



### Bill 34

Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon is urging the faithful to support Bill 34 in the Manitoba legislature. The legislation would protect health care professionals from having to provide, refer, or assist in the provision of Medical Assistance in Dying against their conscience.

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### Democracy is under threat

After watching the U.S. elect Donald Trump, the Law and Justice Party of Poland undermine that country's judiciary and constitution, and British apprehension about immigration lead to Brexit, Ukrainian Greco-Catholic bishop of Paris Borys Gudziak warns that when we give up on democracy, we give in to fear.

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### Survivors

Residential school survivors recalled some painful memories and spoke of the steps they have taken toward healing at a public event held Sept. 28 at the Frances Morrison Library in Saskatoon.

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### Online porn

"Children can easily stumble upon pornographic images through maliciously placed links or seemingly innocuous searches," says author and speaker Matt Fradd, "and curious youth can find porn online with a click or two."

— page 7

### Fear of God

Threats have no place in love, and a God who is to be feared for his punitive threats is not a God with whom we can have a relationship, writes Ron Rolheiser, OMI. To preach hellfire is against the Gospel.

— page 11

### Cafeteria Catholics

"The truth is, all Catholics are cafeteria Catholics," writes Thomas Reese, SJ. "Conservative Catholics were quite willing to ignore John Paul's and Benedict's strong statements on justice and peace, and progressive Catholics are happy to ignore Francis' opposition to women priests."

— page 13

## Dream for church realized in Fort Simpson

By Andrew Ehrkamp

FORT SIMPSON, NWT. — The people of the small, remote town of Fort Simpson say it is a prayer answered.

Parishioners of Sacred Heart Church took turns ringing its aging bell to call the community to the official mass consecrating the new \$1.3-million building on Sept. 17.

The new church officially opened just days before the 30th anniversary of what many residents consider another answered prayer — the detour St. Pope John Paul II took to keep a promised visit to the roughly 1,200 people who live here, about 600 kilometres west of Yellowknife.

It was standing-room only inside as parishioners, supporters, First Nations elders and chiefs gathered to help celebrate the fact that they finally have a new place

*Ehrkamp is the news editor for the Archdiocese of Edmonton.*

to worship in the Deh Cho region and its largely Dene communities.

"It's a beautiful gift. It's like people's prayers have been answered," said Mike Cazon, a Dene parishioner from nearby Trout River, who has been attending Sacred Heart Church since he was a child.

Parishioners had been attending mass in a school gym for five years after the old building — built in 1923 — was condemned and demolished.

"It's almost unbelievable that this longtime dream of the people of this region is becoming a reality," added Rev. Joe Daley, the pastor of Sacred Heart.

People gasped audibly as they entered the new church, with its gleaming blue-and-pale-brown interior and vaulted hardwood roof, many of them seeing for the first time how the design has mixed the present with the past.

The steeple and bell from the old church building was saved and placed on a concrete base in front of the new one. Both are



Andrew Ehrkamp

**NEW CHURCH BLESSED** — Bishop Mark Hagemoen of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith (left) greets a parishioner after the blessing of the new church for Sacred Heart Parish in Fort Simpson, N.W.T., just a few days after his appointment as the new bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon was announced.

signature symbols of the churches built by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the North-

west Territories.

Ornate wood-relief Stations of the Cross, written in French in honour of the Oblates, hang on the walls. And the baptismal font, altar and podium — handcrafted from local diamond willow — have been saved from the old church.

The church building opened thanks in part to the Archdiocese

## Treaty elder welcomed at Sacred Heart

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

DAVIDSON, Sask. — After Sunday mass and a potluck meal, parishioners at Sacred Heart Parish in Davidson, Sask., listened as Elder Ruth Cameron shared her experiences of attending residential school, overcoming the trauma of being separated from her family, and finding healing in the traditions of her culture.



Tim Yaworski

**TREAT ELDER** — Elder Ruth Cameron spoke to parishioners and community representatives Sept. 17 at Sacred Heart Parish in Davidson, Sask., the latest in a Treaty Elder Series launched in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

"I am honoured to be here today to share with you and help you to know some of the history of the indigenous peoples and how

we are looking at truth and reconciliation," Cameron said, describing how she has now come to a time in her life when she feels "able to speak in my own voice."

An initiative in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon to respond to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Treaty Elder Series provides an opportunity "to open our minds and our hearts, to listen, and to seek to understand," explained Myron Rogal of the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace.

Born in Treaty 4 territory, Cameron worked for some 32 years as a home and school liaison in the Catholic school system in Saskatoon, and is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

In the presentation at Davidson, she offered insights into what it is like to be separated from your family at a young age, and some of the challenges she experienced as an Aboriginal child and woman.

At the age of five, Cameron was taken from her home to attend the residential school operated by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate

and the Grey Nuns at Lebret, Sask. The experience left her angry and hurt, unable to understand why her mother left her at the residential

— **DISRUPTION**, page 4

— **CHURCH**, page 5

## Pope announces pre-synod meeting to listen to youth

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has invited Christian and non-Christian young people from around the world to a meeting in preparation for the synod of bishops on youth in 2018.

Before concluding his weekly general audience, the pope said the March 19 - 24, 2018, pre-synod meeting will be an opportunity for the church to listen to the hopes and concerns of young men and women.

"Through this journey, the church wants to listen to the voices, the sensibilities, the faith as well as the doubts and criticisms of young people. We must listen to young people," Pope Francis said Oct. 4.

The theme chosen by the pope for the synod of bishops, which will be held in October 2018, is: "Young people, faith and vocational discernment."

The general secretariat of the synod said the initiative "will allow young people to express their expectations and desires as well as their uncertainties and concerns in the complex affairs of today's world."

Young people attending the meeting will represent bishops' conferences, the Eastern Catholic churches, men and women in consecrated life and seminarians preparing for the priesthood, the general secretariat said.

The gathering also will include representatives from other Christian communities and other religions and experts in the fields of education, culture, sports and arts, who "are involved in helping young people discern their choices in life."

"The pre-synod meeting will enrich the consultation phase, which began with the publication of the preparatory document and its questionnaire, along with the launch of an online website containing a specific questionnaire for young people," the synod office said in a statement.

Conclusions drawn from the meeting, the general secretariat added, will be given to members of the synod of bishops "to encourage their reflection and in-depth study."

Young people attending the meeting also will take part in the Palm Sunday mass at the Vatican March 25, coinciding with local celebrations of World Youth Day.



# Christians should return to Iraq as full citizens

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Christians don’t want to be a “protected minority” in the Middle East; they must be full citizens with full rights and the opportunity to contribute to a just and lasting peace, said Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

The return of Christians to Iraq’s Ninevah Plain “must be the first and urgent objective of our efforts,” the cardinal said. “That will allow the Christian community to then face the other challenges that await it in being fully active and generous in building up the common good of the entire nation.”

Parolin spoke Sept. 28 at a Rome conference sponsored by Aid to the Church in Need, an international Catholic charity. The group’s “Return to the Roots” campaign is trying to raise \$250 million to rebuild 13,000 houses in northern Iraq and help their Christian owners return to their villages.

About 100,000 Christians — among them more than 60,000 Syriac Catholics — were expelled from the Ninevah Plain by the Islamic State group in the summer of 2014 as the militants campaigned to expand their reach into Iraq.

“A Christian presence is fundamental for a peaceful, stable” and multicultural Middle East, the cardinal said. For centuries, the region has been home to Christians, Muslims and Jews, but recent waves of terrorism and war are destroying its identity.

Aid to the Church in Need’s project, he said, “beyond expressing the solidarity of the universal church — shown not only at the level of spiritual closeness through prayer, but also on the concrete level of charity — aims to restore to

Christians that air of normality that is so necessary for overcoming fear and desperation and allowing them to look to the future with hope.”

But the people also need guarantees of their security and their rights, Parolin said. They have a right to return in safety, a right to

religious freedom and, above all, a right to be recognized as full citizens and not just a “protected minority.”

Chaldean Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad, who participated in the conference along with Syriac Catholic Archbishop Youhanna

Boutros Moshe of Mosul and Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Nicodemus Daoud Sharaf of Mosul, told Vatican Radio, “Without reconciliation what does rebuilding houses do? They could be destroyed again.”

“The most important thing is

the culture, the mentality,” the patriarch said. “People must exit this culture of violence — always war, always violence, always revenge. We must educate people to live together in peace with respect, with collaboration and with understanding.”

## Pope: True Christians must not be ‘whiny and angry’

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Real hope lies in the proclamation of Jesus’ death and resurrection, not just with one’s words but also in deeds, Pope Francis said.

Christians are called to be witnesses of the resurrection through “their way of welcoming, smiling and loving” instead of just “repeating memorized lines,” the pope said Oct. 4 during his weekly general audience.

“Look,” he said, “that’s what a real Christian is like, not whiny and angry, but convinced by the power of the Resurrection that no evil is infinite, no night is without end, no person is permanently in error, no hatred is stronger than love.”

Arriving later than usual, Pope Francis was quickly ushered around St. Peter’s Square to greet the estimated 15,000 pilgrims, stopping only once to greet a crying child.

The pope continued his series of audience talks on Christian hope, reflecting on a reading from the Gospel of St. Luke, which describes the astonishment and disbelief of the disciples upon being visited by the risen Christ.

Christians are not “prophets of doom” but rather missionaries of hope who are tasked with proclaiming Jesus’ death and resurrection, which is “the nucleus of

Christian faith,” Pope Francis said.

“If the Gospels ended at Jesus’ burial, the history of this prophet would be added to the many biographies of heroic people who have given their lives for an ideal,” the pope said. “The Gospel would then be an edifying and consoling book, but it would not be a proclamation of hope.”

Instead, he continued, Jesus’ resurrection is not only “beautiful news that is brought to everyone,” but rather a powerful event that “transforms us by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

However, at times proclaiming hope may come at the price of one’s own life, as it did for the disciples, the pope said.

Recalling the lives of countless Christian martyrs who “did not abandon their people when the time of persecution came,” Pope Francis said their witness and sacrifice proved that “injustice is not the final word in life.”

“Let us think of our brothers and sisters of the Middle East who give witness to hope and offer their lives for this witness,” the pope said. “These are true Christians. They carry heaven in their hearts.”

“Those who have had the grace to embrace the resurrection of Jesus,” he said, “can still hope in the unexpected.”



CNS/Paul Haring

**POPE MEETS DOG, U.S. NUN — Pope Francis greets U.S. Dominican Sister Pauline Quinn and her dog during the pope’s general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Oct. 4. Quinn, 77, founded a dog-training program for prisoners at the Washington State Correctional Center for Women more than 30 years ago. The program, through which prisoners train service dogs for people who are blind or have other special needs, has since spread around the world.**

## Trump relaxes contraceptive mandate

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Trump administration Oct. 6 issued interim rules expanding the exemption to the contraceptive mandate for religious employers, such as the Little Sisters of the Poor, who object on moral grounds to covering contraceptive and abortion-inducing drugs and devices in their employee health insurance.

The contraceptive mandate was put in place by the Department of Health and Human Services under the Affordable Care Act.

While providing an exemption for religious employers, the new rules maintain the existing federal contraceptive mandate for most employers.

President Donald Trump had pledged to lift the mandate burden placed on religious employers during a White House signing ceremony May 4 for an executive order promoting free speech and religious liberty, but Catholic leaders and the heads of a number of Catholic entities had criticized the administration for a lack of action on that pledge in the months that followed.

From the outset, churches were exempt from the mandate, but not religious employers. The Obama



CNS/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters

**President Donald Trump**

religious entities such as church-run colleges and social service agencies morally opposed to contraceptive coverage that required them to file a form or notify HHS that they will not provide it. Many Catholic employers still objected to having to fill out the form

The HHS mandate has undergone numerous legal challenges from religious organizations, including the Little Sisters of the Poor and Priests for Life.

A combined lawsuit, *Zubik vs. Burwell*, made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the justices in May 2016 unanimously returned the case to the lower courts with instructions to determine if contraceptive insurance coverage could be obtained by employees through their insurance companies without directly involving religious employers

who object to paying for such coverage.

Senior Health and Human Services officials who spoke to reporters Oct. 5 on the HHS rule on the condition of anonymity said that the exemption to the contraceptive mandate would apply to all the groups that had sued against it. Groups suing the mandate all the way to the Supreme Court include the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Archdiocese of Washington, the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Eternal Word Television Network and some Catholic and other Christian universities.

In reaction immediately after the 150-page interim ruling was issued, religious groups that had opposed the mandate were pleased with the administration’s action.

Mark Rienzi, senior counsel at the Becket Fund, told reporters in a telephone news conference an hour after the rule was released that it is a “common sense and balanced rule and a great step forward for religious liberty.”

He said the rule “carves out a narrow exemption” and keeps the contraceptive mandate in place for those without moral or religious objections to it.

## Pope to address ‘fake news’

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Given the strong divisions sparked and fuelled by “fake news,” Pope Francis is highlighting the importance of truth in his message for World Communications Day.

The message will call for studying the causes and consequences of baseless information and will promote “professional journalism,” which always seeks the truth and therefore peace and understanding in the world, the Vatican Secretariat for Communication said, announcing the theme.

“‘The truth will set you free’: Fake news and journalism for peace” will be the theme of the church’s celebration of World Communications Day 2018. The day’s theme is announced every year on Sept. 29, the feast of the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael.

The theme Pope Francis chose “relates to so-called ‘fake news’ — namely baseless information that contributes to generating and

nurturing a strong polarization of opinions,” the announcement said. “It involves an often misleading distortion of facts, with possible repercussions at the level of individual and collective behaviour.”

With so many key players in the world of social media, Internet and politics beginning to face the phenomenon, it said, “the church, too, wishes to offer a contribution.”

The pope’s message for the day will propose “a reflection on the causes, the logic and the consequences of disinformation in the media,” and it will try to help “promote professional journalism, which always seeks the truth, and therefore a journalism of peace that promotes understanding between people.”

Most dioceses will celebrate World Communications Day 2018 on May 13, the Sunday before Pentecost. The Vatican will release the pope’s message for the observance Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron of journalists.



# Gagnon backs conscience provisions in Bill 34

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — Archbishop Richard Gagnon is urging the faithful in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg to support a bill in the Manitoba legislature that would protect doctors, nurses and other health care professionals from having to provide, refer, or assist in the provision of Medical Assistance in Dying against their conscience.

The “A Call for Conscience” campaign has been organized to back Bill 34, which is currently on the legislative assembly of Manitoba Order Paper and will soon be up for debate. The bill was introduced by Progressive Conservative MLA Kelvin Goertzen, Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living.

The campaign was started by the Coalition for Health Care and Conscience, a Canadian Christian-based organization.

“The opportunity for action is time-sensitive,” writes Gagnon in



PM file  
Archbishop Richard Gagnon

a pastoral letter. “I am asking you, the faithful of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, to take part in the efforts of contacting our MLAs to let them know that you support Bill 34, and that you

would like them to do the same. This is an important issue for the future of health care in Manitoba and for the right of people of faith to freely practise medicine. Unfortunately, in Ontario, the College of Physicians and Surgeons has voted to make referrals for Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) a provincial policy. In Manitoba there is currently a great deal of pressure from powerful and well-funded advocates of assisted suicide and euthanasia to do away with the conscience rights of doctors and nurses as well. Support for Bill 34 is not a partisan issue as it is clearly about protecting the conscience rights of doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals from being forced to choose between their conscience and their career.”

A template for writing letters to members of the legislative assembly has been provided in churches

for the past three Sundays. “Better yet,” suggests the archbishop, “use the template as a model for your own personalized letter.” The letters will be forwarded to Micah House, the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Centre for Social Justice, for distribution to MLAs. Parishioners can also support the campaign by visiting their MLA personally to let their views be known.

