Five documentaries reveal mounting evidence of threats to the planet’s life-support systems and human civilization — from climate change, an accelerating rate of extinctions, and population growth leading to scarcities, migrations and conflicts, writes Gerald Schmitz. — page 9

Sacred water

Water should be seen by authentic believers as an entry point toward many justice concerns: wetland preservation, healthy living, opposition to destructive mining practices and extractive industries that destroy essential aquifers, respect for indigenous livelihoods and traditional knowledge, writes Joe Gunn. — page 13

Pope condemns the evils of ‘corruption’

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christians and non-Christians must join the fight against corruption, which tears apart the bonds that unite humanity, Pope Francis said.

Corruption “reveals such strong anti-social conduct” that it “dissolves the pillars upon which society is founded: coexistence among people and the vocation to develop it,” the pope wrote in the preface to a new book.

“Corruption breaks all of this by replacing the common good with a particular interest that contaminates every general outlook,” he wrote. “It is born of a corrupt heart and is the worst social plague because it generates serious problems and crimes involving everyone.”

The new book, *Corrosion*, was written by Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and Vittorio V. Alberti, an Italian philosopher. The book’s release coincided with the Vatican’s first “International Debate on Corruption.”

The meeting, sponsored by the dicastery and the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences, looked at corruption as a global problem and at its connections to

organized crime and the Mafia.

Among the participants of the meeting were 50 anti-Mafia and anti-corruption magistrates, as well as bishops and Vatican officials, heads of movements, victims, journalists, scholars, intellectuals and several ambassadors, the Vatican said.

In a June 17 statement, the

Vatican also said the conference studied the possibility of “excommunication for corruption and

— PROMOTE, page 15



Anne Wicks

SUMMER — Summer, after all, is a time when wonderful things can happen to quiet people. For those few months, you’re not required to be who everyone thinks you are, and that cut-grass smell in the air and the chance to dive into the deep end of a pool give you a courage you don’t have the rest of the year. You can be grateful and easy, with no eyes on you, and no past. Summer just opens the door and lets you out. — Deb Caletti

Homeless youth are a prime target for trafficking

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Canada’s homeless youth population is younger and more diverse than their American counterparts, but they are just as vulnerable to becoming trafficking victims.

Bruce Rivers, executive director of Covenant House Toronto, said that as more research and more data is collected, they better understand the factors that put homeless youth at risk of being forced into a life of slavery.

“Because we had noticed that there is a trend up of young women that are coming to our attention, we decided to take a step back and have a studied look at this,” said Rivers.

In an effort to better protect the vulnerable on the streets, Covenant House International recently released a study that reveals the extent of the problem.

“Labour and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth” study was published April 17. Researchers from Loyola University New Orleans and the Field Centre for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research collectively interviewed more than 900 youth in Covenant House shelters across 13 cities in the United States and Canada.

Among the 13 cities that par-

ticipated in the study, Toronto and Vancouver were included as the two Canadian locations for Covenant House. As a result, the study is heavily influenced by data gathered in American cities.

“It’s not necessarily a reflection of our Canadian experience,” said Rivers.

Rivers said that the study found many common trends that speak to both the Canadian and American situation.

The study found that 91 per cent of youth interviewed between the ages of 17 to 25 have been approached by strangers offering work that was too good to be true.

About 14 per cent were victims of sex trafficking, while eight per

cent had been trafficked for other forced labour and three per cent were trafficked for both sex and labour. This means that one in five homeless youth have experienced some sort of human trafficking.

“It’s not unusual for young people when they hit the streets to be lured and to be targeted by predators and by pimps,” said Rivers. “And they’ll do whatever they can to engage with these young people and to get them engaged to the point where they’re providing sexual favours for people and generating income for that pimp.”

What is different about Toronto, Rivers said, is the characteristics of the city’s homeless youth. Covenant House Toronto

is Canada’s largest youth shelter, serving as many as 250 young people a day.

The majority (53 per cent) of homeless youth that participated in the study identifies as African, African American or black. Other major ethnic groups include white (19 per cent) and Latino (10 per cent).

“There would be a higher percentage of white youth and a lower percentage of black youth (in Toronto),” said Rivers. “There would be more diversity in terms of the Asian population in Toronto and there would be more Aboriginals, especially in other parts of Canada.”

— TRAFFICKING, page 5

Wellness centre unique in Canada

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Representatives from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, the University of Saskatchewan College of Medicine’s Department of Pediatrics, and the Saskatoon Tribal Council recently signed a memorandum of understanding to celebrate and enhance a 10-year partnership.

An innovative, community-based model of well-being — bringing the doctor’s office into

the school — took shape 10 years ago at St. Mary’s.

Responding to the needs of children and families in the city’s core neighbourhoods, where children’s health services were absent, the three organizations saw an opportunity to improve both health and educational outcomes of students and community members. Groups worked together to open Canada’s first in-school pediatrics clinic, offering a number of children’s health programs

and services.

Today, St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre includes a variety of strategic partnerships and professional on-site health services that complement the educational focus on literacy and numeracy support. Services are housed in a world-class learning environment supported by corporate sponsorships and strong community supports.

— RISK, page 8

An unloved heart leads to hatred and violence: pope

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Violence and hatred often are signs that a person is unhappy and feels unloved and unwanted, Pope Francis said.

In today’s world, people — especially children and youth — often feel that unless “we are strong, attractive and beautiful, no one will care about us,” the pope said June 14 during his weekly general audience.

“When an adolescent is not or does not feel loved, violence can arise. Behind so many forms of social hate and hooliganism, there is often a heart that has not been recognized,” he said.

Despite a heat wave that brought temperatures close to 32 C degrees, an estimated 12,000 pilgrims donning colourful hats and umbrellas cheered and waved as the pope entered St. Peter’s Square.

Pope Francis took a moment to greet the sick who were watching the audience from indoors be-

cause of the hot Roman weather.

“They are in the Paul VI hall and we are here,” the pope told the crowd in the square. “But we are all together; we are connected by the Holy Spirit who always unites us.”

In his talk, the pope focused on the certainty of hope that comes from feeling loved as children of God.

When men and women do not feel loved, he said, they run the risk of succumbing to the “awful slavery” of believing that love is based solely on one’s appearance or merits.

“Imagine a world where everyone begs for reasons to attract the attention of others and no one is willing to love another person freely,” he said. “It seems like a human world but, in reality, it is a hell.”

Feelings of loneliness, he added, often lead to “man’s many narcissisms” and can be conquered only by an “experience of love that has been given and received.”

God, who never needs a reason

to love his children, has that kind of unconditional love for each person, the pope said. “God does not even bind his benevolence to our conversion; if anything that is a consequence of God’s love.”

Recalling his time as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, the pope said he saw God’s unconditional love reflected on the faces of mothers who went to the local prison to visit their children.

“I remember so many mothers in my diocese who would get in line to enter the prison. So many mothers who were not ashamed. Their child was in prison, but it was their child and they suffered so many humiliations,” the pope recalled.

“Only this love of a mother and father can help us understand God’s love,” he said, adding that “no sin, no wrong choice can ever erase it.”

Departing from his prepared remarks, Pope Francis asked the crowd, “What is the medicine that can change an unhappy person?”



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE RECEIVES ICON — Cardinal-designate Anders Arborelius of Stockholm and Lutheran Archbishop Antje Jackelen of Uppsala, primate of the Church of Sweden, present Pope Francis with an icon of St. Francis of Assisi following the pope’s general audience June 14 at the Vatican. The artist, Lars Gerdmar, held the icon during the presentation of the gift, which was an expression of gratitude for Pope Francis’ visit to Sweden last October.

“Love!” the crowd exclaimed.

“Very good, very good,” the pope said. Christian hope comes from knowing “God the father who loves us as we are. He always loves us, everyone, good and bad.”

Catholic groups launch a conversation about female deacons

By Josephine McKenna

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Several Catholic groups are launching an initiative aimed at giving lay Catholics and clergy across the U.S. a direct say on whether the church should ordain women deacons.

Their actions follow the appointment of a panel of experts set up by Pope Francis to consider the controversial question.

The Association of U.S. Catholic Priests, FutureChurch and Voice of the Faithful have launched DeaconChat in a bid to promote education and dialogue on the topic.

“Pope Francis wants to hear the voice of the faithful,” Rev. Bob Bonnot, head of U.S. priest group, told RNS. “The church is not a clerical monopoly.”

Deacons are one of the three “orders” of ordained ministry in the church, after bishops and priests, and can fulfil some but not all of the duties of priests, including preaching, conducting baptisms and serving communion.

“Women convinced of a call to

ordained service as deacons, supported by many men, including our priest members, deserve to be heard,” said Bonnot.

Last year, the pope met with the International Union of Superiors General, an organization composed of leaders of the church’s women religious, and later appointed members to the panel.

Bonnot said Pope Francis is giving the issue a serious hearing.

“He has asserted often that we must find ways to enable more women to play servant-leadership roles in the church. This is one possibility that could touch the church from the Vatican to grassroots parish ministry.”

Pope Francis has previously ruled out the ordination of women as priests, saying “that door is closed” in July 2013.

But if the pope endorses women deacons, Bonnot said, more education and dialogue will be needed within the church.

“If this step is taken, people must understand where the idea of women deacons comes from in the church’s tradition and why it is a

well-grounded way to strengthen pastoral care,” he said.

Donna B. Doucette, executive director of Voice of the Faithful, said the initiative was “designed to foster educational efforts to enrich dialogue.”

Voice of the Faithful is a lay organization established in Mas-

sachusetts in 2002 as a response to the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church and now has more than 30,000 members around the world.

“The program has three important components: learning, sharing and connecting,” she said.

FutureChurch supports a

greater role for women in church leadership amid concerns about the declining number of priests.

“We hope Catholics in the United States and around the world will be inspired to start a conversation in their parish,” said Deborah Rose-Milavec, executive director of FutureChurch.

Vatican releases online questionnaire

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — To involve young people in preparations for the Synod of Bishops on youth in 2018, the Vatican has released an online questionnaire to better understand the lives, attitudes and concerns of 16- to 29-year-olds around the world.

The questionnaire — available in English, Spanish, French and Italian — can be found on the synod’s official site: youth.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/it.html and is open to any young person, regardless of faith or religious belief.

The general secretariat of the synod launched the website June 14 to share information about the October 2018 synod on “Young people, faith and vocational discernment” and to link to an online, anonymous survey asking young people about their lives and expectations.

The answers to the questionnaire, along with contributions from bishops, bishops’ conferences and other church bodies, “will provide the basis for the drafting of the ‘*instrumentum laboris*,’” or working document for the assembly, synod officials said in January.

Young people from all backgrounds are encouraged to take part in the questionnaire because every young person has “the right to be accompanied without exclusion,” synod officials had said.

The list of 53 mostly multiple-choice questions is divided into seven sections: general personal information; attitudes and opinions about oneself and the world;

influences and relationships; life choices; religion, faith and the church; Internet use; and two final, open-ended questions. The write-in questions are an invitation to describe a positive example of how the Catholic Church can “accompany young people in their choices, which give value and fulfilment in life” and to say something about oneself that hasn’t been asked in the questionnaire.

Other questions ask about living arrangements; self-image; best age to leave home and have a family; opinions about education and work; measures of success; sources of positive influence; level of confidence in public and private institutions; and political or social activism.

The section on faith looks at the importance of religion in one’s life and asks, “Who Jesus is for you?” That question provides 16 choices to choose from, including “the saviour,” “an adversary to be fought,” “an invention” and “someone who loves me.” It also asks which topics — promoting peace, defending human life, evangelization, defending truth, the environment — are the most urgent for the church to address.

Gangs terrorize Catholics in Vietnam, priests report

HANOI, Vietnam (CNS) — Police have looked the other way as groups of youth have terrorized a Catholic community in north-east Vietnam.

Ucanews.com reported that, throughout June, gangs of youth — wearing red T-shirts with yellow stars and waving national flags — have attacked Catholics and their property in Song Ngoc Parish in Quynh Luu District of Nghe An province.

“We see that the attacks have been carried out in an orchestrated manner, and the police know well what is occurring, but are ignoring what is going on,” said 11 priests in a June 13 petition given to the Vietnamese government.

The priests accused the government of “aiding and abetting

those who intentionally violate laws, cause hatred and divide Catholics from others.”

The attacks have occurred at night, and at least two Catholics have been seriously injured, sources told ucanews.com

Despite a heavy police presence, the youth have ridden motorbikes at full throttle through villages at night and thrown stones at a local church and at the homes of Catholics. They have also intimidated businesses owned by Catholics and, in one case, the youth, armed with knives, threatened a Catholic shop owner and destroyed his goods while also driving away his customers.

Local Catholics told ucanews.com the youth are supporters of the Communist party and criminal elements from other areas.



CNS/Kacper Pempel, Reuters

CORPUS CHRISTI — People take part in a Corpus Christi procession Thursday, June 15, in Banie Mazurskie, Poland. At the Vatican and in many other countries, the feast was celebrated on Sunday, June 18.

Bishops join interfaith effort for famine relief

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Canada’s Catholic bishops have pulled together a coalition of Christians, Muslims, Jews and others to try to keep people from starving to death in four terrorism-and-war-torn nations — South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen.

Under the title “Pray-Give-Speak Out,” the faith leaders are urging Canadians to help 20 million people threatened with starvation.

The coalition has until June 30 to raise as much as it can in the #ZeroHunger campaign. Money raised between March 17 and June 30 will be matched by the federal government to be used in famine relief efforts in the four countries. But the ongoing need is such that Catholic charities participating in the campaign will continue raising money right through the summer.

