



## Overseas mining

Bishops and mining companies are at odds regarding Latin American mining practices. Meanwhile, casualties continue to add up.  
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## Catholic culture

Liturgy offers an answer to the relativism, skepticism and cynicism that plague society, said Rev. Geoffrey Young at a recent Rebuilding Catholic Culture event in Saskatoon.



— page 7

## War and terror

In a few days it will be 16 years since the world-changing events of 9/11. The terrible toll from the subsequent succession of new wars and terrors has certainly not made us more secure. Indeed it has done the opposite, writes Gerald Schmitz.  
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## Soul food

“The soul keeps us grounded in the truth of situations, whether easy or hard to bear,” writes Cedric Speyer. “The soul cultivates inner peace when there are reasons to be frustrated, upset, or offended.”  
— page 11

## Statues and racism

Even though Sir John A. Macdonald was a racist, does that mean his statues should be removed? Dennis Gruending suggests trading cautiously.  
— page 12



## Pope Francis and traditionalists

It's not every day that Pope Francis chooses to invoke the full weight of his office. But when it comes to the furious internal rows over Catholic worship, he's decided that enough is enough.  
— page 14

# Church reaches out to aid asylum seekers

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — As waves of asylum seekers continue to cross illegally into Canada from Donald Trump's America, Catholic dioceses in Quebec and eastern Ontario are mobilizing to provide the border crossers with food, shelter and pastoral support.

“It's a gesture of solidarity towards brothers and sisters,” said Bishop Alain Faubert, auxiliary bishop of Montreal.

An estimated 7,000 men, women and children, primarily Haitians, have entered Canada over the summer since the U.S. president ended a program offering temporary asylum to Haitians displaced by that nation's 2010 earthquake.

About half the asylum seekers that have crossed into Canada have ended up in Montreal after being processed. Whether or not they remain in Canada will be determined in coming months at immigration hearings.

The Quebec government has been using Montreal's Olympic Stadium as one site to temporarily house people. The province is dealing with long lines of asylum seekers seeking financial assistance, as Montreal's French-speaking Haitian Catholic community of approximately 140,000 people raises money, collects fur-



CCN/D. Gyapong

**TENT CITY — Deacon Pierre Aube of the Alexandria-Cornwall diocese has been put in charge of pastoral outreach to the asylum seekers who will be staying at a tent city there for initial processing.**

niture and helps the newcomers find lodging.

Faubert said the church is staying silent on politics, but he is aware of “what the government is doing and not doing.”

“We see people who need our help,” Faubert said. “We can't stay with our arms crossed.”

That help includes providing lodging, clothing and pastoral support, but also pencils and notebooks for school, he said. “This is

Christ knocking on our door.”

To process the asylum seekers, the Canadian military has erected tent cities in Lacolle, Que., on the New York border, and at a government-owned conference facility in Cornwall, Ont., about 110 km west of downtown Montreal.

More than 50 tents began springing up in the third week of August outside the Nav Centre in Cornwall, where the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

will hold its annual plenary Sept. 25 - 29. The tents are not yet occupied but some Haitians are being accommodated inside the conference centre itself alongside guests attending various conferences.

Archbishop Terrence Prendergast of Ottawa, currently the apostolic administrator of the Alexandria-Cornwall diocese, said he has visited the facility.

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# Pope and patriarch mark World Day of Prayer for Creation

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Environmental destruction is a sign of a “morally decaying scenario” in which too many people ignore or deny that, from the beginning, “God intended humanity to co-operate in the preservation and protection of the natural environment,” said the leaders of the Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Marking the Sept. 1 World Day of Prayer for Creation, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople issued a joint message.

They urged government and business leaders “to respond to the plea of millions and support the consensus of the world for the healing of our wounded creation.”

Looking at the description of the Garden of Eden from the Book of Genesis, the pope and patriarch said, “The earth was entrusted to us as a sublime gift and legacy.”

But, they said, “our propensity to interrupt the world's delicate and balanced ecosystems, our insatiable desire to manipulate and control the planet's limited resources, and our greed for limitless profit in markets — all these have alienated us from the original purpose of creation.”

“We no longer respect nature

as a shared gift; instead, we regard it as a private possession,”

the two leaders said. “We no longer associate with nature in

order to sustain it; instead, we lord over it to support our own constructs.”

Ignoring God's plan for creation has “tragic and lasting” consequences on both “the human environment and the natural environment,” they wrote. “Our human dignity and welfare are deeply connected to our care for the whole of creation.”

The pope and the patriarch said prayer is not incidental to ecology, because “an objective of our prayer is to change the way we perceive the world in order to change the way we relate to the world.”

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople established the World Day of Prayer for Creation in 1989. In 2015, shortly after publishing his encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis established the day of prayer for Catholics as well.

The object of Christian prayer and action for the safeguarding of creation, the two leaders wrote, is to encourage all Christians “to be courageous in embracing greater simplicity and solidarity in our lives.”

Echoing remarks Pope Francis made Aug. 30 when the pontiff announced he and the patriarch

— HEAR CRIES, page 15



CNS/Paul Haring

**CARE OF CREATION DAY — Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople urged people to be respectful and responsible toward creation while being aware of how disrupted ecosystems impact the poor. They released a message to mark the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Sept. 1. Here they embraced at an ecumenical prayer service in 2016.**



# God wants people to dream big, not listen to cynics

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — God wants people to live with hope and joy — not bitterness — and to dream with him of a better world, Pope Francis said.

“Please, make sure we do not pay attention to disappointed and unhappy people; let us not listen to those who cynically plead not to cultivate hope in life,” he said

Aug. 30 during his weekly general audience.

People must ignore those who try to crush enthusiasm and smother “youthful euphoria,” he said. Instead, Christians must cultivate a “healthy utopia” based on what God wants for the world.

“God wants us to be able to dream like he does and, with him as we journey, to be quite attentive to reality — dreaming of a

different world,” he said.

Continuing his series of audience talks on Christian hope, the pope reflected on a reading from the Gospel of St. John (1:35 - 43), which describes how the first disciples heard of Jesus and wished to follow him.

Jesus asked the first two men, “What are you looking for?” because he sensed a healthy restlessness in their young hearts,

Pope Francis said.

In fact, the pope said, young people who are not seeking something or looking for meaning in life “are not young, they have gone into retirement, they have aged before their time. It’s sad to see young people in retirement.”

Throughout the Gospels, he said, Jesus responds to the people he meets along the way; he is like an “arsonist,” the pope said, setting people’s hearts ablaze.

The intense joy Jesus ignites in those he encounters is the well-spring of every vocation, the pope said, whether it be marriage, consecrated life or the priesthood.

In that first encounter, Jesus “gives us new joy and hope and leads us — even through trials and difficulties — to an ever fuller encounter with him and

fullness of joy.”

Jesus doesn’t want people who walk reluctantly behind him, the pope said. “Jesus wants people who have experienced that being with him gives immense joy that can be renewed each day in life.”

Any disciple who does not carry joy in his or her heart “does not evangelize in this world.”

People do not become preachers of God’s word by “sharpening the weapons of rhetoric,” the pope said. “You can talk and talk and talk,” but it will not make a difference if that bright light of joy is missing from one’s eyes.

At the end of the general audience, the pope met with three soccer players, who survived a devastating airplane crash in 2016 that killed all of their teammates.

## Traditional marriage is ‘nature of things’

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — By virtue of its very definition, marriage can only be between a man and a woman, Pope Francis said in a new book-length interview.

“We cannot change it. This is the nature of things,” not just in the church, but in human history, he said in a series of interviews with Dominique Wolton, a 70-year-old French sociologist and expert in media and political communication.

Published in French, the 417-page book, *Politique et Societe* (“Politics and Society”) was to be released Sept. 6. Catholic News Service obtained an advance copy, and excerpts appeared online.

When it comes to the true nature of marriage as well as gender, there is “critical confusion at the moment,” the pope said.

When asked about marriage for same-sex couples, the pope said, “Let’s call this ‘civil unions.’ We do not joke around

with truth.”

Teaching children that they can choose their gender, he said, also plays a part in fostering such mistakes about the truth or facts of nature.

The pope said he wondered whether these new ideas about gender and marriage were somehow based on a fear of differences, and he encouraged researchers to study the subject.

Pope Francis also said his decision to give all priests permanent permission to grant absolution to those who confess to having procured an abortion was not meant to trivialize this serious and grave sin.

Abortion continues to be “murder of an innocent person. But if there is sin, forgiveness must be facilitated,” he said. So often a woman who never forgets her aborted child “cries for years without having the courage to go see a priest.”

“Do you have any idea the number of people who can finally breathe?” he asked, adding how important it was these women can find the Lord’s forgiveness and never commit this sin again.

Pope Francis said the biggest threat in the world is money. In St. Matthew’s Gospel, when Jesus talked about people’s love and loyalty being torn between two things, he didn’t say it was between “your wife or God,” it was choosing between God or money.

“It’s clear. They are two things opposed to each other,” he said.

## Israeli archaeologists think they found lost Roman city

By Judith Sudilovsky

JERUSALEM (CNS) — After decades of searching, Israeli archaeologists working on the shores of the Sea of Galilee believe they have uncovered the lost Roman city of Julias, home of the apostles Peter, Andrew and Philip.

Mordechai Aviam, head of the Kinneret Institute for Galilean Archaeology at Kinneret Academic College, said in a press statement Aug. 6 that the remains uncovered at Beit Habek, in the Bethsaida Valley Nature Reserve, have led them to believe that this was a significant Roman city and not just a simple fishing village. The ruins included artifacts characterizing a bathhouse and a building wall next to a mosaic floor.

“The discovery of dozens of golden glass mosaics in the previous season and the present season attests to the fact that the church was an important and magnificent

place,” he said in the statement. “This is a discovery that will arouse great interest among early Christian scholars, historians of the New Testament, and scholars of the Land of Israel in general and the Jewish Galilee, during the Second Temple period in particular.”

Steven Notley, distinguished professor of Bible at Nyack College in New York, also worked with Aviam on the recent dig.

The lost city of Julias was named after the daughter of Roman Emperor Augustus. According to the Roman-period Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, Julias was a great city built by the son of Herod the Great on or near the fishing village of Bethsaida.

Previous excavations have yielded a complex of buildings from the Byzantine period, said the statement, and Aviam vowed to continue excavation on the site until the city of Julias can be positively identified.



CNS/Jaime Saldarriaga, Reuters

**POPE TO VISIT COLOMBIA — Liturgical vestments to be worn by Pope Francis during his upcoming visit to Colombia are displayed Aug. 29 at the headquarters of the episcopal conference in Bogota. Pope Francis will visit Colombia Sept. 6 - 10.**

## Priests use Facebook to express outrage

BANGUI, Central African Republic (CNS) — Catholic priests whose villages have been attacked have taken to Facebook to express outrage and appeal for help.

One priest accused UN peacekeepers of “deliberately abandoning” his town and leaving parishioners to be murdered by rebels.

“You were warned, but you deliberately decided to abandon this town,” said Rev. Jean-Alain Zembi, rector of Zemio, on the nation’s border with Congo.

“This community is being sacrificed, and I will hold you responsible for all those dead and preparing to die.”

In an Aug. 20 Facebook message, the priest said at least 30 townspeople had been killed when armed groups attacked the police headquarters and hospital, burning houses and stealing valuables.

He added that Moroccan troops from the UN-backed military mission, MINUSCA, had initially tried to protect local civil-

ians, but had been unable to prevent “innocent women and children being left to their sad fate.”

Meanwhile, another Catholic priest, Rev. Desire Kpangou, said the attackers wore turbans and spoke neither French nor the local language, Sango, suggesting they had come from nearby Sudan.

“If you don’t come soon to disarm these people, we will have to organize confessions and a final mass and viaticum” — giving communion to and anointing of someone approaching death — “and prepare ourselves and the rest of the displaced people here for the worst,” Kpangou told UN forces on Facebook.

Aid organizations have reported worsening violence throughout 2017 in the Central African Republic, one of the world’s poorest countries. Violence is mainly between armed remnants of Seleka, a Muslim-dominated rebel movement that briefly seized power in 2013, and a mainly Christian militia, Anti-Balaka.

France’s *Le Monde* daily reported Aug. 21 that 80 per cent of the country was believed to be under control of armed gangs, including “a myriad of local militias and mercenaries from neighbouring states.”

Zembi told *Agence France-Presse* Aug. 10 that his town, 1,005 kilometres from the capital, Bangui, had been “ablaze” since June 28, when armed gangs overran it, cutting telephone lines and forcing half of Zemio’s 50,000 inhabitants to flee.

He added that bodies had been left on the street outside his rectory, while food, water and medicines had now run out. He told AFP humanitarian organizations had pulled out and MINUSCA forces were barred “by clauses in their contract” from intervening.

Catholics make up a third of the Central African Republic’s 4.5 million inhabitants and have been widely praised for sheltering displaced people around the country.



CNS/Trudy Lampson, Reuters

**TROPICAL STORM HARVEY HITS SENIORS — Residents of La Vita Bella assisted living facility are seen in waste-deep floodwaters Aug. 27 due to Tropical Storm Harvey in Dickinson, Texas.**



# Bishops, mining companies at odds re Latin America

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

Earlier this year protesters in a small Guatemala village blockaded a giant silver mine operated by a Canadian company and for a month stood their ground despite being regularly tear-gassed by paramilitary police.

Their action culminated July 5 in a Guatemalan Supreme Court of Justice decision that suspended two mining licenses held by Tahoe Resources Inc. of Vancouver until complaints by the Xinka indigenous people who live near the mine can be heard.

The Xinka, who say the mine was opened on their land before they were properly consulted, allege the ground is now shifting in the nearby town of Casillas, damaging homes because of heavy equipment and explosions at the mine, and they complain water has become scarce since the mine opened. They have the support of their archbishop, a local bishop, the Loretto Sisters and many clergy.

It is stories like the Xinka’s struggle that have prompted Canada’s bishops to join the fight, in solidarity with Latin American bishops, to end what they call “unethical, unjust and irresponsible” practices by some Canadian mining companies operating in Latin America.

In an Aug. 9 letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Bishop Douglas Crosby, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic



CNS/Martin Alipaz, EPA

**MINING PROTEST — Bolivian miners clash with police Aug. 11 during a protest along a road in Mantecani. Large-scale mining and extractive operations are failing to deliver economic benefits while causing environmental damages and human suffering throughout Latin America, said a coalition of church organizations and environmental groups.**

Bishops, urged the government to honour a 2015 campaign promise to hire an ombudsperson to field international complaints about Canadian mining. The letter talked about “threats, violence, extortion and even murder” in the mining industry and said the bishops “cannot accept the unethical way Canadian mining companies have been operating in Latin America.”

But Crosby’s claims are refuted by Pierre Gratton, president and chief executive officer of the Mining Association of Canada.

“I don’t accept the argument that Canadians are as bad as he says they are,” he told *The Catholic Register*. “In fact, what the evidence is now showing is that we’re better than our competition. And that actually what’s good for Latin America is probably

more Canadian mining, not less.”

The one point on which the two sides do agree is that it’s time for an ombudsperson, although stark differences remain about how that person should operate. NGOs and church groups want an ombudsperson with power to investigate and sanction companies implicated in overseas human rights violations and environmental disasters. The mining industry

wants the ombud limited to mediation, conciliation and joint fact finding, and wants penalties for bad behaviour left to the courts, preferably courts where the mine is located, not in Canada where the company’s stocks are listed and its executives make the deals.

