



Missionary remembered

Twenty-five years ago Rev. Sylvester Vredegoor, OSB, was killed in a traffic accident in Brazil. One of the first Benedictines from St. Peter's Abbey to respond to Pope John XXIII's invitation to send missionaries to Latin America, Vredegoor is remembered with reverence by his former parishioners.

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Resurrection

"The resurrection is essential," declared Randal Rauser, a Baptist scholar who



was invited to Saskatoon to speak to parish leaders at the annual diocesan Study Days. It is "a glimpse into our future salvation."

— page 3

Wartime stories

"Movies about war have been a staple genre of the cinema from the beginning, including as a propaganda



tool," writes Gerald Schmitz. "But truth doesn't have to be the first casualty when films

are unafraid to show how wars and wartime affect what human beings do to and for each other . . ."

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Shepherd of the universe

"We live in a distant suburb of our 100,000+ light-year-wide Milky Way galaxy," writes Michael Dougherty. "Two trillion galaxies with billions of stars each, which in turn having planetary systems spinning around them, leave us with mind-boggling planetary numbers." Can we imagine the God spark touching creatures across the universe?

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Loyalists, dissidents

"Scripture tells us that they will know we are Christians by our love (John 13:35), but the media tell us they will know we are Catholics by our fights," writes Thomas Reese, SJ.

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Vatican pushing nuclear disarmament

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — As the Vatican gathered 11 Nobel peace laureates, plus NATO officials, ambassadors and peace activists to discuss nuclear disarmament at a Nov. 10 - 11 summit, there was no doubt about the church's position.

Even before the first atomic bomb was detonated during the Second World War, every pope since Pius XII has decried the awesome destructive power of nuclear weapons. The escalation of the Cold War prompted Pope John XXIII to demand an end to the arms race in his 1963 encyclical *Pacem in Terris*. Pope Francis cheered on, signed and ratified the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty in September as U.S. President Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un lobbed alarming threats at each other over North Korea's nuclear arms testing.

For more than 70 years, papal pleas have fallen on the mostly deaf ears of the nuclear juggernauts, with at least one exception.

Will this Vatican conference be any different? Yes, says Canadian peace activist and retired senator Doug Roche.

"This is not more of the same. This is going to be a cry to humanity to put political pressure on the political systems to decelerate and come down from the nuclear mountain that has been created —

before it is too late," he said.

Roche was at the Vatican conference — titled "Perspectives for a world free from nuclear weapons and for integral disarmament" — in his capacity as adviser to the

Holy See's United Nations delegation on peace and disarmament.

While Roche is supportive of the Vatican's message, he is equally critical of Canada's weak, ambiguous subservience to the

United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Canada's refusal to sign or even show up for negotiations on

— CANADA, page 4

Besides food, refugees need education

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Refugees need education and jobs just as much as they need food and shelter, according to a new report by Catholic Relief Services and a Nov. 6 panel discussion about it at the National Press Club in Washington.

"School is a game changer for refugees" because it gives them a sense of normalcy, said Giulia McPherson, director of advocacy and operations for Jesuit Refugee Service, one of the panelists.

She said education is a top priority and noted that refugees are currently five times more likely to be out of school.

Providing an education for those who have fled their homelands is not just a way to help people find a path to success or college but to give an "opportunity for hope," McPherson said, with the end goal of learning a trade to support their families.

She also said agencies that help

— SKILLS, page 15



CNS/Paul Jeffrey

REFUGEE CRISIS — A woman from Myanmar feeds her child in a UN clinic for severely malnourished Rohingya children Oct. 28 in the Balukhali Refugee Camp near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. More than 600,000 Rohingya have fled government-sanctioned violence in Myanmar for safety in Bangladesh. Refugees need education and jobs just as much as they need food and shelter, according to a report by Catholic Relief Services and a Nov. 6 panel discussion in Washington.

Ecumenical service celebrates unity in Christ

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — It took almost 500 years for this scene to develop: a Roman Catholic archbishop and an Evangelical Lutheran bishop standing together in a Lutheran church, jointly presiding over a worship service commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Regina Roman Catholic Archbishop Donald Bolen and Evangelical Lutheran Bishop of Saskatchewan Sid Haugen processed together into Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church to begin the service called "Together in Christ." They alternated saying the opening prayers after Pastor Sarah Dymund extended them a welcome to the church. Dymund read the day's Gospel and

took part in some of the prayers.

"I am thankful you are all here today," said Haugen, and joked about having a church full of people on a Saturday afternoon. In his homily, Bolen stated that we have come a long way in our relations,



Frank Flegel

Rev. Sarah Dymund, Bishop Sid Haugen and Archbishop Donald Bolen.

noting that part of our ecumenical progress has been learning to revisit together the history of our separation 500 years ago. This has allowed the Catholic Church to come to a reassessment of Martin Luther, recognizing that he didn't wish to start a new church but to bring renewal and reform to the Catholic Church. Catholics have also come to recognize the importance of Luther's own journey toward a faith in a God whose mercy is much greater than our sinfulness.

In their joint homily, both Haugen and Bolen referred to the document *From Conflict to Communion* signed by representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church in 2013. The document reviews the history of conflict that arose following Martin Luther's action and the almost 500-year journey that brought the two faith traditions together.

From Conflict to Communion contains five imperatives that were read aloud by representatives of the two faiths. After each reading a large candle was lit, brought to the front of the church and placed with the others.

The five imperatives read:

1. Catholics and Lutherans should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common, even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced;

2. Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves be continuously transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith;

3. Catholics and Lutherans should again commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps and to strive repeatedly toward this goal;

4. Lutherans and Catholics should jointly discover the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for our time; and

5. Catholics and Lutherans should witness together the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.

The Order of Service was the same as that which was used Oct. 31, 2016 in Lund, Sweden, when Pope Francis and Lutheran World Federation president and Bishop of Jordan and the Holy Land Munib Younan presided over an ecumenical service commemorating the anniversary of the Reformation.

Stop taking smartphone shots during mass: pope

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The mass is not a show, but a beautiful, transformative encounter with the true loving presence of Christ, Pope Francis said.

That is why people need to focus their hearts on God, not focus their smartphones for pictures during mass, he said.

When the priest celebrating mass says, “Let us lift up our hearts,” he is not saying, “lift up our cellphones and take a picture. No. It’s an awful thing” to do, the pope said Nov. 8 during his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square.

“It makes me so sad when I celebrate (mass) in the square or in the basilica and I see so many cellphones in the air. And not just by the lay faithful, some priests and bishops, too,” he said.

“Please, mass is not a show. It is going to encounter the Passion, the resurrection of the Lord,” he said to applause.

The pope’s remarks were part of a new series of audience talks on the mass. The series, he said, should help people understand the true value and significance of the liturgy as an essential part of growing closer to God.

A major theme highlighted by the Second Vatican Council was that the liturgical formation of the lay faithful is “indispensable for a

true renewal,” Pope Francis said. “And this is precisely the aim of this catechetical series that we begin today — to grow in understanding the great gift God gave us in the eucharist.”

“The Second Vatican Council was strongly driven by the desire to lead Christians to an understanding of the grandeur of the faith and the beauty of the encounter with Christ,” he said. That is why, “with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, an appropriate renewal of the liturgy” was necessary.