Those who did not receive a template can send a letter to their MLA via the Coalition for Health Care and Conscience website. On the website, MLAs are found by entering one’s postal code. Users then enter their name and email and can send a prepared letter or modify the message with their own thoughts. By clicking “Write Your MLA and the Minister,” the email is sent to the MLA and the Minister of Health.

For those who want to learn

more about the issue, the website also offers a three-minute video called Call for Conscience with several Canadian physicians sharing their concerns regarding conscience rights and their hope for Bill 34 to be passed. The video is also available via the Archdiocese of Winnipeg website.

“Lastly, and most importantly,” writes Gagnon, “I ask for your prayers for the success of this campaign, that our Lord Jesus Christ may aid our province of Manitoba to continue to be a place where the diversity we celebrate as a society makes room for people of conscience and of faith. It is my hope that many of you will participate in this collective effort, in communion with other Manitoba dioceses and with other Christians in our province as well as people from various faith backgrounds, who share our values of respect for life.”

# Indigenous relations remain a top priority for Canadian bishops

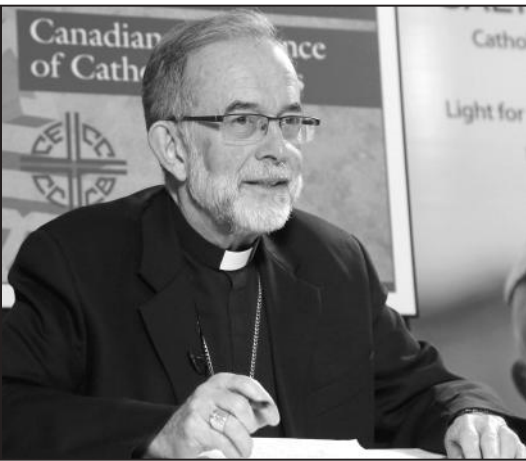
By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Whether Pope Francis comes to Canada or not, indigenous relations remain a top priority for Canada’s bishops, says Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, Que.

The newly elected president of

the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops said a possible papal visit was not a major topic at the bishops’ recent plenary gathering Sept. 25 - 29, but reconciliation remains high on the agenda.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) helped us to “better discover the sufferings of



Art Babych  
NEW CCCB PRESIDENT — Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, Que., the newly elected president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

wants to come, we will welcome him,” Gendron said. “Our way of interpreting him, Pope Francis would accept, if at the some point we see that it is important, we might as well say, ‘Holy Father, if you wish to come . . .’”

The bishops, in other words, are in a process of “accompaniment and discernment,” to find out what the “Spirit is asking of us at this moment” from a “pastoral point of view,” he said.

He noted that when Pope John Paul II visited in 1984, dioceses had groups of people tasked with planning the visit. Pope Francis realizes we do not have this kind of personnel now, Gendron said. The previous CCCB president, Douglas Crosby, told CCN papal visits are enormously expensive, and discussions are ongoing with various levels of government and other agencies.

“I don’t know that I could have said that a year ago,” he added.

Bolen, who was in Ottawa Sept. 29 to receive the Alumnus of the Year award from Saint Paul University, drew the attention of Pope Francis last spring, according to the apostolic nuncio to Canada.

Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi told the reception in Bolen’s honour that during his annual half-hour audience with the Holy Father last June, Pope Francis mentioned a young bishop who had spoken “in a clear, luminous way” about the importance of reconciliation with Canada’s indigenous peoples during the western bishops’ visit with him.

over time,” Bolen said. “Our focus isn’t reduced to the role of Pope Francis.”

Instead, the CCCB is “investing, time, energy, commitment” and resources to reconciliation, and it is yet to be determined exactly “what shape that takes,” he said.

One area the Canadian bishops are focusing on is supporting the six dioceses of Canada’s North: Whitehorse; Mackenzie-Fort Smith; Churchill-Hudson Bay; Moosonee; Grouard-McLennan; and Keewatin-Le Pas that used to be missionary dioceses under the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, but are now normal dioceses.

“Because of the transfer . . . we are building relationships with these northern dioceses and their peoples on a level that has never happened before and that’s a beautiful thing,” Bolen said. “In my diocese and every diocese, good discussions are going on on what it means to be in relationship, or be a twin with a diocese or part of a diocese,” he said. “I think there’s some excitement about this.”

“It’s not seen as a burden, but it’s about a relationship we didn’t have or only had in a minimal way,” he said. To that end, Bolen is planning a visit to Inuvik.

“For me, like many bishops, the north is kind of a new territory. I haven’t spent a lot of time thinking about the



Kiply Yaworski

**MAKE TIME FOR LIFE —** Hospital Chaplain Rev. Rhéal Bussière and parish nurse Ethna Martin were among the leaders at a “Make Time for Life” workshop Sept. 23 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon. Organized by the diocesan office of Hospital Chaplaincy, the workshop provided an introduction to the “Dying Healed” program, tackling end-of-life issues and concepts related to suffering, dignity, and the power of human presence. Workshop facilitators emphasized that physical and cognitive powers are not the source of human dignity; that human life does not lose its inherent value in the face of disability, illness, aging or dying; and the power of ordinary people to make a difference by providing a loving, caring presence to those who are suffering.

That represents a change, he said. “The Spirit has done great things among us and is helping us,” he said. “We were discussing so many things not according to the Gospel and mission as bishops.”

But now the focus has shifted to focus on reconciliation with an awareness of what First Nations brothers and sisters “have suffered,” he said.

“If the pope



Archbishop Donald Bolen

Bonazzi told him that was Archbishop Donald Bolen of Regina. “A very good bishop!” the pope replied.

While indigenous relations and reconciliation remain a “major priority” for the bishops, “the part Pope Francis will play on this has to unfold on the Holy See side of things and unfold in discussions

north,” he said.

The northern dioceses rely on support from Catholic Missions in Canada and will now need greater help from richer dioceses in Canada’s south. During the plenary, several bishops spoke in solidarity with the northern dioceses, and explored ways of twinning dioceses or parts of dioceses.



# After 30 years, memory of pope's visit still vivid

By Andrew Ehrkamp

FORT SIMPSON, N.W.T. — The memories of the pope's visit are still vivid for the people of Fort Simpson.

Three decades haven't diminished the thoughts, feelings and details of that day when St. John Paul II made his historic Sept. 20, 1987, visit to the remote town of just 1,200 people — and the Dene communities that surround it — in the Northwest Territories.

Fort Simpson is in the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese, which is one of the largest in the world in terms of area but is relatively small in population, with about 28,000 Catholics.

John Paul II's visit is permanently commemorated on the Edhaa National Historic Site, featuring a 15-metre teepee, believed to be the tallest of its kind in the world, covering a concrete stage where the Holy Father celebrated mass.

First Nations, Catholic and community leaders, and local residents gathered for a special service at the site just days before the anniversary to reminisce about the papal visit — a visit that almost didn't happen.

"A promise is a promise," said Chief Jerry Antoine of the Liidlii Kue First Nation.

"Time is not a factor when it comes to memories of that sort," said Bishop Emeritus Denis Croteau, who was head of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese when the pope visited in 1987. "It's such a unique experience

that today it was like it was 30 years ago . . . the memories are still very vivid."

The pope originally planned to visit Fort Simpson, about 600 kilometres west of Yellowknife, during his visit to Canada in 1984, but he was forced to cancel when heavy fog prevented his plane from landing.

Three years later, he kept his promise by making a five-hour detour to visit Fort Simpson during a tour of the U.S.

"It's easy to say 'I'll come back,' " recalled Croteau. "But the pope was a man of his word."

In 1984, Andy Norwegian, a Dene linguist, was asked to help the Holy Father with his address in South Slavey, the Dene dialect spoken in Fort Simpson. He was also assigned to a bus with news reporters when the pope's plane tried to land in the fog.

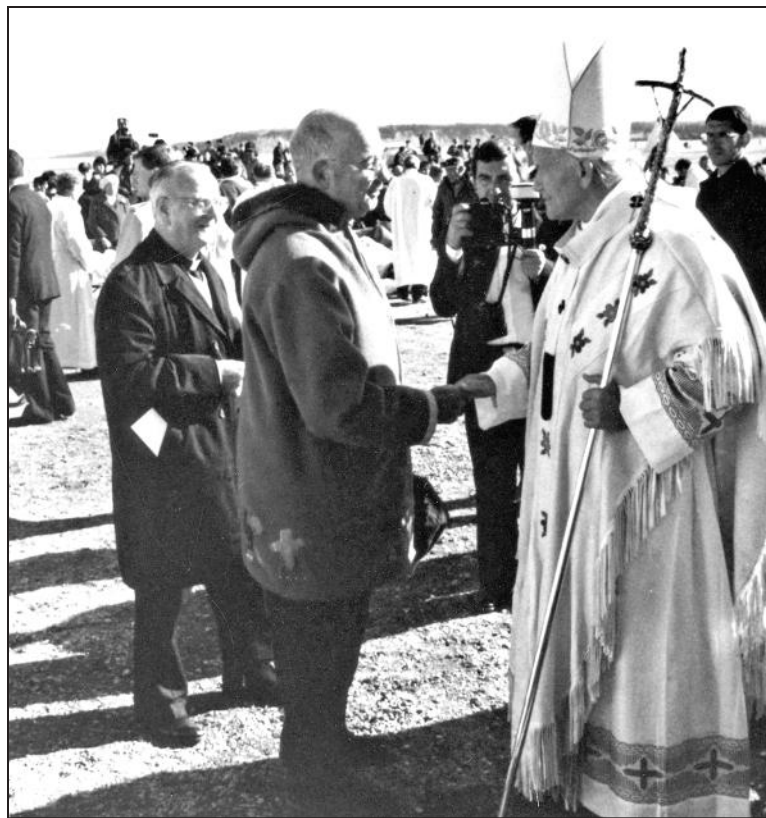
"I'll always remember we got to the airport quite early. We were all sitting in the bus and we could hear the plane circling the airport, and then eventually we heard that he wasn't able to land," Norwegian said.

"We were absolutely quiet all the way back into town."

Antoine recalls that elders who had come by plane, vehicle and boat from all parts of the North to attend the pope's mass took the news in stride.

"The elders were not really the ones who were disappointed," he said. "They're pretty amazing. They let you know things. With that event not happening, they told us that things will work out at the end, and they did."

After the aborted visit,



Archdiocese of Edmonton

**HISTORIC VISIT — The people of Fort Simpson welcome Pope John Paul II in 1987.**

Antoine was part of a delegation that visited Pope John Paul II at the Vatican to persuade him to make another visit — it didn't take much convincing.

"He was right down on the same level with you, the way that he came across," Antoine recalled.

"He said 'Get your people to meet my people.'"

It was agreed that the pope would fly from Los Angeles, through Edmonton, and arrive in Fort Simpson on Sept. 20, 1987. The date was secure, but local leaders didn't feel completely confident.

"Early in the morning, eight o'clock, it was misty and covered with clouds and I said, 'Oh, don't tell me we're going to go for another one of those events!'" said Croteau. "By the time he arrived at 10 o'clock, it cleared up, rainbow in the sky, and the plane landed. Perfect."

Antoine was among the chiefs who headed to the airport to welcome the pope. "When we were driving over there, there was fog. However, there was this special kind of anticipation, something in the air, that things would be OK. When he landed, there was this huge cheer."

An estimated 4,000 people greeted the pope, nearly four times the population of Fort Simpson. He blessed a monument made of four rocks, representing the four directions, and walked to an altar under the teepee, shaking as many hands as he could. "People were just in ecstasy," Croteau recalled. "He had touched their hand. For native people to touch the hand of someone, it's really something, especially the pope. It will remain in their memory as long as they live."

The Holy Father celebrated mass under the teepee — a symbol of the Dene culture — that had been built to mark his visit. The iconic structure is made of 12 red cedar logs, representing the 12 apostles, imported from B.C., because the North has a short growing season and trees can't grow that big.

Linguist Andy Norwegian was again asked to help with the pope's address in the local dialect. But this time Pope John Paul II wanted more than a recording. He wanted a five-minute language lesson.

Alone with Norwegian inside the teepee, the pope examined the text, pointing out a few South Slavey words that he didn't know how to pronounce, including a word whose sound doesn't exist in English.

"I said, 'What you do is put the tip of your tongue on that ridge behind your upper teeth, force the air over top of it and allow the air to come out the sides,'" Norwegian said.

"It was quite a relief when he delivered his message and everybody began to clap."

Croteau noted it was important for the pope to meet with First Nations leaders during his visit, including Antoine.

"After he got to the stage, the native leaders came to sit with him in a circle and he listened to them, to what they had to say, what they expected, what his visit represented," Croteau recalled.

Thirty years after the pope's visit, Antoine said: "The message that he conveyed here really began to enhance what our elders have been talking about, that things are going to work out the way they need to work out."

## Disruption to culture and family had long-term effects

Continued from page 1

school, separated from all but one of her siblings.

The disruption to culture and the family unit had many long-term effects on self-esteem and relationships, said Cameron. Although her mother always told her to be proud of who she was, the racism and denigration she experienced in her life brought profound hurt.

"When people called you Indian, and the way they looked at you, it made you ashamed of who you are," Cameron said. One of the main teachings in the indigenous culture is "respect — respecting yourself, your parents, your grandparents, everybody that is in your families. In our communities we come to respect our people."

As a child attending residential school, Cameron did not feel welcome or valued, and was surrounded by unfamiliar ways and by children who were also sad, hurting and angry. She remembered lonely nights in the dormitory looking out the window and trying to look toward home.

At the age of 14, she struggled to integrate into a public school, eventually finding acceptance through athletics. However, something as simple as a class assignment involving a phone book was daunting — her family did not

have a telephone — and there was little understanding of cultural differences.

She described her fear, her relentless drive to be perfect as a means of staving off negative comments and attitudes, and her struggle to realize her own value and the value of her culture.

"I only learned about treaties later in life. We were not told about them, or that there was anything supposed to be good about me, or about being a gift from our Creator, who is God."

Cameron described how she gradually came to understand the ways in which the residential school system, colonization and racism affected her. At the same time, she stressed that she was not trying to make anyone feel guilty.

"It is history — but no one had ever known or shared the history of our peoples," she said, expressing the hope that this and future generations will have a greater understanding. "They will know more about the beginning of the treaties, where they were signed, how they were signed, what was the purpose."

"I believe that each and every one of us is here to represent God, the Creator who gave us each a life on this earth, and a reason for us," Cameron said. "I believe in truth and reconciliation."

But reconciliation is not easy,

she said. "It is not easy to forgive when you have been caused a lot of pain to your body, your mind, your soul, your spirit — because you know, as a child, when someone is knocking you down, ridiculing you, it becomes habitual, especially when you had no one to say 'It's OK, it's okay to feel, okay to cry.'"

Healthy families and individuals come about "when you have a family unit, with love and nurturing and knowing how to do things, and you are not learning in foreign ways," she said.

Coming to terms with those experiences, beginning to understand one's self and one's emotions, and moving forward on a path of healing is an arduous process that many are dealing with, she said. "Many of us have travelled on those journeys."

Cameron's own walk has included helping others grow in understanding and healing, including the families she encountered in the Catholic school system, and her own children and grandchildren. It involves finding their own voice: "I can't change anyone, but I can help them understand how we can take control of our emotions, and how we have to have faith, how we have to have something to build on."

She stressed the importance of all Canadians coming to a deeper

understanding of the experiences of indigenous peoples, to realize why the damage continues in our communities and in ongoing crises in our country, such as the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Cameron pointed to the Scripture and homily heard at Sacred Heart earlier in the day, which was a message of forgiveness and understanding, a message about a loving, merciful God — contrasting it with the image of an angry, punishing God she often heard about as a child at residential school.

"Today I know it is different. I have accepted God into my life, not by force but by choice, and by comparing the teachings we received from my elders, and many different teachings from our culture. We have so much in common as human beings. We haven't always accepted that gift that we are supposed to be sharing in this life."