Meanwhile, casualties are still adding up.

Twenty-two-year-old Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was assistant to the director of the Guatemalan Centre for Legal, Environmental and Social Action, which is acting on behalf of the Xinka people. He took two bullets to the head in Guatemala City last November. Ten months on, no one has been charged with the crime in a country in which political murders are common and mines are centre stage in politics.

What’s truly remarkable about the Guatemalan saga is that it’s not remarkable at all. It ticks off every box of a typical overseas mining brouhaha.

Indigenous? Check.  
Water rights and environmental damage? Check.

Corrupt and incompetent local government? Check.

Deeply divided society? Check.  
Extreme policing? Check.  
Death? Check.

The pattern is repeated all over Latin America, Africa, the Philippines — wherever mining engineers find valuable ore.

MiningWatch Canada, a non-profit that monitors how mining

— MINING, page 6

## Jesuits concerned that one of their own could be in danger

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

Provincial superiors of the English and French Canadian arms of the Jesuits wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Aug. 11 asking him to put pressure on the government of Honduras to protect the life of Jesuit Father Ismael “Melo” Moreno.

Their plea came in the wake of 24 Canadian organizations banding together to express shock at a government agency report which they fear could place their people in danger.

Canadian Jesuits International, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and the ecumenical social justice organization KAIROS are among the organizations which have asked International Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne to withdraw a report released by the Office of the Extractive Sector Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Counsellor.

In the 47-page report on Canadian mining conflicts in Honduras, CSR Counsellor Jeffrey Davidson opined that Canadian NGOs are “ideologically positioned against mining” (italics in the original) and that they have pushed “confrontational and adversarial approaches when dealing with companies and the Honduran government.” He implies that Canadian organizations are to some extent calling the shots for Honduran environmental activists.

Church organizations fear Davidson’s words could get somebody killed. The Jesuits are doubly concerned because they believe one of their own is in danger.

“Currently the situation is escalating and Father Melo is again being targeted,”

said the letter to Trudeau from Jesuit Fathers Peter Bisson and Erik Oland. “We therefore urge you and the Government of Canada to apply immediate pressure on the Government of Honduras to ensure that the rule of law is upheld, that Father Melo’s safety and freedom are protected, and that all people in Honduras enjoy the full range of human rights.”

Moreno is well known throughout Honduras for his activism. He was a close associate of Berta Cáceres, an environmentalist and indigenous rights activist murdered last year by intruders in her home with connections to the Honduran military. Cáceres had worked in association with the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, among many other organizations.

“In a highly, highly charged context like Honduras, these kinds of statements sometimes can make a difference between life and death for people,” Canadian Jesuits International executive director Jenny Cafiso told *The Catholic Register*.

The idea that Honduran activists are dancing to the tune of foreign entities would be justification enough

in some Honduran circles for violence, she said.

Davidson stands by his analysis in the CSR report.

“How foreign-based NGOs and their local affiliates and counterparts have interacted with companies, governments and communities has framed much of the conversation. I felt that was true in Honduras,” he said in an interview. “It has contributed — I didn’t say it caused, I say it contributed — to the strained and tense situation that currently exists.”

The British NGO Global Witness has named Honduras the most dangerous country in the world for human rights defenders.

A Global Affairs spokesperson told *The Catholic Register* it does not control what Davidson says.

“Views expressed by the CSR Counsellor are not subject to the approval of the minister or the Federal Public Service,” said an email reply to questions. “Any questions or concerns about the CSR Counsellor’s reports should be addressed to the CSR Counsellor.”



Photo courtesy of Radio Progreso

**IN JEOPARDY — Canadian Jesuits fear that the life of Rev. Ismael “Melo” Moreno may be in danger because of his activism in Honduras.**



# Wife alleges Quebec doctor let her husband die

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — A Catholic woman has filed a complaint with a Quebec health agency alleging that her husband was denied antibiotics to treat a bladder infection after doctors determined it was better to let him die because he had cancer.

“Herman’s greatest wish was to survive another year in order to watch his daughters graduate from college and university,” said Mary Lucille Durocher in a complaint filed July 31.

Her complaint alleges that a hospital doctor refused to treat her husband’s infection because he “knew Herman had cancer in the bone and it was spreading to the liver, therefore it was better to let him die from the infection in a week or 10 days than to allow him to live for a year or more and suffer in the final stages of the cancer.”

“These were definitely not mine or Herman’s wishes and we very clearly indicated this to the doctor,” says her complaint.

Herman Morin, 65, was admitted to hospital on June 12 and died four days later.

The complaint suggests the medical decision was “influenced” by Quebec’s Bill 52, which legalized assisted suicide for terminally ill patients who meet certain conditions.

“This is a case where it appears the tenets of Bill 52 may have influenced the actions of some of the medical practitioners involved, although its protocols

were not respected,” reads the complaint, filed with the *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux* (CISSS) de l’Outaouais.

According to a priest from the Pembroke diocese, which straddles Ontario and Quebec, this is the third case he is aware of involving a patient being refused treatment for bladder infections because of cancer or old age. In two cases, the patients died, said Rev. Tim Moyle. In the other case, the family was able to force doctors to treat their family member.

“Doctors in general possess a healthy sense of entitlement,” said Moyle. “Giving them the power of life and death, as the euthanasia law does, has only made this situation worse.”

In her complaint, Durocher says her husband was wearing a wristband to indicate an allergy to the opioid pain medication Dilaudid. She learned that not only was her husband being denied treatment for his bladder infection, but that he was receiving Dilaudid, which caused vomiting and made him unable to eat or drink.

The Dilaudid was stopped and, says Durocher’s complaint, replaced with morphine “at a rate 15 times greater than he had been receiving at home.”

In an interview, Durocher said she thought she had a week to find a way to force the hospital to treat the bladder infection, perhaps through obtaining a lawyer’s letter, but the next time she came to the hospital, “it was too late.”

A CISSS spokesperson said she could not comment on the case for reasons of confidentiality.

But the CISSS has no policy “which forbids a doctor to prescribe any type of medication to his patient,” said Geneviève Côté in an email statement. “It is up to

the doctor to determine what the best treatment is for his patient.”

She said a patient is entitled to seek a second medical opinion and address concerns to the Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner of the *CISSS de l’Outaouais* and the *Collège des médecins du*

*Québec*, which “has the legal mandate to oversee and improve medical practice in order to protect the public and improve the health of Quebecers.”

Durocher’s complaint will go to a medical examiner, who will investigate.

## Mall chapels at the centre of it all

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The *Centre Dieu* is in a Quebec City mall, but not of it.

It’s a peaceful refuge, a small chapel, just around a corner and a million spiritual miles away from the constant din of the food court and 260 stores with goods to hawk.

The chapel was the brainchild of the Laurier Quebec mall developer, the Delrano Group of Paul Racine, François Nolin and Amédée Demers Jr. 50 years ago.

Place Laurier, as the mall was then known, was Quebec’s first covered mall and one of the largest indoor malls in the world. It opened in 1961 with 50 stores, but by 1967 the mall was becoming a revolution in the way Quebecers live.

The mall itself thought there should be a place for God in the midst of it all.

As the little chapel celebrates 50 years of service to shoppers, store clerks and office workers,



Photo by Chris Jugo, courtesy of the Archdiocese of Edmonton

**MALL CHAPEL —** Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith, left, and Rev. Oscar Monroy, chaplain of St. Benedict Chapel, outside the chapel housed at the City Centre Mall in Edmonton. As chaplain, Monroy has developed relationships with his neighbours in the stores that surround St. Benedict Chapel.

its chaplain Rev. André Béland worries there’s not much place left in the heart of Quebecers for God, or at least not for the church that once assured French Canadians of their identity.

“We have just one student in the seminary,” Béland told *The Catholic Register* during a recent visit. “Pray for us.”

Béland leads 15 to 20 people every weekday in celebration of the mass. He hears a steady stream of confessions. There are five to 10 regulars who stay after the noon mass for adoration.

As they enter the chapel, worshippers pass by paintings of Quebec’s founders and saints — St. François de Laval, St. Marie de l’Incarnation, St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, Blessed Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin, St. Marie-Marguerite d’Youville.

The *Centre Dieu* isn’t the only mall chapel in Canada celebrating a birthday. Last November, St. Benedict’s Chapel in Edmonton’s City Centre Mall turned 10 years old.

St. Benedict’s is the brainchild of Cardinal Thomas Collins, who was searching for a way to connect the church with people in their working lives when he was archbishop of Edmonton.

“In my travels, I saw a number of spaces that planted the seeds for a place of solace and prayer in the midst of our commercial centres,” said Collins in an email.

St. Stephen’s Chapel, which has operated as a sort of Bay Street branch office to Toronto’s St. Michael’s Cathedral for 31 years, was one of those examples that caught Collins’ eye.

St. Francis’ Chapel in the Prudential Center on Boylston Street in Boston was another, along with Holy Cross Chapel and Catholic Resource Centre in downtown Houston, Texas.

“It’s important for us to offer an opportunity to bring our faith to the people in a variety of settings. This creativity in our outreach reminds us that these spaces can be important tools of evangelization,” Collins said.

One thing that makes the mall chapels different is the church doesn’t own them.

In Edmonton the community that prays at St. Benedict’s raises \$4,000 per month to cover the rent. It’s a lot, but the people who gather there for mass three times a day (at 7:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.) believe it’s worth it, said St. Benedict’s chaplain Rev. Oscar Monroy.

Unlike multifaith prayer rooms, St. Benedict’s is a specifically Catholic chapel with daily mass, confessions and the presence of the consecrated Body of Christ in the tabernacle, said Monroy.

“There are people who stop 10 minutes and sit down, kneel, pray and go. There’s a real belief in the presence of the Lord. It’s amazing,” said Monroy.

While the altar, the tabernacle, the stained glass and the hush of contemplation all mark St. Benedict’s as different from the rest of the mall, the secret of the chapel’s success is something it shares with every other store in the downtown mall — location, location, location.

Monroy glories in St. Benedict’s prime spot near walkways that connect the mall with city hall, the main library and other office buildings. It guarantees traffic.

Monroy also gets out and about in the mall.

“Over the years, I have made a kind of relationship with the people in the stores, with people that sell shoes, with the Tim Hortons guys, whatever,” said Monroy. “They are the ones who are coming here.”

## Tents have heaters but are not winterized

Continued from page 1

“I noticed the presence of many Haitians who seemed at ease and the children well-behaved,” he said.

Prendergast was told Haitians had attended mass in a few of Cornwall’s Catholic parishes and had “asked about pastoral care.” He appointed Deacon Pierre Aubé to look after the pastoral needs, along with two French-speaking priests, he said.

The tents have heaters, but are not winterized, said a soldier involved in erecting the tent city. Most tents accommodate 10 people.

The Montreal archdiocese has appealed for government funds and other forms of assistance, as it did in 2015 in response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

Montreal Archbishop Christian Lépine, in an Aug. 22 pastoral letter, wrote that the diocese’s sponsorship program “has recently evolved due to events surrounding the influx of asylum seekers.”

The archbishop said the parish of Notre-Dames-des-Victoires, “in an evangelical spirit of welcoming,” will house asylum seekers in its vacant rectory.

“This space, with a dozen rooms, will serve as temporary and safe housing for the time it takes to handle the required migration phases,” he wrote. “The welcoming of pregnant women and single mothers, who are considered to be the most vulnerable and at-risk, are our priority.”

By entering Canada illegally, the asylum seekers hope to avoid

being returned to the United States under provisions of the Safe Third Country Agreement between the two countries. It requires asylum seekers to file their claims in the first safe country they arrive at. But the agreement only applies to people who cross the border legally at recognized entry points, not to those who enter illegally elsewhere. These people must now prove they are legitimate refugees who face persecution if they are returned to their home country.

“There is uncertainty for people,” said Faubert. “Who are we to judge why they crossed the border?”

People might say these are “not refugees, their lives are not in danger, but we don’t know that,” he said.

Faubert said how Canadians respond to the asylum seekers may be a test of our core values.

“What do we really stand for as human beings when challenged by another human being and a situation that is not foreseeable?” he asked.

Faubert admitted he doesn’t have “a special telephone line with God” to help him “understand the signs of the times,” but he said some refugees will come because of war, but many more will be economic migrants and refugees fleeing poverty and the effects of climate change.

“This little wave, it could become big waves,” he said. “We don’t have too much time to reflect on this matter and make up our minds.”



CCN/D. Gyapong

**TENTS BEING SET UP —** More than 50 tents began springing up in the third week of August outside the Nav Centre in Cornwall, where the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops will hold its annual plenary Sept. 25 - 29. The tents have heaters, but are not winterized, said a soldier involved in erecting the tent city. Most tents accommodate 10 people.



# Mary's Meals raise funds to feed children in need

By Jean Ko Din  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Mary's Meals is about lots of little acts of love, said founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow.

It is about eight-year-old twins Audrina and Tianna Alles from Oakville, Ont., who donated their summer allowances so that young children in Malawi can have one meal a day for an entire school year.

It is about 11-year-old André from Winnipeg, Man., who had an iced tea stand and collected aluminum cans from his neighbours to raise \$430 over the summer.

It is about June Stevens from Markham, Ont., who bought 45 copies of *The Shed That Fed a Million Children* to spread the story of Mary's Meals to all her friends.

These are the individuals that MacFarlane-Barrow came to thank in person when he visited Toronto Aug. 24. Matt and Michelle McGrath hosted a garden party in their home to bring together people across the Greater Toronto Area that have been raising money and awareness for Mary's Meals within their communities.

"(Mary's Meals) has been growing just like how it did in the beginning, with lots and lots of little acts of love," said MacFarlane-Barrow. "Back in our head office in Glasgow (Scotland), we don't sit there thinking we know how to fundraise in Canada, or the U.S. or Germany. What we see is that people figure out their own way. . . . I'm really, really grateful to those of you who are already doing that."

MacFarlane-Barrow makes regular visits to Canada and 14 other countries where affiliates and informal groups of supporters raise funds and awareness



Catholic Register/Jean Ko Din

**MARY'S MEALS FOUNDER** — Mary's Meals founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow poses with twin sisters Tianna and Audrina Alles of Oakville, who gave up their allowances this summer to the charity.

for their work.

Mary's Meals began in 2002 with a simple mission — to provide one good meal to every child in their place of education. There are more than 60 million primary school-age children in the developing world who are out of school because of hunger and poverty. Mary's Meals provides daily meals to about 1.2 million children in 14 developing countries.

"Maybe of all the years we've been working, I think I've maybe seen more chronic suffering and hunger than ever this year," said MacFarlane-Barrow.

The majority of Mary's Meals programs are established in Malawi where it feeds about 900,000 children, or 30 per cent of the country's children in need.

MacFarlane-Barrow said in every school where Mary's Meals programs are established, the

school has seen an enormous increase in attendance and in academic performance.

"It's a very simple idea," he

## Hospital provides emergency spiritual care

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Whether it's a train crash, a building collapse, or a pandemic, the Ottawa Hospital is ready to provide spiritual help through a team of volunteers for those affected.