The eucharist is a wonderful way Jesus Christ makes himself truly present in people’s lives, the pope said.

To take part in the mass is to relive the Lord’s passion and redemptive death, where, on the altar, he is present and offers himself for the salvation of the world, Pope Francis said.

“The Lord is there with us and present,” he said. “But so many times we go, we look around, we chit-chat with each other while the priest celebrates the eucharist.”

If the president or any other famous or important person were to show up, he said, it would be a given “that we all would be near him, we would want to greet him. But think about it, when you go to mass, the Lord is there and you, you are distracted, (your

mind) wanders. Yet, it is the Lord!”

People should reflect on this, he said, and if they complain, “ ‘Oh father, mass is boring.’ What are you saying? The Lord is boring? ‘No, not the mass, but the priest.’ Ah, well, may the priest be converted,” but just never forget that the Lord is always there.

Catholics need to learn or re-discover many of the basics about the mass and how the sacraments allow people to “see and touch” Christ’s body and wounds so as to be able to recognize him, just as the apostle St. Thomas did.

He said the series would include answering the following questions:

— Why make the sign of the cross at the beginning of mass? Why is it important to teach children how to make the sign of the cross properly and what does it mean?

— What are the mass readings for and why are they included in the mass?

— What does it mean for people to participate in the Lord’s sacrifice and come to his table?

— What are people seeking? Is it the overflowing fount of living water for eternal life?

— Do people understand the importance of praise and thanksgiving with the eucharist and that receiving it “makes us one body in Christ”?



CNS/Tony Gentile, Reuters

POPE DEPLORES TAKING PICTURES AT MASS — A priest takes pictures with a tablet as Pope Francis celebrates mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican. The pope, at his Nov. 8 general audience, said it’s “an awful thing” for people to take cellphone photos at mass.

Pope bans cigarette sales at the Vatican as of 2018

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Concerned by the damage caused by smoking, Pope Francis has banned the sale of cigarettes in Vatican City State.

Starting in 2018, the Vatican “will cease to sell cigarettes to employees,” Greg Burke, Vatican spokesperson, said in a Nov. 9 statement.

“The reason is very simple: The Holy See cannot contribute to an activity that clearly damages the health of people,” he said. “According to the World Health Organization, every year smoking is the cause of more than seven million deaths throughout the world.”

The Vatican used to be known as a safe haven for cigarette smokers. That changed dramatically in 2002, when Vatican City

prohibited smoking in offices and public places.

However, cigarettes continued to be sold to current and retired personnel at the Vatican. Even after the cigarette ban goes into effect, the Vatican will continue discount sales of gasoline, groceries and other goods to employees and retirees.

Nevertheless, while cigarette sales “are a source of revenue for the Holy See, no profit can be legitimate if it puts lives at risk,” Burke said.

On a moral level, the church has never defined smoking as a sin. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says the gift of physical health requires “reasonable care” of the body, and more specifically says: “The virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco or medicine.”

U.S. gun laws not reasonable

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The nation’s leaders “must engage in a real debate about needed measures to save lives and make our communities safer,” said the chair of the U.S. bishops’ domestic policy committee.

Such debate is essential because “violence in our society will not be solved by a single piece of legislation, and many factors contribute to what we see going on all around us,” said Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

His Nov. 7 statement was issued in response to “recent and horrific attacks” in the country, referring to the mass shooting Nov. 5 at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas, that left 26 people dead and 20 others wounded, and the Oct. 1 the mass shooting in Las Vegas during an outdoor concert that left 58 people dead and hundreds of others injured.

“For many years, the Catholic

bishops of the United States have been urging our leaders to explore and adopt reasonable policies to help curb gun violence,” Dewane said.

The Las Vegas and Sutherland Springs gun massacres “remind us of how much damage can be caused when weapons — particularly weapons designed to inflict extreme levels of bloodshed — too easily find their way into the hands of those who would wish to use them to harm others,” he said.

Dewane said the USCCB continues to urge a total ban on assault weapons, “which we supported when the ban passed in 1994 and when Congress failed to renew it in 2004.”

Other efforts the bishops support include measures that control the sale and use of firearms, such as universal background checks for all gun purchases; limitations on civilian access to high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines; and a federal law to criminalize gun trafficking.

Pope meets global leaders: The Elders

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis met with Kofi Annan, the former UN secretary general, and former Irish President Mary Robinson to discuss shared concerns about peace, human rights and climate change.

“Pope Francis has shown great moral leadership on the crucial issues of our time. His assertion of the values of peace and human dignity resonates with people of all faiths and those of none,” Annan said in a written statement released after the Nov. 6 meeting in the pope’s residence.

Annan and Robinson made the private visit Nov. 6 together with Lakhdar Brahimi and Ricardo Lagos as members of The Elders, an independent group of global leaders who use their experience and influence to support peace and human rights.

The four representatives met with the pope “to express their appreciation and support for his work on global peace, refugees and migration, and climate change,” according to The Elders’ website.

The organization is “proud to stand in solidarity with him today and in the future as we work for justice and universal human rights,” Annan, chair of The Elders, said in his statement.

Annan told Vatican Radio it was important for them to visit the pope because they hold a number of interests and values in common, and they wanted to “discuss how we can work together, how we can pool our efforts on some of these issues.”



CNS/L’Osservatore Romano

POPE MEETS KOFI ANNAN — Pope Francis greets Kofi Annan, former secretary general of the United Nations and leader of The Elders, during a private audience at the Vatican Nov. 6.

Robinson, who is also a former UN high commissioner for human rights and a UN envoy on climate change, told Vatican Radio that they spoke about climate change and other issues where “the pope has given leadership. We felt there was a great deal of common ground between us.”

Other issues they discussed, Annan told the radio, were migration, nuclear weapons, the mediation of conflicts and “the importance of giving women a voice and respecting their role.”

“I hope this will be the first of many meetings,” he said.

They expressed their appreciation for what the pope has been

doing, Robinson said, and how he, like The Elders, is “trying to be a voice for the voiceless” and the marginalized.

“I think he could be a future ‘Elder,’ ” Annan told the radio, to which Robinson remarked, “I think he’s a Super Elder.”

Former South African President Nelson Mandela formally launched The Elders 10 years ago after British entrepreneur Richard Branson and musician Peter Gabriel presented their idea of taking the traditional practice of looking to one’s village elders for guidance and conflict resolution and applying it to today’s “global village.”

Montreal rectory a transition centre for asylum seekers

By Yves Casgrain

MONTREAL (CNS) — When a Haitian mother and her two young children crossed into Canada by taxi, “police officers said that I was going to be arrested because I had just done something illegal.”

“I said to myself: ‘It’s better to get arrested than to be killed in Haiti,’ ” said the woman, who asked to be identified only by her first name, Emmanuela.

Like many asylum seekers, she was directed to the Montreal YMCA. Now, however, she lives at the rectory of Our Lady of Victory Parish, which on Oct. 2 opened its doors to women and children seeking asylum.

Casgrain is a journalist with Presence info, based in Montreal.

“It was a warm welcome. We are at home,” she said.

Emmanuela said she still experiences moments of anguish.

“The wait is stressful. I don’t want to go back to Haiti. It’s not a life. We receive death threats. So, I’m waiting. I keep hope. I’m not happy, but a little quieter,” she said.