At the conclusion of her talk, Cameron thanked her listeners, saying that she was honoured to come and speak to the parish. Mary Jane Morrison of Sacred Heart Parish expressed thanks to Cameron for her inspiring words, and described plans to follow up the session with the installation and blessing of a treaty plaque in the church.

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# Disturbing trend sees democracy being threatened

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

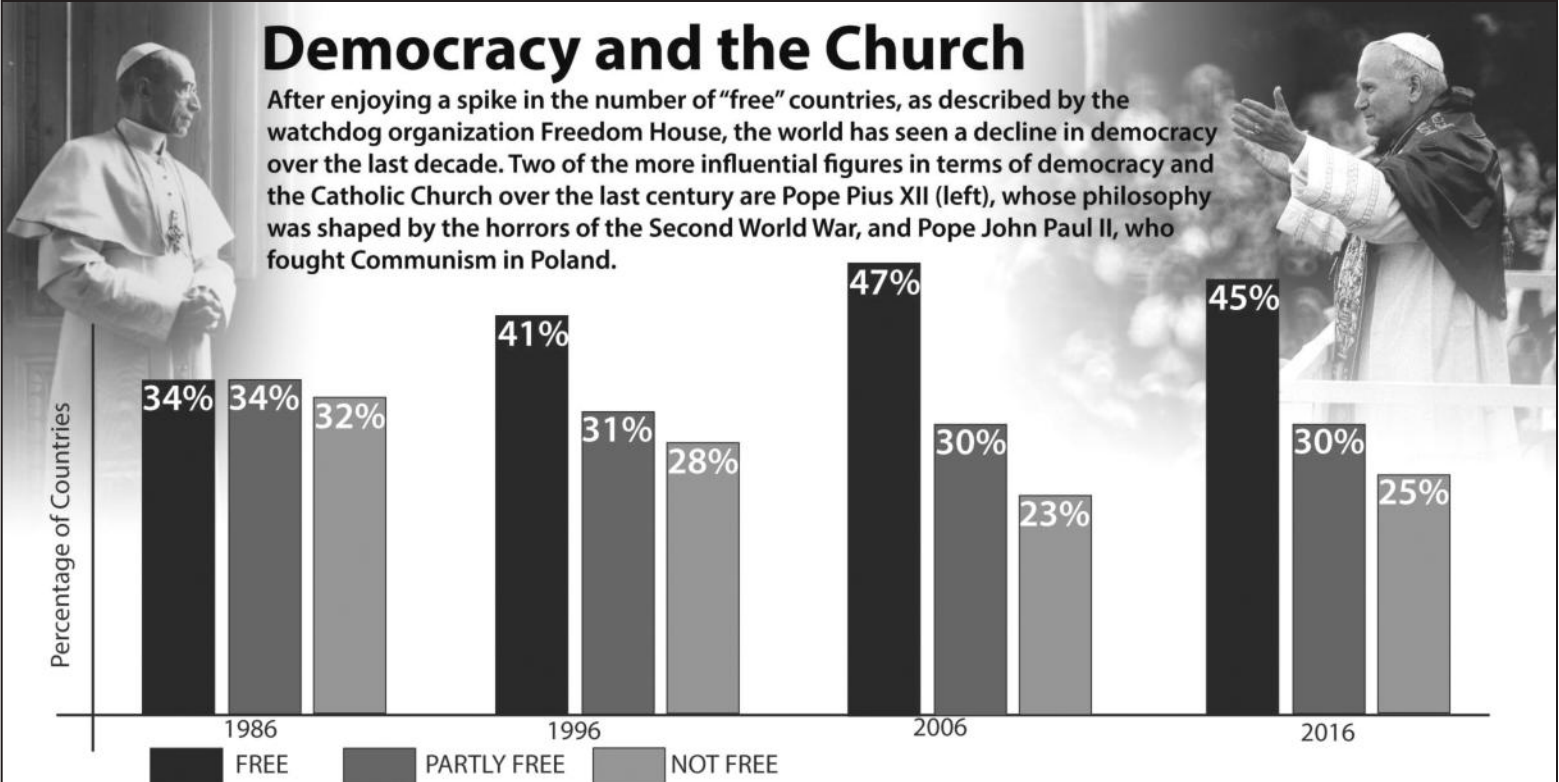
In a trend that alarms Catholic thinkers, for the 11th year in a row, freedom around the globe declined in 2016.

An annual report by the American think-tank Freedom House found just 45 per cent of 195 countries surveyed qualify as free. Another 30 per cent are “partly free” and fully a quarter of the world’s countries are rated “not free.”

The good news for Canada is that it remains a very free place (a rating of 99 out of 100 from Freedom House, compared to 89 for the United States and 95 for the United Kingdom), but Canada is not the norm.

Countries such as Brazil, Denmark, France and the U.S. have all declined from the previous year on a scale that measures political rights and civil liberties. For many, including prominent Catholics, there is mounting evidence of democracy being threatened, which raises concerns for the future of the Catholic Church and its values.

“Liberal democracy is under



threat, and all who cherish it must come to its defence,” declared a document called the Prague Appeal for Democratic Renewal, published last May. The spectre of a “post-democratic world order” has caused a stampede of more than 170 statesmen, academics and artists around the world into signing the Prague Appeal.

Signatories include the American biographer of St. John Paul

II, George Weigel, and Ukrainian Greco-Catholic bishop of Paris Borys Gudziak, as well as former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell and Irwin Cotler, a former Liberal justice minister and attorney general.

After watching the U.S. elect Donald Trump, the Law and Justice Party of Poland undermine that country’s judiciary and constitution, and British apprehension about immigration lead to Brexit, Gudziak warns that when we give up on democracy we give in to fear.

“Today there is, globally, an increase in authoritarian rule,” Gudziak told *The Catholic Register*. “What really underlies, underpins that desire — unhealthy desire — for an order that leads us out of democracy is fear.”

“The danger we all face — Catholics or not — is the rise of new forms of authoritarianism on both the left and the right,” said Weigel in an email to *The Catholic Register*.

Pope Francis worries about the depth and genuineness of contemporary democracy. In the spring he told German newspaper *Die Zeit*, “populism is evil and ends badly, as the past century showed.”

But the church has not always been the greatest defender of democracy.

“It would be hard to say that the church has always embraced democracy,” said St. Mark’s College political theology professor Nick Olkovich in Vancouver. “It’s very clear that after the French revolution happens, liberalism is a dirty word.”

The church, of course, is not a democracy. Through the 19th century, Catholic bishops and theologians sneered at France’s revolutionary ideals of “*liberté, égalité, fraternité*” and loathed every instance of what they called “Americanism,” with its lack of an established aristocracy.

Pope Pius’ 1864 Syllabus of Errors and the Index of banned books which followed the revolution made abundantly clear what the Vatican thought of freedom of the press.

“The church wasn’t able, really, to differentiate between the good and the bad, the positive

and the negative (in constitutional democracies). They threw out the baby with the bathwater,” said Olkovich. “Some people still want to withdraw from engagement in modern politics. They tend to think of democracy and liberalism primarily in that negative way that the church had condemned.”

But since Pope Leo XIII started issuing encyclicals in the late 1800s (85 of them, starting with one on “the evils of society”) there’s been a gradual opening up about democracy in Catholic social teaching.

“To say that democracy is necessary and religious freedom is a demand tied to human dignity — that’s something the church is called to defend in a very particular way,” Olkovich said.

It was the World Wars that pushed the church to reconsider its attitude.

“The democratic form of government appears to many as a postulate of nature imposed by reason itself,” Pope Pius XII said in his Christmas 1944 message.

Pius had seen the Nazi party undermine the democratic institutions of Weimar Germany and watched Mussolini’s populist rise to fascist control over every aspect of life in Italy, including the church. He came to see any form of government that manipulates the masses as a danger to human dignity.

“The dignity of man is the dignity of the moral community willed by God,” said the pope as the Second World War ground through its ugly final stages. “The dignity of political authority is the dignity deriving from its sharing in the authority of God . . . a purely formal democracy may often serve as a mark for all that is in reality least democratic.”

The real pioneering work on democracy and the relationship between faith and liberty came more from the outer edge of the church than its centre. As the Byzantine Ukrainian Catholic Church suffered through five decades of official banishment and oppression under the Soviet system, Ukrainian Catholics

## Church ultimately about people: Hagemoen

Continued from page 1

of Edmonton, which contributed through its Together We Serve annual appeal, as well as donations from the local community, private donors, Catholic Missions In Canada and the Diocese of Hamilton — which announced that it was forgiving \$50,000 worth of the loan it made to the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith.

But “the church is not about the building. It’s about the people,” Bishop Mark Hagemoen said during mass, a large part of which was translated into South Slavey, the local Dene dialect.

Building the new Sacred Heart Church was a big community effort. Parishioners raised about \$300,000 on their own through bake sales, raffles and even a pool on when the ice would break in Fort Simpson, which lies at the confluence of the Mackenzie and Liard rivers.

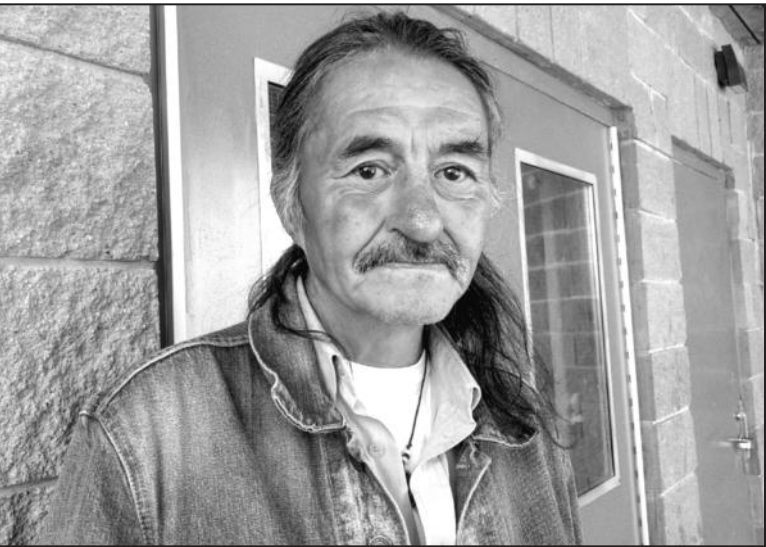
Daley also singled out Billy Villeneuve, an older parishioner who single-handedly helped raise more than \$80,000 for the new church by collecting bottles and cans for recycling for years.

“That served as a catalyst to motivate other people to do other projects.”

Villeneuve, who rides around town on a tricycle with a basket, was too shy to even come inside the packed Sacred Heart Church, but he looked through the window until mass was over. Then he quickly sped off.

It’s a bittersweet time for Hagemoen, who is credited by parishioners for moving the Sacred Heart Church project forward. Days before the church opening, he was appointed the new bishop of the Diocese of Saskatoon.

“I’m sad to leave Mackenzie. There are some relationships here that I think will last a lifetime,” said Hagemoen, who has been in



Andrew Ehrkamp

**A BEAUTIFUL GIFT —** The opening of the new church in Fort Simpson is “a beautiful gift,” said Mike Cazon, a Dene parishioner from nearby Trout River, who has been attending Sacred Heart Church since he was a child. “It’s like people’s prayers have been answered.”

the Northwest Territories for less than four years.

“I think the thing I’m most proud of, is that this is an Aboriginal diocese, and to learn and have a role as a bishop, in moving forward the meaning and the mission of a Catholic Aboriginal diocese.”

For the Dene in Fort Simpson, the new church represents a new beginning after the history of Catholic residential schools, including Lapointe Hall which was located opposite Sacred Heart Church before it was torn down.

“Today it was really impressive, because they kind of acknowledged the Aboriginal perspective,” said Mike Cazon, who attended both Lapointe Hall and Bompas Hall, the Anglican residential school.

“The key issue now is forgiveness and living in the moment.”

Melissa Hardisty, who was raised Catholic before she left the church, agrees.

“To me, what I think, it’s a new start, because the church that was here was a ‘residential’ church.

Now that we have a new church, it shows us that we can have a new beginning,” said Hardisty.

She now hopes her daughter will be among the first to celebrate first communion there.

Federal Senator Nick Sibbeston, a longtime Sacred Heart parishioner and himself a residential school survivor, said incorporating more Dene traditions will bring more people back to Sacred Heart and the Catholic Church. “It’s about respect.”

After the consecration mass, a special service at the site of the papal visit in 1987 gave Fort Simpson a chance to mark three decades since Pope John Paul’s visit to the town.

The Holy Father originally planned to visit Fort Simpson during his visit to Canada in 1984, but he was forced to cancel when heavy fog prevented his plane from landing. Three years later, on Sept. 20, 1987, he kept his promise by making a five-hour detour to visit Fort Simpson during a tour of the United States.



# Residential school survivor leads ‘with my heart’

By Kate O’Gorman

SASKATOON — Sept. 30 was the annual Orange Shirt Day — a day when Canadians remember the residential schools and acknowledge the inter-generational trauma that has stemmed from them. It is also a day of affirmation. On Sept. 28 the City of Saskatoon, in collaboration with Reconciliation Saskatoon and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, hosted a public event at the Frances Morrison Library.

Annie Battiste, Indigenous Relations director for Big Brothers Big Sisters and a member of the Speakers Bureau for the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, hosted a panel in which stories of residential school survival were shared.

According to Battiste, there are two reasons we wear orange shirts on Sept. 30: “The first is that autumn, when the season changes, is the time of year that many of our children and youth were taken away to residential school. So it is often a sad time for survivors.”

The second reason revolves around the story of Phyllis (Jack) Webstad. As a young girl, Webstad received a new orange shirt from her grandmother in anticipation of

attending the mission school. Her excitement quickly dissipated as she was stripped upon arrival and her orange shirt taken away. Phyllis’s story, and the image of the shirt, is a catalyst for conversation as part of the journey toward reconciliation and healing.

“We can be aware of the past, we can be aware of the story, and we can acknowledge the harm of residential schools by wearing our orange shirts,” said Battiste. “More specifically, the City of Saskatoon and Reconciliation Saskatoon have been going through a process of internalizing and making actionable the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.”

Call to Action no. 80 speaks to the establishment, “as a statutory holiday, of a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour survivors, their families and communities, and ensure that the public commemoration of the legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.”

Among the panelists at the event to share their stories was Elder Frank Badger, a survivor of St. Michael’s Indian Residential School in Duck Lake, Sask. Badger described how he was sent



Kate O’Gorman

Frank Badger

to residential school for 10 years, beginning at the age of six.

“They squeezed 40 or 50 of us into a cattle truck and hauled us off,” he remembered.

Once they arrived at the school, boys and girls were separated.

“One after the other, we got a buzz cut. They had powder that they put over our bodies and then they threw us in the showers. I’m still haunted by the cries of some of the younger students who wanted to go home.”

He went on to describe the abuse he suffered: “I went through a lot of strappings, a lot of physical and sexual abuse.” He was beaten for speaking in Cree. “I lost my pride, I lost my dignity and my identity. I was taught how to love God, but I was also taught how to hate myself because I was Indian.”

Badger spoke of his later experiences with alcoholism and the criminal justice system: “There wasn’t a lot of difference between jail and residential school, but at least in jail you didn’t get slapped for speaking Cree.”

He also spoke of the residual impact of residential schools on family members: “Residential schools not only affected the individual but the communities as well. In residential school, a hurt child goes home and hurts other people. A lot of residential school survivors still have a hard time saying ‘I love you’ to their children.”

Panelist Janice Linklater also spoke about her experiences with inter-generational trauma and growing up in a home that had been affected by the residential school legacy. Both her parents were survivors. Linklater spoke about how her mother kept her hair cut short. When examining pictures of her grandmother at resi-

dential school and comparing them with her own pictures, she noticed how her haircut as a child mirrored the haircut not only of her grandmother, but of all the children at residential school. “Our hair was exactly the same,” she said.