The hospital's Emergency Spiritual Care Assistance Team (ESCAT) is the first of its kind in North America. Its recently published guide has been requested by more than 25 other hospitals in Canada and the United States, said ESCAT leader Rev. Nicolas El-Kada, a Maronite Catholic priest who is the hospital's Clinical Pastoral Education Co-ordinator.

El-Kada said the literature shows for each medical casualty in a disaster or emergency, there are many more "psycho-social spiritual casualties who need spiritual support."

"A disaster is always chaotic," said El-Kada. But training can help people respond to "high demand" challenges. "Everyone is screaming for help: how are you going to deal with it?"

"A crowd of people might all be in need of support for medical, psychological, social and/or spiritual needs," he said.

The team, composed of hospital chaplains, spiritual leaders and volunteers from a range of religious faiths, is trained to intervene as a group and not as individuals, El-Kada said.

They learn about the phases of an emergency and what spiritual interventions are appropriate at each stage; they learn the language spoken by first responders — fire fighters, police, the army, various levels of government — to facilitate communication and a more effective intervention, he said.

The ESCAT volunteers learn what symptoms are common among people who have experienced a disaster, such as anxiety, fear, distress, feeling numb, and confusion, for example — and how to identify "red flags" if a

said. "We meet their immediate need for food, but at the same time, we tackle all the underlying causes of poverty by always serving that meal in a place that allows them to gain that education that can set them free."

Mary's Meals Canada (MarysMeals.ca) was formed in 2010 when Brigid Davidson started a group with her fellow teachers at Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School in Niagara Falls, Ont. Davidson died of colon cancer in 2013.

Since then, the Canadian chapter has grown to more than 2,600 donors and volunteers across the country. Jill Mowser, fundraising co-ordinator of Mary's Meals Canada, said this is just the beginning.

"I think it's only recently that Mary's Meals Canada is gaining this momentum," said Mowser. "Last year, we more than doubled our income. We raised about \$575,000. . . . The year before that we raised \$272,000."

And it seems as though Mary's Meals Canada is about to grow even more. Mowser announced

that an anonymous donor from Toronto has pledged to match up to \$125,000 of new monthly donations this year.

"We've got a long way to go in Canada and there's lot of potential," said Mowser.

Mowser said Mary's Meals Canada relies heavily on its volunteers. The Canadian chapter's headquarters does not have a physical building. Rather, it is run by a small team of 40 volunteers in Calgary. In fact, Mowser was only hired last year to be the only full-time staff member of Mary's Meals Canada.

Toronto has the second largest group in the country with about 20 individual volunteers in the region. Several parishes in Melville, Sask., hold annual fundraising events every year. There are also several individual supporters scattered across the country.

"We're a low-touch charity so what we'll do is we just share our story," said Mowser. "And we find that when we share our story and they hear about our work, they want to get involved and they want to give us their support."



CCN/D. Gyapong

**EMERGENCY SPIRITUAL CARE** — Rev. Nicolas El-Kada is Clinical Pastoral Education Co-ordinator at the Ottawa Hospital and team leader of ESCAT (Emergency Spiritual Care Assistance Team).

person's reaction is extreme and could become impairing or lead to PTSD or an anxiety disorder in the future, El-Kada said.

Part of the course involves dealing with a mock disaster such as a building collapse, and asking the trainees to imagine how they would handle various scenarios, such as someone becoming angry and violent after hearing he or she has lost a loved one.

"An intervention in a disaster situation is different than the intervention with someone going through a life struggle," he said. "A wrong intervention might worsen the survivor's condition. We talk about psychological first aid."

"These interventions need to be tailored to the needs of each survivor," he said.

A key is helping a person find their own strength and recovering their resilience, he said. Sometimes when a person experiences a disaster, they go into shock.

Some of that involves helping people "find a source of calmness and connectedness," and to help them connect with their own sense of transcendental reality, he said. "In the Catholic context, I would say God."

ESCAT has a box of sacred

objects and books, such as Bibles, rosary beads, Qur'ans, prayer cards, spiritual medals, religious objects to help survivors find that "source of calmness."

The hospital started to develop the program in 2009 when the H1N1 virus threatened a worldwide pandemic. "Thank God, we didn't need it!" El-Kada said.

But by the time H1N1 petered out, the ESCAT planners decided not to wait for another emergency or disaster before building the program into what it is today.

Since H1N1, ESCAT has been activated three times: in 2011, after an explosion at a local Catholic high school killed a student; in 2013, after a double-decker bus crashed into a train, killing six and injuring many more; and in 2014, after a shooter killed a soldier at the War Memorial, then rampaged through Centre Block on Parliament Hill.

At the 2011 explosion at Mother Teresa High School, there was one death, but the hospital had to deal with about 125 psycho-social casualties, El-Kada said.

Key to the program is the involvement, even at a leadership level, of local faith communities, he said.

## Ottawa matches \$21 million in famine relief efforts

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

OTTAWA (CCN) — With the final numbers in, the Canadian government is kicking in \$21.3 million to try to protect 20 million people in Africa and Yemen from imminent starvation, but Canada's Catholic development agency is continuing to collect more funds even as Ottawa closes down its matching fund program.

Canadians donated \$21.3 million to the charities of their choice between March 17 and June 30 in the effort to head off the impending disaster. The federal government will match those funds with its own \$21.3 million Famine Relief Fund, which will be distributed among organizations with food security and health projects in the famine zones.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace has raised \$2.85 million, of which \$1.3 million is eligible for matching. The organization has an extensive network and experience in Africa and throughout the Middle East and is likely to be one of the development agencies to

benefit from the matching funds.

Though no longer eligible for matching funds, Development and Peace continues to campaign on behalf of people in the four famine-threatened countries — Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. Information about donating is at [devp.org/en/emergencies/food-crisis-2017](http://devp.org/en/emergencies/food-crisis-2017).

The Canadian matching fund was set up in response to a February warning from Food and Agriculture Organization Director-General José Graziano da Silva that 20 million people would starve to death in the next six months without urgent action. In March, Canada pledged close to \$120 million.

The food crisis in Africa continues. On July 14, FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System sent out an alert saying the third consecutive failed rainy season is threatening families in central and southern Somalia, southeastern Ethiopia, northern and eastern Kenya, northern Tanzania and northeastern and southwestern Uganda. Development and Peace funds programs for farmers through partner organizations in all of these countries.



# Woloschuk new ecumenical co-ordinator

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Celeste Woloschuk is the new part-time Ecumenical and Interfaith Co-ordinator for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Nicholas Jesson, who served in the position for many years, recently left Saskatoon to become the Ecumenical Officer for the Archdiocese of Regina.

Until a bishop is named for the Diocese of Saskatoon, a new ecumenical officer cannot canonically be appointed, but the work of ecumenism in the diocese will continue, with administrative support for ecumenical and interfaith work in the diocese provided by Woloschuk.

A longtime parishioner and volunteer at St. Augustine Parish in Saskatoon, she also serves as part-time administrative assistant at the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

Woloschuk's recent studies at St. Paul's University in Ottawa provided both ecumenical forma-

tion and experience. "It is a very ecumenical setting. Many of my fellow students were considering ordination or were on the route to ordination in a variety of denominations," she notes, with her professors also coming from diverse Christian backgrounds.

She describes her new role as being a resource person for parishes and groups across the diocese, and a contact for Christian and interfaith partners in the community.

"For the diocese I serve as a point person that people can talk to if they are thinking of starting up a project, but don't know where to start, sharing ideas and resources," says Woloschuk.

For instance, she might offer suggestions for prayer or provide parishes with connections to other Christian churches, as well as assisting with the co-ordination of events or projects involving ecumenical partners as well as people of different faiths.

"Saskatoon has a rich ecumenical and interfaith history,"



Kip Yaworski

Celeste Woloschuk

says Woloschuk, pointing to the ground-breaking work of Rev. Bernard de Margerie.

She begins her new role just as several initiatives are getting underway, such as the launch of a new Saskatoon Evangelical-Roman Catholic Commission for Common Witness, established this

spring after a five-year dialogue drew to a close.

Another major undertaking is the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. It was on Oct. 31, 1517, that Martin Luther sent his Ninety-Five Theses calling for reform of church practices to the Archbishop of Mainz — an action immortalized in the image of the reformer posting his statement on the church doors. The date is considered the start of the Reformation.

Saskatoon joins communities across the world marking the anniversary.

A study and dialogue about the Reformation will be offered in Saskatoon, using *Together in Christ*, a five-session series prepared by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB).

Facilitated by Rev. Marie-Louise Ternier, the *Together in Christ* series begins at 7 p.m. Sept. 20 at Zion Lutheran Church

in Saskatoon, and continues with four Saturday morning sessions at Queen's House on Sept. 23 and 30, and Oct. 14 and 21.

Each of the four Saturday sessions will also be repeated as an evening session at a different Christian church each week, though organizers are still finalizing plans for the weeknight sessions.

A highlight of the Reformation 500 celebration will be an ecumenical worship service to be held at 3 p.m., Oct. 29 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon, with Archbishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina and Bishop Sid Haugen of the ELCIC Saskatchewan Synod co-preaching. Bolen and Haugen will also preach at a similar commemoration the day before at Trinity Lutheran Church in Regina.

"It is really important for Christians to mark the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation," says Woloschuk. She acknowledges that at the beginning there was acrimony and violence, with "a lot of closed mindedness and unwillingness to listen." However in the past 50 years, Christian unity has come a long way.

"With Vatican II we have come to new understandings of ecumenism and what we share as Christians. The strides we have made in terms of repairing some of the relationships is quite phenomenal."

— REFORMATION, page 8

## Mining Watch Canada believes better regulations needed

Continued from page 3

has an impact on communities and the environment, believes Canadian overseas mining operations should be better regulated.

"We have an obligation. These are our companies," said Mining-Watch Canada research co-ordinator Catherine Coumans. "We're supporting these companies financially and politically. Where is our responsibility?"

But how bad is it? A yet-to-be published study by University of Ottawa international development and global studies professor Paul Haslam looked at 634 mining properties in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru. He grouped them into three categories of ownership: local, Canadian

companies and the rest of the world. The largest single category is locally owned, at 39.1 per cent, followed by Canadian-owned mines (36.3 per cent) and rest of the world mines (24.6 per cent).

The vast majority of mines in Haslam's database — 506 of the 634 mines — report no conflicts, leaving just 128 where there's trouble, 42 of them Canadian-owned. The mines most likely to be in conflict with local populations are those owned by the rest of the world. Despite controlling just 24.6 per cent of all mines, non-Canadian foreigners accounted for 40.6 per cent of those in conflict (52 mines). Canadians control 92 more mines (36.3 per cent of the total) but have 10 fewer troubled operations. Locally owned mines

(39.1 per cent of all mines) account for the other 34 conflicts.

Gratton is using this data as new ammunition in his fight for Canadian mining, refuting the Crosby letter.

"This constant pointing fingers at Canadian miners when we're actually in many ways leading the global industry in terms of best practices is — you know, it's got to change," he said.

Haslam himself would prefer his research not become a weapon in the war over regulating Canadian mining abroad.

"I wouldn't interpret the results as a justification for not doing any of the things that are suggested in (Crosby's) letter," he said. "I do not believe that my research is a justification for complacency. It is intended to give context. It is intended to examine a particular question — a very narrow question."

Haslam's study indicates two kinds of conflict that come up over and over — conflicts over the environment and fights over who benefits from the mine.

In fact, it's hard to distinguish these two issues. How the money is distributed — whether it's invested locally or siphoned off to some distant capital city — is doubly important to poor farmers and herders if they are losing their land and water to industrial pollution.

The Mining Association of Canada estimates between 60 and 80 per cent of all money spent in building and operating a mine remains in the host country through wages and local procurement. But the money can stay in the country without ever making it to the local municipality, much less local indigenous farmers.

"The immediate issue at hand is responsible mining," said Elana Wright, advocacy and research officer for D&P.

"We would like to see the Canadian government play a stronger role in regulating companies, because we as Canadians benefit directly from Canadian mining operations overseas."

In 2013 Development and Peace persuaded more than 80,000 Canadians to sign postcards asking then prime minister Stephen Harper for an independent mining ombudsperson. The Catholic agency has kept asking ever since.

"The nature of the business is that the mines are where you find them," said Gratton. "You can end up in places where communities don't have much experience with mining and, yes, it can lead to conflict. But again, I go back to professor Haslam's study. Most of the time there isn't conflict."

Development and Peace is on the side of the villagers, helping the farmers' unions, women's collectives and indigenous fight for their rights.

Getting an ombud office with teeth isn't about creating a perfect world. It's about getting people reasonable and timely redress when they suffer because of a mine they never wanted, said Coumans of MiningWatch Canada.

Canada, along with just about every other nation, signed the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in 2011. The Mining Association of Canada agrees with those principles.

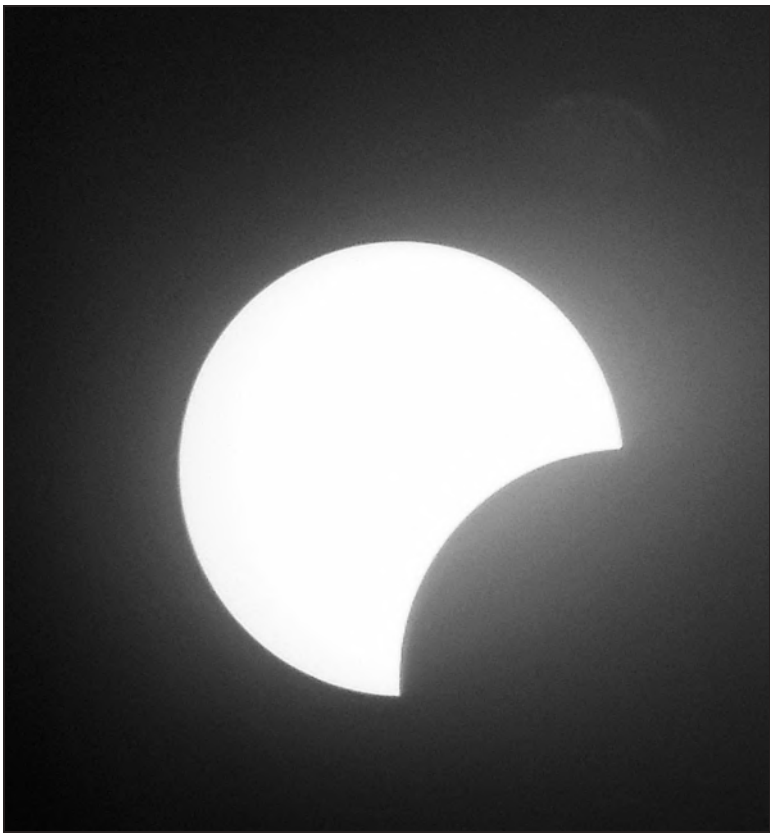
The UN principles say people who have been harmed by a business must have access to a remedy and that rich countries where the corporations are headquartered must be involved. The Mining Association of Canada wants that remedy to be through a non-adversarial process of conciliation and mediation that begins with joint fact finding.

Coumans utterly rejects the notion. One or both parties could drag the process out for years. Women who have been raped by mine security guards, mothers who have lost their sons and husbands, villagers made sick by tainted water don't want to sit down with the company and discuss who they're going to hire to investigate and what will be included in the investigation, she said.