“We definitely will continue raising funds all summer,” said Development and Peace emergency program director Guy Des Aulniers. “We know the worst time will be June and July in terms of living conditions in the field.”

Development and Peace has so far raised a quarter of a million dollars that are eligible for matching funds.

Des Aulniers anticipates charities will ask the government to extend the deadline on the Famine Relief Fund.

Toronto’s Cardinal Thomas Collins is backing the Pray-Give-Speak Out campaign.

“When we care for our brothers and sisters who are suffering, we live a faith that acts,” said Collins in a press release. “My prayer is that we learn more about the causes of this famine, pray for the sick and suffering and offer our financial support to shine a ray of hope through the darkness that so many are experiencing.”

Canada’s bishops aren’t just asking for money. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has also distributed prayers to be used at Sunday masses through the summer.

The joint statement from 27 national faith leaders and organizations, including the CCCB, said their plea was a “unified cry from the heart.”

“Ours is the insistent call for peace and the need to protect the vulnerable,” said the interfaith statement. “The protection and promotion of human dignity are foundational elements of all our faith communities. Wilful indifference toward violations against human dignity are always wrong, at all times and in all places.”

The joint effort sends an important message to the world, said Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs spokesperson Steve McDonald.

“We and I think many others who are involved in interfaith work see dialogue as a stepping stone to joint action,” said McDonald. “The world needs us now more than ever to demonstrate that faith is a source of positive action in the world today, that



Paul Jeffrey for Caritas Internationalis

SOUTH SUDAN — In South Sudan there are nearly 1.9 million internally displaced people and 1.74 million refugees, 86 per cent of them women and children, as rebel and government forces fight for control of oil revenues.

faith communities are outward looking and forward looking.”

The Canadian interfaith campaign stands in direct contrast to conflicts around the world, whether it’s the ISIS attack on Iran’s parliament or the inter-communal conflicts that are producing refugees in the four countries hit by famine and

near-famine conditions.

“This is an important initiative, not only because it’s a response to a great need, but it speaks to the world with a message of unity and love for humanity at a time when we only hear of divisions and conflict,” said Canadian Jesuits International

executive director Jenny Cafiso.

In South Sudan and on the border between Ethiopia and Somalia, the Jesuit Fathers are dealing directly with fallout from terrorism and war, beginning with hunger, said Cafiso.

The Jesuit-run Loyola Secondary School in Wau, South Sudan,

Sisters make case for poverty reduction strategy

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Given the chance to tell politicians from Ottawa about poverty, Sister Sue Mosteller didn’t want to argue about economics.

She didn’t want to measure Canada’s battle against poverty in dollars and cents and she didn’t want to resort to heart-tugging examples of deprivation and despair.

“Our caring for our less fortunate citizens is not simply about money, but about the kind of society that we’re trying to create together,” she told Toronto Danforth MP Julie Dabrusin and Don Valley West MP Rob Oliphant as part of the federal government’s countrywide consultation process toward a poverty reduction strategy.

Mosteller and her fellow Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto know poverty better than most, having worked for and with the poor in the city for 151 years.

“We daily meet those struggling to ride out poverty,” said Furniture Bank founder Sister Anne Schenk.

After meeting the Liberal MPs, the sisters then submitted a video of their presentation to the consultation processes website.

With two weeks to go in the consultation process, Catholic leaders and ecumenical organizations are pushing federal politicians hard to produce a serious legislative plan to lift nearly five million Canadians out of poverty — one that includes targets and timelines. Submissions to the Canadian Poverty Reduction

Strategy close June 30.

So far, Minister of Children, Families and Social Development Yves Duclos has received more than 700 email submissions, more than 400 completed surveys and nearly 200 other submissions. The submissions come from academic economists, provinces, municipalities and poor people themselves.

Schenk’s suggestion to the politicians had less to do with large-scale, dramatic reforms of the national social safety net and more to do with modest, humble, local efforts.

“I urge you to follow these not-for-profit organizations. Rejoice in the importance of your funding to them and assist as best you can to lift our neighbours out of the prison of poverty, a prison both physical and psychological.”

Canada’s Catholic bishops haven’t submitted anything to the anti-poverty consultation process yet, but Regina Archbishop Don Bolen believes poverty reduction needs to be a national priority.

“Human beings and societies have shown themselves capable of extraordinary technological advances and scientific findings. Learning to live as a society which cares for those in greatest need would be a still greater achievement,” Bolen said in an email to *The Catholic Register*.

“It is time, indeed it is well past time but it is always time, to make it a societal priority to address the various forms of acute poverty in our society. This will require prioritizing the common good, making political and economic decisions which take seriously those in greatest need and

moral maturity that we have lacked to this point.”

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston, Ont., want to see a national basic income that would universalize the social safety net, but their Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation office isn’t suggesting a guaranteed minimum income for every Canadian is the only solution — or any sort of simple, final answer to every problem.

“I’m not putting all my eggs in that basket,” said Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation organizer and educator Tara Kainer. “I think it’s extremely important in the meantime to do whatever we can to alleviate poverty.”

Affordable daycare, a national housing plan, pharma-care, better wages and jobs with benefits are all part of the Sisters of Providence recipe for raising people out of poverty.

Catholic Charities of Toronto wants to co-ordinate its submission with Campaign 2000. Social justice and advocacy co-ordinator Jack Panozzo sees safe, stable, affordable housing as the key difference-maker in poverty reduction.

A report from the consultation

has been transformed into a food distribution centre. Jesuits are also distributing food at the St. Peter Claver Agricultural Project in Rumbek, South Sudan.

“For most students the meal they’ll get at school is the only meal they will have that day,” said Cafiso.

Contributions to Canadian Jesuits International, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and Aid to the Church in Need Canada made before June 30 are eligible for government matching. The matching funds go into the Famine Relief Fund administered by Global Affairs Canada.

Organizations with a history and demonstrated capability in the famine-affected countries will be invited to apply for funding from the matching fund. But the majority of money from the government fund will likely go to United Nations agencies. Money contributed to Catholic charities remains with them to fund their projects.

In February, United Nations secretary general António Guterres declared an international emergency, announcing that 20 million people face imminent danger of starvation.

“We are facing a tragedy; we must avoid it becoming a cata-

— FOUR, page 4



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

Sister Sue Mosteller

Facts on Poverty

- One in seven Canadians live in poverty — about five million people, including 1.3 million children.
- On any given night there are 35,000 homeless people across Canada.
- Poverty is directly responsible for \$6.2 billion in extra cost to Canada’s health care system or over 14 per cent of total spending on acute care inpatient hospitalizations, prescriptions and doctor visits.
- The top 20 per cent of Canadians now hold 70 per cent of the nation’s wealth.

Doctor who promoted euthanasia has second thoughts

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Euthanasia opponents find it a “great irony” the physician who championed Quebec’s euthanasia law now has second thoughts.

Only weeks after the secretary of the Quebec College of Physicians, Dr. Yves Robert, wrote his May 10 reflection the College’s website on whether the push for euthanasia has gone too far, two individuals have mounted a legal challenge against the Quebec law because they are ineligible to receive so-called “medical aid in dying.”

The plaintiffs in the case filed

June 13: Jean Truchon, 49, who has lost the use of his arms and legs, and Nicole Gladu, 71, who suffers the effects of post-polio syndrome, are ineligible for euthanasia because they are not terminally ill, as is required under Quebec law. “The plaintiffs would rather die with dignity than live with intolerable suffering,” their court document said.

Plaintiffs in British Columbia, along with the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, had already mounted a challenge of the federal law’s requirement that death be “reasonably foreseeable.” The euthanasia laws are also under

pressure from those who want to widen accessibility to include mature minors under 18; those suffering from mental illness; and incapacitated persons who have signed advanced directives.

Aubert Martin, executive director of Living with Dignity, said Robert is now realizing euthanasia “has nothing to do” with doctors’ “medical competence, but is asking them to be a rubber stamp of someone’s request to die.”

The Physicians’ Alliance Against Euthanasia wrote on its website that Robert’s reflection is reminiscent of “the classic novel *Frankenstein*, in which an idealis-

tic scientific genius creates a humanoid monster that threatens the human race.”

“This interpretation of the text probably exceeds the secretary’s intentions,” the Alliance said. “However, he stated a very clear statement of principle: if the client’s will is the only criterion for euthanasia, then the wisdom of medicine, the art of medicine and the science of medicine has no role to play.”

In a reflection written May 10 on the College’s website, Robert mused about how so-called “medical aid in dying” is now being seen as a “right.”

“For many, it is about having control over their death and the right to choose the time and the way,” he wrote. While “medical aid in dying” was reserved for those suffering at end-of-life, “we see the emergence of speech demanding a form of death à la carte. But is this really what our society wants?”

And, if “death à la carte,” Robert then asked why the medical profession needs to be involved.

He suggested this euthanasia on demand “could take the form of assisted suicide, managed by a private company that would deal with the person, as in Switzerland . . . but is it really in this direction

that Quebec society wants to go?” he asked.

Martin pointed out that a patient cannot go into a doctor’s office and insist on getting an operation on his shoulder when the physician says there is no need of such an operation. But in the case of euthanasia, even if it is against the doctor’s advice, it is about the patient’s rights. “What is a doctor now?” asked Martin. “He’s starting to be a waiter, providing services only.”

The Alliance, said Dr. Robert, “seems to believe the protection of the common good can coexist with the pressure of unrestricted individual freedoms and that a stable compromise can be reached between these two perspectives.”

“But the legal and moral shift we have witnessed — when euthanasia has moved from homicide to medical aid in dying — is more than an ‘evolution’ since both are genuinely different,” the Alliance said. “There is no compromise. We are talking here of a clearly perceptible seismic upheaval that leads us to a radically different medical paradigm, based solely on personal subjective choice.”

The Alliance is urging its member physicians and others to telephone or write to Robert to tell him they share his concerns.



St. Mary’s University/Adam Bowen

ABORIGINAL AWARENESS WEEK — To mark the launch of Aboriginal Awareness Week, St. Mary’s University in Calgary completed their journey to raise a teepee on campus (see story, page 5).

Pope inspires students to grow vegetables

By Josh Tng
The B.C. Catholic

VANCOUVER (CCN) — “Look! Our beets are growing!” shout the children at Immaculate Conception Elementary in Vancouver as they point and gasp with wide smiles at the pink beet-root emerging from their garden.

Students from Immaculate Conception and Holy Cross Elementary, Burnaby, are growing vegetables in their school gardens. Inspired by the Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’*, the children learn respect for the environment and get a taste of responsibility.

“We’ve been thinking a lot of how to care for our environment in class, so going on a local food diet is one of the ways the kids have been doing this,” said Marcus Schollen, who teaches Grade 4 at Immaculate Conception. “By learning to grow their own food, they can take these lessons home with them.”

The students grow vegetables in small garden spaces on the school grounds, which means the plants have to be able to survive in the Canadian climate.

“Just by having the students take responsibility of their gardens in their groups, I’ve seen them having more pride in their work and school,” Schollen said.

“It’s a good way to represent to the kids what caring for something is like. The students have to work as a group and make sure their project goals are being met.”

Kristina Manfron, who teaches Grade 3 at Holy Cross, coincidentally also has her class growing vegetables and fruits for the curriculum. “With the theme this year being ‘caring for our common home,’ the idea of gardening fits so perfectly. We can care for our environment, and it shows the kids we can make something blossom, grow, and then share it together.”

The gardens “are run by the Grade 3 class, but all the other classes have pitched in and helped along the way,” said Manfron. She found the students “really make connections with the lesson because it’s such hands-on learning.”

Once harvested, the crop is tasted by the students, then donated to the New Westminster Food Bank Society. “This year we are planning to give a basket of fresh vegetables to Syrian refugees,”

said Manfron.

“The garden program is something that has to stay as long as we have the means to do it,” Manfron said. “The kids love it, they look forward to it, and they bring extra clothes to change so they can go out there. They make connections and come back to the classroom with their finds.”

Joanna Wilke, a parent who spearheads the gardens at Immaculate Conception, agrees. “It’s a journey of discovering healthy living, teamwork, and perseverance,” she said. “One of my goals with the program is to figure out how we can teach about healthy living habits and the reasons behind it.”

The children get invested in the gardens, but Wilke admits there are some challenges depending on a student’s life background.

For “a family that never gardens or doesn’t eat many fruits or vegetables, it’s unfamiliar to them.”

“It’s about learning ways to have a healthy lifestyle mentally, physically, and emotionally. Gardening is a healing process of self-discovery.”

Four countries focus of relief

Continued from page 3

strophe,” Guterres told a press conference Feb. 22. “This is preventable if the international community takes decisive action. The situation is dire.”

The Canadian government responded with the Famine Relief Fund on May 29.

The government had earlier announced \$119.25 million in humanitarian aid in response to Guterres’ appeal.

The CCCB has designated Development and Peace, Aid to the Church in Need and Canadian Jesuits International as their preferred charities. All three have local partners and projects running in Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria.

In Toronto, Catholics can also give through their parishes by making cheques payable to “Name of Parish — African Famine — Humanitarian Relief,” or online at www.archtoronto.org and by phone at (416) 934-3411.

Development and Peace takes donations over the phone at 1-888-664-3387 or online at www.devp.org/en/famine-relief-fund. Cheques can be mailed to 1425 René-Lévesque Blvd. W., 3rd Floor, Montreal, Que., H3G 1T7 or a \$10 contribution can be made by texting Peace to 45678 on your phone.

Aid to the Church in Need takes online donations at <https://secure.acn-aed-ca.org/>

Four countries in focus for relief

The Famine Relief Fund addresses four separate food crises in South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria. But this

quartet of humanitarian disasters share certain characteristics. To varying extents, all four countries are experiencing drought and in all four cases the disruption of historic rainfall patterns suggests climate change plays a significant role. Also, in all four cases it’s likely the local population could cope with the drought if not for civil war and terrorist attacks.