The Archdiocese of Montreal calls the new centre *Le Pont* (The Bridge). In the rectory halls, residents hear the contagious laughter of Alessandra Santopadre, head of the refugee sponsorship program for the Archdiocese of Montreal. Without her, *Le Pont* would not exist.

In the small kitchen, asylum seekers are talking cheerfully. Christina, Emmanuela’s two-year-old daughter, draws at a table. She is quickly joined by Santopadre, who draws her attention to the

small colourful pumpkins in front of her. Santopadre wanted to emphasize Thanksgiving in a simple and fun way.

Through the always-open door of his office, *Le Pont*’s co-ordinator, Arthur Drieux, keeps an eye on everything.

“I hear children playing, babies screaming. I see people passing by. Our guests stop and invite me to share their meal.”

“Here,” he explained, “we make a point of not treating residents in an administrative way. We want them to feel at home. We treat them as members of our family.”

He said the residents take on the various daily tasks.

“They’re people like us,” he said. “They cook, take care of their children and scold them when necessary. When they see that I tinker around the house,

they give me a hand. This is like home, yet they know they’re here in a transitional way.”

Le Pont can count on a handful of volunteers who commit themselves for a given time. Isabel Barrera, a former social pastoral worker, recently volunteered.

“I came to Canada as an immigrant. I know what asylum seekers are going through,” she said.

Her experience dictates how she responds to residents who share their pain and anguish.

“We listen to them. However, we are not specialists. That’s why we hope to recruit volunteer psychologists.”

She also believes in the need to train volunteers in intercultural dialogue.

“To become a volunteer at *Le Pont*, you need to have an open mind. We all have prejudices. We must all work on this,” Barrera said.

Santopadre said she feels the “presence of God in everything I do. It is a very concrete presence. He has the face of little Christina and her little sister, Joyce. He has the face of this mother who has another religion than mine, but who prepares the pumpkin marmalade, because I do not have time to prepare it. For me, here is God.”

‘The resurrection is essential’: Rauser

By Blake Sittler

SASKATOON — Every year the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon hosts Study Days for leaders across the diocese. During this two-day event, various theologians are brought in to discuss different topics. The audience is primarily made up of the pastors, parish life directors and parish staff of the diocese. This year, Randal Rauser, a Baptist scholar from Edmonton, was the speaker.

Associate professor of historical theology at Taylor Seminary in

awareness and acceptance of the “New Atheism,” initiated by Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and other vocal atheists.

“While there is more being written and shared,” Rauser said, “the percentage of non-religious people has not increased significantly in recent years.”

God, by nature of being trinitarian, is also a community, said Rauser, exploring the Trinity as the first pillar of Christianity.

This topic contained the recurring theme that God is personal: God is an “I.” Rauser argued that we can be in relationship with God because God is “an Other” and that God, in God’s personal, trinitarian reality, is communal: “a They.”

“This is intimidating to some people,” he said, “because, if there is a God, then we are accountable.”

“What does it mean for an eternal, omniscient, sovereign, immortal God to become like one of his creatures?” he asked. “To take on pain, uncertainty, time, and even death, is too difficult to comprehend. It is scandalous, but imperative. If you were a soldier, would you respect and follow a general who had never seen battle? That is the Incarnation.”

In the segment on atonement, Rauser discussed the many different theologies of soteriology, attempting to address how Jesus saved humanity through his death on the cross.



Blake Sittler

Randal Rauser

Edmonton, Rauser holds a doctorate in theology from King’s College in London, England, where his dissertation was titled, *Trinity, Mind and World: A Theological Epistemology of Mediation*. Rauser is also an author, whose most recent book is *What’s So Confusing About Grace?* He has written extensively on the issue of discussing faith with atheists.

Rauser’s topic over the two days in Saskatoon was “The Five Great Pillars of Christianity.” Under this heading, he discussed five topics that he felt allowed the Roman Catholic and Baptist churches to dialogue.

Rauser described the five binding doctrines as a diamond — an object that can be turned in the light to discover different aspects of the faith. He defined these teachings as: the Trinity, sin, incarnation, atonement, and resurrection.

He began by setting the stage of the contemporary milieu. He noted how there was a growing

Rauser was supportive of people asking difficult questions of their church and their faith: “It is people who ask hard questions who force us as Christians to expand our thinking and understanding of God.”

On the topic of sin, Rauser started lightly by quoting Reinhold Niebuhr, who once said, “Original sin is the only empirically verifiable doctrine of the Christian faith.” Rauser discussed many of the classical theological perspectives on sin, but also referred to serial killers, the Simpsons, and conservative radio host Dr. Laura Schlessinger.

“Sin stems from our instinct to survive and compete,” Rauser opined. “Sin is — in the words of Stanley Grenz — our failure to be God’s ‘Image Bearers.’ ”

In his reflection on the Incarnation, entitled, “God Became Meat,” Rauser discussed the various implications of an eternal, omnipotent Creator taking on flesh.

“The crucifixion can be seen as penal substitution, as scapegoating, as a ransom, or as simply redemption,” he said. “The cross can be interpreted as healing or as an example that we are expected to follow.”

Rauser shared the image that Christ took on flesh so that he could become “bait on the hook of the devil, who reeled him into the bowels of hell. The devil swallowed Jesus and that is where the battle took place.”

Jesus’ sacrifice and loving willingness to embrace the cross can be seen as a “lifestyle complement for youth” who are challenged to follow Christ as an exemplar, a person who will take on their cross and challenge evil with love in their day-to-day lives.

In the final section of his presentation, Rauser discussed the resurrection. He was not afraid to discuss the topic in a physical, historical manner. He quoted various modern writers, but also historical, non-Christian texts that allude to the idea that Jesus had indeed risen in a corporeal way.

“The resurrection is essential; the tomb was found empty,” Rauser proclaimed. “The death of Jesus should have been a criterion for embarrassment, so if there was a body in the tomb, why tell the story?”

Nearing his conclusion, Rauser described the resurrection as “a glimpse into our future salvation” and broached the interesting reality that most Christians indeed proclaim a belief in “the resurrection of the body but frankly only expect heaven.”



CCN/D. Gyapong

PRIVATE MEETING — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Cardinal Gerald Lacroix held a private meeting Nov. 6 in the prime minister’s office on Parliament Hill. The only public information about what the prime minister and the cardinal said behind closed doors came from a Twitter exchange with official photos of the meeting. “My thanks to Cardinal @gclacroix for the meeting in Ottawa this morning — it was nice to see you again,” said Trudeau’s tweet. Lacroix replied: “Taking time to share is always enriching. Thank you for your hospitality Prime Minister @JustinTrudeau.” A spokesperson for the cardinal told CCN they were not planning on releasing anything further.

Benedictine missionary remembered 25 years later

By Claire Novecosky, OSU

SASKATOON — Twenty-five years ago, on Nov. 21, 1992, Rev. Sylvester Vredegoor, OSB, was killed in a highway accident in his parish of Marechal Deodoro,

John XXIII’s invitation to bishops to send missionaries to Latin America, principally to Brazil.

Following him were a number of religious men and women from the abbacy who formed small Christian communities in the vast parish of São Jose in the city of Maceio, and years later in the parish of Marechal Deodoro.