SMS

**SISTER PASSES** — Sister Cecile Fahl, SMS, died Aug. 18 in Saskatoon at the age of 85. One of the first members of the Saskatchewan-based religious order the Sisters of Mission Service, Fahl was a lifelong teacher and a founder and facilitator of the Lay Formation program in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Fahl was a teacher and principal at Major, Sask., and with the Saskatoon Catholic school division. Later she worked at the pastoral office of the diocese. It was during this time that Bishop James Mahoney asked her to help develop a Lay Formation program in response to Pope John Paul's call to make the formation of the laity a priority. The program was launched in fall 1987 with Fahl as the first co-ordinator. In her retirement, Fahl's interests included her pet dog Sean, gardening, reading and travel, as well as cheering for the Saskatchewan Roughriders.



Jacob Yaworski

**SOLAR ECLIPSE** — Saskatchewan residents experienced a partial solar eclipse Aug. 21, with some 75 per cent of the sun blocked by the moon at Saskatoon. It was the first solar eclipse visible over the province since 1979. The path of totality went across the United States from Oregon to South Carolina, becoming what some dubbed the most observed and photographed solar eclipse in history.



# Authentic Catholic culture should lead to joy

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Liturgy offers an answer to the relativism, skepticism and cynicism that plague society, said Rev. Geoffrey Young at a recent Rebuilding Catholic Culture event in Saskatoon.

“From the liturgy we receive healing, we receive strength, and we receive, ultimately, an ordering to things that last,” said Young.

Organizer Celine Sidloski welcomed the crowd that gathered for the talk Aug. 17 at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Saskatoon.

“We need every resource at our disposal to see the truth, to know the truth and to love the truth, and in doing so, to love God,” she said, before introducing Young, a Saskatoon priest who is currently studying at the Pontifical Institute for Liturgy at Sant-Anselmo in Rome.

An authentic Catholic culture should lead us to be holy, to have joy, humour, and confidence in God’s providence, said Young. Liturgy may be solemn at times, but it “leads to joy in our life and in the city square.”

During his talk, Young referenced themes from *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, a book written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) in 1999, and the writings of Catholic intellectual Romano Guardini (1885 - 1968), including his 1918 book, also entitled *The Spirit of the Liturgy*.

“Ratzinger turned to Guardini in almost every one of his writings, because he considered that Guardini’s voice is still relevant today,” Young said, describing Guardini’s importance as a leader in the liturgical renewal in the years before the Second Vatican Council.

At different times in history there have been different assaults and evils directed against Christ, the Gospel and the church, noted Young.

“Some generations will be more subject to persecution, as we know, to adversity and even martyrdom. Whether today’s evils are greater, or whether today’s culture is more in crisis (than other eras), I cannot say for certain,” he said, but he cautioned against taking either an egocentric or a nostalgic view of history.

Young identified three main evils that are causing sorrow and



Kiply Yaworski

**REBUILDING CATHOLIC CULTURE — Rev. Geoffrey Young was guest speaker at a Rebuilding Catholic Culture event MCed by Celine Sidloski at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Aug. 17 in Saskatoon.**

disorder in society: relativism, skepticism, and cynicism.

Relativism seeks to undermine belief in truth itself, he said. “From a spiritual side it threatens to destroy the theological virtue of faith. Relativism makes a mockery of Our Lord’s profession that he is the Truth.”

As for skepticism, “the good it seeks to undermine is our belief in trust itself. From the spiritual side, it threatens to destroy the theological virtue of hope. Skepticism makes a mockery of Our Lord’s profession that he is the Way.”

Cynicism, finally, seeks to undermine “belief in identity itself. From the spiritual side, it threatens to destroy the theological virtue of love. Cynicism makes a mockery of Our Lord’s profession that he is the Life.”

Young stressed that these are three perennial evils that have been manifested in different ways throughout history, can be seen at work in the story of the Fall in Genesis, and have prompted or emboldened a range of different heresies.

He noted that human beings of every era have asked three questions: What is truth? Where am I

going? Who am I? In an era dominated by relativism, skepticism, and cynicism, the answers that are offered to those basic questions lead to despair.

“When modern man or woman asks ‘What is truth?’ the answer is ‘Nothing’; or ‘Where am I going?’ the answer is ‘Nowhere’; and when I ask ‘Who am I?’ the

answer is ‘No one.’”

Exploring the idea of relativism and the reality of truth, Young quoted Pope Benedict: “No one will dispute that one must be cautious or careful in claiming the truth, but simply to dismiss it as unattainable is really destructive. A large portion of contemporary philosophies subsist as saying that man is not even capable of truth . . . the humility to recognize the truth and accept it as a standard has to be relearned and practised again and again. The truth comes to rule, not through violence but rather through its own power.”

As to how liturgy can answer the lie of relativism, Young turned to a definition from Guardini and Pope Benedict: “Liturgy is where truth and prayer embrace.” Liturgy is where we are met with truth incarnate, “made sacramentally visible through the passion, the cross and resurrection.”

Liturgy also answers the question, “Where am I going?” by telling us first of all where we come from, how we are made and how we are ordered.

As for the third great human question, “Who am I?” throughout the liturgy we discover our true identity. “We hear confirmed our very identity as beloved sons and daughters. In Christ we see the fullness of our humanity made visible and our ultimate end confirmed.”

Young reflected on the meaning of the Vatican II call for “full,

conscious, and active participation in the liturgy,” stressing that this does not mean everyone must have an “activity” at mass, but rather that the baptized fully and prayerfully engage in the celebration with receptivity and humility, so the mysteries can penetrate into a person’s soul and lead to holiness.

The goal is not “to make the sanctuary more like the world, but to extend the sanctuary into our lives. Your dinner table is your altar,” Young said.

The distrust of tradition and authority undermines much of what has allowed culture and life to flourish, he pointed out. “When tradition is undermined and those who pass on tradition are held in suspicion, the culture suffers,” Young said.

“To have a rich culture we must grow and mature on the vine of tradition, we must have humility to receive the wisdom handed down to us, we must be like the good scribes who bring out of their treasure chests that which is old and that which is new. In a world of relativism, which questions truth itself, we are called to say yes to the faith of Christ who is the Truth. In a world of skepticism, which questions authority itself, of what has come before and what might lie ahead, we are called to say yes to the hope of Christ who is the Way. And in a world of cynicism and self doubt, which questions identity itself, we are called to say yes to the love of Christ who is the Life.”

## Sister influenced lives of hundreds

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Sister Mary Martin, RNDM, was all smiles surrounded by her community and friends as she celebrated 75 years of service as a member of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions.

The July 31 celebration began with a mass celebrated by Msgr. Ken Miller at Santa Maria Seniors Care Home where Martin resides. With assistance from Claire Himbeault, the current RNDM local leader, Martin recited her original final vows taken 75 years ago.

Melvina Hruska, RNDM, delivered a toast in honour of Martin, noting that she worked in educa-

tion for 56 years and influenced the lives of hundreds of students. “Thank you for all the planting you have done,” she said in reference to the planting of the mustard seed contained in the day’s readings and Miller’s homily.

Martin was born Helen Zywinia; her family were members of Regina’s St. Anthony’s Polish community. She entered the novitiate in Sacred Heart College while she was a high school student there.

She took Martin as her religious name when she received her habit on the feast day of St. Martin of Tours. All RNDM sisters’ religious names are preceded by “Mary,” and she became known as Sister Mary Martin. She chose to keep the name following Vatican II when many sisters reverted to their birth names. “Everyone knows me as Sister Mary Martin, so I’m going to keep it,” she was heard to say at the time. However, she is listed in the directory as Sister Mary Martin Zywinia.

Martin obtained her teaching certificate from the Normal School in Moose Jaw. She then obtained both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education as well as counselling education in the United States. Her first teaching position was in Lebreton, Sask.

Martin will be remembered as a teacher and principal at Marian High School — formerly Sacred Heart College Girls High School where Martin started her journey as a novice. She retired from classroom teaching after 39 years



Frank Flegel

**Sister Mary Martin, RNDM**

and began tutoring at Regina’s Miller Catholic High School, an activity she continued for another 17 years. She made herself available to students any time they required help, especially in mathematics, which was her specialty.

Donna Ziegler, chair of the Regina Catholic School Board, presented Martin with a framed print by landscape painter Wilf Perreault and thanked her for her many years of teaching and her support of Catholic education.

It was a double celebration for the RNDM community. Following the mass and before the reception, Sisters Hien and Hoi took their one-year temporary vows as members of the community. Both are from Ho Chi Min City, where they entered the novitiate. They came to Canada to study English and expect to take their final vows next year when they return to Vietnam.



Patsy Pohler

**VACATION BIBLE CAMP — Vacation Bible Camp was held July 10 - 14 at Holy Family Cathedral in Saskatoon, with 88 young campers in attendance for a week of faith, food and fun. The theme of the camp was “A Wilderness Adventure through the Sacraments: Jesus in My Heart.” Using materials produced by CatChat, a family-owned ministry, 28 junior volunteers and 22 senior youth volunteers assisted 10 adult leaders. Parish staff and the wider community assisted with details and logistics, and the camp concluded with a hot dog lunch provided by the CWL.**



# Soul music: hidden spiritual gems found in song

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

Maybe punk music doesn't mean much to you — not your generation, not your taste, not your concern. Maybe you hate punk, its aggression, its contempt for everything non-punk, its vulgarity.

But theologian and musician Michael Iafrate believes the spirit of punk is the Holy Spirit. That's not just an off-the-cuff theory. The 40-year-old doctoral candidate at University of St. Michael's College began playing in punk bands in high school.

"I have brought what I learned from punk beyond music into the large arena of a 40-year-old life, including my faith," Iafrate said in an email.

Iafrate leads and records with M Iafrate & The Priesthood. Their music is a bit louder than a folk band, but not really punk either. His musical journey from high school primal screams to the singer-songwriter tradition of his band's most recent album, "Christian Burial," led him to contribute an essay called "Punk Rock and/as Liberation Theology" to a new collection just published by Lexington Books.

If punk can be the subject of theology, why not all music?

Edited by University of St. Michael's College Christianity and Culture professor Michael O'Connor, *Music, Theology and Justice* is a book of musical-theo-

logical thinking, but it's not about traditional church music. It's about how music sits in our lives, both in and out of church. What is the theology of the beat?

The book retails for \$100 and is marketed primarily to academic research libraries, but the subject matter is not reserved to the ivory tower. Everybody cares about music.

"Music can help us imagine something new, the future. In theological terms, certain experiences of music can be filled with eschatological hope," O'Connor told *The Catholic Register*. "It seems to be able to somehow, out of this abstract combination of sounds and rhythms, to shape possibilities, to allow us to imagine things being good, even better."

O'Connor and his contributors are interested in the spiritual values of our musical culture. If making music shapes both the people who make it and the people who listen to it, then how is our music shaping us now — spiritually, emotionally, socially, economically?

Is our musical culture, whether experienced at festivals or in the playlists on our phones, healthy, healing and hopeful? Or have we narrowed our horizons, held ourselves back?

O'Connor puts the questions in theological terms by looking at music in three traditional categories — priest, prophet and pastor. Pastorally, music should sustain us and our communities. The priestly

role of music is to lead us into paths of restoration and reconciliation. Music has always had a prophetic role giving voice to protest and demonstrating the harmony of justice, whether that protest comes in the form of punk or Pete Seeger, who helped transform church songs into the picket-line bravery of "We Shall Overcome."

Any piece of music can

be analyzed in this way — from Beethoven piano sonatas to rap recordings. O'Connor's book ranges from the eco-theology of Sting to the medieval choral music of Hildegard of Bingen and back to Daft Punk and extreme metal.

On O'Connor's blog, musictheologyjustice.wordpress.com, a variety of contributors share deeper analyses of songs and artists, including Beyoncé's "Lemonade," Prince, Bruce Springsteen, David Bowie and the musical tradition of the ecumenical Taizé community.

Real theology cannot avoid questions of justice but, with the exception of a tiny community of dedicated professionals and stars, most of us are mere consumers of musical product, said punk-theologian Iafrate.

"The radical division between consumers and producers in the music world is but one example of the way capitalism shapes our desires and distorts our lives," Iafrate told *The Catholic Register*. "The music industry turned what was once the shared experience of music, often taking place in the home, into just another leisure product. But of course music is more than just a leisure product for consumption."

Iafrate is more than just a guitar player with attitude. He's also a coordinator with the Catholic Committee of Appalachia in his home state of West Virginia, a father to eight-year-old Hazel and deeply committed to social justice.

"I wouldn't say all of my songs are implicitly theological, but many of them are," said Iafrate. "If only in cryptic ways, I'm often dealing with big questions or concerns."

Like any good punk, Iafrate believes music that serves commerce deserves abundant contempt. He wants nothing to do with "a mere soundtrack for shopping." We have to choose between music as "something in the background of life, or worse, something that merely helps us ignore or escape from life," and music that "is a part of life and helps us live more fully and deeply," Iafrate said.

"We as a society tend to use music in decorative ways," said O'Connor. "We tend to use it for mood management and for filling awkward silences and things like that, rather than as an activity that has value in itself."

As a product which we choose and purchase, we think of our music (albums, CDs, digital playlists) as a reflection of ourselves. Our music tells us who we are. But if music is just the result of purchasing power and download speeds — if we never sing, hum, dance or play a song — we become separated from the music which we say is a part of us.

If we primarily experience our music alone with buds in our ears, then we begin to break apart the society and the community which music is meant to create.

"Music is less rational. It's more spontaneous," said O'Connor. "Which is why the church is always interested in music. But also why all the churches have been concerned about trying to find ways to keep it on the straight and narrow."

Pope Pius X, in a 1903 *motu proprio*, decreed that sacred mu-



Photo courtesy Michael Iafrate

**THEOLOGY IN MUSIC** — Michael Iafrate has been performing for more than two decades. The theologian and musician believes the spirit of punk is the Holy Spirit.

sic "must be holy, and must therefore exclude all profanity, not only from itself but also from the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it."

In fact, O'Connor said, the ageless arguments about which music is right or wrong inside a church is quite often a proxy for arguments about our culture in general — resentments held between generations and fears of anything new and different.

"Everybody cares about music, values music and often is concerned about somebody else's

music," he said. "Whether I'm concerned about the kinds of things my children listen to, or my grandchildren listen to, or I'm concerned about the music that's going on in church — it's often a thing people have an opinion about."

One thing O'Connor is certain of is that there will be music in heaven. From newspaper cartoons to old master paintings, music is always part of our picture of heaven.

"In heaven we won't be painting watercolours or doing clay pottery. We'll be playing harps," he said.



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

**MUSICAL-THEOLOGICAL THINKING** — Edited by University of St. Michael's College Christianity and Culture professor Michael O'Connor, *Music, Theology and Justice* is a book of musical-theological thinking, but it's not about traditional church music, writes Michael Swan. "It's about how music sits in our lives, both in and out of church."

## Reformation affected all

Continued from page 6

The 500th anniversary is a moment for reflection, for confession and conversion, and of celebrating how far Christians have come in their relationships, she adds.

Woloschuk stresses that the Saskatoon event is not solely a Catholic-Lutheran undertaking. "On the committee we have Catholics and Lutherans, certainly, but we also have Anglicans, members of the United Church, members of the Evangelical church. We are recognizing that the Reformation has affected all Christians."