SOUTH SUDAN: There are nearly 1.9 million internally displaced people and 1.74 million refugees, 86 per cent of them women and children, as rebel and government forces fight for control of oil revenues.

NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA: Severe drought in the Chad Basin has intensified the conflict between Boko Haram militants and the Nigerian army. 1.9 million people have abandoned their homes and their farms, trying to get out of the way of the fighting. In total there are 8.5 million people in need.

SOMALIA: Virtually without government for a generation, the current government only controls Mogadishu and a few counties surrounding the capital city. There are 6.2 million people in need and 1.7 million on the run from both drought and al-Shabaab terrorists. Children suffer the most. More than 71,000 require immediate, life-saving nutrition treatment.

YEMEN: The conflict between Shia Houthi rebels and the Sunni, Saudi-backed government is complex and unrelenting. More than 70 per cent of the population, 18.8 million people, need outside assistance to meet their basic needs. That includes 6.8 million who aren’t getting enough to eat.

St. Mary’s University campus raises its own teepee

By Adam Bowen

CALGARY — Members of the St. Mary’s University community met with Elder Randy Bottle on May 17 and 18 to brave snow and rain and began the first major steps toward raising a teepee on the St. Mary’s campus in Calgary.

Though the weather may not have been ideal on the first day, the significance of honouring the traditional ways of selecting and



Courtesy of St. Mary’s University

THE LAND TEACHES — “There’s no better teacher than experience, there’s no better teacher than the land, truthfully,” said Michelle Scott, director of Indigenous Initiatives at St. Mary’s University. “Being on the land and finding our lodge poles and doing the debarking ourselves and having that experience as a community, indigenous and non-indigenous, taught us what it’s like to be on the land. What it’s like to care for a lodge pole.

Trafficking trade is largely hidden

Continued from page 1

Sister Nancy Brown, director of pastoral care at Covenant House Vancouver, said that there is a large population of homeless Aboriginal youth in British Columbia. Of the 85 young people she co-ordinated to participate in the study, 58 were youth from residential reserves.

“In many statistics that I’ve read about Canada, the average age is 14, but we in Vancouver only deal with 16- to 24-year-olds,” said Brown, who is a member of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity Halifax. “I would say the average age would be 16 or 17. It appears that they are coming to us already (having) been involved.”

Rivers said Covenant House Toronto is experiencing the same trend. He said the average age of trafficked victims cared for by their city agency is 17 years old, but staff have seen victims as young as 13.

The majority of youth interviewed for the American-based study were between the ages of 19 to 21. They accounted for more than 58 per cent of the data pool.

Even if the research does not necessarily represent the problem of trafficking in Canada, the data collected sets a precedent. Covenant House International called it the “largest-ever study of the inci-

denance of trafficking among homeless youth.”

Rivers said the data is a useful resource for Covenant House to understand its role in addressing the issue of trafficking in North America.

The number of people trafficked in Canada is largely unknown because the trade is often hidden. Trafficking is no longer on the streets but in places like hotels, massage parlours or spas.

Information from community organizations like Covenant House and police investigations suggests those most likely to be trafficked are young Canadian women exploited for sex.

“One of the things, though, that is consistent is that most of these young people are our kids. It’s a domestic issue and this is not kids coming from other countries,” he said. “The vast majority of survivors, victims are young women and as well, most of them are girls, just like girls you and I would know from our own community.”

As Covenant House Toronto and Vancouver look to expand local services for what they call a “continuum of care” for vulnerable youth, the Toronto agency is also spearheading a national petition for a hotline to connect youth with local shelters and other services.

“It’s really important, I think,

searching for the right type, height and width of tree; manoeuvring these large poles out of a densely wooded area while navigating rough terrain were some of the challenges faced before branches were pruned and bark was hand-scraped on all of the soon-to-be teepee poles.

“There’s no better teacher than experience, there’s no better teacher than the land, truthfully,” said Michelle Scott, director of Indigenous Initiatives at St. Mary’s University. “Being on the land and finding our lodge poles and doing the debarking ourselves and having that experience as a community, indigenous and non-indigenous, taught us what

that there be a 1-800 number that’s well-known, that’s been promoted across the country, so that there’s one place to go to report but also to seek help,” said Rivers. “This hotline would in turn connect with local initiatives across the country.”

More than 23,000 signatures had been collected from across the country as of June 12. Rivers hopes to collect signatures until June 19 before he brings them to the attention of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s office.

More information about the petition and Canada’s Catholic youth agencies can be found at covenanthousetoronto.ca and covenanthousebc.org

By the numbers:

Significant numbers from the study of 900 homeless youth involved with Covenant House in 13 cities, including Toronto and Vancouver:

- 19 per cent — victims of human trafficking
- 14 per cent — victims of sex trafficking
- 7 per cent — youth forced into drug trade
- 30 per cent — engaged in sex trade at some point
- 16 — median age for trafficked youth

it’s like to be on the land. What it’s like to care for a lodge pole.”

“Experiences like this, getting to do things together, to learn from and with, are going to make the difference.”

It is that feeling of community that Scott has come to cherish and embrace. Having spearheaded the idea to carry the teepee and do it in a traditional manner may have started as an idea but has been supported every step of the way.

“I don’t feel like I’m alone in this,” explained Scott.

“Sometimes I forget the gravity of the situation because I’m doing it. What is really humbling for me is knowing that I am not alone, that there are a lot of people who care and understand the significance of this. It’s not just me who’s excited about the teepee poles.”

From a community perspective, the traditional way of carrying a teepee is symbolic of St. Mary’s commitment to continually seeking to make the institution a safer space for indigenous learners and the indigenous community as a gathering place.

The significance of the moment and the efforts of the volunteers involved in the pole harvest was not lost on Fidler either, who may not have understood the

power this journey may have had when she volunteered but quickly came to understand the impact this journey has had on herself and the others involved.

“When I signed up to help, I did not realize it would happen, but I feel an incredible sense of pride, investment and connection in these wooden poles and the teepee itself,” said Erin Fidler, a first-year student at St. Mary’s University in Calgary.

“Even now, seeing the poles up at St. Mary’s gives me a sense of community and hope for the initiatives, relationships and memories yet to come.”

A mother’s death begins a life of service for Walley

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Dr. Robert Walley will never forget the moment when he watched a pregnant woman die.

“I went to Africa for the first time in 1981 . . . (and) I couldn’t believe what I saw,” he said. “(It was) the first time that I was ever at a maternal death. I actually, and this only happened to me once in my life, was holding her hand and I probably felt the last heart beat.”

Not only did the mother die, but so too did the child she was carrying.

“If we were really quick we could have done a cesarean section there in the bed and delivered the baby,” said the obstetrician. “(But) we had no gear to do a post-mortem cesarean section. After a few moments the (unborn child’s) movements stopped.”

The experience was life-changing. Walley, a British ex-patriot who moved to Newfoundland in



Courtesy of St. Mary’s University

ST. MARY’S TEEPEE — “When I signed up to help, I did not realize it would happen, but I feel an incredible sense of pride, investment and connection in these wooden poles and the teepee itself,” said Erin Fidler, a first-year student at St. Mary’s University in Calgary.

1973 when pressured to perform abortions, vowed to make a difference in maternal care.

His work and dedication has been recognized with the 2017 Archbishop Adam Exner Award for Catholic Excellence in Public Life by the Catholic Civil Rights League (CCRL).

“Since 1981 I’ve been doing something about the number of women who die in Africa” due to a lack of access to “essential obstetrics,” said Walley, who earned his medical degree in London in 1964. “Where one or two would die in Canada per 100,000 live births, there about 790 per 100,000 would die. That is a horrendous difference.

“Over there, they don’t get anything. (Often) they deliver in their village and if they are lucky they’ll get a non-trained traditional birth attendant, that means a woman in the village. There is usually no way of getting to specialist care or trained care.”

— WALLEY, page 13

Holy Spirit brings diversity of gifts shared by all

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Graduates of a two-year Lay Formation program were recently sent forth in two missioning ceremonies: one for participants from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon and another for those from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

The purpose of the Lay Formation program is to help adult Catholics fulfil their baptismal commitment to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ, through a process of formation and faith education.

The program emphasizes spiritual growth and personal transformation, as participants deepen their relationship with God, expand their prayer life, learn more about the Catholic faith and experience Christian community during a live-in experience held at Queen’s House of Retreats one weekend a month, from September to June, over two years.

Some 900 participants have graduated from the program since it started in 1987.

Participants in three streams of Lay Formation now journey through the program: a diocesan Latin-rite stream, an eparchial Byzantine-rite stream and an Aboriginal Catholic stream. The groups spend time together in formation, in prayer and as a community, as well as gathering in their individual “streams,” focusing on their own traditions and spirituality.

Seventeen eparchial graduates were sent forth June 3 at a celebration held at Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church. The next day, nine diocesan Lay Formation graduates were anointed and sent forth by diocesan administrator Rev. Kevin McGee at St. Paul Co-Cathedral.

Other special guests at the diocesan celebration included family members, parishioners and Lay Formation alumni, as well as Rev. Pius Schroh, pastor of St. Paul’s, Rev. Nestor Gregoire, pastor of St. Joseph and St. Francis Xavier parishes, Rev. Marvin Lishchynsky, diocesan Judicial Vicar and pastor of St. John Bosco Parish, and Rev. Deyre Azcuna, associate pastor at the



Kiply Yaworski

SENT FORTH — Graduates of the Lay Formation program in Saskatoon were recently sent forth in two missioning ceremonies: one for participants from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy and another for those from the Roman Catholic Diocese. Diocesan graduates were anointed and sent forth by diocesan administrator Rev. Kevin McGee (centre) in a celebration at St. Paul Co-Cathedral.

Cathedral of the Holy Family.

Co-ordinator Mona Goodman welcomed those gathered for the diocesan missioning June 4 by acknowledging Treaty 6 territory

and the ancestral homeland of the Métis people, saying “Our relationship as treaty people has brought many cultures together here today.”

The diocesan missioning included prayer in the four directions at the Great Amen and gathering the collection in a traditional star blanket — with gifts going to the Steve Ballantyne Bursary Fund to assist Aboriginal participants with costs that might otherwise prohibit participation in the Lay Formation program.

“As servants of Christ we are to be men and women motivated by the spirit of the Gospel, we are called to a life of holiness, prayer and action. Such a mission requires ongoing formation and renewal,” said Goodman.

“Over the past two years these members of our church have diligently and conscientiously deepened their knowledge of our faith and intensified their spiritual lives through the lay formation process. Today they ask the Lord’s blessing, they ask to be renewed in the spirit as you send them forth to proclaim

the good news to serve and to worship in spirit and in truth.”

After the renewal of their baptismal promises and the affirmation of the assembly, each diocesan candidate was anointed by McGee as a sign of being sent forth into the community to continue their journey as disciples of Christ.

The feast of Pentecost was an appropriate day for the missioning, with McGee exploring in his homily the new beginning experienced by the disciples who encountered the Holy Spirit in the upper room.

“The gift of the Holy Spirit brings the reality of Jesus Christ into the lives of the disciples,” McGee described. “The Holy Spirit in a very real way makes Jesus complete in his ministry and mission. So we hear about men and women who were once hiding and hesitant who now leap from their hiding place to bring the good news of the risen Lord to people of all languages and cultures.”

— CHRISTIANS, page 7

Women respond to God’s call

By James Buchok

VIRDEN, Man. — Sacred Heart Parish in Virden, Man., hosted the 69th annual convention of the Manitoba Provincial Council of the Catholic Women’s League of Canada June 2 - 3, with the theme, “Women Inspired by the Spirit Respond to God’s Call.”

Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon celebrated the liturgy with convention attendees and parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish.

In his homily, Gagnon said the theme for the convention “not only describes something about the Catholic Women’s League itself but serves also as an instruction on how to be Catholic women in the league.”

The archbishop referenced the day’s Gospel reading as Jesus appears before the disciples on Easter night when they were all together behind locked doors. “This in itself indicates that there was a conflict and a fear about being who they were as disciples; we can translate that into our own modern context. Jesus stood among them; this too is useful for us as we recall that ‘where two or more are gathered in his name, he is there among

them.’ A reminder that in every gathering and work of the CWL, he is there among the members.

“The Lord’s words, ‘Peace be with you,’ usher in a manifestation of his power when he breathes into them to receive the Holy Spirit so that sins may be forgiven through the ministry of these apostles.”

Gagnon said it is the same when “women who are breathed into or inspired by the Holy Spirit are given power to go forth and witness to Christ before all nations and make disciples for him. Deeds of power accompany the presence of the Holy Spirit in every woman and man who opens their hearts to this divine presence.”

“The mere fact of the active apostolate of the CWL in Canada since June 17, 1920, is a sign that women have responded to God’s call through the Holy Spirit,” said Gagnon. “Your first president, Bellelle Guerin, was a remarkable woman of talent and faith. All this is an extraordinary witness to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit not only in our archdiocese but in Canada from coast to coast. The opening prayer for this Pentecost celebration captures very well what we should be praying for: ‘. . . we

pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth and, with the divine grace that was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed, fill now once more the hearts of believers.’”

Gagnon said “the instruction” contained in the theme for the gathering, “has to do with this convention and every council meeting and every committee that is part of the faith life of the CWL. When Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you,’ he did not use the word ‘peace,’ but rather ‘shalom.’ The peace of God is shalom, the peace of the Holy Spirit is shalom.”