Linklater also related how her father suffered from alcoholism and a gambling addiction after his residential school experience: “I grew up with violence and addiction and at the age of 13, I too started to drink. For 20 years I drank. I made a lot of mistakes and I wasn’t the best mother.”

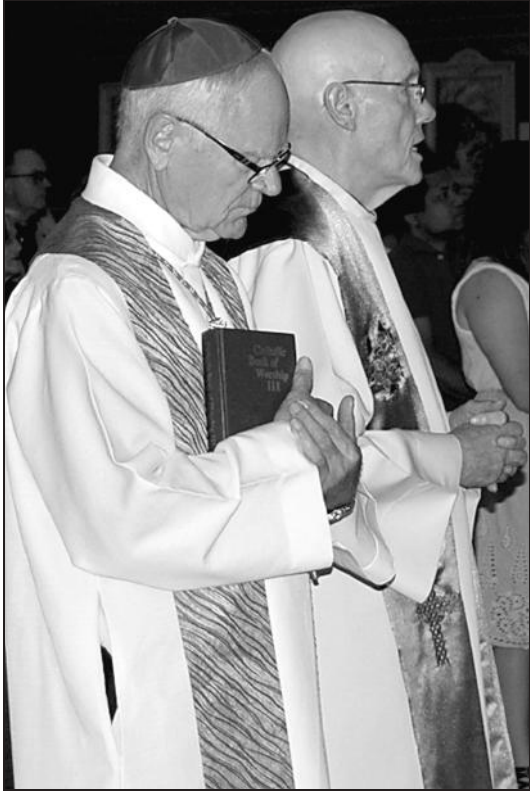
Since then, Linklater has worked toward sobriety and trauma recovery. “I did a lot of work on myself,” she said, crediting a return to traditional practices as a source of support and healing. “I went to the ceremonies, I went to the sweat lodges, I talked to the elders and I went to the healing circles. My life started to fall into place.”

Linklater has learned a lot about inter-generational trauma and the impact of residential schools on indigenous families. This awareness, she says, “has made my life richer, and it’s made my relationships happier. I try, now, to live the teachings and lead with my heart — to make my parents, grandparents and ancestors proud.”

## Parish celebrates 50 years of ministry

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Holy Trinity Parish celebrated a double anniversary at its Sept. 9 Saturday evening mass: it was the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Holy Trinity as a parish and the 50th anniversary of the local Catholic Woman’s League council.



Frank Flegel

**HOLY TRINITY — Winnipeg Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber and Rev. Don McNeil, both former Holy Trinity pastors, attended the mass and took part in the 50th anniversary celebrations of the northwest Regina parish Sept. 9.**

Corinne Pirot, music director at Archbishop M.C. O’Neill High School, put together some seasoned voices from around Regina to form the choir that performed for the anniversary celebration. The congregation obviously appreciated the music, as the choir

was enthusiastically applauded at the end of mass.

Holy Trinity CWL members were in evidence, wearing their traditional shoulder sashes. Several former CWL and parish members came back to the church to attend the celebration, and church members greeted returning friends in the foyer before and

after the mass. Velma Harasen, North American vice-president of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Leagues, attended the anniversary mass and brought congratulations, representing the National Council of the CWL.

In the mid-1960s, Regina’s northwest Regent Park area was, and remains today, a rapidly growing residential district, and Catholics living there wanted a church in their area. Holy Trinity was formally established in 1967, Canada’s centennial year. Land for the church was obtained in 1968 and fundraising began in earnest. By 1974, Holy Trinity’s distinctive shape dominated the neighbourhood at the corner of Sherwood Drive and Macintosh Street.

By the time the church was ready for occupancy, St. Mary School (now École St. Mary), which is just around the corner from the church, was already in use by Holy Trinity parishioners.

Initially, St. Mary School gymnasium served a dual purpose: a gymnasium for the school and a temporary home for Holy Trinity services. The CWL established a council for the parish and a men’s club was formed to carry out fundraising in support of the church and community activities. The men’s club remained active until 1990, when members voted it out of existence with the establishment of Knights of Columbus Council #10401.

Archbishop Donald Bolen celebrated the anniversary mass, assisted by pastor Rev. Ron Andree and Deacon Joe Lang. Andree has a dual role in the archdiocese: he also serves as liturgy director. In his homily, Bolen lauded the parish for its leadership in what continues to be a growing community. He referred specifically to the 1979 establishment of Holy Family Parish further to the northwest of the city as the result of overcrowding at Holy Trinity and the need to form a new parish. As he often does, Bolen also talked about mercy, and about healing and forgiveness, to bring healing to the community and to the world.

“Forgiveness is essential in building community,” he said.

Winnipeg Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber and Rev. Don McNeil, both former Holy Trinity pastors, attended the mass and took part in the celebrations. Weisgerber was parish priest at the time Holy Trinity had to be divided, which led to the establishment of Holy Family Parish. Bolen identified Weisgerber as the oldest living former pastor of Holy Trinity, much to the amusement of the congregation.

The anniversary celebration continued with a reception in the church basement hall following the mass. A large cake to commemorate the occasion was cut and distributed.



St. Ann’s Senior Citizens’ Village

**RENEWAL OF VOWS — The excitement was felt by all who walked through the doors of St. Ann’s Nursing Home Sept. 30 as 14 couples, collectively celebrating 848 years of marriage, gathered in the chapel for a Wedding Vow Renewal and Blessing Ceremony. The team at St. Ann’s worked to ensure the residents were looking their best and the home was ready for the 70 expected guests. Jack and Iva (above) were among the couples who took part.**

## Teaching a fundamental human task: archbishop

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen told a church full of educators that teaching is one of the most fundamental of human tasks. He was celebrating the opening mass for the Regina Catholic School Division for the 2017 - 2018 school year.

“It is the duty of family and community to teach a newborn child how to live and love and how to be human,” said Bolen. His homily focused on the school division’s theme for the year, “Let Your Light Shine.”

The archbishop stated, “In the Gospels, Christ told his disciples to be the light of the world.” Then he “unpacked” that Gospel in terms of the role a teacher plays in Catholic education on behalf of the community and the church.

“What is the light you are to carry?” he asked the more than 1,100 teachers and staff who filled Resurrection Church. “That light is the joy of being alive; it is a deep, abiding sense that life is good, that life is blessed. You are beloved sons and daughters of God and every one of the students in front of you is also a beloved child of God. The light you are called to share is the hope within you that whatever happens, God will accompany you and you are safe in God’s hands.”

Students are also the light of the world, he said, and urged that they be taught that. “Let your light shine brightly,” he said, “as you begin a new school year.”

He then offered a special blessing for all the new teachers, whom he expected would be excited to begin their vocation after four years of study.



# Children can easily stumble upon pornography

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Content-blocking and accountability software are among the practical tools that parents and educators can use to protect children and youth from exposure to pornography on the Internet, Matt Fradd said Sept. 14 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

The Australian-born, U.S.-based author and speaker also spoke to high school students in Saskatoon and Regina, as well as to a Catholic men’s group about the impact of pornography during his two-day visit to Saskatchewan, sponsored by One More Soul Canada.

Pornography is easily accessed through mobile and hand-held devices, laptops and home computers, and even via gaming systems, Fradd noted at the session for parents, youth leaders, educators and pastors.

Children can easily stumble upon pornographic images through maliciously placed links or seemingly innocuous searches, and curious youth can find porn online with a click or two, he said.

Never before has so much explicit material been so easily accessible to so many, with so few restrictions. On one tracking site alone, in one year, people watched some four billion hours of pornography. Fradd stressed that this epidemic is not only of concern to people of faith. “This is a big deal if you are human, and it is a big deal if you have children.”

Acknowledging the barrage of

information, responsibilities and tasks that flood parents today, Fradd urged his listeners not to “bury their heads in the sand” or succumb to “analysis paralysis,” but to take practical steps to protect children from pornography.

In addition to installing content-filtering software such as Net Nanny to block offensive sites, and using accountability software such as Covenant Eyes to monitor Internet use by family members, Fradd emphasized talking to children about pornography, as well as talking to other parents about the issue — including, if necessary, saying, “I’m sorry, but if you do not use filtering software, my child can’t play at your house anymore.”

The attitude that “my kids are good kids,” which suggests that only “bad kids” are interested in sex or are affected by pornography, is nonsensical. “They are being exposed to this stuff. Think what goes on inside an eight-year-old when they first see pornography, what that means for them.”

Parents must talk to children about pornography, he stressed, and probably at a much younger age than many think. This includes giving children a course of action if they encounter pornographic material, such as the “can-do” plan : “C” for close your eyes and close the computer; “A” for alert a trusted adult, tell mom or dad what you saw; “N” for naming pornography when you see it; “D” for finding a way to distract one’s mind from the image if it pops back up in memory, and “O” for “order your thinking brain” to take charge, and remember

why pornography is harmful.

The conversation among parents and children about pornography should be built on an ongoing series of conversations about the goodness and beauty of the human body, Fradd stressed. The discussion of pornography becomes more nuanced as children get older and begin to understand the difference between pornographic images and the artistic presentation of the naked human figure.

Fradd noted that art depicts the human person in a way “that does not rob them of their internal life,” while pornography ignores or obfuscates personhood. “It is precisely because the human body is good that it can be degraded.”

Fradd stressed that, instead of getting angry with children or youth who are looking at porn, parents should apologize for the fact that their child has encountered it. “It is not their fault that we raised them in a sexualized culture. It is not their fault we give them these devices,” he said.

Parents can share with older youth the evidence about the damage that viewing pornography can have on individuals, families and communities, and the realities of porn addiction.

“What happens online is not less real than what happens offline,” he stressed, describing the problem schools are now facing with “sexting” and the sharing of sexually provocative im-

ages via smartphones.

The range of resources suggested by Fradd include the podcast and website [www.integrityrestored.com](http://www.integrityrestored.com), as well as his book, *The Porn Myth*, which cites a range of experts to provide a non-religious response to commonly held beliefs that pornography is harmless, or even beneficial.

Finally, Fradd stressed that the battle against pornography is not hopeless, describing another step Christians can take: to trust in God. “There are no wounds that the Divine Physician cannot fix,” he said, cautioning against despair, calling for prayer, and pointing to the process of spiritual growth that comes from resisting temptation and battling sin.



STM Campus Ministry

**THEOLOGY ON TAP — Dr. Chris Hrynkow (centre) was the guest speaker at the first Theology on Tap of the season Oct. 4, speaking on “The Season of Creation: Christians Co-operating to Care for Our Common Home” at Louis’ Pub on the University of Saskatchewan campus — an appropriate topic for the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Theology on Tap is an outreach event for young adults offered on campus as a collaborative effort between St. Thomas More College Campus Ministry and the Youth Ministry offices of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon.**

## Regina’s Campion College celebrating centennial

REGINA — Campion College at the University of Regina is celebrating its first 100 years, Oct. 4 - 8, welcoming hundreds of guests to campus for a welcome social in the Campion College Student Commons Oct. 4, an open house at the college and at Campion College High School (now Regina Christian School) Oct. 7, an anniversary liturgy Oct. 8, followed by a special unveiling of selected paintings by Campion alumna and renowned artist Erica Grimm; and the 100th Anniversary Alumni of Distinction Awards Gala.

The awards gala, to be held Oct. 7 at the Conexus Arts Centre, will draw more than 400 people to celebrate the 100-year tradition of excellence of Campion College, and to honour alumni and former students who have not only distinguished themselves in their profession and in their community, but have also demonstrated the core values of their Jesuit education in their professional and personal lives.

This year Campion is awarding four Alumni of Distinction awards to: Jackie Beaurivage, Natasha Jaques, Jane Leibel, and Doug McKillop.

Campion is celebrating the success of hundreds of alumni who began their journey at the college, individuals who were inspired by the values of Campion College and the Jesuits, which include excellence, holistic education, justice, and leadership.

Named after the Jesuit priest and scholar, St. Edmund Campion, the college was founded in 1917 through a special Act of the Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan as the “Catholic College of Regina.”

In 1923 Campion attained status as a junior college of the University of Saskatchewan, and was the first institution in Regina through which students could earn a bachelor’s degree.

Campion was granted federation with the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus — later to become the University of Regina — in 1964.

Today, Campion boasts a faculty of 20 full-time professors, offering courses in the areas of Arabic, astronomy, Catholic studies, classics, English, film studies, history, humanities, international studies, mathematics, pastoral studies, philosophy, political science, psychology, religious studies, statistics, and theatre studies.

Campion College is one of 120 Jesuit post-secondary institutions worldwide, and the only Jesuit undergraduate college in Canada. The college is an associate member of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, an organization comprising 28 Jesuit universities and colleges in the United States. As well, Campion College is a member institution of Alpha Sigma Nu, the international honour society for Jesuit institutions of higher learning.

## Annual Archbishop’s Appeal kicks off

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — “As disciples of Jesus we are called to be bearers of hope,” said Archbishop Donald Bolen as he addressed the kick-off activities for the Archbishop’s Annual Appeal Sept. 21 at Our Lady of Peace Church.

“Building up hope in our communities, communicating it to others by the way we live and by our active outreach in love,” was Bolen’s basic message of support for the appeal.

The archbishop was the last of several speakers to talk about the importance of the appeal in carrying out the various ministries in service to the people of the Archdiocese of Regina. The theme for this year’s campaign is “Hope, Born of Mercy,” which was reflected in the archbishop’s message to parish representatives who were together for the appeal kickoff.

“The appeal is a tangible way in which we can foster hope,” he said. “The many things the appeal can fund are important for us to know and to name.”

He mentioned specifically the nine seminarians who are at various stages on their journey to the priesthood — the largest group of archdiocesan seminarians since the early 1950s. He also spoke about the diaconate and Lay Formation programs and the ecumenical activities carried out by

the Ecumenical Office.

Donor Services co-ordinator Denise Walsh gave a brief overview of the 2016 campaign and thanked everyone involved at the parish level for the work they do in helping the campaign achieve its goals.

The program began with a presentation of the new video which all parishes are encouraged to show. The video features Bolen talking about his youth and the rural church of St. Elizabeth where he first heard the Word of God, and shows other individuals testifying how appeal funds helped them grow in their faith and also to minister to others through health care, youth ministry and Lay Formation.

The video was followed by presentations by director of Pastoral Services Robert Kowalchuk, Ecumenical co-ordinator Nick Jesson, and Financial officer Deacon Barry Wood. Last year’s campaign raised \$1,280,000. Disbursements in 2016 from the 2015 campaign amounted to \$1,132,220, which supported 27 ministries and community outreach programs. Thirty-two parishes reached their goal and were awarded just over \$44,000 in rebates. Parishes receive rebates of 80 per cent of the funds donated over and above their goal.

The goal for this year’s campaign is \$1,600,000, an increase of \$200,000. Parish goals, however,

will continue to be calculated at a total of \$1,400,000. The archbishop said the remaining \$200,000 will be raised separately.

The appeal is a yearlong campaign, and most of the money comes in after the kickoff.

A live podcast, patterned after an old-time radio show — complete with live music, jokes, adlibs, special guests and commercials — was written and produced by diocesan staff. The hosts engaged the audience to become part of the podcast, adding to the enthusiasm and humour of the presentation.

As part of the podcast, Braden Kuntz, assistant youth ministry co-ordinator, performed two praise songs accompanied with his guitar. Sister ReAnne Letourneau and members of the Aboriginal — Non-Aboriginal Relations Community invited people to sing along to “Amazing Grace” in Cree and English, seminarians Parker Love and Chinh Vu answered questions about life in the seminary, and recently ordained Rev. Arpee Urquico responded to questions about the life of a new priest.