Woloschuk hopes the Reformation 500 events will bring awareness and a renewed commit-

ment to Christian unity.

"This is a chance to remember the past and what has been, both positive and negative. We will also look to the present and rejoice in where we are now. But ultimately, we look to the future: we want this to be something that spurs people on to further the cause of Christian unity.

"We trust that Christ in the Spirit will bring us to where God wants us to be," she says. "We will continue to pray for that and to work for that."

For more information, see [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/ecumenism](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/ecumenism) or contact Woloschuk at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, (306) 659-5814.

## Queen's House

Retreat and Renewal Centre

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 Sessions 2 - 5: Queen's House — Sept. 23 & 30, Oct. 14 & 21, 9:30 a.m. - noon  
 Cost: \$25/session or \$100 for the series (add lunch for \$12).  
 Facilitator: Rev. Marie-Louise Ternier


**SACRED JOURNEY: 19th Annotation — The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life**  
 Oct. 1, 2017 - April 29, 2018 with Dianne Mantyka  
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**K of C BROTHERS KEEPER BREAKFAST:** 2nd Tuesday/month, 7 a.m., Sept. 12.  
**Taizé Prayer for Christian Unity:** 2nd Tuesday/month, 8 p.m.: Sept. 12.  
**Quiet Day of Prayer:** 2nd Wed./month. \$25 w/lunch, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
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# Of war and terror: facing the truth of consequences

## Readings, Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



In a few days it will be 16 years since the world-changing events of 9/11. The terrible toll from the subsequent succession of new wars and terrors has certainly not made us more secure. Indeed it has done the opposite, as argued by Paul Rogers, professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University and international security editor for [www.opendemocracy.net](http://www.opendemocracy.net), in his latest book, *Irregular War*. The “War on Terror” has manifestly failed to deliver peace, democracy, or prosperity in the most affected regions. Over 250,000 people have been killed in Afghanistan and Iraq, the great majority civilians; even more have perished in Syria’s civil war. This year has been the deadliest for Afghan civilians since 2001 and they make up the second largest source of refugees after Syrians.

Rogers’ analysis is deeper and broader than the focus on Islamist extremism, although he takes into account its eschatological dimen-

sion that seems likely to persist. Rather than a “clash of civilizations,” he observes that we are moving into an “age of insurgencies” arising from the wider phenomenon he calls “revolts from the margins.” Unless the causes of these revolts are addressed, a conventional “control paradigm” relying on military force, which Rogers associates with the “military-industrial-academic-bureaucratic complex,” will have limited effect or be counterproductive. The so-called “Islamic State” (ISIS) may be defeated on the battlefield. But that will prove a pyrrhic victory if nothing is done about the fundamental drivers of conflict and global insecurity: “deepening socio-economic divisions, which lead to the relative marginalization of most people across the world, and the prospect of profound and lasting environmental constraints, caused by climate change.”

Former president George Bush’s 2002 “axis of evil” speech presaged a global expansion of the war on terror leading to the disastrous invasion of Iraq and its unintended consequences — violent insurgencies and suicide terrorism, murderous sectarian strife (between Sunnis and Shi’as, Arabs and Kurds) — with the result that al-Qaida in Iraq gained traction and morphed into the more virulent ISIS even after its leader, Abu al-Zarqawi, was killed by a U.S. air strike in 2006. The ISIS “caliph” Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi came from one of the prison camps that had become schools for extremist proselytizing and terrorist recruitment. The 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden was followed by the emergence of ISIS with stronger paramilitary capabilities and sophisticated social media propaganda tools.

Although the “Arab Spring” awakening of 2011 raised hopes, the savage repression of non-violent protests in Syria was a trigger for radicalization and militarization. It was in this context that ISIS was able to seize territory in Syria (abetted by the Assad regime’s deliberate release of Islamist prisoners), setting up its capital there. The relative ease with which ISIS was able in 2014 to take control of six million people in a territory the size of Britain underscores the extent of the debacle.

It won’t be “mission accomplished” if ISIS loses that ground without making progress on the harder challenges of counteracting extremist ideologies and anti-west-

Irregular War: ISIS and The New Threat from the Margins, by Paul Rogers (London, I.B. Tauris 2016)

The Yellow Birds (U.S. 2017)

Nowhere to Hide (Iraq/Sweden/Norway 2016)

Hell on Earth: The Fall of Syria And the Rise of ISIS (U.S. 2017)

ern attitudes linked to longer-term trends. Among those identified by Rogers are: the perception that Islam is under attack, anti-Muslim discrimination, and Saudi Arabia’s export of its fundamentalist “Wahhabist” version of Islam; anger over socio-economic marginalization, especially among unemployed youth; environmental pressures, resource conflicts and dislocations.

The legacy of the global war on terror can be measured in its appalling costs — trillions of dollars, millions of refugees, hundreds of thousands killed and many more maimed — yet the advocates for military responses (increasingly relying on aerial bombardment and drone warfare rather than boots on the ground) and for an expanding national security state keep demanding more resources, while cynical politicians exploit popular fears for their own power. An atmosphere of permanent war and surveillance is inimical to liberal democracy.

Calling this a “century on the edge,” Rogers makes a powerfully cogent case for a radically different socially and environmentally responsible approach to the challenges arising from terrorism and irregular war.

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Despite a reputation for being box office poison, American Iraq war films continue to be made. Alexandre Moors’ *The Yellow*



ten thousand images

**NOWHERE TO HIDE** — As a frontline emergency nurse, Nori Sharif had to deal with the carnage caused by murderous attacks and suicide terrorism in Jalawla in central Iraq. The personal eye-witness intensity in Kurdish-Norwegian director Zaradasht Ahmed’s *Nowhere to Hide* was awarded top prize at the 2016 Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival, the world’s biggest.

*Birds*, which won a cinematography award at Sundance, follows two soldiers, Daniel Murphy, nicknamed “Murph” (Tye Sheridan), and Brandon Bartle (Alden Ehrenreich), whose wartime experience has fateful results. With a screenplay adapted from a novel by Kevin Powers and co-written by David Lowery (*A Ghost Story*), the story unfolds, often in flashback, through episodes of deployment, homecoming, retreat, and surrender. The older Bartle has promised Murph’s mother, Maureen (Jennifer Aniston), to look out for his buddy Murph. But when terrible things happen in the field (the time period is during the worst years of the Iraqi insurgency against the occupation), much goes awry in ways that traumatize Murph to tragic effect.

Murph goes missing and never comes home. Bartle returns to Virginia carrying a heavy burden, sinking into a depressive haze while concealing what really happened from an agonized Maureen who is determined to get the truth. Another figure in this casualties-of-war drama is aggressive Texan Sergeant Sterling (Jack Huston), who embodies the worst instincts of his kind. Humanity and truth both take a hit.

Scheduled for release next month is *Thank You for Your Service*, about a group of young Iraq veterans struggling with PTSD as they try to return to civilian life.

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As much as American and other western soldiers have paid a price in Iraq, by far the greatest death, destruction and suffering has been borne by the Iraqi people. The recent liberation of Mosul from ISIS has involved massive casualties and devastation.

The toll of the post-invasion years on ordinary citizens is brought home with personal eye-witness intensity in Kurdish-Norwegian director Zaradasht Ahmed’s *Nowhere to Hide* ([http://www.tenthousandimages.no/portfolio-item/nowhere\\_to\\_hide/](http://www.tenthousandimages.no/portfolio-item/nowhere_to_hide/)), awarded top prize at the 2016 Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival, the world’s biggest. At its centre is the remarkable Nori Sharif, a dedicated medic working

in the small town of Jalawla in central Iraq, and devoted father to four young children, two boys and two girls. While the pullout of occupying U.S. troops in 2011 was initially welcomed, it did not end the epidemic of violence in a region that had become known as the “triangle of death.” As a frontline emergency nurse, Sharif had to deal with the carnage caused by murderous attacks and suicide terrorism.

In 2011 Ahmed gave Sharif a small camera with which he could record what was happening around him. It’s not all hellish. There’s even family fun and a wedding celebration. But what impacts most is the graphic recording of turmoil, terror and trauma as an everyday occurrence — which went from bad to worse when Jalawla was seized by ISIS in 2014, forcing the Sharif family to flee into the desert. They moved 16 times in search of safety, ending up in a camp for internally displaced persons. Sharif offers this sobering reflection: “There is an expression saying: wars are planned by the elite, the dumb will die in it, and the opportunists benefit from it. We see thousands of people killed, not only the dumb ones. And even the opportunists don’t benefit from it anymore.”

When Sharif was able to return to Jalawla he found the medical centre an empty ruin. In 2016 two of his brothers were killed. He has no home to return to and is supporting three families. Amazingly he stays optimistic, a compelling testament to the resilience of the human spirit in conditions we can scarcely imagine.

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Thinking of graphic images and horrendous circumstances brings me to another documentary, a Tribeca festival premiere, *Hell on Earth: The Fall of Syria and the Rise of ISIS* (<http://channel.national-geographic.com/hell-on-earth/>), co-directed by Sebastian Junger and Nick Quested. Observing that extremist ideologies thrive in conditions of state failure, Junger delves into the factors that produced the civil war. The non-violent protests against the regime in the spring of 2011, which Sarah Chayes notes were “explicitly an

anti-corruption struggle,” were met with maximum force that included the torture and murder of schoolboys in Daraa. This was the initial spark for a cycle of violence. Defections from the military added to the growth of numerous armed “moderate” opposition militias. But it was the Assad regime that released jihadists from its prisons, which had become a “factory of terrorism.” The regime wanted a war in which it could tar all opposition as “terrorist” and claim to be fighting it. Such was its cynical survival strategy of state terror and to an extent it succeeded.

Western powers denounced Assad but dithered even when “red lines” (i.e. on the use of chemical weapons) were crossed. Meanwhile, support for opposing sides by other actors (Hezbollah, Iran, the Gulf states, Russia) intensified the destruction. When ISIS expanded from Iraq to seize territory, imposing a reign of terror, Assad in effect made “an undeclared non-aggression pact with it,” concentrating his fire instead on internal enemies. In the words of one of many experts interviewed, British writer Robin Yassin-Kassab: “It’s absolute hell on earth. Assad wants the middle to be eliminated so the choice is between him or ISIS.”

*Hell on Earth* isn’t just a history lesson. Woven into the narrative are the personal testimonies of Syrian families affected by the nightmare of escalating violence. We feel their terrifying circumstances. (The film carries a warning about graphic images, especially so when children are involved.) Moreover, the filmmakers to their credit do not absolve the West of responsibility. Indeed Junger comments that “all societies are blind to their own violence,” adding that “the U.S. has killed far more civilians than ISIS ever could.” He is primarily referring to the carnage caused by the mishandling of the Iraq invasion and occupation resulting in horrific levels of violence and directly contributing to the rise of ISIS and subsequent atrocities.

Junger and Quested made many trips to the region but, denied entry to Syria, they searched out frontline footage shot by Middle East news organizations, activists and citizen



# God of love grants us mercy, but not for keeps

## Liturgy and Life

Margaret Bick



Which Jesus should I follow? Yes, you read it correctly, “Which Jesus?” Last week’s Jesus or this week’s Jesus? Last week’s Jesus offered us a rather structured court-like process for dealing with community members (our brothers and sisters) who sin against us. The community is mandated by Jesus to counsel the offender, make sure the offender is aware of their sin, and give the offender a chance to repent before exacting any punishment. Rather than allowing the community to inflict a vengeful kind of rough justice on offenders, Jesus places a heavy burden on the community, trusting us to act in his name, either forgiving or shunning the offender.

In seemingly stark contrast, this week’s Jesus places forgiveness at its source: in the hands of God, who is the fount of all love, mercy and forgiveness. The community’s

*Bick is a happily retired elementary school teacher who lives in Toronto. She is a liturgist with a master’s degree in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame and is a human rights advocate working for prisoners who have experienced prolonged solitary confinement.*

burden here is to pass on to others this gift of forgiveness, which we have certainly received.

Last week’s Jesus entrusts to us the authority to hand out forgiveness at our discretion. This week’s Jesus cautions us to remember the One to whom forgiveness — the forgiveness which we receive in everyday moments and in the sacraments — really belongs. The God of infinite love grants it to us, but not for keeps. Like all God’s gifts, mercy and forgiveness are given to us to be spread throughout our world. Therefore we are to forgive “seventy-seven times.”

Now we all know that there are not two Jesuses, but only one, whose depths are revealed in passages like these in Matthew 18. Poor Peter had already heard Jesus’ mandate to enter into a careful process of discernment when dealing with the offences of others. But, typically, Peter had to take it one step further and ask how many times he must forgive. So Jesus comes at it from a different, deeper perspective.

<b>Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time September 11, 2017</b>	<b>Sirach 27:30-28.7 Psalm 103 Romans 14:7-9 Matthew 18:21-35</b>
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I must confess this: I sympathize with Peter. In fact, I identify with him. I suspect that, deep down, I probably prefer that the people who sin against me be treated in the manner of last week’s gospel. “Repent or be gone.” Swift justice, swift closure. But when I am the sinner, I want to be treated in the manner of this week’s gospel — forgiven over and over again. And I also hope to get away with forgetting that business of passing it on. I am uncomfortably

like the slave in this week’s gospel.

What a puzzle we human beings are! That slave’s debt was enormous. (I’d rather use his story than one of my own as an illustration.) The king was entitled to balance his books by selling the slave, his few possessions and even his wife and children — possibly to different owners. But the slave asked for patience on the part of the king and was granted mercy in abundance. The king erased the slave’s entire debt. This was much more than the slave had hoped or asked for. His money problems were gone in an instant.

You’d think this slave would be overflowing with “the milk of human kindness.” But no! He had his debt-ridden neighbour thrown into debtors’ prison. Truly, this slave’s behaviour does not make sense. Sin seldom makes sense. That’s why Dr. Phil became famous asking, “What were you thinking?!” When we take time to reflect on our own bad acts, we often realize that we should have known better; we do know better. This is part of the mystery of sin.

But this king’s behaviour doesn’t make sense either. Who in their right mind would simply erase such a large debt? Who could be so gracious? Who but God, the true king! God’s grace is also a mystery. However, this king has great expectations of his graced people. They too must forgive in abundance.

As we leave the liturgy this week, we are sent forth in the peace of Christ, carrying within us God’s mercy and forgiveness, which are meant to be passed on to those we meet in coming days. Let’s try our best to leave the hurts, resentments and grudges behind. They are simply festering within us and are doing more harm to ourselves than to the one who has sinned against us. They certainly do not grow in the kingdom of God.

# Ritual keeps us doing what we should when we don’t feel like it

## In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



I don’t always find it easy to pray. Often I’m over-tired, distracted, caught up in tasks, pressured by work, short on time, lacking the appetite for prayer, or more strongly drawn to do something else. But I do pray daily, despite the fact that I often don’t want to and despite the fact that many times prayer can be boring and uninteresting. I pray daily because I’m committed to a number of rituals for prayer, the office of the church, lauds and vespers, the eucharist, and daily meditation.

And these rituals serve me well. They hold me, keep me steady, and keep me praying regularly even when, many times, I don’t feel like praying. That’s the power of ritual. If I only prayed when I felt like it, I wouldn’t pray very regularly.