“ ‘Women Inspired by the Spirit Respond to God’s Call,’ has everything to do with this shalom. Every gathering and every deliberation that is undertaken needs to be under the action of the Holy Spirit so that one can respond to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us. This means more than simply starting things off with a prayer because that’s what Catholics do, rather to make the listening to and invocation of the Spirit among us, something continuous and part of the faith-life and faith-action of the league. Remember that at the beginning of the encounter between Christ and the apostles the Holy Spirit was given, the shalom was given. He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

“As members of the Catholic Women’s League, you have been and are inspired by the Holy Spirit. The question constantly before you, as it is before all of us, is, ‘Do we respond to this call, not just once, but continually?’ And with regard to being witnesses throughout the world, Paul really does remind us that, ‘No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.’”

Rev. Leo Fernandez, pastor of St. Rose de Lima Church at Ste. Rose du Lac, Man., and two rural missions, is completing his last term as the Manitoba Catholic Women’s League provincial adviser.



CWL CONVENTION — Archbishop of Winnipeg Richard Gagnon (left) is joined at the head table by CWL provincial president Faith Anderson (at the archbishop’s left) and Archdiocese of Winnipeg CWL president Lori Marks, across the table.



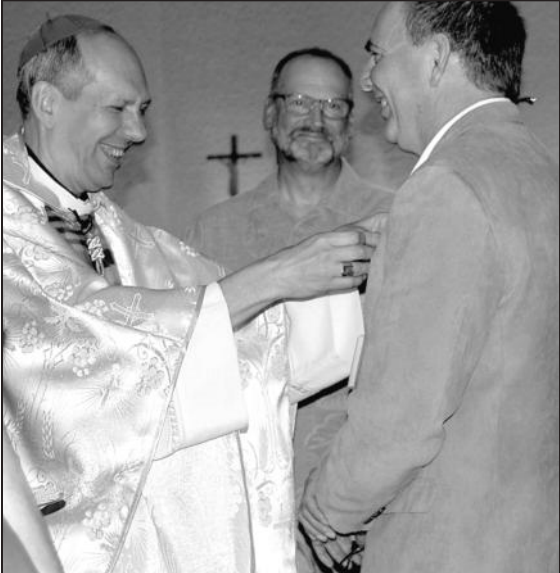
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CATHOLIC EDUCATION DAY — World Catholic Education Day at Light of Christ Catholic Schools (LOCCS) brought together almost two thousand students, staff, community and family members. The Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation, via the Adrienne and Mervyn Welter Education Endowment Fund, the Debora and Robert Tiede Endowment Fund and the Capital Fund of the foundation offered moral support for LOCCS’ World Catholic Education Day celebration and provided a grant of \$4,000. Making the presentation to LOCCS board chair Glen Gantefer are Adrienne and Mervyn Welter. Mervyn is a member of the Grand Knights, who provided an honour guard at the special mass. The local Knights of Columbus Council 2094 also presented a cheque for \$1,000 to Gantefer.

Lay Formation graduates celebrate in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The Regina archdiocese Lay Formation program added seven more graduates to the list of 550 alumni at a graduation mass celebration held June 10 at Little Flower Roman Catholic Church.



GRADUATION — Dean Vey of Resurrection Parish receives his medal from Archbishop Donald Bolen marking his graduation from the Lay Formation program in Regina.

“Welcome to this service of joy,” said Archbishop Donald Bolen in his greetings at the beginning of mass. “The Holy Spirit is at work in our church.” Five of the seven graduates came from Regina parishes, St. Cecelia (two); Resurrection, Holy Child, Holy Trinity (one each); and two from St. John the Baptist, Estevan. Lay Formation program co-ordinator Eric Gurash called each graduate by name, remind-

ing them that Christ called each by name to come forward, as the archbishop commissioned and presented each with a medallion emblematic of their accomplishment. In his homily prior to the commissioning, Bolen said their mission, as it is the mission of everyone, is nothing more than to carry out Christ’s mission: “To love and serve the world, to bring healing to the world, to speak joy to the world. To transform the world and prepare the world for the kingdom.” He referred to Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit to be among us. “It moves us in three directions: it turns us inward to cultivate a deep faith; outward toward the world and a focus on service; and toward others as members of the Body of Christ. Each part of the body is different and we need each other, we need you in the church today with your gifts,” he told the graduates. The archbishop ended his homily by saying, “The work of the Holy Spirit grows within us to be visible. Thank you for taking this journey.” Becky Franke from St. John

the Baptist Church, Estevan, speaking on behalf of the graduates, thanked everyone for what she called “this God journey.” “I would love for people to know how we feel when we are together. There are not many places to go where the common theme is to be in the presence of God, to learn about God, to question God. We get to be ourselves. We learn about our Creator and his teachings in a safe place. So we say thank you to all who journeyed with us.” She had a special thank you for the support of their parishes and families and ended by blowing a kiss to the congregation. The Lay Formation program began 37 years ago and this was the 34th graduating class. Candi-

dates attend at Campion College one weekend a month, except for the summer months of July and August, for three years to complete the program. Graduates perform in a variety of roles throughout the archdiocese — as pastoral assistants and in church ministries such as music, proclaimers, and the eucharistic.

Student receives STEM scholarship

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Catholic high school student Regan Wilson has always had a fascination with the way things work. “I was that kid who would take apart old appliances that didn’t work anymore to see how they worked. And building things has always fascinated me,” said the Grade 12 student at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon. That natural curiosity — combined with an aptitude for math, a lot of hard work and dedication, as well as a sense of community and service that demonstrates a unique maturity — has made Wilson a member of a prestigious group of scholarship recipients known as Schulich Leaders.

Wilson is the ninth Schulich Leader from Saskatoon and the first from Holy Cross High School. Since 2012, the Schulich Foundation has funded 50 scholarships per year to support students in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields. Students pursuing post-secondary programs focusing on science, technology and math receive \$80,000; students pursuing engineering receive \$100,000. Wilson will be taking mechanical engineering at the University of Saskatchewan in the fall, and is therefore a recipient of the larger scholarship. Throughout her four years at Holy Cross, Wilson has demonstrated her keen interest in math and science. “Physics is by far my favourite class, learning why things are the way they are,” said the honours student.

But her interest in how things work isn’t just theoretical — it’s practical, too. “I love working with my hands and building things.” In May, Wilson launched a cedar-strip canoe she built in industrial arts class. Wilson plans to use mechanical engineering as a stepping stone for her career plans that require graduate-level training. “In Grade 10 I decided I wanted to become a biological engineer designing prosthetic limbs. It’s a dream of mine to make things to make other people’s lives easier and give them the same ability as everyone else.” That desire to help others isn’t something new for Wilson. For the past six years she has been volunteering with the Spirit Flyers dance group, a special-needs program at the U of S. She has also found a way to blend service and her love of outdoor activities at St. John Bosco Wilderness Camp — for three years as a camper and three years as a camp counsellor. Wilson is also active in extracurricular activities such as the school’s outdoor education club, the senior basketball team, cross-country running, and track and field. She recently won silver at the city track and field championships in the 3,000-metre race, earning her a spot at provincials. “She’s a well-rounded student and excels in whatever she chooses,” said Michelle Remizowski, a school counsellor at Holy Cross. “She’s a real self-starter and hard worker, leads by example and exudes confidence. She’s top notch, and we’re proud of her.”

“It wasn’t until after I was notified that I realized that I was able to do those things, and the things I had done in my life are important,” said Wilson. “I’ve always worked hard to keep a well-rounded life, and that’s got me where I am today. The community service and hard work definitely shaped who I am, and I’m lucky enough to get recognition for that.”



Derrick Kunz
Regan Wilson

‘Christians are people who are sent on a mission’

Continued from page 6

The Holy Spirit brings a diversity of gifts that are shared by all within the Body of Christ, he added. “Over the past two years those of you who have been in Lay Formation have been exploring gifts, bringing them to a greater purpose in terms of their service to the Body of Christ.” The Holy Spirit acts as a lens through which the disciples see for the first time and with perfect clarity who Jesus is, he added. “The Holy Spirit gives us fresh perspective and new meaning.” Ultimately, Christians are people who are sent on a mission, McGee noted. “Over the past two years you have left your upper rooms and gone on a journey to encounter Jesus again and again, to go out and be met by him and transformed by him.” He encouraged the graduates to go forth to be “the living fire of Jesus Christ, proclaiming his love and mercy. Continue to be the fire of God’s love in this world.” The 2017 graduates of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy are Dodie Abrametz, Jennifer Clerke, Mary Shewaga and Theresa Skomar of Dormition of the Blessed Mother Parish, Saskatoon; Carmen Bartko, Nadya Berezowski, Bruce Berezowski, Fritz

Friedrich, Patricia McCoshen, Yuri Popowych, Gloria Pryma, and Sister Georgia Schavij of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, Saskatoon; Veronica Chelack, Curtis Hiebert, Tamara Hrechuch and Marissa Owchar of St. George Cathedral, Saskatoon; and Lori Keller of St. George Parish, Melville. This year’s diocesan graduates are all from Saskatoon: Annette Bley of St. John Bosco Parish; John Lyrette of St. Patrick Parish; Eileen MacKenzie of St. Francis Xavier Parish; Maria Luisa, Mendoza O’Sullivan and Katelyn Peterson of Holy Spirit Parish; Cecilia Mui of St. Joseph Parish; Marjorie Stevens of the Cathedral of the Holy Family; and Chong Wong and Maylane Wong of St. Paul Co-Cathedral. The Lay Formation program team includes leadership from both the diocese and the eparchy — staff as well as volunteers. Team members include Mona Goodman, Sister Bonnie Komarnicki, SSMI, Sister Marijka Konderewicz, SSMI, Joanne Kzyzyk, Wayne Kzyzyk, Henry Spilchuk, and Bob Friesen. Applications are now being taken for all three streams of Lay Formation, with sessions beginning in September. For information see: www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/layformation or call (306) 659-5846.



Brian Zimmer
COMMUNITY DAY — Performer Parob Poet entertains children as St. Paul’s Hospital in Saskatoon welcomed hundreds of students from the surrounding neighbourhood to their 25th annual Community Day May 31 on the hospital grounds. Some 100 volunteers from St. Paul’s Hospital and other sites in the Saskatoon Health Region, as well as high school students, hospital board members and community sponsors, assisted with the day, which included donated food (2,500 hot dogs, buns and popsicles) and activities.

Feminist violence, terror on screen

By Gerald Schmitz

Instead of a first female American president, we have a misogynist who's bragged about sexually assaulting women — interesting timing for two high-profile U.S. productions carrying very different feminist messages. April brought the 10-episode first season of Hulu's *The Handmaid's Tale* (Bravo TV in Canada) based on Canadian Margaret Atwood's very dystopian 1985 novel. Some of the episodes are directed by women, including Canadian Kari Skogland. I have no desire to reread the novel to see how faithfully it is followed, but note that Atwood is an adviser to the series and one of its writers. At Austin's South By Southwest festival in March, Hulu's promotion included having dozens of mute young women, clad in handmaiden scarlet and white, circling the streets.

What to make of it? The sce-

nario has a crisis of infertility coinciding with a fascistic totalitarian "Christian" makeover of America in which a class of subjugated women are forced to bear the chil-

The Handmaid's Tale

(Hulu and Bravo TV)

Wonder Woman

(U.S./China/Hong Kong)

dren of "commanders." Elizabeth Moss gives a strong performance in the lead role of Offred, one of these handmaidens. Any dissent is violently suppressed, though Canada remains a northern safe haven (as it was for those escaping racial slavery in the 19th century). Allusions have been made to the Trump phenomenon and his support from right-wing white evangelicals. Still, the prospect of any of this horror happening seems to me to be between nil and none, about as likely as the Islamic State

taking over the secular West.

Moving from futurist nightmare to rearview fantasy is Patty Jenkins' *Wonder Woman*, which arrived on the big screen early this month, a long in development female-directed superhero blockbuster in which a heroine calls the shots. In it a reimagined First World War crashes into invented Greek mythology, literally when the stricken Allied pilot and spy Steve Trevor (Chris Pine) washes up on the island paradise of Themyscira, home to a race of Amazons and the warrior princess Diana who has god-killing powers. She's played by Israeli actress Gal Gadot, a former Miss Israel who served in the Israeli army and has appeared in the *Fast and Furious* franchise.

Hapless humans seem to be in the grasp of the god Ares who seeks their destruction, until Steve and the wondrous Diana team up against the baddies — Germans, of course, including a facially disfigured female mad scientist nicknamed Dr. Poison — though it turns out Ares has other guises up his sleeve. It's all rather preposterous, with some corny dialogue thrown in, but if you're going to rewrite history you may as well go all the way. The sight of the striking Gadot striding through a hellish trench warfare no man's land is something to behold. Action fans will cheer the frequent fights and explosions.

The original *Wonder Woman* emerged in the Second World War. The 2017 version rolls that back leaving more room for sequels. Thankfully it also sheds the skimpy all-American star-spangled look for an equally alluring more goddess-appropriate armour.

For all the combat violence, the movie's female-powered message is that "only love will save the world." Wouldn't that be wonderful?



Gerald Schmitz

HANDMAID'S TALE — At the SXSW festival in Austin, Texas, in March, this street promo could be seen for the new series *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Books

Vanier wrestles with 'life's great questions'

LIFE'S GREAT QUESTIONS by Jean Vanier. Toronto, Novalis, ©2015. Paper, 172 pages, \$19.9. Reviewed by Edwin Buettner.