OSB

Rev. Sylvester Vredegoor, OSB

Alagoas, Brazil. He was one of the pioneer missionaries from St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster, Sask., who responded to the call of Pope

The mission statement of the abbacy team stated: “We, the Canadian missionary team sent by the church of Muenster, are called to insert ourselves fully into the life of the Brazilian people, hearing their anxieties, feeling their pains, participating in the people’s struggle to transform their reality, celebrating, already now, their eventual victory, which is directly linked to the resurrection of Christ. Filled with Gospel hope, we are impelled by a universal vision, a true communion of churches united in mutual love, to the enrichment of both. Let us continue working together for a more abundant life for all.”

Twenty-five years later, members of these parishes were asked, “What legacy did Fr. Sylvester leave for you?” Following are

Protections for worship services to remain in bill

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — After an “avalanche” of letters and testimony from faith leaders, the Justice Committee has amended Bill C-51 to keep protections for religious leaders and worship services.

The committee amended the omnibus bill Nov. 8, the day after the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops released an open letter to the justice minister dated Oct. 31 from more than 60 religious leaders and groups urging the government to keep the Section 176 that protects religious leaders from being assaulted or obstructed in their work, and protects religious services from being disrupted.

“I was persuaded by the testimony of people who came before us, including His Eminence Cardinal Collins,” said Liberal MP Anthony Housefather, chair of the Justice Committee in an interview. Collins testified via video conferencing on Oct. 30, along with the president of the CCCB Bishop Lionel Gendron of Saint-Jean-Longueuil and Bill Simpson, a criminal lawyer, who

attended the session in Ottawa.

“We are extremely pleased that the Standing Committee has recommended to Parliament that protection of religious services remain in the Criminal Code,” said Neil McCarthy, a spokesperson for Collins. “The advocacy efforts of many diverse faith communities played a critical role and reminds us that we need to continue to be engaged in these important issues. Certainly from a Catholic perspective, we will continue to do so.”

“There was no value to deleting the section,” Housefather said, noting that even though it had seldom been used and “theoretically it could have been covered” by other sections in the Criminal Code, this section “let people of faith know they were recognized in a special way in the Criminal Code.”

Housefather said he will return the amended Bill C-51 to the House of Commons Nov. 20 at report stage of third reading.

“I’m very, very hopeful the government will support this amendment,” Housefather said.

Unless the government chooses to make their support for the



CCN/D. Gyapong

BISHOP TESTIFIES BEFORE COMMITTEE — CCCB President Bishop Lionel Gendron testified before the House of Commons Justice Committee on Oct. 30 and told the committee an interfaith letter was coming to the justice minister regarding Bill C-51. The committee has decided to keep protections for religious leaders and worship services in the amended bill.

amendments known beforehand, they will let the committee know its position at report stage, he said.

“We tried hard to work with the minister and the department to convince her as we always do that the committee’s wishes

makes sense,” he said.

“It was a matter of listening to everyone and hearing what people had to say,” Housefather said. Not only did the committee hear from witnesses, but from constituents who wrote letters, emails and made phone calls. “I do

appreciate all who did reach out to MPs. It’s only when you reach out that people know what you are thinking.”

Housefather said all three parties agreed to keep Section 176, though there was some disagreement on how to update the words “clergyman or minister.” The bill now refers to “officials of religious and spiritual services” to better include indigenous spirituality and other non-Christian forms of worship and makes the language gender-neutral.

NDP MP Alistair MacGregor told the committee he had not noticed the deletion of Section 176 until he received a “trickle” of correspondence that evolved “into an absolute avalanche.”

“I think at first I was prepared to accept the government’s argument that the offences in this part of the Criminal Code can most certainly be covered in other sections, but I think I’ve been absolutely convinced that it needs to be kept in the Criminal Code, simply because it has very significant symbolic value for the people involved,” he said.

Canada has turned its back on long tradition of disarmament: Roche

Continued from page 1

the new treaty was dictated by Washington in an October 2016 letter to NATO country leaders. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s eager compliance represents an abdication of Canadian responsibility and tradition on the issue, Roche said.

“Canada has turned its back on a long tradition of fairly deep involvement in nuclear disarmament issues,” said the former Canadian ambassador for disarmament at the UN. “It is today

shameful that Canada is dissociating itself, turning its back and denigrating a treaty signed by the majority of nations of the world.”

Roche bemoans Trudeau’s betrayal of his own father’s legacy, contrasting the present prime minister’s position to Pierre Trudeau’s 1983 Mission for Peace that took him to the capitals of all five nuclear powers to press for disarmament.

The UN treaty that Canada won’t sign or even talk about is the same one the Vatican signed and ratified in one day.

“They put their weight behind the treaty,” Roche said.

That weight came into play at another infamous moment — the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. Pope John XXIII played a crucial role in brokering a peace of sorts in the stalemate between Soviet Union leader Nikita Khrushchev and U.S. President John Kennedy. After hearing from Kennedy, the pope penned a message to both the U.S. and Soviet embassies, then read it on Vatican Radio. The message was printed in newspapers around the world, including the Soviet Union, prominently proclaiming the pope’s plea: “We beg all governments not to remain deaf to this cry of humanity.”

The crisis passed, and the pope has since been credited with keeping the superpowers away from the brink of war.

One bright light in the current nuclear debate is a Canadian citizen, Setsuko Thurlow, who is part of a delegation that will be accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, on Dec. 10 on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Thurlow, a Hiroshima atomic bomb survivor, is part of the network of activists that pushed the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty through the UN.

The 85-year-old retired Toronto social worker, who saw 30 of her classmates incinerated beside her when she was in Grade 7, is asking for a meeting with Trudeau to discuss the treaty. In the House of Commons, Trudeau has called the UN agreement outlawing nuclear weapons “useless.”

The prime minister praised Thurlow to reporters, but has not committed to meeting her.

The argument against the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty is that the balance of nuclear threats established during the Cold War has so far prevented war between the major powers, said University of Toronto political scientist and expert in comparative foreign policy Arnd Jurgensen.

“We have not had a major confrontation or major war like World War I or World War II since the arrival of nuclear weapons,” Jurgensen said. “And nuclear weapons are partially responsible for that.”

Roche worries that we’re sleepwalking into nuclear armageddon.

“The world in the past couple of years has shifted into the most dangerous period for humanity since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962,” he said. “(Disarmament) has been pushed right to the top of the political ladder now by the egregious and outrageous comments and stands taken by President Trump and Kim Jong-un of North Korea.”

There’s nothing naive or pie-in-the-sky about negotiating among nations for the elimination of nuclear weapons, said Project Ploughshares executive director Cesar Jaramillo.

“The naïveté lies elsewhere,” he said. “It is more disingenuous to believe, if they truly believe it themselves, that we will ever reach a world without nuclear weapons when these countries are

spending billions of dollars on modernization of their nuclear arsenals, rejecting good-faith efforts of the international community to advance nuclear disarmament.”

Roche finds Canada’s position against a multi-lateral treaty signed at the UN inexplicable.

“This rejection of the will of the world community is astounding for a country that seeks a seat on the United Nations Security Council,” he said. “The Canadian government badly needs a wakeup call.”