The podcast was hosted by archdiocesan theologian Brett Salkeld and Eric Gurash, co-ordinator for Lay Formation and evangelization. The podcast was a great success and was released Oct. 3 on the archdiocese website: [www.archregina.sk.ca](http://www.archregina.sk.ca)



# We often see gifts only when we are looking for them

## Around the Kitchen Table

Shannon Kutcher

When my first husband, Ramsy, was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer in 2010, I had to do a lot of relearning. Gifts I had appreciated and come to rely on, like his goal-oriented mind, his physical labour around the house, and the comfortable place we held in our community, began to disappear. It was gruelling and terrifying to watch pieces of our life, and pieces of him, slip away. I grieved those losses. I fought against some of them; some I managed to let go of more gracefully.

The amazing thing, though, is that the loss of those gifts did not mean that there were no gifts anymore. New gifts came: a clearer sense of priorities; a developing ability to say “no”; a vivid awareness of God’s presence and character; unflagging help from friends and acquaintances; a

*Shannon Kutcher is Manitoba-born and Saskatchewan-raised, the daughter of “Kitchen Table” columnist Lloyd Ratzlaff. She currently lives in rural Manitoba and spends her time teaching, reading, writing, and making music, as well as grandmothering, mothering and wife-ing her sweet family.*

## Demagogues offer simplistic but seductive ‘solutions’

Continued from page 5

looked to the democratic West for ideals to sustain them. When Ukraine’s fledgling, flawed and even corrupt post-Soviet democracy was threatened by a dark deal with Russian president Vladimir Putin in 2014, it was Ukrainian Catholics who occupied Kiev’s central square for what they called the “revolution of dignity.”

“Very cynically, politicians — especially in modern times — have appealed to that fear to get people to sell out on their freedom,” Gudziak said. “That’s why the good news of Christ, who calls us out of fear, is so substantive for the basic postures of democracy.”

That basic posture was the core of St. John Paul II’s teaching as he confronted Soviet power in Poland.

“A human being is a free and reasonable being. He or she is a knowing and responsible subject. He or she can and must, with the power of personal thought, come to know the truth. He or she can and must choose and decide,” said St. John Paul II.

When Catholics reflexively support politicians who promise to restore some old order or bygone social peace, it sets even Weigel’s teeth on edge. The American conservative simply wasn’t buying the deal candidate Donald Trump offered Catholic voters on abortion and religious liberty in 2016.

heightened sensitivity to others’ struggles. The list goes on and on. A few years after Ramsy died, I met a man who had also experienced heartbreaking losses, and who has become my new husband, Paul. He and I continue to watch as gifts reveal themselves, in flashes or in slow unveiling, in front of us, in ourselves, and in our children.

I believe we are able to see these gifts only because we are looking for them. If I had stood with my hands tightly clenched around the memories of the gifts of my old life, I would have been blind to the beauties that were flowing around and through me. Like a child throwing a tantrum in a grocery store, I would have been so consumed with being denied that box of frosted fruit sugar-o’s that I would have been unable to see the bounty being piled into the cart. I believe each one of us must play a part in opening our hands to receive the blessings God is showering over us.

That is not as easy as it sounds. It is sometimes incredibly painful to sacrifice the old gifts. It can feel like defeat, or maybe like betraying someone we love. It might be done with a deep sigh or a scream of rage. It might require

“President Trump has at least as many religious critics (like me) as acolytes,” he said.

“The notion that Donald Trump, self-professed admirer of Vladimir Putin, is going to defend persecuted Middle East Christians is as ludicrous as the claim that Mr. Putin, ex-KGB thug and current kleptocrat, gives a tinker’s dam about the Christian victims of ISIS,” he wrote in *First Things* just before last year’s U.S. election.

When Polish bishops give their blessing to the populist reactionaries in the governing Law and Justice Party, it leaves a sour taste in Weigel’s mouth. “Polish bishops who uncritically embrace Law and Justice are not following the social doctrine of John Paul II, but falling back on 1920s and 1930s patterns of church-state interaction in Poland,” he said.

“I do see some parallels (between today and the age of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin),” said Robert Ventresca, King’s University College history professor at London, Ont.’s, Western University. “It’s in the social, cultural, economic and demographic anxiety that seems to be fuelling, at least in part, populist movements, ideas, figures.”

“It also seems to be fuelling the popularity of demagogues who, like demagogues of the past century, are offering simplistic but seductive solutions to what ails today’s world — or what people think ails today’s world.”



Shannon Kutcher

**GIFTS FOR THOSE WHO LOOK** — A funnel cloud forms over the Manitoba prairie. It is often the case that we are able to see certain gifts only because we are looking for them, writes Shannon Kutcher.

opening our hands again and again as we choose each day to relinquish those old gifts and reach for the new ones.

If you live in the prairies, odds are that you have been on the receiving end of comments like these from a visitor or newcomer: How can you stand to live in the prairies? There’s nothing to see. I realize that to people who come from rolling hills or craggy mountains, the prairie appears flat and monotonous. I will concede the “flat” part, but monotonous or boring? I feel the opposite way about our geography.

Have these people ever seen how the sky, horizon, and highway combine in gorgeous lines and generous proportions? Have they watched the unending variety show that the clouds put on? Have they noticed the patches of

colour that flash by their car windows as the pink wild roses, purple alfalfa, acid yellow canola, silvery-green oats, bleached wheat stubble or chocolate-brown cattails roll by?

I think the answer must be no. They have not found these treasures because their eyes are still looking for the familiar and beloved views they are used to, and they never forgive the prairies for not being like wherever “home” is. But among such people, I know there are some who come to love this landscape, and discover previously unknown beauties in it.

Life offers us all kinds of treasures as we make our ways through the years. I think of the thrill of choosing a treat when, as a child, I shopped with my grandma; the excitement of taking the

stage in high school plays; the flutters and chills of falling in love; the mild winters I enjoyed living in Kelowna; as a parent, the softness of my baby’s hand touching my cheek; as a teacher, the satisfaction of building trust with a skittish student. Many gifts are tangible. Some are long-lasting and others are fleeting.

What I have learned, and am challenged to relearn at each turn of my life’s path, is that I must look for the gifts. My heart and mind get used to certain privileges and blessings at each stage. It is hard to say goodbye to any of them. What I know without a doubt is that when we open our hands, our eyes, our hearts, to what our new “home” is, we will begin to see the beauties that belong to its distinctive landscape, and we will live here, now.

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# Toronto delivers mixed bag of dramatic highlights

## Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



As intense as was my Toronto Film Festival schedule, notable titles I missed included *The Other Side of Hope* (Silver Bear winner Berlin), *The Square* (Palme d'Or winner Cannes), *The Shape of Water* (Golden Lion winner Venice), as well as the runners up for TIFF's People's Choice, *I, Tonya* and *Call Me By Your Name*.

Before moving to the best of what I did see let me note the fine animated feature *The Breadwinner*, which played to enthusiastic audiences of all ages at the Ottawa International Animation Festival, North America's largest, following its TIFF premiere to which Angelina Jolie, an executive producer, brought her children causing paparazzi/fan madness, stopping traffic. (Jolie had another film in the fest about which more below.)

A Canada/Ireland/Luxembourg co-production directed by Nora Twomey and adapted from Canadian Deborah Ellis' eponymous award-winning novel, *The Breadwinner* is about an 11-year-old Afghan girl, Parvana, living under the harsh conditions of Taliban rule in Kabul prior to the 2001 invasion. Restrictions were especially severe for women and girls, so when her father, a teacher, was imprisoned, Parvana cut her hair and dressed as a boy so she could go out on the streets to help her family survive and to seek her father's release. Using an exquisite mix of animation techniques, incorporating elements of Afghan mythology, Afghan voices and music, this inspiring story really comes alive on screen.

Here are other titles that made a strong impression:

**Loveless** (Russia/France/Belgium/Germany)

Andrey Zvyagintsev, Oscar-nominated for *Leviathan* in 2015, helms this unsparing wintry drama of family and societal dysfunction awarded the jury prize at Cannes. In a loveless, broken marriage, 12-year-old Alyosha lives with a mother who never wanted him and has a closer relationship with her smartphone. While both she and the estranged hapless father have new partners, Russian life exists in a larger state of loveless malaise, punctuated by radio and TV broadcasts of passing crises. When the boy disappears, it is, despite the efforts of volunteer searchers, as if into a heartless void.

**The Death of Stalin** (France/U.K./Belgium)

Russia in darkest Soviet times is the setting for this savagely entertaining political satire directed by Armando Iannucci. When the great dictator suddenly expires in 1953 it sets off a furious round of scheming and backstabbing among the Politburo. The antics, also involving Stalin's

daughter and wastrel son, are brilliantly portrayed by a top-notch cast that includes Jeffrey Tambor as the weak successor, Malenkov, Simon Russell Beale as the ruthless KGB chief Beria, and Steve Buscemi as Khrushchev. What better timing than when Stalin admiration has returned in Putin's Russia, and the follies of Trump's strongman approach are upon us. In January Iannucci penned an open letter to the Donald, calling him "an avalanche of contradictions: real and unreal, scary yet amusing, fact and fiction rolled into . . . We want to laugh at your stumbles, but are petrified by what those stumbles may lead to."

**Lady Bird** (U.S.)

Greta Gerwig, best known for her acting roles in quirky comedies, makes a most impressive debut as the writer-director of this poignant semi-autobiographical dramedy about a high school senior in a Sacramento, California, Catholic school dealing with adolescent pre-occupations while looking to the future. Christine McPherson, who goes by Lady Bird, is convincingly played by Saoirse Ronan (who has a much bleaker role as a spurned newlywed young woman in another TIFF premiere, *On Chesil Beach*, a grim adaptation of the Ian McEwan novel). The movie sparkles with Lady Bird's complicated relationships, familial, academic and social, that feel completely authentic. The school priest and nun characters are also refreshingly human types, not caricatures. If I have a quibble it's that situation involving an awkward first boyfriend, Danny (Lucas Hedges), disappears when he comes out to her as gay and she drops him like a hot potato. His distress is left unexplored while she moves on to the much hipper Kyle (Timothée Chalamet).

**Foxtrot** (Israel/Germany/France/Switzerland)

Writer-director Samuel Maoz's second feature, winner of the

Silver Lion at Venice among other awards, is a scathing look at both Israel's bureaucracy of military death and a militarized society in the grip of fear and anxiety. Michael (Lior Ashkenazi) and Dafna (Sarah Adler) become distraught when informed of the death of their soldier son Jonathan (Yonatan Shiray). Except it's a case of mistaken identity. He's actually killing time with bored buddies manning a remote outpost, occasionally letting a camel pass, until he makes a horrendous mistake that kills four young Palestinians. While a coverup buries the evidence in the sand, Michael's raging demands to have his son brought home produce a further fatal tragedy of lacerating irony.

**Sweet Country** (Australia)

Indigenous director Warwick Thornton's Aussie "western" won TIFF's innovative Platform Prize as well as a special jury award at Venice. In the rough Northern Territory outback of 1929 racism pervades relations between the white settler master class and the Aboriginals who answer "yes boss." The exception is devout Christian Fred Smith (Sam Neill) whose faith in the country will be tested when his stockman Sam Kelly (Hamilton Morris) fires a fatal shot to ward off the violent advances of bitter drunken war veteran Harry March (Ewen Leslie), who regards Aboriginals as inferior "blackstock." A manhunt led by a Sergeant Fletcher (Bryan Brown) takes place across a landscape captured by stunning cinematography until an outdoor trial delivers a just result, only to be negated by the malice that prevails.

**Dark River** (U.K.)

Writer-director Clio Barnard received a special mention from the Platform jury for this story of an emotionally fraught sibling relationship as long-absent daughter Alice (Ruth Wilson) returns to take charge of a failing rat-infested Yorkshire sheep farm follow-



Gerald Schmitz

**TIFF SCREENING — Piers Handling, Redoutable director Michel Hazanavicius, Louis Garrel, and Béatrice Béjo at the Toronto International Film Festival.**

ing the death of an abusive father from whom she fled. Her brother Joe (Mark Stanley) stayed behind, becoming a bitter wreck of a man who now resents her interference. As she struggles with traumatic memories he wants out, and when he cuts a deal behind her back the consequences turn deadly. The result is raw and uncompromising, forcing them to become each other's keeper as a dark river swallows their secret.

**Custody** (France)

Xavier Legrand was awarded best director at Venice for this debut feature, another excellent Platform selection that revolves around an escalating battle by divorced parents Miriam (Léa Drucker) and Antoine Besson (Denis Ménochet) over arrangements for their young son Julien (Thomas Gioria). The narcissistic Antoine makes enough moves to persuade a female family court judge to grant him limited visitation rights. But as Julien reacts to his plays for affection with a protective passive aggression, Antoine becomes increasingly assertive and demanding, leading to a harrowing heart-stopping climax. Seldom has the reality of family breakdown and domestic violence been depicted more realistically on screen.

**Mudbound** (U.S.)

With America's racist history more pertinent than ever, director Dee Rees has adapted the eponymous Hillary Jordan novel to great effect in this Netflix production.

During the 1940s Laura McAllan (Carey Mulligan) accompanies her taciturn husband, Henry (Jason Clarke, who also plays Ted Kennedy in the lesser TIFF drama *Chappaquiddick*), to a muddy cotton farm in the Mississippi delta, accompanied by Henry's virulently racist father. When her brother-in-law Jamie (Garrett Hedlund) returns from the Second World War he comes to the defence of Ronsel, the son of a nearby black family, who has also served with distinction, but is subject to violent racist

abuse, especially when it's discovered he has fathered a child with a white woman overseas. Jamie and Laura are drawn to each other as he wrestles with his demons and confronts terrible choices. Strong performances add to the emotionally devastating impact.

**If You Saw His Heart**

(France) and **BPM** (France)

The first, a Platform selection, is an impressive debut by director Joan Chemla featuring Gael Garcia Bernal as Daniel, a small-time grifter on the margins of a nomadic Roma community near Marseille. Blaming himself for the death of best friend Costel (Argentine actor Nahuel Pérez Biscayart), Daniel is a lost soul until finding solace in reaching out to an equally emotionally wounded young woman, Francine (Marine Vach). The film artfully blends gritty circumstances with dreamlike effects.

Biscayart has a lead role in Robin Campillo's *BPM (120 Battements par minute)*, awarded the Grand Prix at Cannes, as fearless activist HIV-positive activist Sean during the AIDS crisis of the 1990s. With a title alluding to the beats per minute of the human heart rate, the film shows tremendous heart in recreating the highly charged atmosphere — personal, public and political — of this seminal period, focusing on the Paris-based protest movement ACT UP and its leading figures.

**Lean on Pete** (U.K./U.S.)

From writer-director Andrew Haigh, the title actually refers to a quarter horse to which 15-year-old Charley (Charlie Plummer) becomes attached after leaving home and finding work in the stables of cranky owner Del (Steve Buscemi), who runs the horse on race-track circuits in the Pacific Northwest. When "Pete," ridden by jockey Bonnie (Chloë Sevigny), fails to deliver and is disposable, Charley takes off with his equine friend in the direction of Wyoming where a beloved aunt lives. Plummer certainly deserves the best young actor award he received at Venice.

**Woman Walks Ahead** (U.S.)

Director Susanna White brings attention to the little-known story



Netflix/YouTube

**JOLIE FILM — Based on the memoir by Loung Ung, Angelina Jolie directs First They Killed My Father, the remarkable story of horror and resilience as a well-to-do family in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh is driven into the countryside during the communist Khmer Rouge's fanatical takeover in the mid-1970s.**

— WATCH, page 10



# Most beloved of eastern feasts takes place in October

## Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



The notion of Both Lungs is about understanding each other, sharing, and learning. Although we are distinctly East and West, each with our own expressions of worship and theology, there is far more which unites us than separates us. One area of commonality is feast days and devotions. Many saints are recognized in both the East and West. St. Nicholas immediately comes to mind. Most notably, however, we all show our devotion to the Mother of God.