For those who remember, the Baltimore Catechism provided unambiguous answers for students to memorize. In *Life's Great Questions*, the "answers" have a quality of openness, born of a sincere "wrestling" with reality and living more authentically and fearlessly. Eschewing canned and clichéd answers, Vanier's reflections often reveal a disarming humility, yet his words resonate with the wisdom of a long life lived in spiritual reflection integrated with loving service. His building of the L'Arche communities around the world is a living testament to his commitment to these values.

There are 17 chapters in this book, each devoted to a question, including: What is reality? Why is there so much suffering? Why is it so hard to be good? How do you know God exists?

The table of contents is reminiscent of an introductory philosophy text, yet Vanier's discussions transcend the limits of rational inquiry without in any way compromising the rigour of disciplined thought. The former professor does not abandon his philosophical training, rather, he completes it. It is akin to adding colour to a black and white image, with the colouring agent of "heart knowing."

Now in his 80s, the author gently engages the reader in accessible conversations. However, the finely tuned mind of the philosopher echoes throughout, reminiscent of Socratic inquiry. There is a recursive quality to the writing, in which certain themes are applied to the "questions." They include

breaking down barriers, humility, and living from the heart — all of which are derivative of Love.

Drawing heavily on John's Gospel, Vanier regards Love as the very essence of God, a quality freely shared with humankind so that "to be human is to love and be loved." Furthermore, this Love has a personal quality, i.e., God seeks to be in relationship with each individual in his or her uniqueness. "God intervenes discretely and respectfully, changing one heart and then another, to realize (his) magnificent vision" Such an understanding of Love is of a different quality than that of some spiritual writers who characterize love in impersonal language, such as "higher vibrational energy."

One of the questions discussed in this book is: Why is there so much evil in the world? Vanier begins with an admission that he lacks a philosophically satisfying resolution to a question that has dogged philosophers, theologians, and the average person for millennia: "I cannot say . . . but perhaps it does not matter. What I can say and you can say is that evil exists."

He regards evil as a kind of "anti-life" force often connected with unjust actions, so dealing with evil involves ". . . not so much a matter of being good . . . (but) . . . doing what is right." The chapter concludes with a challenge that summarizes not only this book, but Vanier's life and work. He asks the reader to pray not only for the victims of terror, but also for the jihadists.

Not unlike the Gospels, his words are strong medicine for the healing of souls and societies.

'Bit of a risk to go ahead with this model'

Continued from page 1

"It just made a lot of sense to include health and education in one facility," said Diane Boyko, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education chair.

"Schools are community hubs. Students spend most of their waking hours here and parents are here regularly, so it makes accessing health services so much easier for families. It was a bit of risk to go ahead with this model, but I think it has paid off from both an educational and community health perspective," she said.

"Working together ensures our children receive the best health care, education and teaching tools

in one environment. This model has been successful and has improved the quality of life for many of our youth. We are fortunate to be commending a 10-year partnership with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the University of Saskatchewan," said Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas.

"The centre is one of the most unique initiatives in Canada," said Dr. Preston Smith, dean at the College of Medicine. "We are proud to be involved with a program that so wonderfully exemplifies our strategic priorities of indigenous health and social accountability and community engagement."



Andréa Ledding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING — Representatives sign a memorandum of understanding for an innovative program at St. Mary's school in Saskatoon May 12. It is the 10th anniversary of the collaborative effort to bring health care services into the Catholic school in Saskatoon's core neighbourhood. From left: Dr. Preston Smith, dean of the College of Medicine; Diane Boyko, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education chair; and Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas.

Queen's House

Retreat and Renewal Centre

Retreats & Workshops

Silent Directed Retreat: "Be Still and Know"

Dianne Mantyka, MDiv. Monday, June 26, 6:30 p.m. - Thursday, June 29, 1 p.m. Cost: Live-in only \$499

Summer Stillness — Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Public Lecture: Monday, July 10, 7 - 9 p.m. *A Secret Hidden Since the Foundations of the World — The Cross as Revealing the Basis for Trust*. Cost: \$20
Tuesday, July 11 - Thursday, July 13, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.: *A Spirituality of Charity, Justice and Prophecy — Why Simply Being Good-hearted is Not Enough*. Cost: \$200 commuter (public lecture and retreat, Monday supper, lunches).
\$260 commuter plus (public lecture and retreat, all meals).
\$410 live-in (public lecture and retreat, bedroom, all meals).

Companions on the Journey: A Retreat for Religious Men and Women — Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI. July 13 - 18, **IS FULL**.

Triumph: Freedom through Healing — Gerry and Donna Kristian

Friday, July 14, 6 p.m. - Sunday, July 23, 3 p.m. Cost: \$1,395

Conspire 2017: Transformation — Webcast with Fr. Richard Rohr & Friends. Hosted on Friday, July 28, 7 p.m. - Saturday, July 29, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Facilitator: Rev. Marie-Louise Ternier, MDiv. Cost: \$110 (includes lunch), room and breakfast at extra cost.

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Life on Earth: from crisis to sustainability?

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Donald Trump and his cohorts may deny climate change, but it's a hot topic in national security circles including the Pentagon as explored in Jared Scott's *The Age of Consequences* (<http://theageofconsequences.com/>), which cites U.S. Defence Department reports to the effect that climate extremes are a "threat multiplier" exacerbating resource scarcities (water especially, pointing to consequences brought on by major droughts in Syria and Afghanistan), population displacements, and other conflict-inducing risk factors. In the words of an American general, "climate change as an accelerant to instability" is a real and present danger to long-term U.S. national security interests, something any president should care about.

Helmed by Jeff Orlowski and the team behind *Chasing Ice*, *Chasing Coral* (<http://www.chasingcoral.com/>), winner of the Sundance audience award and available on Netflix, is the product of three-and-half years of globe-trotting undersea exploration which also features remarkable time-lapse photography to chart the damaging effects of ocean temperature rise and acidification on coral reefs. The film drives home that "without a healthy ocean we don't have a healthy planet." (A cover feature "Ocean Warning" in the May 27 edition of *The Economist* puts the problem more bluntly: "The ocean sustains humanity. Humanity treats it with contempt.") The filmmakers' challenge is to communicate the urgency of these issues. In part this is done through truly extraordinary images — best appreciated on the big screen — of what is happening in the ocean depths.

The science is alarming. On our blue planet, 72 per cent covered by water, 93 per cent of the warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions is absorbed by the oceans. As well, some of the carbon dioxide pollution is dissolved, making the oceans more acidic. Corals, which have existed for hundreds of millions of years, are complex and diverse organisms — the polyps are animals that contain within themselves micro-algae food factories which give them their fantastic range of colours. Coral reefs play a critical foundational role in ocean ecosystems that contain "galaxies" of amazing life forms we are still discovering. They "have the capacity to build their own habitats" that then serve as support systems for universes of marine life.

The problem is that corals are sensitive to changes in ocean temperature and chemistry caused by global warming. Their stress response leads to bleaching that ultimately leaves dead skeletal remains. Over the past three decades

the global loss is 50 per cent and in many areas close to 100 per cent. The rate of loss is increasing and severely affecting natural wonders such as Australia's Great Barrier Reef. The filmmakers' complicated underwater camera systems record incontrovertible evidence of what is taking place, including the last gasp of some stressed corals described as "the incredibly beautiful phase of death."

The reality behind these images warns of a widespread ecological collapse. A montage of bleaching events across the globe is a sign of worse to come. (The Canadian documentary *The Sea of Life* also features stunning underwater cinematography in tackling the adverse consequences of the climate crisis.) At the same time, the *Chasing Coral* team and scientific experts insist that resolute action is possible on cutting carbon emissions and transitioning to clean renewable energy sources. The film closes on that optimistic note, "dedicated to all the young people who can and will make a difference." One hopes its combination of impressive facts and emotional appeal provokes such a response.

Directed by Jeffrey McKay, *Call of the Forest: The Forgotten Wisdom of Trees* (<http://calloftheforest.ca/>) takes a journey with

botanist and biochemist Diana Beresford-Kroeger as she extols on the benefits of natural old-growth forests — as carbon sinks, biomedical sources, suppliers of healthful aerosols (in Japan "forest bathing" is popular) — and explores the loss of forest biodiversity and the native species dependent on this habitat. She shows how healthy forests are integral to coastal marine ecosystems as well as those inland such as the vital boreal forest that covers much of Canada. (If there's any doubt that trees are amazing organisms, read Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees*.)

Deforestation and climate change are major threats to the biodiverse forests that remain. Beresford-Kroeger makes a passionate appeal for action on both from the local (including the planting and maintenance of urban forests) to the global.



Ronan Killeen

FROM THE ASHES — Director Michael Bonfiglio's National Geographic production *From the Ashes* delves into the history and prospects of America's coal industry, writes Gerald Schmitz. Colstrip power plant in Colstrip, Montana, is seen in this still from the film.

Like the oceans, which supply much of the world's oxygen, we ignore harm to forests at our peril.

Director Michael Bonfiglio's National Geographic production *From the Ashes* (<https://www.fromtheashesfilm.com/>) delves into the history and prospects of America's coal industry which has seen epic union battles by coal miners, safety violations and terrible accidents, work-related diseases, booms and busts with mass layoffs. Currently 40,000 coal miners remain; average age 50. Coal still supplies 30 per cent of U.S. electricity but is increasingly uncompetitive with other less-polluting energy sources. Corporate bankruptcies have left

responsible for many thousands of deaths annually.

What may finally weigh most heavily is that most governments and consumers are looking for cheaper and cleaner energy sources. As the price of renewables falls the transition to them will accelerate (to wind in Montana for example). A lot of coal has been exported to Asia, but Chinese demand is already falling rapidly. The film concludes that the prospect of "clean coal" is illusory and that, notwithstanding Trump, the "coal industry is on life support."

Transition to a new economy is at the heart of another of the Tribeca festival's Earth Day premieres, *The Third Industrial Revolution*, directed by Eddy Moretti of Vice Media, which produced the documentary with the backing of Ford Motor Co. I really didn't like its uncinematic format — basically a filmed lecture by futurist and economic guru Jeremy Rifkin talking for 70 minutes to a captive Brooklyn audience of mostly millennials before taking a few softball questions. Rifkin, an adviser to the EU and China, may be preaching to the choir and some of his confident assertions are debatable. Still, the argument drawn from his eponymous book merits consideration. As described by the filmmakers, its central thesis is "that the emergence of the digital Communications Internet, the Renewable Energy Internet, and the Mobility Internet, riding atop an Internet of Things platform, will dramatically increase productivity, create vast new business opportunities, employ millions of workers, reduce ecological footprint and revolutionize how we live, work and consume in the context of climate change, and the exhaustion of natural resources, and sluggish economic and jobless growth."

Saving the best for last, a different kind of optimism about sustainable alternatives is presented in a much more cinematically engaging way in the French film *Demain* (<https://www.demain-lefilm.com/en/film>) also based on an eponymous book, which was awarded the 2016 best document-

tary "César" (France's equivalent of the Oscar). Directed by Cyril Dion and Melanie Laurent, the English version *Tomorrow* was released in the U.S. this spring.

There is mounting evidence of threats to the planet's life-support systems and human civilization — from climate change, an accelerating rate of extinctions, and population growth leading to scarcities, migrations and conflicts. But the activist filmmaker collective behind *Tomorrow* didn't want to make yet another movie sounding the alarm. Instead, convinced that "everywhere in the world solutions exist," they embarked on a global search for transformational stories of people creating sustainable alternatives.

The first chapter explores possibilities in agriculture. In Detroit, industrial wasteland has been converted into organic community gardens. In the U.K. they find an "incredible edible" program at the local community level. Without romanticizing this, urban agriculture and productive micro-farms can provide a small-scale alternative to an industrial agriculture of monocultures highly dependent on harmful chemicals and fossil fuels.

A next chapter on energy shows the possibilities of renewables (hydro, solar, wind, biomass, geothermal) as cost effective, reducing consumption while increasing efficiency. It's not just hypothetical. The city of Copenhagen plans to be 100 per cent energy self-sufficient and carbon-neutral by 2025. There are health and social benefits to living better and more sustainably at less cost.

Chapter 3 on "economy" looks at some promising examples. In San Francisco organic waste is being diverted from landfills to be sold as compost to area farmers. A successful factory in Normandy produces its own energy and operates on a 100 per cent sustainability basis. Towns in the U.K. have created their own local currencies to support local enterprise. These are forms of economic activity that promote efficiency and build community.

Unity event important for Ukrainian Catholic youth

Both Lungs



Brent Kostyniuk

Recently Both Lungs focused on the Risen Christ, then speculated on what heaven would be like. Of course it was mere speculation as the question of the nature of heaven is beyond our understanding. However, sometimes we are given an answer when we are not looking. My six-year-old granddaughter Charlotte attends Bozhi Dity — God’s Children — during divine liturgy. On the Sunday following Ascension the children were asked to draw a picture of what they thought heaven would be like. What would Charlotte choose to draw? God, trees, butterflies, maybe angels? Her picture was a portrait. “Is this God?” “No, it’s Christopher.” She had coloured a picture of the older brother she never knew who died tragically before she was born.

Most Catholics will be well aware of World Youth Day (WYD), a gathering of young people, which takes place in a different country every three years. A much more accessible event, Unity, is sponsored annually by the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada. This year, Unity will take place from Aug. 17 to 20 at St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster, Sask.

Sarah Buchko, Youth and Young Adult Minister for the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, explains the significance of Unity 2017 for Ukrainian Catholic young people. “Unity is not only a reunion gathering for young adults who may have attended WYD, it brings people together who were unable to go to WYD due to financial circumstances, work, school or just the inability to get the time off. Unity is a more affordable and shorter time period for Ukrainian Catholic young adults to get together in Canada.