Ottawa is touting its position chairing a high-level UN group developing a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, intended to choke the supply of raw materials for bomb making to countries like Iran and North Korea. Jaramillo said that doesn’t get Trudeau off the hook for tackling the central problem.

“The problem with the existence of nuclear weapons is the existence of nuclear weapons. People aren’t buying it anymore, that their approach is working. They are investing billions of dollars to modernize — the exact opposite of what disarmament would mean to any reasonable person. Canada, on this issue of human existence, is on the wrong side.”

The church position on nukes is even clearer.

“Nuclear weapons represent

the ultimate rejection of creation,” said Atlantic School of Theology professor David Deane.

In a March letter to the United Nations as negotiations began on the treaty to ban nuclear weapons, Pope Francis asked: “How sus-



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

Setsuko Thurlow of Toronto, who survived the Hiroshima atomic bomb attack in 1945.

tainable is a stability based on fear, when it actually increases fear and undermines relationships of trust between peoples?”

They are words with a long echo. Pius XII, shaken by the atom bomb’s devastation of Hiroshima, said in 1948 that the nuclear bomb is “the most terrible weapon that the human mind has ever conceived.”

In the end, he said, “every act of war directed to the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast inhabited areas is a crime against God and man.”

Funds matched for Rohingya

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — As the federal government announced a matching fund to help more than 600,000 Rohingya refugees, Canada’s Catholic humanitarian aid and development agency was already on the ground in Bangladesh delivering aid to desperate people in Cox’s Bazar.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace has partnered with Caritas Bangladesh to meet the immediate needs of the Muslim refugees pushed out of the majority Buddhist country of Myanmar, also known as Burma. The Canadian arm of Caritas has already contributed \$50,000 to fund Caritas Bangladesh’s food distribution, helping close to 25,000 people, the organization said in a press release.

All donations to Development and Peace made between Aug. 25 and Nov. 28 specifically for the Rohingya refugees will be eligible

— D&P, page 5

Former professional finds joy serving homeless

VANCOUVER (CNS) — Mildred Moy at one time was apprehensive about speaking to homeless people on the street.

Nearly 14 years later, she’s out on the streets with them, devoting herself to befriending homeless people and women being trafficked for sex and recruiting other street missionaries.

Moy seemingly had it all: two university degrees and a high-paying job with IBM, yet she felt empty. That is, until she had what she described as a conversion experience that changed her way of seeing the world and set her on a new path. She left her job in 2004 and started St. Mary’s Street Ministry at her Vancouver parish.

The ministry at St. Mary Parish grew to include about 30 volunteers who would regularly take to the streets to meet with whomever they encountered. Still, Moy felt called to do more. In 2015 she started Catholic Street Missionaries to recruit more people to be full-time street missionaries.

“We journey with people who want to leave the street, and if they call you because they need someone to talk to but you don’t have the time, it’s a big loss,” Moy said, explaining the inspiration behind creating the group.

Catholic Street Missionaries was incorporated as an official ministry of the Archdiocese of Vancouver in 2016 with seven volunteers who would split their time between their regular jobs and street missionary work. “Three are discerning becoming full-time missionaries,” Moy said.

Full-time missionary work included spending 18 to 20 hours a week hitting the streets to meet people in need and supporting



CNS/Barbara Walton, EPA

STREET MINISTRY — A homeless woman sleeps on the floor inside a church in Vancouver. Mildred Moy, a member of St. Mary Parish in Vancouver and a former IBM employee, started Catholic Street Ministries after spending 14 years volunteering to serve homeless people in her city.

those who were transitioning away from street life. Part-time missionaries would split their time between their jobs outside of the ministry and their missionary work.

On Saturday evenings the missionaries went out to meet with women who were being trafficked for sex. On Sunday afternoons the group would reach out to the homeless. They started with Bible study and prayer.

“We have to be a bridge between the person we meet and God . . . so we must be filled with God,” Moy said.

Volunteers from St. Mary’s Street Ministry and the Catholic Street Missionaries also visited a local residential drug rehabilitation centre every week.

In the winter the volunteers

would provide cold-weather supplies to the people they met, but their focus would be providing spiritual and emotional support. “The government provides many opportunities (for people on the streets), but the person on the street needs to have a reason to change their life,” said Moy, explaining that the street missionaries tried to help people find a reason to change.

Moy said most of the women being trafficked whom she had met reported being abused as children. A homeless count in September by local non-profit organizations for the Metro

Vancouver Homeless Partnering Strategy Community Entity found that 3,605 people were experiencing homelessness in the greater Vancouver area and of those, more than 80 per cent reported suffering from addiction, a medical condition, or mental illness.

“If we don’t address mental health, we won’t deal with homelessness,” Moy said. She believes improving access to housing was part of the solution to homelessness but not the full solution.

Many of the people Moy had met had lost connection with their families because of the various mental health and personal issues

with which they struggled. They also reported feeling invisible. Combined, those factors made it difficult for people to change their lives.

“People forget that street people don’t have anyone to listen to them,” she said.

The street missionaries’ work did not end once a person decided to transition away from life on the streets or in the sex trade. “After they leave the street, there are financial concerns and lots of barriers. We support them in that transition,” Moy said.

Over the years Moy has received more satisfaction than she ever imagined in ministering to people in need, but she recognized many people might be scared to approach a homeless person and strike up a conversation.

“They are more scared of us because they have nothing and they see us as being in power,” she said, adding that even just a smile of acknowledgment means a lot to a person living on the street.

“Ask if they want food. Don’t give money, but ask if they want a cup of coffee. Carry cookies in a package for homeless people, or socks. They are light and easy to carry around and homeless people really appreciate getting fresh socks,” she suggested.

The key to making a difference, according to Moy, was to remember that “people on the street are just like everyone else.”

More information about Catholic Street Missionaries can be found online at www.catholic-streetmissionaries.org/

Nov. 19 is the first World Day of the Poor.

D&P is looking for ways Canada can help

Continued from page 4

for government of Canada matching funds. So far this year the Canadian government has committed over \$25 million for humanitarian aid in Bangladesh and Myanmar separate from the matching fund.

Overcrowding in the refugee camps has led local health officials to ask the Bangladesh government to approve a plan to offer voluntary sterilization in the camps.

Canada’s Myanmar Crisis Relief Fund will prioritize funding to projects that serve pregnant women and single mothers, who are among the most vulnerable in the refugee camps.

Development and Peace has a program officer in Cox’s Bazar talking with the dozens of NGOs working there about projects where the Canadians can help. Development and Peace worked with Caritas India in the aftermath of the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which translates into established contacts in the

region, said Development and Peace spokesperson Kelly Di Domenico.

As a closed society dominated by its military, independent humanitarian and development work inside Myanmar is “very difficult,” said Di Domenico. Development and Peace is in contact with Caritas Myanmar concerning the Rohingya crisis.

Development and Peace has also partnered with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Banmaw, near Myanmar’s border with China, schooling displaced Kachin children. The Kachin minority, many of them Catholic, have also been under pressure from Myanmar’s military in disputes over hydroelectric projects, jade mines, gold and timber.

“We will definitely evaluate what is possible,” inside Myanmar, Di Domenico said.

The federal government appointed former Ontario Premier Bob Rae as special envoy to Myanmar to investigate the fate of ethnic minorities.