Ritual practice keeps us doing what we should be doing (praying, working, being at table with our families, being polite) even when our feelings aren’t always onside. We need to do certain things not because we always feel like doing them, but because it’s right to do them.

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

And this is true for many areas of our lives, not just for prayer. Take, for example, the social rituals of propriety and good manners that we lean on each day. Our heart isn’t always in the greetings or the expressions of love, appreciation, and gratitude that we give to each other each day. We greet each other, we say goodbye to each other, we express love for each other, and we express gratitude to each other through a number of social formulae, ritual words: *Good morning! Good to see you! Have a great day! Have a great evening! Sleep well! Nice meeting you! Nice to work with you! I love you! Thank you!*

We say these things to each other daily, even though we have to admit that there are times, many times, when these expressions appear to be purely formal and seem not at all honest to how we are feeling at that time. Yet we say them and they are true in that they express what lies in our hearts at a deeper level than our more momentary and ephemeral feelings of distraction, irritation, disappointment, or anger. Moreover, these words hold us in civility, in good manners, in graciousness, in neighbourliness, in respect, and in love despite the fluctuations in our energy, mood, and feelings.

Our energy, mood, and feelings, at any given moment, are not a true indication of what’s in our hearts, as all of us know and

frequently need to apologize for. Who of us has not at some time been upset and bitter toward someone who we love deeply? The deep truth is that we love that person, but that’s not what we’re feeling at the moment.

If we only expressed affection, love, and gratitude at those times when our feelings were completely onside, we wouldn’t express these very often. Thank God for the ordinary social rituals which hold us in love, affection, graciousness, civility, and good manners at those times when our feelings are out of sorts with our truer selves. These rituals, like a sturdy container, hold us safe until the good feelings return.

Today, in too many areas of life, we no longer understand ritual. That leaves us trying to live our lives by our feelings; not that feelings are bad, but rather that they come upon us as wild, unbidden guests. Iris Murdoch asserts that our world can change in 15 seconds because we can fall in love in five seconds. *But we can also fall out of love in 15 seconds!* Feelings work that way! And so we cannot sustain love, marriage, family, friendship, collegial relationships, and neighbourliness by feelings. We need help. Rituals can help sustain our relationships beyond feelings.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer used to give this instruction to a couple when he was officiating at their wedding. He would tell them: *Today you are in love and you believe that your love can sustain your marriage. But it can’t. However, your marriage can sustain your love.* Marriage is a not just a sacrament, it’s also a ritual container.


Ritual not only can help sustain a marriage, it can also help sustain our prayer lives, our civility, our manners, our graciousness, our humour, our gratitude,

and our balance in life. Be wary of anyone who, in the name of psychology, love, or spirituality, tells you that ritual is empty and you must rely on your energy, mood, and feelings as your guiding compass. They won’t carry you far.

Daniel Berrigan once wrote: *Don’t travel with anyone who expects you to be interesting all*

*the time. On a long journey there are bound to be some boring stretches.* John of the Cross echoes this when talking about prayer. He tells us that, during our generative years, one of the biggest problems we will face daily in our prayer is simple boredom.

And so we can be sure our feelings won’t sustain us, but ritual practices can.



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# Sending hope in instant messages from hell

By Julia Lieblich

CHICAGO (RNS) — “Julia, over three hundred bodies they have buried today,” Ambrose Ndoenje texted me from Freetown, Sierra Leone, after torrential rains and mudslides left corpses floating down the street. Local leaders say the death count this week reached 1,000 in a country too often forgotten.

Twelve years have passed since Ndoenje drove me in his taxi during my six-week trip to the West African nation. But he still sends instant messages telling me that Jesus loves me and news of the latest disaster to befall his godforsaken place.

“When will you come back to Freetown?” Ndoenje asks again and again.

Never, I say silently to myself. I doubt I can once again bear witness to such relentless sorrow.

As a visiting fellow at Northwestern Law School’s Center for International Human Rights, I went to Sierra Leone to watch proceedings of the Special Court addressing human rights violations during the country’s 11-year civil war and to interview survivors of trauma. I visited segregated settlements built specially for amputees, whose arms and sometimes legs were chopped off by Revolutionary United Front rebels. And I spoke to RUF perpetrators, like the born-again Christian who cried as he told me of eating his victims’ hearts.

*Lieblich’s latest book is “Wounded I Am More Awake: Finding Meaning After Terror.” She is an Ochberg fellow at Columbia University’s Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma.*

A slight, gentle man, Ndoenje, then in his mid-20s, was determined to be my protector, picking me up at my hotel early each morning and steering me away from danger. He navigated his rickety car through six lanes of traffic in Freetown and along the dirt roads to outlying villages, frantically tending to his vehicle when it broke down in the heat.

I’ve never met someone who cared so much about my day, who I met, what I saw and what I thought of his country.

“Ah, Julia,” he’d say over lunch after I had tracked down a government official. “You are having a fine day.”

I was his older sister from America and he would never forget me.

When I returned home, he began saving up his pennies to call every few months. Then Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp changed everything. Now he sends me pictures weekly of his wife and three young children, interspersed with the news of the day in Krio, an English-based Creole language.

Most of his notes are about family and work.

“Julia, we are still waiting 4 d company to pay our monies and they have already close down because of financial problem.”

“My brother Abdul has been paralyzed. Only God knows why. We have taken him up country to c if he can be cure by a native doctor.

“U have forgotten me, Julia.”

Then there are the religious messages accompanied by pictures of a lily-white Jesus in a country that remains predominantly Muslim.

“Never ask for a lighter rain, just pray to God for a better umbrella.”

During the Ebola crisis that

## Western policy criticized

Continued from page 9

journalists. Especially effective and affecting is that it was recorded at grave risk by two brothers, Marwan and Radwan Mohamed, who eventually managed to escape besieged Aleppo with their young families. They made it to Turkey where they remain after being turned back from an attempt to sail to Greece. They are not optimistic about Syria’s fate. Junger remains critical of west-

ern policy and is definitely no fan of Donald Trump’s bluster. Behind the exodus of Syrian refugees are the life-and-death decisions of families like those featured in the film. Junger decries the right-wing populist backlash that stokes fears of a Muslim “invasion.” The West is far from blameless, and as he says, “all violence and misery affect us.”

*Hell on Earth* first aired on the National Geographic channel in June.



National Geographic

**HELL ON EARTH** — Woven into the narrative of the documentary *Hell on Earth: The Fall of Syria and the Rise of ISIS* are the personal testimonies of Syrian families affected by the nightmare of escalating violence.



CNS/Ernest Henry, Reuters

**HAVING FAITH** — Residents and rescue workers search for survivors after a mudslide in Regent, Sierra Leone Aug. 14. Julia Lieblich reflects on the mysteries of how people can keep faith in catastrophic circumstances.

killed thousands in Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries, the messages came frequently. Each day he sent the body counts reported in Sierra Leone’s numerous tabloids and described the corpses piling up in the streets. I wrote back inadequate condolence notes, sent a little money, made donations to NGOs and wondered how this slight young man held onto his faith through an unending course of war and natural disaster.

This week’s messages and photographs, which sometimes arrive every half-hour, are about

the flooding and mudslides, exacerbated by deforestation, that have left hundreds dead and thousands more homeless.

“I thank god Julia we were able to escape but we lost all our properties but d life is more important I thank god.”

“People are still trap under d debre becoz two things happen d floodind and the land slide.”

“We cannot find my wife’s auntie and her eight children.”

My Harvard Divinity School education and my years as a writer specializing in religion and

human rights have not prepared me for such extreme stories of loss upon loss. Tragedy has deepened Ndoenje’s faith. But I have begun to lose interest in such questions as whether there is a God who acts upon the world. I just know at the end of the day it brings Ndoenje comfort that someone is witnessing via instant messenger.

“When are you coming?” he asks between emojis.

“I don’t know,” I say. But Ndoenje makes sure I will never forget.

## The soul ‘is the truth of who we are’

### Outlooks from the Inner Life

Cedric Speyer



*“How will you know the difficulties of being human/ if you’re always flying off to blue perfection? Where will you plant your grief seeds? We need ground to scrape and hoe/ not the sky of unspecified desire.”*

— Rumi

The ground which Rumi invokes is where “soul work” takes place, since as a priest once told me, “We’re not angels yet.” And we’re not destined to become angels, because they have “blue perfection” covered.

The privilege and difficulty of being human is all about how the Spirit is fleshed out. We can intuitively recognize when spirit is dissociated from humanity: in the cult leader who promises followers a grief-free utopia; in the evangelist who is all resurrection while the shadow knows it’s fake transfiguration; in the too-good-to-be-true perennial “nice” person whose masked resentment peeks through the cracks of a polished persona.

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Similarly, we know real soul when we see it and feel it. That’s why we speak of “soul food” or “soul music,” and have “soul mates” and “soul friends,” all of which put us in touch with where the surface of life meets the depths.

Soul would be defined as the unconditioned essential locus of personhood, if it could be defined. Yet the small bookshop owner or craftsperson or *Prairie Messenger* editor who puts a lot of soul into their work wouldn’t necessarily see or speak of it like that, and why should they? “The soul is the truth of who we are” (Marianne Williamson), and by their fruits ye shall know them.

Fortunately, we don’t need to know what exactly the soul *is*, to know what the soul *does*. The soul keeps us grounded in the truth of situations, whether easy or hard to bear. The soul keeps things simple, travels light, and slows down to smell the roses. The soul knows it’s not what you’ve got; it’s what you do with what you’ve got. The soul chooses kindness and com-

passion, even when surrounded by competitiveness and fear. The soul cultivates inner peace when there are reasons to be frustrated, upset, or offended.

Thomas Merton called it the true self and incorruptible *point vierge*. Quakers call it the inner teacher. Buddhists call it our original nature or big self. It’s the Atman in Hinduism. Humanists view it as a matter of authentic identity and integrity. “But no matter what you say, you’re still gonna have to serve somebody . . .” (Bob Dylan, 1980).

What is soul if not the particular, unique form our self-giving takes? And that can’t be reduced to biological predispositions, psychological mechanisms, or sociological constructs. It resists marketing of all kinds, because we are processes not products and ultimately can’t be manufactured into whatever society needs us to be. In this world, what we need most is soul strength, which is not just the sum of good character traits, personal bests, and healthy lifestyles.

So what does the soul want in order to be strong? It wants to keep us rooted in our truth, able to resist the distractions of mind and diversions of ego. It wants to keep us connected to community, for no one is an island. It wants to find the place where our gifts and talents meet specific needs in the world. Mostly it wants to be food for others, because in a world that deals out too much death, life-giving nurture is of the soul’s very nature. To hear its summons, “Put your ear down close to your soul and listen hard” (Anne Sexton).



# Confronting Macdonald's racism with 'acts of anger'



## Pulpit & Politics

Dennis Gruending

Just as the Americans are dealing with what to do with statues of Confederate leaders such as General Robert E. Lee, Canadians have embarked on their own debate about stripping the name of Sir John A. Macdonald from schools and other buildings in Ontario. At its recent annual meeting the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario passed a motion which described this country's first prime minister as the "architect of genocide against indigenous peoples."

I do not agree with the union's recommended action, but respect their decision to engage in an important discussion. Until recently Macdonald was treated kindly by most historians, a trend toward hagiography that began with Donald Creighton's biographies in the 1950s. Macdonald was portrayed as a lovable political rascal who achieved great things despite his heavy drinking and many other flaws.

*Gruending is an Ottawa-based writer and a former member of Parliament. His blog can be found at <http://www.dennisgruending.ca>*

### Macdonald was a racist

Unfortunately, there is no doubt that Macdonald was a racist in his attitudes and actions toward indigenous peoples. I was shocked several years ago to read in a book called *Clearing the Plains* by James Daschuk that Macdonald, who was also the minister of Indian affairs, withheld food as a weapon to force starving First Nations people onto tiny reserves and out of the way of European settlers.

It was also Macdonald who sent Nicholas Flood Davin to investigate residential schools for indigenous children in the United States. Macdonald then set up similar schools in Canada beginning in the 1880s. The objective, in his own words, was to remove children from their families, place them in residential schools and to "take the Indian out of the child." The results of this cruel social engineering project were devastating, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has indicated.

### "Cultural genocide"

These are harsh truths about Macdonald. Most other settlers in his day held indigenous peoples in



Wikimedia Commons

**STATUE DEBATE** — A statue of Sir John A. Macdonald is seen in Gore Park, at King Street East and John Street in Hamilton, Ont.

equal contempt and had no qualms about stealing their land — but Macdonald's transgression is greater because he was the prime minister. Murray Sinclair, who was a judge and is now a senator, was the lead commissioner for the TRC. He has used the term "genocide" to describe the intended results of residential schools, land seizures, forced relocations and other destructive tactics. Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin used the term "cultural genocide" and said: "The most glaring blemish

on the Canadian historic record relates to our treatment of the First Nations that lived here at the time of colonization."

### Tread cautiously

Yet we should tread cautiously before expunging Macdonald's name from buildings, a move which would almost certainly be followed by demands to have his statues removed in Kingston, on Parliament Hill and from locations such as the Ottawa airport, which also bears his name. The

campaign paints Macdonald as a unidimensional monster. However, one of his strengths was his ability to overcome commonplace prejudices of the day between Protestants and Catholics, and between francophones and anglophones. If there is nothing worthy about Macdonald, then perhaps there is nothing worth celebrating about the nation that he and others brought into being. I believe that, despite its flaws, there is much that is good and noble about Canada.

### "Smacks of revenge"

The momentum for reconsidering the relationship between indigenous peoples and settler Canadians likely arises from the TRC report in 2015. Sinclair and his fellow commissioners made 94 "calls to action" that relate to reconciliation. They focus upon the need for an honest reappraisal of our history and a variety of concrete actions to be undertaken by governments, educational institutions, churches and individual Canadians. Much of the emphasis in those recommendations is upon education. But nowhere does the TRC propose renaming buildings or removing statues. In fact, Sinclair says doing so would be "counterproductive" and "almost smacks of revenge or smacks of acts of anger."

Let us, as the TRC recommends, redesign school curricula to tell the truth about what has been done to indigenous peoples in Canada, and to tell of the resilience of their societies. Let's pressure the Trudeau government to adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Let's repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which held that Europeans could blithely claim as their own lands which had been occupied by indigenous peoples since time immemorial. Let's support treaties, land claims and the provision of equitable funding as it relates to education and social services for indigenous children. Let's not bother with names on buildings or the location of statues.

## Be hesitant to pass judgment on how others live faith



## Double Belonging

Rev. Marie-Louise Ternier

It's that time again — musing about eucharist, ordination and church. A friend recently cited two reasons for not taking communion in an Anglican church. First, he highly doubted whether Anglicans really believe in transubstantiation, i.e., that they truly believe they receive the actual Body and Blood of Christ. Second, he feels he cannot receive in a church that is not "in communion" with Rome.

I replied by referring to the substantial agreement on the eucharist that exists between Roman Cath-

olics and Anglicans (ARCIC 1971), including on the Real (and permanent) Presence of Christ in the Eucharistic Body and Blood: "We believe that it is of utmost importance for our two Churches to acknowledge their substantial identity in the area of Eucharistic doctrine, and to build upon it as they go forward in dialogue." \*

But my friend remained unconvinced: "I'm not interested in ecumenical documents. I'm interested in the actual beliefs of the people. A lot of Anglicans don't even think it is a mass. You either believe in transubstantiation or you don't. And the Anglican Church, as a whole, does not. Individuals within it do. That's not a position that makes logical sense as a basis for inter-communion."