It does much the same thing as WYD — it fosters spiritual growth in young adults. It not only does this, but it empowers young adults to discover their true purpose.” That ideal is reflected in Unity’s theme this year — Focus on Faith, Beyond the Horizon.

Typically, Unity lasts four days and features presentations by noted Christian speakers, as well

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.

Global change is possible

Continued from page 9

They do not depend on a system of endless growth, accumulation and resource depletion.

Citizens taking back control is a further theme addressed in chapter 4 on “democracy.” Iceland’s economic crisis led to a constitutional revolt and more deliberative approaches to democratic representation. In India village democracy is making a difference. Texas may be an oil state but, as communities seek cost-efficient renewables, it has more wind tur-

bines than any other state. A final chapter on “education” also points to its contribution, citing Finland’s highly trained teachers, learning centres and skills development programs.

Tomorrow, with its emphasis on grassroots community-led alternatives, offers a practical and bracingly positive challenge to the hold that destructive ideologies have on our societies. Achieving global change can seem overwhelming. But no tomorrow is possible that does not begin with small steps today.



YOUNG PEOPLE TO GATHER AT ST. PETER’S — This year’s Unity, an event sponsored annually by the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada, will take place from Aug. 17 to 20 in the tranquil prairie surroundings of St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster, Sask.

their faith, figuratively and literally as they experience the vast prairie landscape of southeastern Saskatchewan at St. Peter’s Abbey, where Rev. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB, is guestmaster. Unity 2017 will have more than a passing Both Lungs perspective for him. “I have the privilege of bi-ritual status since 2006. I am given the opportunity to serve in the Eparchy of Saskatoon. I, as a Benedictine monk priest, have been able to be witness both lungs of the church, for which I am humbled and grateful to do so. As our church breaths with both lungs, St. Peter’s Benedictine Monastery welcomes our sisters and brothers of the Eastern Rite.”

This will be the second time St. Peter’s will have hosted Unity, having done so in 2006. St. Peter’s Abbey is the oldest Benedictine monastery in Canada, having been founded in 1903. It offers first-year university courses to more than 100 students, both part time and full time, each year.

While Unity 2017 is an opportunity for Ukrainian Catholic youth to grow in their faith and to learn more about their church, its spirit can also be an incentive for each of us to seek spiritual enrichment this summer. The opportunities are endless. Instead of taking a romance novel along on vacation, pick up something enlightening at your local Christian bookstore. Wherever you travel, with a little looking, you may find someplace to worship that will take you out of your comfort zone. Perhaps a small country parish with only 10 or 20 people attending, or maybe an different Eastern-rite church — Melkite, Maronite, or Coptic. If you do, you will appreciate that the Catholic Church is truly universal. That there is unity in diversity and that breathing through Both Lungs is both possible and beneficial.

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Humble hospitable heart the way to grow community



My wife and I were married for seven years before God blessed us with children. Through those seven years, many hope-filled days were dashed with disappointment. I remember the day we found out we were going to have a child. We were spending a Christmas in my wife's family home and were able to announce the great news on the date of our sixth wedding anniversary.

Two weeks later, the baby was stillborn and our grief dug deep into our hearts.

The doctor had the most positive reaction. "This means you can get pregnant! So don't despair." A year later my wife gave birth to a healthy baby girl. Two boys followed and we felt blessed by God.

Barrenness in biblical times had a whole raft of cultural and religious stigma. One who was said to be barren was somehow shunned and must have had some suspiciously horrendous sin to hide to be so cursed. (I recall a number of nasty comments made to us when we were trying unsuccessfully to have kids. So it isn't just in times gone by, but even contemporary culture looks askew at barren couples.)

I think of the many couples I have met along my journey who desperately wanted to have a child of their own. I think of the ones who adopted children, some at great expense. I also think of the couples who went to great lengths to seek medical intervention and aid. Many were successful at this venture and many were not.

But I offer you another category of person. Not having been blessed with a gift to reproduce, these individuals find new ways to connect themselves with community. They volunteer their time and talents generously. They may even play a significant role as aunt or uncle to nieces and nephews. Or, in their older years, they may be like a wise and loving grandma or grandpa to others who have missed the opportunity to connect with their biological relatives. They look for ways to supplement the needs of growing children in their extended family and they are generous in offering their love and support.

There's a story told of a seniors home in Chicago in the 1970s. The elderly there had adopted "grandchildren" from a local orphanage. When a huge winter storm hit Chicago, it was so bad that the staff of either home couldn't make it out to work that day. But the seniors, whose day it was to visit their grandkids, did make it out!

This is exactly what our first reading is about today. The Prophet Elisha receives such hospitality from his friends, as they give him shelter and sustenance, that he wishes to bring God's bounteous blessing on them. We remember that prophets of the day were not "popular" people. They were often calling for a conversion of heart and while the presence of a prophet meant the blessing of God, no one but disciples would hail their arrival! "They will have a child," declares Elisha. How many "barren" situations can we name in the Bible that shows God's powerful creative intervention in the lives of those who have shown hospitality to others.

That is why Jesus in today's Gospel promises all those who receive his disciples with even a cup of water will receive a reward. Abraham and Sarah understood. So did Elizabeth and Zechariah. Those who were said to be barren are with child. "For nothing is impossible with God." When visiting her cousin Elizabeth, Mary was struck with awe at the creative workings of God, which led her to proclaim: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to God's word."

St. Paul puts this blessing in even deeper terms. If we have died with Christ by the many ways we offer hospitality, kindness, openness and communal belonging, so we will live with him. Our connection to our brother Jesus is meant to be a connection in and through our commitment to community. Hospitality is the key and a humble hospitable heart is the way to grow community.

Rev. Ron Rolheiser often refers to this as developing "wider loyalties." It reminds me of the saying that "middle age" is when our broad minds and narrow waists switch places! It's true that as we grow older there can be a narrowing of our sense of belonging.

So, at a time when there are so many disconnected people, so many elderly shut away in seniors' homes, so many young people lost and alone, this is the time for the followers of Jesus to step up and be connected to those who really need us. Create new soul friends and adopt new relatives who are in need of our time, attention, affection and care.

One way to be less self-preoccupied and to have a lighter heart is to journey with someone who has heavier crosses to bear than we do. Be an uncle, be an aunt, be a grandma or grandpa. Be a sister or brother to someone impoverished in their relationships.

When you do this, Jesus will bless you with abundant fruitfulness. As John Shea puts it in one of his poems: "The Feast is ready for all who will feast with all!"

Williston gives parish missions and is a former missionary with the Redemptorists. He is also a song writer and recording artist.

Thirteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
July 2, 2017

2 Kings 4:8-12a, 14-16
Psalm 89
Romans 6:3-4, 8-11
Matthew 10:37-42

Christianity is not old and dying; it's suffering noonday fatigue



There's a popular notion that suggests it can be helpful to compare every century of Christianity's existence to one year of life. That would make Christianity 21 years old, a young 21, grown up enough to exhibit a basic maturity, but still far from a finished product. How insightful is this notion?

That's a complex question because Christianity expresses itself in communities of worship and in spiritualities that vary greatly across the world. For instance, just to speak of churches, it is difficult to speak of the Christian church in any global way. In Africa, for the most part, the churches are young, full of young life, and exploding with growth, with all the strengths and problems that come with that.

In eastern Europe the churches are still emerging from the long years of oppression under communism and are struggling now to find a new balance and new energy within an ever-intensifying secularity.

Latin American churches have given us liberation theology for a reason. There the issues of social injustice and those advocating for it in Jesus' name and those reacting against them have deeply coloured how church and spirituality are lived and understood.

In Asia, the situation is even more complex. One might talk of four separate ecclesial expressions and corresponding spiritualities in Asia: there is Buddhist Asia, Hindu Asia, Muslim Asia, and a seemingly post-Christian Asia. Churches and spiritualities express themselves quite differently in these different parts of Asia.

Finally there is still western Europe and North America, the so-called "west." Here, it would seem, Christianity doesn't radiate much in the way of either youth or vitality, but appears to be aged, grey-haired, and tired — an exhausted project.

How accurate is this as a picture of Christianity in western Europe, North America, and other highly secularized parts of the world? Are we, as churches, old, tired, grey-haired, and exhausted?

That's one view, but the picture admits of other interpretations. Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx, along with many Enlightenment figures, saw Christianity as a spent project, as a dying reality, its demise the inevitable death of childhood naiveté. But Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, looking at the same evidence, saw things in exactly the opposite way. For him, Christianity was still "in diapers," struggling still to grow in maturity, a child still learning to walk; hence its occasional stumbles.

Contemporary spiritual writer Tomas Halik, the recent winner of the prestigious Templeton Award, suggests still another picture. For Halik, Christianity in the West is undergoing a "noonday fatigue," a writer's block, a crisis of imagination. In this, he is very much in agreement with what Charles Taylor suggests in his monumental study, *A Secular Age*. For Taylor, what we are experiencing today is not so much a crisis of faith as a crisis of imagination and integration. Older Christian writers called this a "dark night of the soul," and Halik suggests it is happening to us, not at the end of the day, but at noontime.

My own sympathies are very much with Halik. Christianity, the churches, and the spiritualities in western Europe and North America aren't old and dying, a spent project. Rather, they are young, figuratively speaking only 21 years old, with still some growing up to do. But, and here is where I agree with conservative critics, growth into that maturity is not guaranteed, but is rather contingent upon us making some

clear choices and hard commitments inside a genuine faith. As any parent can tell you, there are no guarantees that a 21-year-old will grow to maturity. The opposite can also happen, and that's true too for Christianity and the churches today. There are no guarantees.

But, inside of faith and inside the choices and commitments we will have to make, it is important that we situate ourselves under the correct canopy so as to assign to ourselves the right task. We are not old and dying. We are young, with our historical afternoon still to come, even as we are presently suffering a certain "noonday fatigue." Our afternoon still lies ahead and the task of the afternoon is quite different than the task of the morning or the evening. As James Hillman puts it: "The early years must focus on getting things done, while the later years must consider what was done and how."

But the afternoon years must focus on something else, namely, the task of deepening. Both spirituality and anthropology agree that the afternoon of life is meant to be an important time within which to mature, an important time for some deeper inner work, and an important time to enter more deeply our own depth. Note that this is a task of deepening and not one of restoration.

Our noonday fatigue will not be overcome by returning to the task of the morning in hope of refreshing ourselves or by retiring passively to the evening's rocking chair. Noonday fatigue will be overcome by finding new springs of refreshment buried at deeper places inside us.



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Tracing the shape of the dark

Barefoot and Preaching

Leah Perrault



My sister had an old dead tree tattooed on her arm. She always meant to have dark clouds filled in behind it, but she didn't get the chance. I asked her why a dead tree and not a living one; she said it was because she had seen the dark and the dead and gotten through it. And now, her death has become the shape of the dark for me.

It isn't that I am a stranger to darkness. But each difficult circumstance and undesirable situation in my life invites me to get acquainted with a new corner of darkness, each with a different shape, a new texture, a strange depth. It is the wandering around in the dark I do not like. I resist the pain of loss, the fear of never seeing light again, the weight of carrying the darkness with me. And I am tracing out the

Perrault is a wife and mom, a grateful employee of Emmanuel Care, and a speaker, writer and consultant at www.leahperrault.com

shape of the darkness while I read bedtime stories and help with math homework. Wandering in the dark is exhausting.

So much pain is tied up in my resistance to the dark. I want a world where all the days are warm and sunny, where our family life is mostly peaceful and awesome, where children die after their parents, and death comes peacefully in sleep after a life lived well and long. Wind and rain, tired kids and imperfect parents, early and violent death — all of it gets in the way of my perfect plans.

I want to run away from my life in an impossible attempt to outrun the dark. As if it would be possible to escape suffering by escaping joy. In my unimaginable reality, the tears fall at the same time that my littlest giggles uncontrollably at my fake sleeping on her pillow. Hearings happen while the clouds dance across the sky and birds are singing. She isn't here and I can see her in the faces of her children.

Lying at the bottom of this unfamiliar pit of grief, I feel unanchored. The other half of my twin soul is missing, not gone but far away. Where there was always someone holding my hand, there is an empty space. When I push, she does not push back. The floor is rough and the air is dense. There are other people in the pit with me, tracing their own grief, and still others standing around the pit. The dark feels lonely, and I am not alone.

The dark is eerily quiet and deafening at the same time. It is unsettling and unpredictable. Mostly it is heavy, and I do not want to set it down any more than I want to carry it forever. My feet are itchy, and the dark is coming out of me as much as it surrounds.

I do not get to choose the dark, neither its arrival nor its shape. I wish I knew a God that prevented darkness, instead of One that enters into it. And I am shocked by the ways God has been preparing me for tracing darkness: in asking for help, in letting myself be carried, in silence, and in waiting for resurrection. I am having difficulty feeling God at all these days, and looking back over my life I can see the Spirit tracing a way through the history of my darkness. Perhaps God is in my present in a way I will only see in the future?

At Abbie's funeral, I sang Psalm 16: "You have shown me



Tracing the shape of the dark

the path of life, and lead me to joy forever." It was a prayer for the future, rather than one felt fully in the present. I was so angry with God, so stunned by Divine silence, that I had difficulty saying the words to God. But I found cracks of light in praying them with her as a start. She has shown me and continues to remind me that the path of life goes through darkness and through death.

Abbie had death tattooed on her arm and her laughter and joy in living was a constant rebellion against its power. Her life and her death contained more difficulty than we imagined. Still she walked, tracing her way through the darkness, into a beautiful life. Her shape remains in the dark. Help me to trace you in the dark, that I might find you living with me still.