Ktunaxa decision has positive elements

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Ktunaxa Nation may have lost the first religious freedom case involving indigenous spirituality Nov. 2, but Christian intervenors still see positive signs in the decision.

The case involved the development of a ski resort in an area called Qat’muk deemed sacred to the Ktunaxa “because it is home to Grizzly Bear Spirit, a principle spirit within Ktunaxa religious beliefs and cosmology,” said the 7 - 2 decision of the court.

The majority held that the British Columbia Forestry, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Minister’s decision to allow the ski resort to go ahead did not violate religious freedom rights, “because neither the Ktunaxa’s freedom to hold their beliefs nor their freedom to manifest those beliefs is infringed by the minister’s decision.”

The Ktunaxa “are not seeking protection for the freedom to believe in Grizzly Bear Spirit, or to pursue practices related to it,” the judges wrote. “Rather, they seek to protect the presence of Grizzly Bear Spirit itself and the subjective spiritual meaning they derive from it.”

The judges called this claim “novel” and added it would “put deeply held beliefs under judicial

scrutiny.”

The court held the Charter’s 2a protections do not “protect the object of beliefs or the spiritual focal point of worship.”

However, the minority decision by Justice Moldavor held that while the duty to consult with the Ktunaxa Nation was met, their religious freedom would be impaired. “The development of the ski resort would desecrate Qat’muk and cause Grizzly Bear Spirit to leave, thus severing the Ktunaxa’s connection to the land.”

While a blow to the nation’s religious beliefs, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and the Christian Legal Fellowship (CLF), two groups that intervened jointly in the case, see positive signs in the decision and that of the minority.

“The majority’s reasons reaffirm that the Charter protects both the public and communal aspects of religion — not just the individual and private — and that courts must not entangle themselves in religious matters by assessing the content and merits of personal beliefs,” said Derek Ross, executive director and legal counsel for the Christian Legal Fellowship, in a joint news release with the EFC. “The decision also clarifies that the Charter protects both ‘old’ and ‘new’ religious beliefs and practices — this allows for the possibility that one’s sincere reli-

gious beliefs may develop and mature over time.”



CCN/D. Gyapong

Derek Ross

“The minority’s reasons provide a salient reminder that it is not just the act of religious exercise that attracts Charter protection, but the religious or spiritual essence of that act,” Ross said. “The Charter ought to be interpreted in a way that reflects the unique aspects of diverse religious traditions, beliefs, and practices — particularly those of minority communities or those not widely understood.”

SCSBA/CHAS awards recognize years of service

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association (SCSBA) presented three appreciation awards to individuals who have made significant contributions to Catholic education over long years of service.

Bernadette Cey spent 15 years in Catholic education as a teacher from Grade 1 to high school. During those years she also co-ordinated sacramental preparation, parent meetings, and eucharistic celebrations. She has served as religious education consultant with Holy Trinity Catholic School Division, Moose Jaw.

Prince Albert Bishop Albert Thévenot is the bishop in charge of Catholic education in Saskatchewan. As a teacher who spent many years in the classroom, he has had many interesting experiences — especially while teaching in Africa — that have influenced him in becoming an exceptional leader in education.

Bruno Tuchscherer became a Catholic school board trustee in 1988 and has served in that capacity for 29 years. Since 2004 he has been the board chair. He spent many hours involved in the formation of the Holy Family Catholic School Division, located

in Weyburn, in 2004. This was accomplished through the amalgamation of several rural Catholic school divisions, including the Weyburn, Estevan, and St. Olivier School in Radville. Three years later, in 2006, the division boundaries were expanded to include Queen Elizabeth and Spruce Ridge Catholic school divisions; and St. Augustine in Wilcox joined the division in 2009.

Bud Bohun of North Battleford was awarded the Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award for his more than 50 years in Catholic education — first as a teacher and school-based administrator, then as a school board trustee from 1992. He retired in 2016 after 24 years as trustee. Paslawski was there for the presentation.

The Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS) presented its Mission Award to the Mont St. Joseph team of Prince Albert. The team members include Lorrie Kagle, who is director of financial, information and business services, and has served at Mont St. Joseph in various capacities for 28 years. Joan Byrne is director of environmental services and leads the housekeeping, laundry and dietary teams; she has been with Mont St. Joseph for 31 years. Shannon Meyers is director

of volunteers and recreation services, and is the leader and facilitator for more than 300 volunteers; she has accumulated 28 years of service, including at the Mont St. Joseph Care Home, Holy Family Hospital, the Sisters Presentation of Mary, and the Sisters of Our Lady of the Cross.

Bert Yakichuk of Regina was presented with a CHAS honorary membership. He became involved with Catholic health care when he joined the board of Santa Maria Care Home in Regina, becoming chair in 2005 - 2009. He was elected to the CHAS board in 2005 and served as a board member until 2013. He was vice chair in 2009 and chair in 2010, and co-chair of the planning committee for the



Frank Flegel

MERITORIOUS SERVICE — Julian Paslawski stands with Bud Bohun, recipient of the 2017 Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award at the combined Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association/Catholic Health Association joint convention. Bohun was recognized for his more than 50 years of service to Catholic education.

first joint convention of CHAS and SCSBA.

Prayer leads to increase in vocations

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — The best way to bring people to the priesthood and religious life is to pray for it, says the director of vocations for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg — and, he adds, statistics show that prayer leads to an increase in vocations.

Speaking to the Serra Club of Winnipeg fundraising dinner Oct. 25, Rev. Peter Nemcek told a story from 1880: the Italian village of Lu was facing a shortage of priests and nuns, so the people gathered for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, asking the Lord for vocations. “In about 60 years, over one-third of Lu’s population became priests or nuns. There were 323 vocations — 152 priests and 171 nuns who came from the town’s less than 1,000 inhabitants.”

Nemcek said that Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis all agree on the strategy of prayer, and he quoted Pope Francis, saying, “Behind and before every vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life there is always strong and intense prayer from someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a mother, a father, a community; vocations are born in prayer and from prayer, and only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit.”

Nemcek referred to the words of Jesus in Luke: “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.”

“We are onto something here,” said Nemcek. “Pray!”

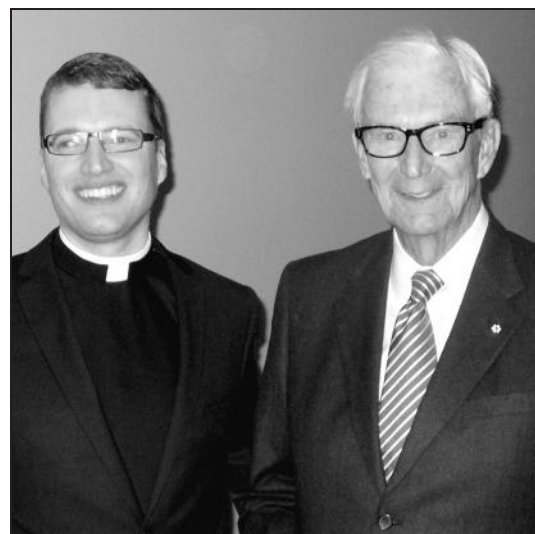
Born in Slovakia, Nemcek came to Winnipeg in 2005 where he attended high school and the

University of Manitoba, and later St. Joseph’s Seminary in Edmonton. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2015 and named director of vocations in 2016. He serves as parochial vicar at Our Lady of Victory Church in Winnipeg. The work of the vocations office is supported by a committee comprised of Revs. Jorge Monte, Dominic Yuen and Christopher Dubois.