In both East and West, the months of May and October are set aside on her honour. In the West, this tradition stems from the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Oct. 7. The feast commemorates the

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

Battle of Lepanto, which took place in October 1571. The battle was the climax of a war against invading Muslims. As the situation became more and more desperate, Pope Pius V called Catholics throughout Europe to pray the rosary asking Mary to intercede for a Christian victory. A decisive naval battle took place on the first Sunday of October 1571. The far-outnumbered Christian fleet met the invading Muslims off the coast of Greece in the Gulf of Lepanto. By the end of the day, almost all the enemy had been driven to shore or drowned. Europe was saved. Soon afterward Pope Pius' successor, Gregory XIII, decreed that the first Sunday in October would be the feast of the Holy Rosary.

In the East, Oct. 1 is one of the most beloved of all feast days, the Protection of the Mother of God. This feast, one of the 12 great feasts of the Byzantine church calendar, pays honour to a miraculous intervention. According to the ancient chronicles of Nestor,



Brent Kostyniuk

**BELOVED FEAST DAY** — This photo is of Mary the Mother of God, holding her protective veil, or *pokrov*. It was taken at Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edmonton. In both East and West, the months of May and October are set aside for Mary's honour.

the inhabitants of Constantinople prayed that the Mother of God would protect them from an attack by a large Rus' (the early Slavic nation) army at a time when Rus was still pagan. Nestor suggests this took place sometime

in the ninth century.

Tradition recalls the story of how Mary the Theotokos appeared to St. Andrew the Fool for Christ inside Blachernae Church in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). Early in the morning of Sunday, Oct. 1, St. Andrew saw the dome of the church open and Mary enter, floating in the air above him, surrounded by angels and saints. St. Andrew saw Mary kneel and pray for all faithful Christians throughout the world. She also asked her son Jesus to accept the prayers of all those who turned to him for protection through her intercession. After, Mary rose and spread her veil over all the people in the church as a sign of her protection.

St Andrew turned to his disciple, St. Epiphanius, who was standing near him, and asked, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "Yes, Holy Father, I see it and am amazed!"

Following the appearance of the Mother of God, the invading enemy was thwarted and the city spared disaster.

The name of the feast — Protection — is a translation of the Ukrainian word *Pokrov*. However Protection does not convey the full significance of *Pokrov*, which has several meanings. First of all, it refers to a cloak or shroud, but it also means protection or intercession. For this reason, the name of the feast is also translated as the Veil of Our Lady, the Protecting Veil of the Theotokos, or the Intercession of the Theotokos. Indeed, it would take a rather long English language sentence to express the full meaning. We are given the mental image of a caring and loving mother, spreading her cloak to shelter her children from harm. It is an image to which any child can relate.

For those who might think these feasts have no relevance today, they are mistaken. In recent years, the Feast of the Protection has become associated with

thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Greek nation from the Italian invasion of 1940. These events are commemorated in Greece in a national holiday known as "Ochi Day" or "No Day," referring to the response of the Greek leader Metaxas to Mussolini's ultimatum for surrender.

In Byzantine iconography, the Mother of God is most often depicted with her Son, our Lord. Commonly she is holding him as any loving mother would. In other icons, she appears alone, interceding before Jesus on our behalf. As early as the third century, Christians were turning to the Theotokos, as evidenced in this Coptic prayer of that time. "Under your protection we seek refuge, holy Mother of God." In various icons we see her with the palms of her hands turned upward toward heaven. In icons of the Protecting Veil, she retains this pose, while holding her veil or *prokov* spread between her outstretched arms, even as she did for the people of Constantinople.

On the Feast of the Protection, like those ancient Christians, we once again pray to the Theotokos for her motherly intercession, in the Kontakion. *Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the church, and with choirs of saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and bishops worship, apostles and prophets rejoice together, since for our sake she prays to the pre-eternal God.*

## Watch for more standout films to come

Continued from page 9

of how a strong-willed New York painter, Catherine Weldon (Jessica Chastain, also in Aaron Sorkin's forthcoming *Molly's Game*), travelled to the Lakota Sioux territory of Standing Rock in 1890 determined to meet the great chief Sitting Bull (played by Saskatchewan-born Cree actor and educator Michael Greyeyes) and paint his portrait. The intrepid Weldon was

# tiff.

caught up in a racist clash of cultures as the U.S. government and its soldiers drove terms of submission. (Mention should also be made of another 19th-century story of Native Americans, Scott Cooper's *Hostiles*, in which a veteran of the Indian wars, Captain Blocker (Christian Bale), is ordered to escort an imprisoned Cheyenne chief and his family from New Mexico to Montana. Accompanied by a white woman who has lost her family in a renegade raid, Blocker's racist attitudes, hardened by violence, will be violently challenged to life-changing effect.)

### First They Killed My Father

(Cambodia)

Based on the memoir by Loung Ung, Angelina Jolie directs this remarkable story of horror and resilience as a well-to-do family in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh is driven into the

countryside during the communist Khmer Rouge's fanatical takeover in the mid-1970s. Sareum Srey Moch is remarkable portraying Loung as the little girl who is a witness to and survivor of genocide. Jolie, who has visited countries from Cambodia to Afghanistan as a UN humanitarian ambassador, brings a deep empathy for people, especially children, caught up in conflict zones. Nor does the movie neglect the context that the U.S. had secretly dropped 2.7 million tons of bombs on neutral Cambodia prior to the Khmer offensive.

**Insyriated** (Belgium/France/Lebanon)

Winner of several awards at the Berlin film festival, writer-director Philippe Van Leeuw (*The Life of Jesus*) imagines the daily terror faced by a multi-generational family and a young couple with a baby trapped in a near-empty Damascus apartment building as violent men rule what's outside. The great Hiam Abbass plays the matriarch Oum Yazan holding the frightened household together as death stalks the streets. A metaphor for the emotional trauma of a besieged Syrian society, the film was shot in Beirut with Syrian refugees in the cast.

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For later review I should also mention some excellent TIFF films set during the last century's world wars: Xavier Beauvois' *The Guardians*, about women on the home front in rural France from 1915 on; Saul Dibb's *Journey's End*, set in British trenches on the

French front in March 1918; Robert Schwentke's *The Captain*, a harrowing true story of a German deserter turned homicidal imposter as the Reich collapses in 1945; Joe Wright's *Darkest Hour*, depicting the British political and military crisis in the spring of 1940 with Gary Oldman delivering a career-topping performance as Winston Churchill.

Others I can recommend with standout roles include: Diane Kruger (best actress at Cannes) in Fatih Akin's *In the Fade* as an avenger of the deaths of her husband and son in a German neo-Nazi anti-immigrant terrorist bombing; Tahar Rahim as a conflicted Paris-based North African immigrant comedian in *The Price of Success*; Zaharaa Ghandour as a would-be female Iraqi suicide bomber in *The Journey*; Andrew Garfield as a paralyzed polio victim who pioneered mobile respirator wheelchairs in Andy Serkis' directorial debut *Breathe* (Oscar loves tears-to-cheers medical tragedies turned triumphs of the spirit, see also Jake Gyllenhaal as the double-amputee victim of the Boston Marathon terrorist bombing in *Stronger*); James Franco as the worst-movie-ever impresario Tommy Wiseau in *The Disaster Artist*, with brother Dave in the role of sidekick; and not least, Louis Garrel as the cinematic provocateur Jean-Luc Godard in Michel Hazanavicius' *Redoubtable* which, although it will never have the popular success of Hazanavicius' *The Artist* that took the 2012 best-picture Oscar, says more about the contested politics and human struggles that have marked the story of film.

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# Giving God some glory and getting our ducks in a row

## Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



I have a friend who often talks about “getting her ducks in a row.” She likes planning and getting things in the right order, especially when big projects are at hand. It seems to me that a lot of the Christian life is about getting our ducks in a row, placing things in the right order, and getting our priorities right. This week’s readings would certainly point us in that direction. So how do we, as Christians, go about “getting our ducks in a row”?

When discerning the right order of things, we can be pretty sure we’re getting close when we’re giving God the glory. When we put God at the centre of our universes, when we stand in wonder and awe before the glory of God in all of creation — including ourselves — we’re close to getting our ducks in a row. That’s why Isaiah reminds us that “there is no other” but the Lord and the psalmist reminds us to “ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name.”

There’s a paradox, though, in giving God the glory. When we give God the glory, we are not abasing our humanity but enabling it. When we proclaim the goodness of God, we become able to recognize that goodness in ourselves. When we praise the generative love of our Creator,

*Rompré is the director of Mission and Ministry at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.*

we can better see that love being enacted in those around us. In other words, we’ve nothing to lose (and everything to gain) by giving to God the honour that is due. Because God is God, willingly infusing all of creation with the life force of love, giving God the glory reveals that self-same glory present in our very humanity.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel once said, “I did not ask for success; I asked for wonder and you gave it to me.” Praying for wonder and actively nurturing our capacity for awe are important spiritual exercises. Wonder and awe are the gifts that allow us to give God the glory and keep the right order of things.

When have we last been filled with wonder and been awe-struck? For me, it happened recently on the streets of central London. I spent an evening with the Community of Sant’Egidio. This group of young people gathers every Saturday evening to make sandwiches, pray, and then go visit their friends who live on the streets. And that is what it is, a weekly visit with their friends. They know each person by name, they know their histories and the struggles, and have developed real relationships with those without a

Twenty-ninth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
October 22, 2017

Isaiah 45:1, 4-6  
Psalm 96  
1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b  
Matthew 22:15-21

home. There is a deep and mutual respect mediated by the act of giving and receiving a sandwich. There’s nothing fancy, there’s nothing difficult, but there is a true manifestation of the glory of God in those encounters that happen every week, rain or shine, on the streets of London. I stand in wonder and awe before the glory of God made manifest in the simple act of receiving and giving.

This week’s gospel is also teaching us about getting our priorities straight. When Jesus reminds us to give to

God what is God’s and to Caesar what is Caesar’s, he not only gets himself out of a sticky situation but he also shows us where our fundamental commitment must be. Our hearts belong to God, our praise belongs to God, and our very being belongs to God. Caesar can have what’s left.

Yet, it’s so hard to get our ducks in a row. There’s always the temptation to put our own duck first, to ensure that our self-interests are attended to first, to take the glory/credit for ourselves. Rather than acknowledging our radical dependence on God in all things, we declare our self-sufficiency. Our ducks get scrambled and start going madly off in all directions.

What is true of us as individuals is also true for us as communities. When we declare that our own communities, our own nations, our own race, our own whatever, comes first, we’re forgetting to give God the glory. We’re putting ourselves at the centre and chaos ensues. That nature of things is such that we are called to recognize both our radical dependence on God and our radical interdependence with each other. Anytime we declare ourselves to be first, our ducks fall out of line. The results are disastrous.

The task for us, then, is to discern those actions that best give God the glory, that allow us to recognize our radical dependence on God and our radical interdependence with each other, and increase our capacity for wonder and awe. When it comes to such discernment, the Quakers put it beautifully: “Every stage of our lives offers fresh opportunities. Responding to divine guidance, try to discern the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without undue pride or guilt. Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness” (Advices and Queries, #28). Really, that’s what giving God the glory — and getting our ducks in a row — is all about, it’s about “attending to what love requires” of us in every moment of every day.

# To speak of fear of God in terms of hellfire is against the Gospel

## In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



As a theologian, priest, and preacher, I often get asked: “Why isn’t the church preaching more fear of God anymore? Why aren’t we preaching more about the dangers of going to hell? Why aren’t we preaching more about God’s anger and hellfire?”

It’s not hard to answer that. We

aren’t preaching a lot about fear because, to do so, unless we are extremely careful in our message, is simply wrong. Admittedly fear can cause people to change their behaviour, but so can intimidation and brainwashing. Just because something is effective doesn’t mean it is right. Fear of God may

only be preached within a context of love.

Scripture itself seemingly gives us a mixed message. On the one hand, it tells us that “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” even as it tells us that virtually every time God appears in human history, the first words from God are always: “Don’t be afraid!” That phrase, coming from the mouth of God or from the mouth of God’s messenger, appears more than 300 times in Scripture. The first words we will hear every time God appears in our lives are: “Don’t be afraid!” So we must be careful when we preach fear of God. Fear of punishment is not the real message we hear when God enters our lives.

Then how is fear of God the beginning of wisdom? In our relationship with God, just as in our relationships with each other, there are both healthy and unhealthy fears. What’s a healthy fear?

Healthy fear is love’s fear:

When we love someone our love will contain a number of healthy fears, a number of areas within which we will be healthily cautious and reticent. We will fear being disrespectful, fear despoiling the gift, fear being selfish, fear being irreverent. All healthy love contains the fear of not letting the other person be fully free. Reverence, awe, and respect are a form of fear. But that kind of fear is not to be confused with being frightened, intimidated, or dreading some kind of punishment. Metaphorically, love’s fear is the fear that God challenges Moses with before the burning bush: *Take off your shoes because the ground you are standing on is holy ground!*

How are we to understand fear of God as the beginning of wisdom? We are wise and on the right path when we stand before the mystery of God (and of love) with our shoes off, namely, in reverence, in awe, in respect, in unknowing, without undue pride, humble before an infinity that dwarfs us, and open to let that great mystery shape us for its own eternal purposes. But that is far different, almost the antithesis, of the fear we experience when we are frightened of someone or something that threatens us because the person or thing is perceived as being mercilessly exacting or as being arbitrary and punitive.

There is too a healthy fear of God that’s felt in our fear of violating what’s good, true, and beautiful in this world. Some religions call this a fear before the “law of karma.” Jesus, for his part, invites us to this kind of holy fear when he warns us that the measure we measure out is the measure that will be given

back to us. There’s a moral structure inherent in the universe, within life, and within each of us. Everything has a moral contour that needs to be respected. It’s healthy to be afraid of violating any goodness, truth, or beauty.

We need to preach this kind of healthy fear rather than that God needs to be feared because of the punishment God might eventually deal out in some legalistic and exacting fashion. Whenever we preach this kind of fear, of a God who deals out hellfire, we are almost always also preaching a God who isn’t very intelligent, compassionate, understanding, or forgiving. A God who is to be feared for his punitive threats is a God with whom we will never find a warm intimacy. Threat has no place within love, except if it is a holy fear of doing something that will disrespect and despoil. To preach hellfire may be effective as a tactic to help change behaviour, but it is wrong in terms of the Gospel.

Fear is a gift. It is also one of the deepest, life-preserving instincts within you. Without fear, you won’t live very long. But fear is a complex, multi-faced phenomenon. Some fears help you stay alive, while others deform and imprison you. There are things in life that you need to fear. A playground bully or the arbitrary tyrant can kill you, even if they are all wrong. Lots of things can kill you, and they merit fear.

But God is not one of those things. God is neither a playground bully nor an arbitrary tyrant. God is love and a perpetual invitation to intimacy. There is a lot to be feared in this, but nothing of which to be afraid.

**The Missionary Oblate Sisters of St. Boniface** held their first General Assembly from July 3 - 7, 2017. The members of their newly elected General Council are:

**Sr. Léa Archambault**, *General Superior*,  
**Sr. Yvette Bernardin**, *General Assistant*, and  
**Sr. Olive Halpin**, *General Secretary and Counsellor*.



Sr. Yvette Bernardin    Sr. Léa Archambault    Sr. Olive Halpin

The Missionary Oblate Sisters wish to thank the members of the outgoing Council, Srs. Cécile Fortier, Léa Archambault, Emma Berard and Brigitte Bissonnette for their dedicated services during the past years.