Reality is fundamentally relational

Outlooks from the Inner Life

Cedric Speyer



"Two men looked out from prison bars: One saw mud, the other saw stars." — Dale Carnegie

"The quantum law says that all potentials exist simultaneously. . . . In the quantum model, the physical universe is an immaterial, interconnected, unified field of information, potentially everything but physical-ly no thing. The quantum universe is just waiting for a conscious observer (you or me) to come along and influence energy in the form of potential matter by using the mind and consciousness (which are themselves energy) to make waves of energetic probabilities coalesce into physical matter." — Joe Dispenza

We have all had the experience of feeling like a different person in the presence of different people. We say that a teacher, coach or mentor "brings out the best in me" and conversely with someone else we can find ourselves uncomfortable to the point of "not feeling like myself." Who knew there was a science behind all

this? It's called the "observer effect" and in quantum physics it simply refers to changes the act of observation makes on what is being observed.

Nothing is that simple in physics, yet it's like checking the tire pressure on your car. It can't be done without letting out some of the air and thereby changing the pressure, albeit negligibly. More mysteriously, it's impossible to see anything without light hitting the object. Although we wouldn't think of it as a change, the object is affected in the way it emits the reflected light in the moment of perception. Pause for a moment here and ponder what we call the light of Christ. There's a desert scene in the movie *Ben Hur* where this is illustrated, as a Roman soldier raising his whip suddenly cowers when Jesus looks at him.

As it turns out, the study of

sub-atomic particles and waves has enormous implications for human relations: parenting, teaching, friendship, marriage, psychotherapy and spiritual direction. Research has shown that children tend to fulfil adult expectations of them for better or for worse, with other factors such as intelligence and aptitude being equal.

I have had my own experience of the "observer effect" on both sides of the coin. Under the steady, unwavering, affirming gaze of my mentor and spiritual director, Tom Francoeur (see <http://www.guidelives.ca/>), I grew into awareness of my true personhood and vocation beyond my own self-doubt. Tom became the godfather of the spiritual psychology we call InnerView. I first practised it when I worked in psychiatry and made the same discovery. Patients who were used to being seen through the filter of mental illness responded well to the human touch of straightforward and honest fellowship. It's as if I would say to them, "OK, you're in this 'condition' and I'm in mine. So here we are. What now?"

Quantum physics confirms that reality is fundamentally relational, like the trinity. It's the space in-between particles and planets and persons that matters! When the encounter in that left-open space is reverent, it's like a hologram of wholeness in which each part reflects the complete picture of its potential. Now we see through a glass darkly, with wide gaps between inner soul knowledge and outer social personas. But then we shall see face-to-face when God's light has transfigured us; when we become who we are, loved into being.

HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE

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Joe Gunn



This month also marked the

The “Blue Communities” project reports that in 2010 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution recognizing



Design Pics

Canadians, especially in a spring season where flooding has affected several communities, may think that the protection of water sources is not a serious issue. But when President Donald Trump has moved to cut 97 per cent of funding to projects that protect the Great Lakes, and when the previous federal government gutted the Fisheries Act, the Navigable Waters Protection Act and the entire Environmental Assessment Act, we have little time to make up for these serious reversals. And when bottled water illustrates how we can make this previously accessible-to-all resource a commodity,

Water is many things: a sacred element, a human right — or perhaps even more profoundly considered — a gift from God, intrinsically valuable in itself. It should also be seen by authentic believers as an entry point toward many justice concerns: wetland preservation, healthy living, opposition to destructive mining practices and extractive industries that destroy essential aquifers, respect for indigenous livelihoods and traditional knowledge, and more. Above all, I find inspiration in Francis' poetic reference to water in *Laudato Si'*, describing it as “a caress of God.” If we fully took this to heart, our actions to respect and protect water would change immediately and profoundly.

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Walley will officially receive the Exner Award during the CCRL's annual Spring Dinner on June 19 in Toronto.

When the pope gets tough

June 29 is the traditional date when newly appointed archbishops meet in Rome to celebrate mass with Pope Francis and receive their signature pallium on the feast day of Sts. Peter and Paul.

In addition, this year five new cardinals will join them after they are created cardinals by Pope Francis at their June 28 consistory.

Pope Francis comes from an experience of pastoral ministry rather than from academia, the background of recent popes. This has helped him create a new model of leadership in church circles.

As a pastor Pope Francis is a people-person, reaching out to those on the peripheries of church and society. This has created tensions among some church groups. He has been labelled as too soft and compassionate by emphasizing the mercy of Jesus within the limits of church law and morality.

As a pastor, he has also been called upon to keep order “in the house.” His experience as a young Jesuit provincial in Argentina taught him that sometimes tough decisions have to be made for the common good.

One example is his current move to reform the Roman curia. His international council of cardinals is tackling some issues that have festered for decades and that his predecessors weren’t able to

address adequately. The council met last week for the 20th time.

More recently, Pope Francis has shown that the common good of the church also requires some strong actions.

As reported in last week’s Prairie Messenger, the pope told priests from the Diocese of Ahiara in Nigeria to shape up. The priests have refused to accept the 2012 appointment by Pope Benedict XVI of a bishop from a different tribe.

The pope ordered each priest to apologize to him in writing, pledge their “total obedience” to the papacy and accept whomever he appoints to lead the diocese. The deadline is 30 days.

“As papal disciplining goes, it doesn’t get much tougher,” notes Vatican commentator Christopher Lamb. “The pope was furious clan differences were being put before the church’s unity and mission,” he added. “If there is one thing Francis really dislikes, it’s the church being used for political, sectarian or tribal agendas.”

Another tough move Pope Francis made was his involvement with the Knights of Malta. When their leader, Matthew Festing, was accused of improperly dismissing a senior aide over a delicate issue of working with organizations distributing condoms to the poor, Pope Francis announced an investigation into the matter. It didn’t help that Cardinal Raymond Burke, a vocal critic of Pope Francis, is the Vatican liaison with the order. In the end,

Festing resigned and a new leader has since been chosen.

Another policy, seen as a clampdown by commentators, is a recent letter asking cardinals living in Rome to inform the pope when they are out of town and where they are going.

The letter was written by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals. It says that the policy revives “a noble tradition” of informing the papacy and the Vatican of their movements, especially if they are gone for a long time.

Lamb suggests a motive for the policy: “It shows the pope wants accountability from those who are his closest advisers. It is also tactically savvy, as it ensures the pope knows if a cardinal is about to deliver a major talk or address that might be critical of his papacy.”

Pope Francis has also come out strongly against sexual abuse of children. At their recent meeting in Indianapolis, the U.S. bishops celebrated a liturgy the last evening in response to a call from Pope Francis to episcopal conferences around the world to observe a “Day of Prayer and Penance” for survivors of sexual abuse within the church.

The Scriptures often link mercy with justice. Sometimes justice requires a firm hand. And justice is better served when a leader listens to good advisers. — PWN

The problem with kindness is that it is no longer ‘a public virtue’

By Donna Thomson, Montreal

In 2004, the effects of our son’s disabilities spiralled into serious illness and constant pain. As a caregiver and mother, I was raw and vulnerable — it was the worst of times. I remember saying to doctors and family members, “I need you to be kind to me. I really need that.”

The problem with kindness is that it is no longer a public virtue. We assume that it will be there when we suffer and need it the most, but will it?

Today, kindness is endangered by the race toward independence

and self-reliance, those old enemies of illness, babies, disability and aging. It has become synonymous with weakness in a culture that values the self over others. Reading about what constitutes winning in business, it’s easy to conclude that kindness is for losers.

Against that cultural background, it’s no wonder that natural care is not valued in our society. Caregivers are daily practitioners of kindness. We know how to comfort without calling attention to frailty. We’ve memorized recipes for favourite soups and casseroles. We reminisce, even when the dishes need clearing up or work deadlines loom. All these acts of caring kindness take time and their reward isn’t money — it’s love and satisfaction.

But we caregivers need kindness shown to us, too, to nurture and sustain us in our caring roles.

Kindness isn’t only about com-

fort and joy. Science has shown that it has real, healing benefits. Caregivers know this both from intuition and experience.

The Centre for Compassionate and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University has revealed a growing body of evi-

dence showing that kindness exhibited by health care professionals can lead to patients experiencing faster healing of wounds and reduced pain, anxiety and blood pressure, leading to shorter hospital stays.

A 2011 study showed that

when physicians sat by patients’ bedsides, those patients reported a greater sense of being cared for than when physicians stood. Simply sitting was interpreted as compassionate listening. Patients

— KINDNESS, page 15

Euthanasia lurks in dark corners of history

By Catherine Frazee, Ottawa

History has a role in the national conversation about medically assisted death, despite protests to the contrary.

A respected physician and scholar recently stepped down as

Frazee is an Officer of the Order of Canada and professor emerita at Ryerson University, School of Disability Studies. www.troymedia.com

chair of the expert working group appointed to study the issue of advanced directives for medically assisted death.

Named to this position only two weeks earlier by the Council of Canadian Academies, Dr. Harvey Schipper was judged harshly in some circles for having authored a commentary in 2014 in which, according to some reports, he had “compared arguments used to justify assisted dying with those advanced by Nazi Germany to justify the Holocaust.”

Schipper was repeatedly characterized as “a strident opponent of assisted dying” for reasons having nothing to do with the tone or substance of his argument. What seemed to cause offence and give rise to a condemnation of “strident” opposition was Schipper’s reference to Nazi-era euthanasia.

None of Schipper’s critics disputed the facts upon which his reference was made, nor should they. As historians have chronicled, the Nazi euthanasia program originated when a father in Leipzig petitioned to end the life of his disabled daughter and Adolf Hitler dispatched his personal physician, Karl Brandt, to authorize her death as “an act of mercy.”

According to historian Hugh Gallagher, “as the story of the little Leipzig girl became known in medical circles, other families sent similar appeals to the Führer.” It fell to Brandt to make determinations on each of these requests and ultimately to authorize the killing of at least 70,000 people with disabilities pursuant to what the

American Holocaust Museum describes as “a medically administered program of ‘mercy death.’”

Schipper’s recusal as working group chair will no doubt be applauded by advocates who seek to broaden the availability of assisted death in Canada. Others, like myself, who know Schipper to be a man of considerable wisdom and integrity, are saddened that the 43-member panel — which includes expert advocates on both sides of this debate — failed to seize the opportunity to rise above the clamour and reject any suggestion that politics, rather than evidence, would govern their work.

Had they spoken out together, and forcefully, in defence of their colleague, the outcome might have been different.

This is not the first time that a measured and accurate reference to the historical facts of the Nazi euthanasia program has been condemned as strident, distasteful or offensive. It should be the last.

Nothing about medically assisted death is ahistorical. As we review current law and practice, and consider potential expansion to the Criminal Code exemptions that now permit Canadian doctors and nurse practitioners to end the lives of certain patients, surely we have the maturity to invite history into the conversation.

Doctors, at times, have killed. This is fact. Often, when they have killed or harmed, they have not acted alone but as agents of state authority. With all of their

— PEOPLE, page 15



CNS/Neil Hall, Reuters

LONDON FIRE DISASTER — People look through clothes and other supplies June 15 near a London apartment building destroyed in a fire the previous day. Catholic leaders in London offered prayers for victims of a fire in the 24-storey apartment building.

Invest Canadian money in peace projects rather than war

The Editor: I find it somewhat disturbing to read and hear that there is more discussion and concern about how much money Canadians should be investing in military matters, while at the same time it seems that at least some of our political leaders do not have any ideas or proposals of why Canadians should not be investing in having Canada establish a Department of Peace. This would be an organization that Canadians could take pride in supporting.

Is there really a foreseeable danger of Canada being attacked by an outside military force? If so, then Canadians should be made aware of who these invaders might be. Is it the Chinese or the Russians or some other country, or possibly a secret terrorist force within Canada? It seems quite obvious that the people who invest in the manufacture and sale of weapons of war do not do so for their own entertainment. They do so by trying to make Canadians and our

political leaders believe that they need a substantial military force to protect themselves against any force that we may consider as an enemy. The word “enemy” is far too harsh a word to describe those people or a country or an organization with whom we may have disagreements. It costs far less to settle disagreements through negotiations rather than trying to settle differences through military force. — **Leo Kurtenbach, Saskatoon**

Voting pro-life covers a multitude of political issues

The Editor: Father Rolheiser is correct when he says that those

A sad decision

The Editor: I read Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers article (PM, May 31) with great concern. Can she really leave God’s live presence in the eucharist? I’m deeply sad to hear about the decision to close the Prairie Messenger. The Messenger is a great quality source of information. Where can I find a comparable source of Catholic News? A loyal subscriber. — **R.M. Godard, St. Claude, Man.**

who are pro-life must be consistent in all areas of morality. However, although he was likely inspired to write this article (PM, June 14) through his American experience where abortion issues are foremost for most Christians, he ignored the elephant in the room. Can one be pro-life if one votes for a person or party that supports the continued killing of innocent people . . . namely, unborn children? Can one justify support for political persons and parties who support the killing of innocent people for the enhancement of social programs that may

end poverty? I think not. If one can vote to kill the unborn to end poverty, then one should be able to vote to kill old people to save government-run health care . . . or vote to kill poor people to end poverty. To be consistently pro-life, a person should support a wide range of issues, but one can never be pro-life if they cast their vote for someone or some party that supports the killing of innocent people. I would like to know how Rolheiser votes. — **Tom Schuck, Weyburn, Sask.**

Promote respect for dignity of everyone

Continued from page 1

Mafia association” at an international and doctrinal level. “We want to assert that we can never trample, deny or hinder the dignity of people. So, it is up to us with this dicastery to know how to protect and promote respect for the dignity of the person,” Turkson said in the statement.