Serra clubs are groups of lay Catholics dedicated to promoting and fostering vocations. There are more than 1,100 Serra clubs in 46 countries around the world, with a membership of about 19,000. The Winnipeg and Brandon Serra clubs hold annual dinners to raise funds to support seminarians as they prepare for priesthood. In 2014 the Serra Foundation of Canada funded vocation programs and grants totalling \$52,403.

“It’s not only the vocations office or the committee that is responsible for vocations,” Nemcek said. “It’s all of us baptized, all of our parishes. I hope you are all praying the prayer for vocations at least once a month in your parishes. I’d like you to pray it, and not just say it. When you are saying this prayer at mass, think about a young man from your parish who would be a good candidate for priesthood, think about your son, grandson, nephew. Think about a

young woman, your daughter, granddaughter, niece. We need to be specific in our prayer. As a teenager I enjoyed serving mass.



James Buchok

SERRA DINNER — Rev. Peter Nemcek, director of vocations for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, with Kevin Kavanagh of the Winnipeg Serra Club.

Before every mass the altar servers would pray, ‘God grant that one of us will become a priest.’”

Nemcek said prayers in front of the Blessed Sacrament “really work,” because Jesus is substantially present and because of the close connection between priesthood and the eucharist.

“Have you ever invited a young man to consider the priesthood?” he asked. “Of course, we need to get to know him first. We need to form relationships with our youth. I attended St. Anthony of Padua Hungarian Church and many parishioners would ask me if I had thought about the priesthood, and it was after many people had asked that I really considered it.”



Rick Murza

SISTERS OF SION — Elaine Zakreski, chair of the Friends of Sion (left), recently presented a cheque for \$8,000 to the Sisters of Sion Congregation, accepted by Sister Kay McDonald, NDS, as Dorothy Fortier looks on. The funds were raised as part of a reunion for former students and staff of Our Lady of Sion Academy.

Boyko re-elected Saskatoon Catholic board chair

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools’ Board of Education held its annual organizational meeting on Nov. 6, at which Diane Boyko was re-elected chair of the board.

Trustee Wayne Stus, who represents rural areas around Saskatoon and the cities of Martensville and Warman, was elected vice-chair for the third consecutive year.

“This past year has been a challenging one for Catholic education in Saskatchewan, to say the least,” said Boyko, referring to a funding reduction, increased enrolment, changes to regulations for boards of education, and the controversial Theodore court case ruling.

“Maintaining the confidence of my fellow trustees to represent the division means a lot to me,” she said. “Our entire board and administration work very hard in the best interest of our students, parents, teachers and staff. It’s a privilege to represent them as chair.”

With 50 schools and over 18,000 students, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is Saskatchewan’s largest Catholic school division, providing Catho-



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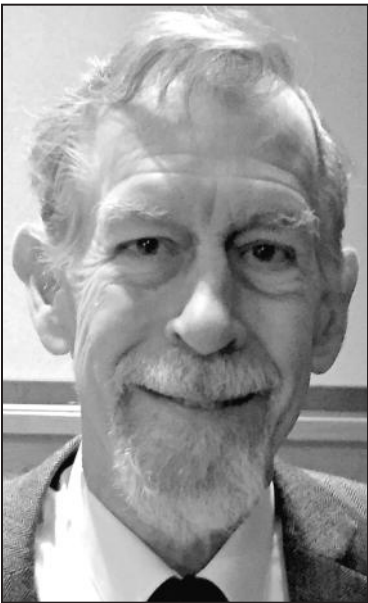
Dianne Boyko

lic education from pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 in Saskatoon and area, Biggar, Humboldt, Martensville and Warman.

Eric McLuhan delivers Keenan Lecture at STM

By Kate O’Gorman

SASKATOON — Dr. Eric McLuhan, author and leader in the field of media and communication, presented the 29th Michael Keenan Memorial Lecture Nov. 2



Kate O’Gorman
Eric McLuhan

at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.
The son of the late Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan,

Eric McLuhan has continued and expanded on his father’s work. Having authored or co-authored several books on media and communications, Eric McLuhan used his most recent publication, *The Sensus Communis, Synesthesia, and the Soul*, to speak about how media operate on people’s sensibilities.
Drawing his father’s work into conversation with the Catholic intellectual tradition, Eric McLuhan explained how new media — everything from the telegraph to the Internet — have a transformative effect on humanity and the world.
According to Marshall McLuhan, media are best understood in reference to our senses. As such, a thoughtful consideration of media depends on a deeper understanding of human experience itself.
Building on this idea in reference to the Catholic intellectual tradition, Eric McLuhan argued that we must not only look to the five corporeal senses, but also to the patristic and medieval treatment of the “spiritual senses” explored by theologians such as Henri de Lubac. By retrieving the sacramental tradition of the spiritu-

al senses, Eric McLuhan unpacked how our participation in the new media becomes transformative.
“The new media belong to the world of metaphysics,” said Eric McLuhan. “They entail the transformation of the users.”
According to Sarah Powrie, head of STM’s English Department, “Dr. McLuhan’s work on media and communications is timely and important, and it promises to assist us in making sense of the ways in which the new media shape our society, relationships with one another, and even our own sense of self-identity.”
Celebrating the memory of

Michael Keenan, STM’s first dean, who served from 1974 to 1984, the Keenan Lecture is an annual event open to the public. Each year, St. Thomas More College invites a recognized scholar to speak on a range of topics reflective of the various disciplines studied at STM.
Eric McLuhan joins a list of distinguished lecturers which has included Margaret Somerville (2016), founding director emerita of the Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law at McGill University in Montreal, and a respected bio-ethicist who spoke on the issue of legalized euthanasia; Maria

Campbell (2015), writer, playwright and teacher, who spoke on “Reconsidering Reconciliation” in the context of Canadians’ ongoing interest in indigenous and non-indigenous relations; and Russell Hittinger (2014), the William K. Warren Chair of Catholic Studies at the University of Tulsa, who spoke on “The Crisis of Modern Times: The Legacy of John Paul II.”
According to Arul Kumaran, the current dean of STM, the Keenan Memorial Lecture is a celebration of St. Thomas More College’s commitment to scholarship and to the intellectual synthesis of faith and reason.

Search retreat ‘a mountain-top experience’ for youth

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Twenty-two youth took part in a diocesan Search retreat held Oct. 20 - 22 in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.
Search weekends are offered to youth grades 9 - 12, co-ordinated through the office of Vocations and Youth Ministry.
An intense weekend of spiritual growth that was revived in the diocese in April 2015, Search challenges high-school-aged youth to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and to make a conscious, adult commitment to their Catholic faith, explains diocesan Youth Ministry co-ordinator Colm Leyne.
Consisting of talks, music,

prayer, spiritual direction, fellowship, and the sacraments, the live-in weekend encourages youth to “search for Christian maturity.” Searchers come to know themselves, others, and God in a more loving and personal way, he says.
Followup is important, Leyne adds, saying that team members stay connected with the Search participants.
“Search is a real mountain-top experience of faith, but we’re not going to just say ‘go back to the valley,’” Layne says. “In the days that follow, there will be opportunities to connect, to follow up, and also to serve as disciples in their local parishes or beyond.”
For more information, see: www.saskatoonsearch.ca



Blake Sittler
RCIA WORKSHOP — Rev. Joseph Thazhathemuriyil, VC, and volunteers from Little Flower Parish in Leader, Sask., recently participated in a diocesan workshop about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). During the Nov. 4 event, facilitator Blake Sittler, diocesan director of Pastoral Services, provided an overview of the RCIA process, as well as practical direction and concrete resources for journeying with those who are seeking to join the Catholic Church.