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



# Letting go into good: allowing all to be well

## Barefoot and Preaching

Leah Perrault



Things are well at our house, at least when it comes to cupcakes. Every fall our family picks coloured leaves, sharpens pencils, and gets ready for the first of two clustered birthday seasons. We make a little banner for the kitchen, tie balloons to the appropriate chair, and talk cake, parties, and sprinkles. I came from a family that does birthdays simply and married into one that does birthdays large. Birthdays are always an invitation to me to drink deeply from the well, to remember that life is worth celebrating — even when it takes effort.

It is curious to me that celebrations make me think most of extra effort. In addition to the regular work of life, within four weeks every fall, we fit in three cakes, three morning Happy Birthday songs, three sets of presents, three little parties, three icing and sprinkle messes. It is well and it is overwhelming. Grief adds holding back tears to the list of things to do.

*Perrault is a wife and mom, a grateful employee of Emmanuel Care, and a speaker, writer and consultant at [www.leahperrault.com](http://www.leahperrault.com)*

My birthday is in the middle of the three, a birthday I will celebrate alone for the first time in my life. I have been dreading it for 131 days. Three more to go. And as our littlest blew out her three candles last week, and tears of gratitude and grief welled up in my eyes. I thought, I'm so glad we were born.

Twins are a miracle. Two where only one was expected. Like ordinary siblings in many ways, and different. And the death of one twin, where life was expected, has siphoned much of the colour out of my world. Things are not well because she is not well. It feels like such betrayal to be well if she is not.

I cannot phone her to tell her about the funny things the kids did today. Her laughter will never again pull me out of self-pity. Her kids never get to be tucked in by their mom again. And still, there are candles on cupcakes and purple icing on fingers and walls. A free editing app lets me colour just the purple and the girl in a birthday photograph and it feels eerily like my world.

Death has left tears just below the surface of my eyes at every moment. The days pass but my heart feels stuck in April. The

strangest things remind me of a person who no longer lives and breathes. And then I am walking along a path at the zoo and I remember my feet walking this same path with Abbie, us laughing about her sandals falling apart. Her feet will never walk the path again. Gray falls over the whole beautiful fall day.

And then I see my own little turquoise flats against the pavement. And Charlize's little purple sandals. Our feet will. Our feet are walking here and now. A little colour. It takes effort to see it, and discipline to want to. Not everything is well, but something is.

Grief is not the first experience to paint gray over my world. Not getting the right coloured cup was nearly the end of the world in my young life. Being assigned to group work in high school often wrecked weeks of potential contentedness. Post-partum depression threatened to pull me into a hole, and my family with me. Unemployment as a reality in our marriage makes the whole world seem cold and scary.

Julian of Norwich wrote that "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well." My cynical self wonders if her sister was ever murdered. But I know that I know that she is right. I know that even when things feel gray and weary, beyond hope, there is a hope — a well — that is bigger and deeper than I can see. I know because right in the middle of my gray some tiny burst of colour pushes its way through.

There is a Well beneath and



Leah Perrault

above me where all is well and all will be well. I am learning that my internal peace depends not on the external circumstances of my life so much as my letting go into what is good, especially when it feels like blessedly little. That purple icing and the girl hiding her face behind the cupcake stand is so well my heart could break open from love just watching her. For just this moment, it is well with my soul. And that well is truer than the gray, and it is worth the effort.

I am so glad my littlest was born. I am grateful that the celebration of her birth reminds me that it

is good to be born and to live, especially because death awaits us all. One of us twins might never have been born, and perhaps this pain could have been avoided. But we were born, and we have lived, and so much of it has been so bright, so filled with colour and laughter and grace. I live still, as does she, though differently.

That little bit of colour is a sign that something is well and that wellness is a spring from which more wellness will come. For three more days, and for days after that, I will make the effort to let it be well, and I will let that wellness spread over the gray.

# Worshipping together is central to the work for Christian unity

## Challenge of Ecumenism

Thomas Ryan, CSP



Pastoral leaders are discovering that worship is more central to the work for Christian unity than was earlier thought. So no surprise then that the topic at this years annual gathering of the North American Academy of Ecumenists was "Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: A Once and Future Vision."

One of the presenters at this year's Sept. 22 - 24 meeting, which took place at the Connors Conference Center of Boston College in Dover, Mass., was Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker, a United Methodist elder and professor of worship at Boston University. She spoke about the ecumenical implications of singing together, how lyrical and harmonic sharing can serve as a sign of unity among the singers.

Dr. Tucker noted that Catholic

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

hymnals of the Post-Reformation era include many Lutheran hymns. Enlightenment era hymnals show even greater use of Protestant hymns. And after the Second Vatican Council, joint worship has motivated further dialogue for unity. "Thirty per cent of hymns in Catholic worship books today come from Protestant sources. Hymnody is accurately seen as an ecumenical heritage," she said.

One striking example of this are Christmas carols. "Eleven of the most popular Christmas carols come from a range of different denominational writers," reported Tucker. And she related how hymn output on Mary has been increasing among non-Catholic composers in the past 10 years. "Singing hymns together in an ecumenical context may inspire a further growing together."

"Singing should never be considered an add-on to the liturgy," Tucker said. "Singing is the liturgy. Singing is the highest form of human expression. The community which does not sing is not a

community. It's remarkable that ecumenists have not paid more attention to the role of singing in Christian relations. It's a sign of the Holy Spirit at work, bringing the church into greater unity."

But she also observed that in our present cultural context, singing together is not in vogue. For example, at ballgames, it's a soloist who sings. Keeping communal singing going is a countercultural act on the part of the churches. It's one of the only places that people get an opportunity to sing together. The ecumenical community of Taizé in southern France is a major preserver of this tradition. And it's easy for people to sing their chants because they're simple and easy to remember.

Another speaker at the conference was Rev. Dr. Gordon Lathrop, pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and liturgy professor at Virginia Theological Seminary. He observed that, given the several full-communion agreements between some denominations like Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Reformed in the past 20 years, many Christians are increasingly worshipping together on Sunday.

Dr. Lathrop cited the positive contribution made by the Roman Catholic Church's three-year-cycle Lectionary that brought about the Revised Lectionary which is now used by many different churches and is in close re-

semblance to the Roman Catholic lectionary. "The readings people hear on Sunday are by and large the same ones," said Lathrop. "Thanks to this, clergy can discuss the readings for the upcoming Sunday and prepare their homilies together."

He also noted common components in the liturgies celebrated across a range of denominations (Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, United Church of Christ): "The presider is facing the assembly. There are cantors, lectors, leaders of prayer, eucharistic ministers. We listen to the Word of God. We confess the creed and pray the Gloria in the same words. We make common intercessions. We eat and drink the sacred elements and send communion to the absent. Our hymnals have come to resemble each other.

"More and more we are worshipping in the same manner," said Lathrop. "This has made much easier mutual recognition of ordination and ministries between churches that are now in full communion with one another."

Similarly, immersion is more widely used in baptism, and the fonts are given more central place in church architecture.

Cross-confessional friendships have formed as people from different churches have worked together on liturgical renewal. neighbouring congregations have

begun to recognize each other, pray for each other, and reach out in ministry together.

In a discussion at the end of the weekend on "What Steps Can We Take to Advance Christian Unity Through Worship?" several suggestions were made:

Lead others on a tour of each of the churches in the area. Exercise pastoral leadership in proposing joint services on different occasions. Send out seminarians to visit three to five other traditions of worship and reflect on it as part of their liturgical formation. Encourage interchurch couples to go to each other's churches.

Attend baptisms in other churches; have fellowship after so visitors can ask questions about what they witnessed; and have a yearly joint celebration for all those newly baptized into the one Body of Christ.

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# After tragedies, who says prayer doesn't 'work'?

By Brandon Ambrosino  
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There's a cartoon making the rounds in response to the devastating Las Vegas shooting tragedy. It features a switchboard full of colourful buttons, on all of which but one is written "DO SOMETHING." The one button that is different is labelled "Thoughts and prayers," and the joke is that it's the only button being pushed by the lone finger in the drawing.

The biting cultural commentary offered is: We content ourselves with shallow promises of prayer even though we should be undertaking real-world action to solve an urgent problem.

This idea has been playing out on social media ever since a shooter killed at least 58 and injured hundreds of others in Las Vegas. For every one tweeter offering prayer, there was one tweeter mocking them.

Some people were more civil about it than others. Actress Emmy Rossum said she believes in prayer, but thinks that more than prayer is needed to reform America's gun laws. Columnist Charles Blow was less polite: "I am so SICK of our hollow, ritualized response to these tragedies: Outrage, prayer, 'thought go out . . .,' debate, then . . . NOTHING! This is gross."

This discussion made its way into my own Twitter feed when I responded to a tweet by Andrew Seidel, an attorney with Freedom From Religion Foundation, a non-profit group dedicated to "freethought activism."

"#PRAYERSFORVEGAS or any other mass shooting won't end gun violence in America," he wrote.

OK . . . that's true enough. But neither, I replied, will being clever with a hashtag. (That really got things going.)

Seidel made himself very clear: Prayer, he insisted, wasn't "real action," and it often runs the risk of giving people who do nothing an excuse to feel as if they are. Finally, he accused me of missing his main point, which was: "Prayer doesn't work."

As a person who both prays and writes about people who pray, I found these comments naive, arrogant and misinformed. First of all, how is prayer supposed to "work"? What does "success" even look like when we're talking about prayer? How quickly does success have to "happen" after the initial prayer for it to count as a result of the prayer? It seems like this accusation is informed by a very elementary notion of prayer: Unless we get something (say, a red lollipop) almost immediately after praying for it, then we can't say the prayer worked.

But I don't know many religious people who think of prayer this way. Instead, many of us see prayer the same way that St. Thérèse of Lisieux sees it: It's "a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy." If this is what prayer is, then every prayer — insofar as it gets us to pause in the midst of tragedy,



CNS/Mike Blake, Reuters

**GATHERING FOR PRAYER —** People attend a candlelight vigil Oct. 3 in memory of the victims of a mass shooting along the Las Vegas Strip. Playing out on social media since the tragedy is the notion that prayer is a useless response. Columnist Brandon Ambrosino disagrees.

take a breath, and remember that the future is still coming to meet us — "works."

Another problem with the "Don't pray; act!" accusation is that it fundamentally misunderstands the relationship of prayer and real-world action. There's an apocryphal quote attributed to Pope Francis (and if he didn't say it, it definitely sounds like something the Jesuit would say): "You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. That is how prayer works." He said something similar in a July 2013 address: "Prayer that doesn't lead to concrete action toward our brothers is a fruitless and incomplete prayer."

"Prayer and action must always be profoundly united," he concluded.

This isn't any different from

the way Jesus taught his followers to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." In other words, God's kingdom comes to earth through the humans who behave as if it is already here. The praying is the doing.

Plenty of religious people seem to believe this. A recent Pew survey found "a clear link between what people see as essential to their faith and their self-reported day-to-day behaviour." For example, more than 60 per cent of Christians who believe that helping the poor is essential to their Christian identity regularly donate time and money to actually . . . help the poor. This suggests the majority of Christians surveyed realize that a truly prayerful posture requires real-world action.

To be fair, if praying actually does prevent someone from taking necessary and appropriate action to fix a problem — for example, religious parents who refuse medical treatment for their children — then that prayer is hypocritical. But this isn't a criticism invented by Twitter — it's as old as religion itself. The Bible, for example, is full of passages condemning unjust people who pray:

*When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.*

If you want God to hear you, Isaiah tells his listeners, then you must "learn to do good; seek jus-

## Some believe they're more Catholic than the pope

By Thomas Reese  
©2017 Religion News Service

"More Catholic than the pope" used to be a joking reference to conservative Catholics, but these days there truly are some people who think they are more Catholic than the pope.

Four cardinals (two of whom have recently gone to their eternal reward) criticized the pope publicly in 2016 by issuing what they called a "dubia," asking the pope to clarify what they considered his straying from the true faith. Last month, several dozen theologians accused the pope of spreading heresy.

The fuss is over the pope's willingness to open the door to the possibility of divorced and remarried Catholics receiving communion, even if they do not have a church annulment. But it raises a larger question: Who has the right to challenge the pope's

teachings in the Catholic Church?

These criticisms of Pope Francis put progressive Catholics in an awkward position. Progressives are big fans of Pope Francis, but it would be somewhat hypocritical of them to suddenly become papal absolutists when they clearly had disagreements with Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. On the other hand, conservatives who are now critical of Pope Francis accused progressives of being "cafeteria Catholics" when they disagreed with John Paul or Benedict.

All I can say is, "Welcome to the cafeteria."

The truth is all Catholics are cafeteria Catholics. Conservative Catholics were quite willing to ignore John Paul's and Benedict's strong statements on justice and peace, and progressive Catholics are happy to ignore Francis' opposition to women priests.

Disagreeing with the pope was not welcomed during the papacies of John Paul and Benedict. Bishops, priests, theologians, and Catholic publications were expected to unreservedly cheer any statement that came out of Rome. Priests were silenced, seminary professors were removed, and magazine editors

were fired if they strayed from the party line. The open debate that occurred during the Second Vatican Council was closed down. Candidates for the episcopacy were chosen based on loyalty to Rome rather than on intelligence or pastoral abilities.

The atmosphere has changed under Pope Francis. Bishops are being chosen because of their pastoral abilities and identification with the poor. Theologians are free to speak and write what they please. Catholic publications are not subject to censorship. And cardinals and theologians are publicly criticizing the pope, something that would never have been allowed in earlier papacies.

Pope Francis can only blame himself for this. He asked for it. At the beginning of the 2016 synod on the family, he told the bishops to "Speak clearly. Let no one say, 'This can't be said, they will think this or that about me.' Everything we feel must be said, with *parrhesia* (boldness)."

The Greek word "*parrhesia*" comes from the Acts of the Apostles where Paul takes on Peter, the first pope, in arguing that the gentile Christians need not be circumcised. Paul won that argument.

Pope Francis remembers how

tice, correct oppression." If you're not going to make those changes, then God won't hear your prayers so you might as well not even offer them. This is why I think it was right for someone to challenge Vice-president Mike Pence when he tweeted that he and his wife were praying for the victims of Las Vegas. "Your campaign took \$30 million from the NRA last year. Save your prayers for something else," wrote author Molly Knight.

But while it might be reasonable in this instance to question the prayers of those collecting money from gun lobbyists, it seems mean-spirited to issue a blanket condemnation of anyone who turns to prayer in response to suffering.

Prayer is a very human response to the world's enormous evil. It grew up within that part of our collective soul that said, "This world is dark . . . and yet I will keep moving forward." Andrew Seidel is right to be outraged with yet another mass shooting — we all should share that outrage! But heaping some of that outrage on prayer ignores the fact that humanity's sense of justice evolved alongside its sense of prayerfulness and reverence. The impulse that makes us rage against evil is the same one that leads us to "look toward heaven."

We all have different views on prayer, but at the end of the day, #praying on social media comes down to solidarity. It's my way of saying, "I see you hurting, and I am here for you." Those expressions of solidarity can't take the place of calling your local politicians and demanding reform. At the same time, retweeting a bunch of graphs that prove your political points can't take the place of gentle reminders of human compassion.

when he was a cardinal at an earlier synod, officials from the Roman Curia told him what subjects could not be brought up. Although the purpose of the synod of bishops is to advise the pope, most bishops at earlier synods spent most of their time quoting the pope to himself. It was a silly exercise.

Pope Francis is not afraid of open discussion in the church. "Open and fraternal debate makes theological and pastoral thought grow," he said. "That doesn't frighten me. What's more, I look for it."

Well, he got it. Some people would like to see him crack down on those dissenting from his teaching, but I rather admire him for his patience and willingness to let people speak their minds. He trusts that the Spirit will guide the church in the right direction.

Catholics need to grow up and learn to live in a church where arguments take place, but we should not let disagreements break up the family. We need to understand that people have different viewpoints and that we can learn from one another by having dialogue. Rather than dividing into partisan factions, we need to model what it means to be a community.



## Churches look at Green menus

Catholic congregations are taking up the challenge of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on ecology, *Laudato Si'*.