I felt sad. Learning about ecumenical agreements, especially on the eucharist, would go a long way to help my friend appreciate our current shared understanding. I know Rome consistently holds that unity at the eucharistic table can only arise as a result of eccl-

sial unity. But that does beg the question: How do we know we have achieved enough unity to share the table of the Lord? And who gets to determine this? Ecumenical agreements on the eucharist between Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and Lutherans now raise the question whether the remaining differences need to be church-dividing.

Moreover, the Gospels portray Jesus as sharing himself indiscriminately with all types of people, regardless of criteria for full communion. It is Pope Francis who insists that we trust the unifying and healing power of the eucharist as a "powerful medicine for the weak." Continuing to limit access to this unifying and powerful medicine in one another's churches seems to set up a logical contradiction. The eucharist is Jesus' banquet of complete self-giving; Christ himself is the host, the church its servant.

The Anglican reverence for the individual's capacity of faith allows for the person to appropriate the eucharistic mystery of real presence in whatever way they can. This comes through at the distribution of holy communion: The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving. *The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee,*

*preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful. (Order for Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer)*

Do any of us really fully grasp Jesus Christ's self-giving to the point of death? I do not expect to ever exhaust the meaning of this profound mystery. Anglican eucharistic spirituality fosters a deeper humility, making me more hesitant to pass judgment on how others understand and live their Christian faith: *Let us look at our own shortcomings and leave other people's alone; for those who live carefully ordered lives are apt to be shocked at everything and we might well learn very important lessons from the persons who shock us. Our outward comportment and behaviour may be better than theirs, but this, though good, is not the most important thing: there is no reason why we should expect everyone else to travel by our own road, and we should not attempt to point them to the spiritual path when perhaps we do not know what it is. (The Interior Castle St. Teresa of Avila)*

When all is said and done, I can only stand humbly before a *mysterium tremendum*.

\* For a complete listing of Anglican-Catholic Documents and Agreements, visit: <https://iarcum.org/agreed-statements>

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# Finding a kid in tall buildings and high attics

## Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



Though I’ve never been much of a Joni Mitchell fan, I have to admit that “Big Yellow Taxi” has been a recurring theme song: “Don’t it always seem to go / that you don’t know what you’ve got / ’til it’s gone . . .” It’s a mindset that leaves you lamenting the years gone by, not fully appreciating what’s right here, and losing faith in your capacity to ever enjoy anything in the future.

Over the years my memories, even the happy ones, have been stored like rocks in a crate, the weight of time past hidden deep in the basement. You don’t want to pull them out in case they hurt too much for being over, a reminder you’re getting older. This summer, though, instead of

burying and mourning lost special moments, I’ve strung them up like patio lights.

A recent experience reminded me of the times our family used to visit my aunt’s farm near Albertville. Auntie Terry’s huge farmhouse had a high second floor with lots of bedrooms and a peak-roofed spare room on one end. The old pull-up window looked out to the yard below. I would sometimes go up there by myself while everyone was busy with chores, the hot summer sun slanting through that window onto a kid alone with her thoughts. While I loved those trips, there were always lots of people around and even then I craved time by myself.

Our daughter Janice and her

husband, Kalon, recently moved to a small town. Their large 100-year-old house has a verandah and an upstairs balcony — and a peak-roofed attic. During a “sisters and daughters” weekend I volunteered to sleep up there. The rustic pull-up window with three little screened holes to let in wisps of summer air freed up the memory of that childhood refuge from years ago.

In Landis trains regularly thunder by within a block or two of the house. The whistle blows long and hard, even at 3 a.m., and you can feel the house shudder ever so slightly. High above the rest of the house that night, I felt like *A Little Princess* in her attic. When the morning sun poured through my window, it illuminated the sweet pastel calico sleeping near my head. The aroma of Kalon’s waffles curled up the wooden stairs from the kitchen two floors below.

I still crave alone time, but I’m not so lonely anymore.

In early August I had to pick up an item from an unfamiliar address and used Google maps to help me find the place. It told me I’d reached my destination on the right. The thing was, no “1703” was in sight. I walked down the sidewalk counting down the house numbers, anticipating 1703 and muttering to myself about how inefficient Google maps can be. There was 1705, and then . . . 1701. Confusion. Even the elderly lady at whose door I knocked for some help looked at me with sympathy. I felt like Harry Potter at King’s Cross Station trying to find Platform Nine and Three-Quarters. Stymied, I finally went back to the original email. 1723, right where my car was parked.

Age is being able to discern when one needs reading glasses. It’s also laughing, not cringing, at the memory of walking down a sidewalk looking for a house that doesn’t exist. Another lantern on the string.

During my summer holidays I visited family in Calgary and on one of the days we decided to have lunch at The Calgary Tower. I hadn’t been there since I was about 13, when the “Husky Tower” dwarfed everything except the Rockies visible in the distance. This tower is now just average in a congregation of skyscrapers. What those skyscrapers don’t have, however, is a glass floor. The same rush of excitement I felt as a teenager caught hold as the elevator carried us to the top. I couldn’t wait to step onto the glass floor where my stomach flipped as I looked 620 feet down to the tiny yellow taxicabs below. No “big yellow taxis” . . .

I haven’t figured out the secret of knowing what you’ve got

before it’s gone, and then looking back with delight instead of despondency. It has to do with contentment, but how to find that?

I think the older you get, the more you have to look for the kid inside. The one who really was OK after all, and ask her forgiveness for all the years you were so hard on her. It’s why I bike. Not the grim spandex and helmet kind, but the rounding the corner and down a slope just fast enough kind. Something about giving myself over to the pedals and the wind helps me to find that kid, to love her, because she is still me, and there’s no contentment without love.

The search is never over, but the effort to string up more patio lights is better than collecting rocks.



M. Weber

ADVENTURES — A summer attic sleepover ignites the imagination.



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## Pope Francis visits Colombia

Pope Francis is visiting Colombia on the north-west corner of Latin America Sept. 6 - 10. It is neighbour to Panama where the next World Youth Day will be celebrated in 2019.

His visit to Colombia fulfils a promise he made after a peace accord was signed in 2016. The people of Colombia suffered a civil war for 52 years. At least 220,000 people were killed and another six million were uprooted from their homes.

The bishops of Colombia describe their current situation as “a terrible tomb” that “has been crushed with armed conflict, drug trafficking, insecurity and inequality.”

In a document designed to prepare people for the visit, they said the pope is coming “to take the first step with us” in building a new society. The country faces a host of complicated processes for reintegrating former combatants into society and compensating victims of the conflict. The theme of the visit is “to take the first step” toward reconciliation.

In a commentary, Rome correspondent Cindy Wooden outlined four steps the pope may emphasize, based on his past experience.

The first step is to put justice into practice. This will mean letting go of festering anger and resentment after five decades of civil unrest. In a similar message to South Koreans in 2014, Pope Francis told Catholics: “Jesus asks us to believe that forgiveness is the door which leads to reconciliation. In telling us to forgive our brothers unreservedly, he is asking us to do something utterly radical, but he also gives us the grace to do it.”

A second step includes taking responsibility for any way one contributed to the tensions, even remotely, and asking forgiveness. In 2015, for example, Pope Francis told Sri Lankans to ask “for the grace to make reparation for our sins and for all the evil which this land has known” after 25 years of civil war.

A third step involves a commitment to sincere dialogue. He urges former combatants to listen to one

another and respond to the needs of those whose dignity has been crushed by poverty, discrimination or exclusion from political and social life. “This will allow different voices to unite in creating a melody of sublime nobility and beauty, instead of the fanatical cries of hatred,” he told the citizens of Sarajevo in 2015.

Another step the pope encourages is to start with prayer and small gestures. “Thank God for the acts of solidarity and generosity which he inspires in us, for the joy and love with which he fills our families and our communities,” he said in his 2015 visit to the Central African Republic.

“Thank God for his gift of courage, which inspires us to forge bonds of friendship, to dialogue with those who are different than ourselves, to forgive those who have wronged us, and to work to build a more just and fraternal society in which no one is abandoned.”

Pope Francis is not the only Jesuit trying to change society by emphasizing the need for reconciliation. As reported in last week’s *Prairie Messenger*, Canadian Jesuits organized the Canadian Canoe Pilgrimage to help reconciliation with people of the First Nations. The 800-kilometre canoe trip followed the river route travelled four centuries ago by explorers and Jesuit martyrs, including St. Jean de Brebeuf.

The 26-day summer trip, though tougher than expected, fulfilled all the group’s expectations and more. It strengthened the bonds among the Jesuits, indigenous peoples, religious and lay people who took part in the pilgrimage. It was taking the first step toward reconciliation, and it bears imitating. — PWN

## Patron saint of slaves

When Pope Francis visits Colombia he will honour another Jesuit who lived four centuries ago.

Young Peter Claver arrived in Cartagena from Spain in 1610 at a time when the slave trade was booming in Colombia. More than 78,000 African slaves arrived between 1570 and 1640 — some

10,000 a year.

After five years of studies in Bogota, he returned to Cartagena, where he was ordained in 1616. Referring to himself as “the slave of slaves,” he joined another Jesuit, Rev. Alonso de Sandoval, who spoke up about the injustice of slavery; he continued that ministry after de Sandoval was transferred to Peru in 1617.

At a time when the Catholic Church did not speak out against slavery in the Spanish colonies, and when even some Jesuit superiors criticized him, Claver made it his ministry to meet the traffickers’ ships at the slave port. Accompanied by slaves who spoke the new arrivals’ languages, he went first to help children and the sick. His humanitarian care and catechesis continued in the squalid houses where traders housed the slaves until they were sold or shipped to another port.

Canonized in 1888, Claver is honoured as the patron saint of human rights in Colombia. But although the country abolished slavery in 1851 and passed a law prohibiting discrimination in 1993, racism persists.

“In Colombia, there are still many human rights violations, especially of Afro-Colombian, indigenous and poor communities, particularly in cultural, economic, social and environmental rights, and rights to education, health and work,” said Rev. Carlos Eduardo Correa, provincial superior of the Jesuits in Colombia. They are marginalized and abandoned by the government.

The pope’s visit to Cartagena Sept. 10 will quietly highlight the persistent inequality in Latin America, which has some of the highest income disparities in the world. Tourists flock to the Caribbean city’s beach resorts, which contrast sharply with the poverty in which most of the city’s large Afro-Colombian population still lives, said Correa.

Pope Francis consistently condemns slavery and racism, both in history and today. His visit to Cartagena offers a world stage to repeat his message. It’s unlikely it is preached on the beach resorts. — PWN

## Pope rails against attempts to restore old-style Catholic worship

By Christopher Lamb

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — It’s not every day that Pope Francis chooses to invoke the full weight of his office. This is, after all, the

pontiff renowned for his free-wheeling, informal style and that famous phrase “who am I to judge.”

But when it comes to the furious internal rows over Catholic

worship, he’s decided enough is enough.

In a detailed, 2,500-word address at the Vatican on Aug. 24, Francis declared that the Roman Catholic Church’s liturgical

reforms of the 1960s are “irreversible,” a move designed to stop groups of traditionalists trying to roll back those changes.

While acknowledging that “there is still work to do” in interpreting changes made during the Second Vatican Council, the pontiff said it is not a question “of rethinking the reform by review-

ing its choices, but of knowing better the underlying reasons.”

The speech almost certainly won’t end the Catholic liturgy wars. Just a few hours after it was delivered the Latin Mass Society, based in the United Kingdom, responded: “Is it a piece of poetic prose about the liturgy? Have got through about half of it and lost the will to live.”

The pope’s words reflect his growing frustration with a tradi-

— TRADITIONALISTS, page 15

## Indian Act should have been abolished

By Brian Giesbrecht, Winnipeg

“The Indian Act is the root cause of all of the maladies that our people suffer from,” aboriginal leader Craig Blacksmith said recently. He’s absolutely right.

Blacksmith was a candidate in the recent Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) election. He ran on a platform of getting rid of the Indian Act.

While he made it clear that he wasn’t calling for an end to the lucrative relationship that status Indians have with the federal government, Blacksmith maintained that the act must go.

Blacksmith is not the only aboriginal leader to call for an end to the act. High-profile leaders like Shawn Atleo and the late Elijah Harper did so years ago. Shortly before he died, Harper said, “The Indian Act treats us like children. We should get rid of it.”

The historical irony of aboriginal leaders demanding that the Indian Act must go is breathtaking

— leaders telling Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to do exactly what their predecessors told Justin’s father, then-prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, what they wouldn’t stand for when he first proposed it almost 50 years ago.

That was when Pierre Trudeau and his minister of Indian Affairs, a very young Jean Chrétien, put out their now infamous white paper outlining exactly the same idea: to get rid of the Indian Act. The paper — very progressive for its time — proposed that aboriginal people would be generously compensated for treaty rights, and substantial allotments of money would be set aside for education and training programs to help ease people into the workforce.

The Indian Act, with all of its outdated and debilitating features, would be phased out over years. It was recognized that — even in 1969 — the phasing-out process would be expensive, long and complicated. But, at the end of the day, aboriginal people would be fairly and generously compensated, and from that time forward would enjoy the same rights as other Canadians.

Imagine how much further ahead we would all be if we had started that process in 1969.

What happened when they put out the white paper was a travesty. Aboriginal leaders, realizing

— BLOCKADE, page 15



CNS/Christinne Muschi, Reuters

CANADA BORDER CROSSINGS — A group of Haitians wait to cross the U.S.-Canada border into Quebec from New York Aug. 29.

Giesbrecht is a retired judge and a senior fellow at the think-tank Frontier Centre for Public Policy. [www.troymedia.com](http://www.troymedia.com)



Traditionalists wield a lot of influence

Continued from page 14

tionalist faction that opposes his overall reformist agenda. Still, a return to previous styles of worship has little support from ordinary Catholics except for a vocal minority.

And the traditionalists wield considerable influence. They include Cardinal Robert Sarah, leader of the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship. He has said liturgical reformers have brought about "devastation and schism" in the church and has delighted conservatives with his call for priests to say mass with their backs to the people.

In Catholic understanding, the celebration of the liturgy is both a moment to praise God but also build up the community of the church. The eucharist, the re-enactment of Jesus' last supper, is something everyone — priest and people — plays a part in.

Walk into the average Catholic Church for mass on Sunday and you are likely to witness a ritual conducted in a language understood by local people and led by a priest facing his congregation. Some of those attending the liturgy

will also read passages of Scripture, distribute communion and say prayers. And when it comes to the singing, you're more likely to hear the sound of guitars strumming than any Latin chanting.

For years, a faction of conservative Catholics have called for a return to a formal style of worship that includes more Latin, a priest facing east and people praying quietly in the pews. This, they argue, is how Catholics have worshipped for centuries and ensures the celebration is sacred and awe-inspiring.

Before the 1962 - 65 council, mass was celebrated entirely in Latin, with the priest saying prayers in a voice that was barely audible. Defenders of this form of liturgy say it offers an other-worldly experience that connects people with the divine.

But a near unanimous number of bishops disagreed and voted during the council to make changes including allowing the use of vernacular languages in the liturgy and the "full, active and conscious" participation of the congregation. Defenders of reform argue that mass said in this way is closer to how the early Christians celebrated

the eucharist when they gathered in one another's houses to pray.