ence,” he said. To fight this, Pope Francis said the church must listen and console those who are suffering and should do so “assiduously seeking the way to improve itself.” All men and women in the church, he added, can accompany each other and those oppressed by

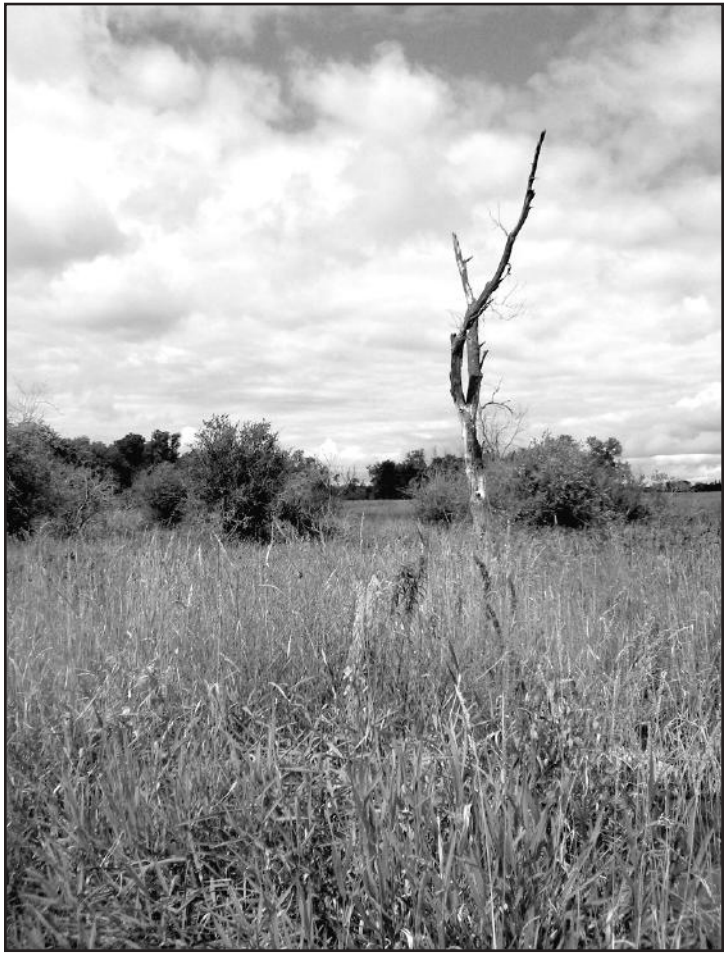
the consequences of organized crime and social degradation while fighting against this “cancer that consumes our lives.” “We — Christians and non-Christians — are snowflakes, but if we unite, we can become an avalanche, a strong and constructive movement,” the pope said.

People with disabilities have suffered harm from doctors

Continued from page 14

immense skill and influence, doctors have played indispensable roles in residential schools and asylums in Canada, comfort stations in Southeast Asia, enhanced interrogation facilities at Guantánamo Bay and extermination centres in Nazi Germany. People with disabilities have suffered violence and harm at the hands of doctors, parents and caregivers. Sometimes, as with Satoshi Uematsu in Sagami-hara, Japan, the world has instantly recoiled in horror. Sometimes, as with parent Robert Latimer in Saskatchewan, a court of law may ultimately uphold conviction, but not before public opinion solidifies in support of the perpetrator. Sometimes, as with Brandt, a nation colludes. The Nazi Aktion T4 euthanasia program is part of my history as a disabled person. Importantly, it’s

also part of Schipper’s history as a physician. Those who would forbid us to speak of this history, or police our speech as strident and unwelcome, can only fuel doubt about whether its lessons have been learned. If our federal government is to benefit from the comprehensive reviews it assigned to the Council of Canadian Academies, and if the council’s working groups are to gather the evidence Canadians require to guide policy decisions about providing medically assisted death to mature minors, to people with mental illness and to people no longer capable of expressing consent, then the history of euthanasia, and questions arising from the darkest corners of that history, must not be out of bounds. As Margaret MacMillan, the distinguished Canadian historian, has said, “We don’t always know best and the past can remind us of that.”



Eva Krawchuk

Rooted In Courage

holding on
though drought stricken
frost bitten
old, infirm
forgotten
standing tall against hardship
strength in its roots.

By Eva Krawchuk

Kindness has evolved into ‘soft enemy of science’

Continued from page 14

whose doctors sat beside them recalled the physicians staying longer, even though in the study, doctors standing spent equal time by the bedside. When the neurologist sat beside me to explain that our son had epilepsy, she saw my tears. I remember she pressed a tissue into my hand and when I looked up, our eyes met. “You will all be all right,” she said. I believed her. And yet in medicine, kindness has evolved into the soft enemy of science. Good clinical care often has no place for long conversations or tears and hugs. Health care professionals may be wary of kindness, as though there are risks attached to it — as though it is a kind of temptation — which indeed it is, because kindness gives us pleasure. Yet it’s our guilty pleasure, largely because we fear that it might sabotage our self-image of toughness, the core ingredient of success. But once we decide to be kind, we become porous enough to be less isolated. We find ourselves experiencing belonging. This

magical transaction is what caregivers, paid or unpaid, have to teach the rest of society. It’s as if the act of caring with love, in the presence of suffering, is a rite of passage and an important developmental achievement. In short, only an adult who has learned to bear frustration is capable of putting the needs of someone else before their own. We all need kindness badly and we must discover the language to support it at home, work, hospital or wider community. Kindness needs to be taught, modelled, supported and championed as a primary virtue. Hospitals should have kindness standards and compliance requirements as they do for proper hand washing. No one is immune from the positive effects of compassion and those who have allowed vulnerability to inform their confidence know that personal strength is their prize. Caregivers in our society are the wise elders who enact the virtues of maturity, character, compassion and kindness every day. We are the purveyors of kindness but we need it shown to us, too.

U.S. bishops mark religious liberty as top priority

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) — Reflecting their concern that religious liberty at home and abroad remains a top priority, the U.S. bishops during their spring general assembly in Indianapolis voted to make permanent their Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

Voting 132 - 53 with five abstentions June 15, the second day of the assembly, the bishops' action came less than a week before the start of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' fifth annual Fortnight for Freedom

June 21 - July 4. The observance is a two-week period of prayer, advocacy and education on religious freedom.

The bishops also reiterated that their efforts are focused on "ensuring the fundamental right of medical care" for all people as the U.S. Senate worked in mid-June on a plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act after the U.S. House of Representatives had passed its own measure, the American Health Care Act.

The chair of the National

Review Board, which works to respond to and prevent sexual abuse by clergy and other church personnel, updated the bishops June 14 on the board's work and presented key points of the recently issued 14th annual report on diocesan compliance with the U.S. Catholic Church's "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."

In a related event, the bishops celebrated a liturgy the last evening in response to a call from Pope Francis to episcopal conferences around the world to observe a "Day of Prayer and Penance" for survivors of sexual abuse within the church.

The bishops also heard reports from the chair of the Committee on International Justice and Peace about international persecution and human rights violations; final plans for the July 1 - 4 "Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America" in Orlando, Florida; and the progress of a working group on migrants and refugees.

Before the vote on making the Committee on Religious Liberty permanent, Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, committee chair, said the need for the body stretches beyond the specific legal and public policy issues challenging religious freedom that continue to emerge.

Lori expressed hope that the committee's work would help "plant the seeds of a movement for religious freedom, which will take years of watering and weeding in order for it to grow, to

grow strong and to bear fruit."

Worldwide, Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, New Mexico, international policy committee chair, said in a June 15 report that religious persecution "includes both social hostilities and government restrictions."

"It finds expression in physical assaults, arrests and detentions, desecration of holy sites, and in discrimination against religious groups in employment, education, housing, the selection of a marriage partner and whether you are considered a citizen."

The USCCB reinforced its stand that the American Health Care Act passed by the House of Representatives May 4 needs major reform — to provide quality health care for the "voiceless," especially children, the elderly, the poor, immigrants and the seriously ill.

"We find ourselves in a time marked by a deep sense of urgency and gravity," said Bishop George L. Thomas of Helena, Montana, in remarks to the assembly. "Within two weeks, we may see a federal budgetary action with potentially catastrophic effects on the lives of our people, most especially children and the elderly, the

seriously ill, the immigrant and our nation's working poor."

Referring to the House bill and its plan to "eliminate \$880 billion from Medicaid over the next decade," Thomas said, "If left unchallenged or unmodified, this budget will destabilize our own Catholic health care apostolates, take food from the mouths of school-aged children and the homebound, and deny already scarce medical resources to the nation's neediest in every state across the land."

The bishops were reminded June 15 that the historic Convocation of Catholic Leaders was nearing by Bishop Richard J. Malone of Buffalo, New York, chair of the bishops' Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth. He noted that it will be the largest gathering sponsored by U.S. bishops and will be a time to show the unity of the church.

The convocation, an invitation-only event, is meant to give the 3,000 participants expected to attend a better understanding of what it means to be missionary disciples in today's world through workshop presentations, keynote addresses and prayer.



CNS/Gregory A. Shemitz

FRANCISCANS CELEBRATE — Rev. Charles Benoit, a member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, offers cookies to guests during a block party June 13 at St. Crispin Friary in the Bronx borough of New York. The friars were celebrating receiving Vatican recognition as a religious institute of pontifical right. Founded in 1987 in the Archdiocese of New York, the community has 125 members ministering to the poor in the U.S., Honduras, Nicaragua, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Pro-life groups question Anglican moralist

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Pontifical Academy for Life is and always will be against abortion and is committed to involving increasing numbers of people in the defence of human life, said Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, academy president.

In an interview posted June 17 on the Vatican Insider website, Paglia defended the nomination of Nigel Biggar, an Anglican professor of moral theology, as a member of the academy.

Tweeting about the interview, which was in Italian, Paglia wrote, "Translation: 'Our NO to abortion is a total NO!'"

Several newspapers and pro-life organizations, including the American Life League, questioned the appointment of Biggar, citing a 2011 interview and debate he was part of with a philosopher who is strongly pro-abortion.

The interview-debate between Biggar and Peter Singer was printed in the online edition of the British Standpoint magazine. Critics focused on Biggar's statement in the piece that he "would be inclined to draw the line for abortion at 18 weeks after conception, which is roughly about the earliest time when there is

some evidence of brain activity, and therefore of consciousness."

The larger point of his argument, though, was to argue against Singer's greater openness to abortion and even infanticide in circumstances where a baby is severely ill or disabled.

"Peter's view is that human life is only valuable if it exhibits certain qualities, and an infant before birth doesn't have these qualities, so we can abort it — and an infant after birth doesn't have these qualities either, so we may kill it," Biggar said. "My view is that we should draw the line much more conservatively. This is simply because the killing of any human being is a morally hazardous business, even if it is permitted at an early fetal stage. It isn't something that we should do casually and wantonly, and I suspect that Peter would agree with that."

Biggar said his position that abortion should not be permitted after 18 weeks of pregnancy was to support "maintaining a strong social commitment to preserving human life in hindered forms, and in terms of not becoming too casual about killing human life."

In the interview with Vatican Insider, Paglia said he had not known previously about the interview, but he later spoke to Biggar

about it. The focus of the Anglican theologian's work is on opposing euthanasia, the archbishop said, and he has never written or published anything about abortion "and he does not intend to enter into debates on this theme in the future."

The idea of abortion possibly being acceptable up to 18 weeks of gestation "certainly is not my personal position and even less the position of the academy," Paglia said.

"We are at the service and defence of life from the first moment of conception to the last breath," he said. "Nothing and no one will ever change this orientation. If anything, we will go anywhere to convince as many people as possible."

The mix of people among the new members, he said, was designed to bring together expertise in a variety of life-related fields, and the working of the academy should demonstrate the church's desire to face issues together "patiently gaining the maximum consensus possible."

In an effort to broaden the membership of the academy, he said, Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury was asked to suggest an Anglican theologian for membership, and Biggar was the person he proposed.

Biggar is the author of the 2004 book *Aiming to kill: The Ethics of Suicide and Euthanasia*, which reviewed arguments for and against suicide and euthanasia and explored the theological basis for asserting the sacredness of human life.



CNS/Catholic Relief Services

EARTHQUAKE DAMAGES CATHEDRAL — Cracks in the dome inside the cathedral in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, are seen after an earthquake June 14.

Pope, cardinal advisers study a 'healthy decentralization'

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis and members of his international Council of Cardinals discussed the possibility of allowing local bishops rather than the Vatican decide on certain matters, including the marriage or priestly ordination of permanent deacons.

It is "what the pope calls a 'healthy decentralization,'" said Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office.

Briefing journalists on the council's June 12 - 14 meeting, Burke said the cardinals and pope looked specifically at the possibility of allowing bishops to determine whether a permanent deacon who is widowed can remarry or whether a permanent deacon who is unmarried or widowed can be ordained to the priesthood without having to "wait for a decision to be made in Rome" as is the current rule.

Such decisions regarding per-

manent deacons now are handled at the Vatican Congregation for Clergy, but could pass to the local bishops' conference, Burke told journalists June 14.

The council of cardinals advising the pope on church governance also discussed proposals to broaden the participation of laypeople and members of religious orders in the selection of new bishops.

"It is something that already exists, but they want to do it in a more systematic, more extensive way," Burke said.

As Pope Francis and his international body of cardinal advisers continues looking at a reorganization of the Roman Curia, the June meeting also included a discussion of the proposed new descriptions of the work of the offices dealing with the evangelization of peoples, Eastern churches, inter-religious dialogue and legislative texts.

The Council of Cardinals will meet again Sept. 11 - 13.

The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark.

— Michelangelo