Jesuit organizations released a prayer tool focused on the environment on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis. And churches in France are promoting a "green label" designation.

St. Francis is the saint most identified with care for creation. The Jesuits of Canada and the U.S., together with the Ignatian Solidarity Network, used his feastday to introduce an Ecological Examen based on the traditional Ignatian Examen of Consciousness. Their examen takes cues from Pope Francis' encyclical to reflect on an individual's relationship with creation, on questions of ecological justice and on how we can all stand in solidarity with those most impacted by environmental harm. The five sections are: gratitude, awareness, understanding, conversion and reconciliation.

Cecilia Calvo, senior adviser on environmental justice at the Jesuit Conference commented, "We hope this Ecological Examen helps individuals in their homes, parishes, schools, universities and communities to examine their relationship with creation, to hear the cry of the Earth and the poor and reflect on ways to reconcile their relationship with God's creation."

Christopher Kerr, executive director of the Ignatian Solidarity Network, said, "Now more than ever, we need to reflect on the ways our care for the Earth impacts our brothers and sisters throughout the world. This examen provides a prayerful way for institutions and individuals to engage in ways that lead us into deeper relationship with God, creation and others."

The Ecological Examen is made up of the following points:

1. I give thanks to God for creation and for being wonderfully made. Where did I feel God's presence in creation today?

2. I ask for the grace to see creation as God does — in all its splendor and suffering. Do I see the beauty of creation and hear the cries of the earth and the poor?

3. I ask for the grace to look closely to see how my life choices impact creation and the poor and vulnerable. What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation? How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and the poor?

4. I ask for the grace of conversion toward ecological justice and reconciliation. Where have I fallen short in caring for creation and my brothers and sisters? How do I ask for a conversion of heart?

5. I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation and humanity, and to stand in solidarity through my actions. How can I repair my rela-

tionship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?

6. I offer a closing prayer for the Earth and the vulnerable in our society.

In another initiative, the French Catholic Bishops Conference together with the Protestant Federation have launched an ecumenical "Green Church" label to promote ecological conversion among parishes.

St. Gabriel's Church in Paris, for example, established a vegetable garden around the church two years ago to grow tomatoes. Four compost bins for recycling waste are now filled with decomposing fruit and vegetable peels. At a "recycling corner" at the back of the church, parishioners collect plastic bottle tops while parish leaflets provide details of seasonal fruits and ways of preventing waste.

In other initiatives at St. Gabriel's, the pastor tries as often as possible to introduce references to biblical stories which deal with animals and nature in his homilies, universal prayers and hymns. The parish has also abandoned the use of plastic cups in favour of "eco-cups." Outings to organic farms are often organized for the children in catechism class.

In a church that is built on a sacramental spirituality, Catholics can expand their vision of how God works in and through material things. God uses water, bread and wine and human touch to show his love for his people. God invites us to show the same care and love for his creation. — PWN

## Invest in small farmers to feed the world and reduce poverty



Eugene Ellmen



According to UN estimates, the world population is expected to grow from about seven billion currently to more than nine billion by 2050. This means that farmers around the world are going to have to produce a lot more food, while limiting their impact on land, water and the global climate.

Smallholder farmers — once disdained by experts as unimportant and inefficient — are now being heralded as the key to unlock this dilemma. Using local knowledge and working local land, smallholder farmers are helping to fight back against the corporatization of land and resources. In turn, this creates a

more sustainable approach to agriculture, keeping environmental impacts and carbon emissions in check.

But can these farmers ramp up production to meet the huge food needs of the future?

The answer is yes, but there is a big "if" attached to this. That is, if they can get the financing necessary to improve productivity.

A report last year from the Initiative for Smallholder Finance and the MasterCard Foundation sketched out the challenges in this massive undertaking.

### A new era

"A renewed drive at the beginning of the 21st century to connect farmers to financial services

has ushered in a new 'era of farmer finance,' " states the report. "Even with these developments, however, the gap between the financial needs of smallholders and the supply of financial services is anticipated to remain significant."

The report estimates that the

*Ellmen is director for Canada and the U.S. for Oikocredit, a co-operative and social investor making loans and investments to more than 780 partner organizations in 70 countries worldwide. For more information, visit [www.oikocredit.ca](http://www.oikocredit.ca)*

270 million smallholder farmers in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South and Southeast Asia, need more than \$200 billion annually in investment capital. State banks in developing countries, microfinance institutions, commercial banks, agribusiness lenders, non-profit organizations and social lenders like Oikocredit, the organization I work for, are doing their part. But even with significant effort on the part of these actors, only about \$50 billion is disbursed each year — leaving a \$150-billion gap in financing.

— CHANGE, page 15

## Outsiders label Canada an 'education superpower'

By Gerry Chidiac,  
Prince George, B.C.

A recent BBC article called Canada "an education superpower." It referred to the fact that, in recent years, Canadian students' results in literacy, mathematics and science are among the best in the world. We're in the same echelon as countries like Finland and Singapore.

The article drew primarily from results of the program for International Student Assessment (PISA), an Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study.

The results are rather surprising, given that Canada is a vast and varied country where, thanks to the British North America Act of 1867, the federal government only plays a small role in educational policy. Education is a primarily under provincial jurisdiction; each province and territory establishes its own policies and practices.

*Chidiac is an award-winning high school teacher specializing in languages, genocide studies and work with at-risk students. [www.troymedia.com](http://www.troymedia.com)*

As an educator, I was intrigued by the analysis of our school system done by a foreign journalist. Several positive aspects of our schools were pointed out, including that we not only have a large number of immigrant children in our schools but that these students tend to do very well. Indeed, our public schools do an amazing job of welcoming and integrating new Canadians into our society.

Tying in with this is what the article refers to as "a common commitment to an equal chance in school." As an educator, I had never given this much thought. But upon reflection, I realized that it's indeed ingrained in the culture of our schools. Much effort is put into tapping into and drawing out the gifts of every child, and the socio-economic background of the people who sit in front of us every day is really not a factor. This is not to say that resources will not be found to support a child in need — a great deal of effort is put into finding ways to aid them — but the focus is on helping each child to succeed.

So there's a system in place in our schools to improve literacy

— HIGH STANDARD, page 15



Oiko

**SUPPORT SMALL FARMERS** — The social enterprise Vasham Kosa Sejahtera (VKS), founded in 2013, provides value-chain financing to smallholder maize farmers with average plot sizes of less than one hectare. The lady at left is harvesting corn in Indonesia with the help of VKS. By linking farmers with input suppliers, feed mills and buyers, VKS provides them with access to a value chain, whereby farmers pay less for their inputs and receive a higher price for their produce. The rice company *Société de Développement Agro Pastorale du Rwanda* (SODAR Ltd) processes paddy rice supplied by almost 10,000 farmers associated with co-operatives in the districts Rusizi and Nyamasheke in Rwanda. Through its activities SODAR contributes to food security and the development of small rice farmers in rural communities. In the photo on the right, Vessiane, age 27, earns a living for her two children and an unemployed husband.



**By Donald L. Telfer, Humboldt**

*Former travel writer-photographer, and editor and publisher of the Humboldt Journal, Telfer has contributed to over a hundred newspapers and magazines in Canada, the U.S. and abroad.*

Perched on the rocky shores of Great Slave Lake, Yellowknife has come a long way from its rough and tumble beginnings when gold was discovered on the North Arm of the lake. A diverse, cosmopolitan and thriving city of

My trip from Edmonton, including diversions to Hay River, Yellowknife and Fort Simpson, totalled some 5,000 km. The distance is not inconsiderable yet it is evident why Carmel Ellis does not tire of what he calls, "the amazing long lost world of the Deh Cho."

## Continued from page 14

The report focuses on three strategies. First, the farmer must be put at the centre of product development, with loans and technical assistance bundled to make financing more accessible and attractive. Second, financial insti-

“Now is the time to put smallholder finance on a new trajectory that will help millions of smallholder farmers secure a more pros-

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By J. Oliver

## Continued from page 14

We also know that we're valued and that we will be paid the same regardless of the economic means of our students' families. Our wages are much better than those of teachers in many countries — but they have to be. Economic forces would draw the best and brightest from our areas

Although we may have always known that we do excellent work, it's affirming to see our efforts recognized globally.

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 <pm.editor@stpeterspress.ca>  
 Associate editors: Maureen Weber <pm.canadian@stpeterspress.ca>,  
 Don Ward <pm.local@stpeterspress.ca>  
 Layout artist: Lucille Stewart  
 Advertising: Gail Kleefeld 306-682-1772 <pm.ads@stpeterspress.ca>  
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# Anti-nuclear coalition wins 2017 Nobel Peace Prize

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Emphasizing the hope for a nuclear-free world, the Nobel committee announced its decision to award the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

The organization, also known by the acronym ICAN, was commended for its work in drawing attention “to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons,” the committee said, announcing the prize Oct. 6.

“It is the firm conviction of the Norwegian Nobel committee that ICAN, more than anyone else, has in the past year given the efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons a new direction and new vigour,” it said.

Launched in 2007, the organization is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in 101 countries aimed at promoting

global nuclear disarmament.

The Nobel committee honoured ICAN for its efforts to achieve a prohibition of nuclear weapons under international law through the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The treaty, which would enter into force 90 days after at least 50 countries both sign and ratify it, bans efforts to develop, produce, test, manufacture, acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Although as of Sept. 20 the treaty had been signed by more than 40 countries, including the Holy See, Canada, the United States and other countries possessing nuclear weapons did not take part in the negotiations and do not plan to sign the treaty.

“We hope that with this year’s prize, we can support the great efforts ICAN has made to give new momentum and new vigour” to the goal of a nuclear-



CNS/Denis Balibouse, Reuters

**NOBEL PEACE PRIZE —** A combination photo shows members of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons in Geneva Oct. 6. The group won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. Pictured from left to right are Beatrice Fihn, executive director; Daniel Hogsta, co-ordinator; and Grethe Ostern, a member of the organization’s steering committee.

free world, the Nobel committee said.

“We live in a world where the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a

long time,” the committee said. “Some states are modernizing their nuclear arsenals, and there is a real danger that more countries will try to procure nuclear weapons, as

exemplified by North Korea.”

The Vatican also has shared its concern regarding North Korea’s nuclear ambitions, and regarding the tensions North Korea’s actions have caused with the United States.

“The rising tensions over North Korea’s growing nuclear program are of special urgency,” Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Vatican foreign minister, said Sept. 20 at a UN conference on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

“The threat or use of military force have no place in countering proliferation,” he said, “and the threat or use of nuclear weapons in countering nuclear proliferation are deplorable.”

In his speech to the United Nations Sept. 25, 2015, Pope Francis urged the international community to prohibit nuclear weapons, which provoke “fear and distrust” among nations and threaten “the destruction of all mankind.”

“There is urgent need to work for a world free of nuclear weapons, in full application of the non-proliferation treaty, in letter and spirit, with the goal of a complete prohibition of these weapons,” the pope said.

## Church wants ‘culture of safeguarding’ for children

By Carol Glatz

ROME (CNS) — Child abuse is not only a crime, it is sacrilege, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said at a world congress promoting the protection of children online.

“The church has become increasingly aware of the harm experienced by victims, of their suffering and of the need to listen to them,” he told an international assembly of more than 100 top experts and leaders in government, law enforcement, non-profit organizations and technology, who are working in child protection.

Action must be taken to “heal wounds, restore justice, prevent crimes” and establish a culture of “real safeguarding” so children can grow up healthy and safe, Parolin said Oct. 3 in a keynote address opening the four-day gathering.

“Fortunately, with regard to the

church, this is already happening, in various institutions and regions, even when society in general has not yet developed the necessary awareness,” he said. “These efforts, however, must continue, must be expanded and deepened with clarity and firmness.”

“To disparage infancy and to abuse children,” he said, “is for the Christian, therefore, not only a crime, but also — as Pope Francis has stated — sacrilege, a profanation of that which is sacred, of the presence of God in every human being.”

The congress, “Child Dignity in the Digital World,” was being held as the Vatican was investigating accusations that one of its foreign diplomats had violated laws relating to child pornography images.

Italian Msgr. Carlo Capella was recalled to the Vatican from his post at the Vatican nunciature in Washington, D.C., after the U.S.

State Department notified the Holy See of his possible crimes. Police in Canada also issued a nationwide warrant for the monsignor’s arrest on charges of accessing, possessing and distributing child pornography while he was visiting Canada.

“It is a very painful affair, a huge ordeal for everyone who is involved,” the cardinal told reporters in response to requests for his comments on the case involving one of his diplomats. “We are handling the case with the utmost diligence, the utmost seriousness.”

Further information must remain confidential “in order to protect the investigations and, therefore, to safeguard truth and justice,” the cardinal said. In regards to an expected time frame of how the case will proceed, “it’s premature to talk about that.”

Communicating quickly and proactively is critical, a member of the advisory board of the Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University told Catholic News Service.

While some things cannot be divulged while an investigation is underway, “you can tell the public there is an investigation going on and it’s being dealt with in an appropriate manner,” said Msgr. Stephen Rossetti, a licensed psychologist and a former Air Force intelligence officer.

“There is a communication issue here” because of very different expectations between the Vatican and the United States and Canada, he said Oct. 4. “In the U.S., it’s expected before the sun goes down there should be a public statement,” so when there are gaps or a lack of prompt communication, “for us it’s frustrating.”

“The Catholic Church should be a leader in child protection rather than a follower,” said the monsignor, who is clinical associate professor of pastoral studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

“It is part of our mandate as a Gospel-based organization. Jesus said very strong things about those who would harm children,” he

said, “so why is it the Catholic Church has not been a leader?”

The Rome congress and its gathering of so many top-notch experts is an example of the beginning of this kind of leadership and of the church becoming a platform for the protection of children, “as it should be,” he said.

The Gregorian University’s Centre for Child Protection was hosting the world congress in partnership with WePROTECT Global Alliance in an effort to get faith communities, police, software and social media industries, mass media, non-profits and governments working together to better protect minors from online abuse, violence and exploitation in a “digital era.”

The founder of WePROTECT, Baroness Joanna Shields, said in her keynote address Oct. 3 that “the progress we make together will determine the future of over one billion children who suffer abuse and violence in their everyday lives.”

## Vatican to use ecologically friendly cleaning techniques

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Roughly half of the Vatican’s 110 acres is devoted to gardens, and a major project is underway to keep them as “green” as possible.

It’s not about watering the plants, although that was a big concern this year with a drought in Italy.

The Vatican Museums and the Vatican City governor’s office — which includes the gardeners — are involved in a five-year project to develop ecologically friendly cleaning agents and techniques to clean, restore and maintain the 570 works of art on display outside. Those works include fountains, statues and stone plaques.

The project involves art experts and biologists, including several dedicated to studying medicinal plants and essential oils extracted from plants.

At a daylong scientific confer-

ence at the Vatican Museums Oct. 3, the scientists and restorers presented their work. Showing a slide of a gardener wearing a hood, jumpsuit, mask and gloves, one researcher told the audience they want such a picture to be a thing of the past.

The artwork needs to be conserved, but without harming the plants, animals and birds who live in the gardens or the men and women who work there, researchers said.

For the Vatican, the project is not just about killing bacteria, removing fungus and algae, controlling rust and chipping off calcium deposits. The entire process is being meticulously documented — from the original state of degradation to the formulae of substances applied and the long-term tracking of their effectiveness — in the hopes of being able to offer other cities and institutions “green” methods for preserving outdoor art.



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

**AUDIENCE ON PROTECTING CHILDREN —** Pope Francis greets Muireann O’Carroll, 16, from Ireland during an audience with participants in an international congress on protecting children in a digital world, at the Vatican Oct. 6. The pope pledged “to work strenuously and with foresight for the protection of minors and their dignity.”

Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out.

— Vaclav Havel