In the years following the council there was a backlash in certain quarters against how the changes set forward by the council developed and there were increasing calls for a "reform of the reform."

During Benedict XVI's papacy traditionalists were encouraged by his loosening of restrictions on celebrating the old form of the liturgy a decade ago while more recently they have applauded Sarah who has spoken favourably about a "reform of the reform."

In his speech on Aug. 24 the pope described the mass as "popular" rather than "clerical" and "an action for the people, but also of the people." He also quoted from the Second Vatican Council documents stating that Catholics should not be "strangers or silent spectators" during mass.

For Francis, the liturgy is more than an idea and should reflect a church that is "truly living" and missionary. And he pointed out that reforms to the liturgy were started by popes such as Pius X and Pius XII, who were held up as heroes by traditionalists.



G. Schmitz

no god

there is no god . . .  
like You they say  
who for hours on end  
will chat away  
at any time  
on any day

but there is no god . . .  
like You at all  
who responds in Silence  
to my call  
and lifts me gently  
when I fall

By Denise Young

Trudeau and Chrétien faced nationwide blockade

Continued from page 14

that they would lose their artificially privileged place, along with a cornucopia of financial benefits, let out a howl heard from coast to coast. They convinced the majority of poor aboriginal people, who actually had the most to gain from the aboli-

tion of the Indian Act, to oppose Trudeau's plan.

Trudeau and Chrétien, faced with threats of nationwide blockades, backed down. A bitter Trudeau told the leaders, "Okay, you can stay in the ghetto for as long as you like."

But here's where Trudeau was wrong: the aboriginal leaders didn't stay in the ghetto. While the great majority of aboriginal people certainly did — stuck in that hopeless spot between the past and modernity — the leaders did just fine. Together with their newfound friends, countless consultants and lawyers, they have created an industry that works very well for them. It has nothing to do with the production of anything of value. It consists only of demands for money based on "we were here first, so pay us."

Part of this industry is a treaty reinterpretation division (more

accurately, treaty rewriting) that completely distorts the original plain meaning of the treaties. In fact, the treaties are now used as ATM machines. The industry has a victim division that lines up historical grievances one after the other and puts on incredibly expensive show trials to extract money from the hapless taxpayer. A staggering sum of money is spent simply to warehouse poor people on reserves.

Meanwhile, an army of opportunists has attached itself like zebra mussels to this money pipeline. And many of these clever people are not even aboriginal.

An exact amount extracted yearly from the government by this industry can't be obtained, because efforts to get proper accounting are thwarted. But the annual amount is probably in excess of \$20 billion — and growing. This is not sustainable.

Aboriginal leaders maintain the myth that Trudeau's plan to bring about equality was the devil's work. Strangely, many intelligent and caring Canadians have accepted this Orwellian interpretation.

The truth is that the privileged aboriginal people threw their poor majority under the bus in order to hang on to their privileges. It has always been about money, not culture.

When one listens to the aboriginal leaders who today call for an end to the Indian Act, one realizes quickly that they're not talking

about all Canadians becoming equal at all. They're actually after a new Super-Indian Act that gives everyone born with some degree of aboriginal ancestry a pension for life, simply by being born — and one that leaves them firmly in control of the tidal flow of money from Ottawa.

However, let's take them literally and believe they want the Indian Act to be abolished with fair compensation. In fact, let's do what their aboriginal counterparts in New Zealand have already done. The Maori people came to realize that remaining in grievance mode and relying on the government for their every need prevented them from moving forward.

They settled with the government on a buyout, and are now far ahead of Canada's aboriginal people in terms of self-reliance and prosperity. The value of assets transferred to the Maori has climbed from around \$9 billion in 2006 to \$50 billion and growing today, according to Maori leader Te Taru White.

Trudeau the elder had his flaws but he was a man of vision. He knew absolutely that a country must have one class of citizen and one set of laws to be successful.

On this one, Trudeau the younger should mind his father.

Hear cries of marginalized

Continued from page 1

were issuing a joint message, the text included a plea to world leaders.

"We urgently appeal to those in positions of social and economic, as well as political and cultural, responsibility to hear the cry of the earth and to attend to the needs of the marginalized," they wrote. No enduring solution can be found "to the challenge of the ecological crisis and climate change unless the response is concerted and collective, unless the responsibility is shared and accountable, unless we give priority to solidarity and service."

Pope Francis and Bartholomew also highlighted how "this deterioration of the planet weighs upon the most vulnerable of its people," especially the poor, in a more pronounced way.

"Our obligation to use the earth's goods responsibly implies the recognition of and respect for all people and all living creatures," they said. "The urgent call and challenge to care for creation are an invitation for all of humanity to work toward sustainable and integral development."

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# Protestants becoming ‘traditional Catholics’ in practice

By Emily McFarlan Miller

NEW YORK (RNS) — The theological differences that led to the Protestant Reformation 500 years ago have dwindled since in both the United States and western Europe.

That’s the finding of a Pew Research Centre survey released Aug. 31, weeks before late October’s 500th anniversary of the schism in western Christianity.

Among U.S. Protestants, many seem unaware of the differences, voicing beliefs today that are more traditionally Catholic than they are Protestant.

“I think it’s fair to say the differences between the two groups have diminished to a degree that might have shocked Christians of earlier centuries,” said Greg Smith,

associate director of research at Pew Research Centre.

“Maybe it’s not a huge surprise in the context of modern-day United States, but if you look back at the longer term — at the 500th anniversary of the Reformation — that would be quite surprising to a Christian of 300, 400, 500 years ago.”

Of course, Smith noted, no survey data exists to measure responses to the same questions in the 1500s.

According to the survey, more Protestants reported they believe salvation comes through a mix of faith and good works (52 per cent) — the traditionally Catholic position — than through “faith alone” (46 per cent). That belief — *sola fide* in Latin — is one of five *solas* that form the backbone

of Protestant Reformers’ beliefs.

The same shares of Protestants also reported they believe Christians should look to the Bible, church teachings and tradition for guidance — the Catholic position — rather than the “Bible alone,” or the Protestant belief in *sola scriptura*.

Only 30 per cent of U.S. Protestants affirmed both *sola fide* and *sola scriptura*. Belief in both doctrines was higher among white evangelical Protestants (44 per cent) than white mainline Protestants (20 per cent) or black Protestants (19 per cent) and jumped even higher (59 per cent) among white evangelicals who reported they attend church at least once a week.

U.S. Catholics, in contrast to Protestants, voiced beliefs more

in line with the teachings of their church: 81 per cent reported both good deeds and faith were needed to get into heaven, and 75 per cent reported Christians should look to the Bible, church teaching and tradition for guidance.

And while differences between Catholics and Protestants once led to wars and persecution, most U.S. Catholics (65 per cent) and

Protestants (59 per cent) now agree they have more in common than not.

The U.S. survey of more than 2,500 adults, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, was conducted online from May 30 to Aug. 9. The margin of error for results based on each sample in that survey is plus or minus 2.9 percentage points.

## Pope offers early new year greetings to world’s Jews

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis praised the increasingly friendly and fruitful relations between the Catholic Church and Jewish leaders as he also wished the world’s Jewish communities a happy Rosh Hashanah a few weeks early.

“In recent decades, we have been able to draw closer to one another and to engage in an effective and fruitful dialogue. We have grown in mutual understanding and deepened our bonds of friendship,” he told a delegation of rabbis, led by Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, chief rabbi of Moscow.

The pope met Aug. 31 with representatives of the Conference of European Rabbis, the Rabbinical Council of America and the Commission of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel; the groups are engaged in dialogue with the Holy See’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The rabbis presented the pope with their written declaration, “Between Jerusalem and Rome,” which, according to the declaration, offers “an important contemporary Jewish Orthodox reflection on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity.”

In the declaration, published online in early 2017, the rabbinical leaders urged the Catholic Church to partner with them “in deepening our combat against our generation’s new barbarism, namely the radical offshoots of Islam, which endangers our global society and does not spare moderate Muslims.”

“As a people who suffered from persecution and genocide throughout our history, we are all too aware of the very real danger facing many Christians in the Middle East, and elsewhere they are persecuted and menaced by violence and death at the hands of those who invoke God’s name in vain through violence and terror,” the document said.

This radical extremism “threatens world peace in general and the Christian and Jewish communities in particular. We call on all people of goodwill to join forces to fight this evil,” it said.

As the western world becomes more secular and abandons its Judeo-Christian values, the more religious freedom will be “increasingly threatened by the forces of both secularism and religious extremism,” it said.

For that reason, the leaders wrote they seek to partner with “the Catholic community in particular, and other faith communities in general, to assure the future of religious freedom, to foster the

moral principles of our faiths, particularly the sanctity of life and the significance of the traditional family, and to cultivate the moral and religious conscience of society.”

In his remarks to the groups, Pope Francis told them, “We are presently experiencing a fruitful moment of dialogue.” And he echoed the declaration’s statement that, “given the great spiritual heritage we hold in common, every effort must be made to foster reciprocal knowledge and respect, above all through biblical studies and fraternal discussions.”

While recognizing deep theological differences exist between the two faith traditions, the pope underlined the importance of the document affirming that “religions must use moral behaviour and religious education — not war, coercion or social pressure — to influence and inspire.”

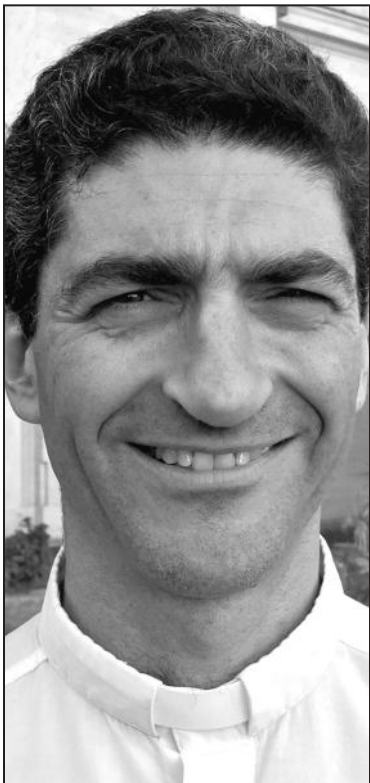
After expressing his hopes that “the Eternal One bless and enlighten our co-operation, so that together we can accept and carry out ever better his plans,” the pope told the delegation, “*Shanah tovah*,” conveying his best wishes for the Jewish New Year, which begins Sept. 20.

He asked the delegates to remember him in their prayers and he prayed that “the Almighty bestow his peace upon us and upon the entire world.”

## Catholic social teaching still developing

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholic social teaching has developed over the past century as new problems — human, social, economic and environmental — come clearer into focus and call out for a faith-based response.



CNS/Cindy Wooden

Rev. Augusto Zampini Davies

Pope Francis’ contribution, with his encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, on Care for Our Common Home, is to emphasize just how closely entwined those problems are.

“After *Laudato Si’*, for the Catholic Church, these are connected. You cannot try to tackle poverty without caring for the earth and equally you cannot care for the earth without caring for the people who live on the earth,” said Rev. Augusto Zampini Davies, an official at the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

One of the biggest challenges of Pope Francis’ approach is a spiritual one, the Argentine priest said. It involves conversion.

The poor are impacted most by

climate change, yet they have done the least to contribute to it, he said. “We must convert and change our lifestyles and help others cope with the climate change we’ve caused.”

People in wealthy countries may think they are “ecologically friendly” because they recycle and “like trees and gardening,” he said, “but the way we produce, trade, consume and waste” is not offset by separating plastic from paper.

In addition, wealthy countries “have the resources to mitigate the effects of climate change,” for example, in building infrastructure to control flooding and providing emergency relief to victims of natural disasters and drought. But in poor countries, thousands of people die in floods and tens of thousands are forced to migrate because of drought and famine.

“If you cannot grow your crops and feed your children, who wouldn’t migrate?” he asked.

In richer countries, the conversion Pope Francis is calling for includes learning to face fear with a Gospel-based attitude toward others and toward future generations, the priest said.

The connections between environmental damage, the global economy and migration are clear, he said. And so are the motives underlying reactions like climate-change denial, isolationism and anti-migrant sentiments.

“What Pope Francis does is say, ‘OK, here are the symptoms, let’s find the roots,’ ” Davies said. “The roots are the same: selfishness or indifference or greed or this mentality of thinking that if I have more I will be more important.”

In many ways, he said, fear appears to be spreading among people in the wealthiest nations, and “politicians play on people’s fears. If I feel I am not benefiting from the global economy and I live in a democracy, I will vote for someone who says they will get us out of that.”

Christians can find in their faith a healthy way to handle their fears, he said, “because we have a different approach to the quality

of life, to what it means to have a better life, because our understanding of life is relational and our understanding of redemption and salvation is that it is for all of creation.”

Transforming the former Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace into the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Pope Francis specified that the office is an expression of the church’s “concern for issues of justice and peace, including those related to migration, health, charitable works and the care of creation.”

In other words, for Pope Francis, all those issues together are key components of “integral human development.”

Davies, a priest of the Diocese of San Isidro, Argentina, is one of the newest officials at the dicastery. He moved to Rome from London where he spent the last four years serving as a theological adviser to CAFOD, the official aid agency of the bishops of England and Wales.

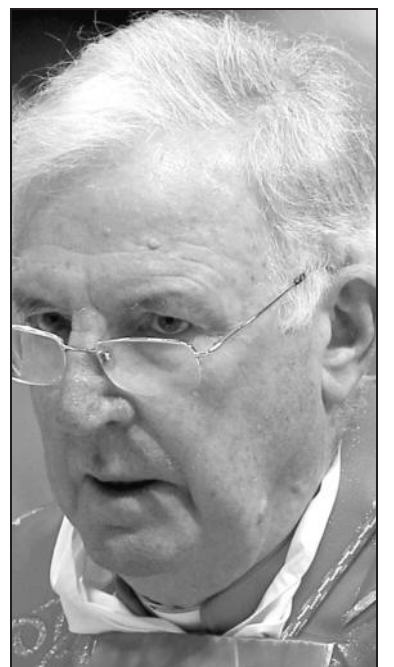
His focus is “integral ecology,” which includes development, the environment and spirituality.

Early development efforts focused almost exclusively on material growth, Davies said, but over time it became obvious that increasing income and purchasing power was not enough. Progress also meant access to education and health care and greater social and political inclusion.

Thanks also to the social teaching of Blessed Paul VI, St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, he said, Catholic development experts began insisting that respect for human dignity, strengthening families and religious freedom also were markers of progress.

For many of the development models, he said, environmental degradation was accepted as collateral damage in the drive to increase production and consumption, thereby raising GDPs.

Now it is clear to scientists, economists, development experts and theologians that care for the environment and reducing the factors that contribute to climate change are essential for making development sustainable and truly caring for the poor, Davies said.



CNS/Paul Haring

**CARDINAL DIES** — English Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor, a longtime leader in Catholic-Anglican relations and former archbishop of Westminster, died Sept. 1 at the age 85. He is pictured in a 2013 photo. Murphy-O’Connor was once described by *The Tablet*, a Catholic weekly, as “everyone’s favourite bishop: human, genial, collaborative, imposing.”

There are no wrong turns, only unexpected paths.

— Mark Nepo