St. Gianna’s Church
ALL SAINTS’ DAY — Rev. Darrin Gurr, pastor at St. Gianna’s Church in Winnipeg, stands with children dressed in saintly costumes for the parish’s All Saints’ Day gathering, Nov. 1.

Children celebrate All Saints’ Day

By Rachel Suarez-Banmann

WINNIPEG — On Nov. 1 the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of All Saints, teaching us that through Christ, who triumphed over death as the head of the church, we are connected with all members of the church, whether living or dead. On this day, we celebrate the church triumphant for those who have gained entry into heaven.
All Saints’ Day is a great holy day for children. It is both an opportunity to point to Christian heroes and heroines and a chance to explore God’s promise to be with us always and forever. All the saints share something: they did something remarkable or extraordinary in the name of God. As we learn more about these special people, we can discover ways we can deepen our devotion to following the path of Jesus.
On the feast of All Saints, the parish of St. Gianna Beretta Molla in Winnipeg celebrated with a liturgy that involved the Faith Formation children. The children were asked beforehand to pick a favourite saint, or one they didn’t know much about. They were asked to learn about their saint and then come dressed as him or her for the celebration.
The saints processed into the worship space to a triumphant, “When the Saints Come Marching in.” In Rev. Darrin Gurr’s homily, he asked each “saint” to introduce themselves and to tell everyone a bit more of what they learned about their saint. Saints ranged from well-known ones such as Mary, the mother of Jesus, to less-

er-known saints such as St. Jose Brochero from Argentina, also known as the Gaucho Priest.
The saints ranged in age from the 11-year-old Maria Goretti to the 87-year-old Mother Teresa of Calcutta. They came from different countries, cultures, lifestyles, social status, education and professions.
Gurr asked who had dressed up for Halloween the previous evening. All the children raised their hands. When asked what they had dressed as, the answers included an alien, a pirate, a princess, and even a Kit Kat bar. Gurr explained

that those are things you can likely never be, but being a saint is attainable. He advised the children to strive for the things of God and to use the saints as guides and role models. He emphasized that the saints were ordinary people who had an extraordinary love for Jesus, which we are all capable of experiencing.
At the end of the liturgy, the children were given a prayer card of the church’s patron, St. Gianna Beretta Molla.
Rachel Suarez-Banmann is pastoral associate at St. Gianna Beretta Molla Church, Winnipeg.

Voice silenced, but not spirit

Continued from page 3

testimonies from some who knew him:
“I still cherish in my heart the celebration of my first communion, the outings we had as young people. I will never forget Fr. Sylvester and the Canadian team for the incentive they gave me to be the woman I am today.” (This woman today is a leader in pastoral works in her parish.)
“His voice was silenced, but not his spirit, which continues to motivate us to continue to struggle for a better life. He brought me life and enkindled again the light of Christ that I received in baptism, through his sermons, dialogue and action. He helped us become authentic people of God on the march to a fuller life.”
“I remember his zeal. He was always preoccupied with how to make life better. He had a spirit of

universality and ecumenism.”
“In speaking to a number of parishioners and friends, all spoke of the hope that Fr. Syl gave — hope that helps us to see, judge, act and celebrate. So we call him the Father of Hope. In his great love for the ‘little ones,’ he welcomed, taught and transformed us. At this moment, Brazil is passing through a great moral, political and social low, so it is important to have hope and be in solidarity, especially with the ‘little ones.’ Experiencing this in Fr. Sylvester and in the Canadian team fills us with strength and grace to continue to maintain that hope before all the difficulties we are confronting. It was so good to have learned to be a people of God who continue the journey with faith, action and hope.”
On his tombstone is written: “You left a burning flame in each of us.”

Craving the spiritual in Alice McDermott's new novel

By Kimberly Winston
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"There is a hunger . . ."

That declaration, uttered by an old, crippled nun who has scrubbed away her life and her vocation in a convent's basement laundry, sums up *The Ninth Hour*, the newest novel by National Book Award-winning author Alice McDermott.

The book tells the story of a fictional order in early 20th-century Brooklyn, N.Y., and the sick and poor it serves.

And while McDermott's novels are often concerned with Irish Catholics in her native Brooklyn, this book — her eighth — is her most specifically religious. In it, McDermott offers rich, nuanced portraits of women who have given their lives to the service of others, often at great cost and compromise.

"A woman's life is a blood sacrifice," one of the nuns, Sister Lucy, says, foreshadowing the price each character pays in some way by the novel's end.

"I was very determined, once I realized there were going to be nuns in this book, that I would make them individuals," McDermott said in a phone interview during a break from an East Coast book tour. "I was aware, maybe with good reason, that we think of nuns as either monsters or clowns or with something foolish about them, something terrifying

about them. But I really had to see them as complex individuals."

Mission accomplished. There is Sister Illuminata, the laundress, whose vocation is cut short by illness; Sister Lucy, who thought her vows would bring her a life of contemplation but who finds herself eternally dealing with disease, filth and cruelty; and Sister Jeanne, whose vocation seems the purest even as she makes a decision that may damn her forever.

Their faith is lived out not inside the walls of the parish church or in its rites and rituals — which McDermott does not address — but within their work and their sharp, constantly ticking minds.

"It would be a different church if I were running it," says Sister St. Savior, the most memorable of the nuns, whose many disappointments have taught her to manipulate a world that overlooks women, their work, their needs and their God.

Reviews have been almost ecstatic. Writing in *The New York Times Book Review*, the novelist Mary Gordon said, "Alice McDermott has taken the risk of writing about nuns, and the risk has been more than worth it. Known and admired for her portrayal of Irish-American family life, she has now extended her range and deepened it, allowing for more darkness, more generous lashings of the spiritual."

Much of the "lashings of the spiritual" centre around the nuns'

different back stories, especially how they came to discover their vocation, the genuineness of which is a central concern of the novel. McDermott did not base the characters on nuns she knew as a Catholic schoolgirl, but let them evolve out of their names, both of their order and of those they gave themselves upon entering it.

"These religious orders of women are quite lyrical in the naming of themselves," she said, ticking off real orders like the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Daughters of Charity, the Handmaids of the Holy Child.

"There is a tremendous humility, a willingness to erase the individual personality, but in the same phrase there is this ambition and hubris enough to say 'We are going to go out there and help the poor, eliminate suffering.'"

The names, McDermott said, show "a faith in the unseen along with this ambition to fix what can be seen."

In this novel, much of what is seen is terrible suffering. McDermott is graphic and brutal in describing the failings of the body — the sores and the ooze and the stink of the sickroom and the body are on almost every page. That, too, highlights the religious nature of the story.

"To be human is to suffer," McDermott said. "We are kidding ourselves, as Sister Lucy says, to believe we can alleviate all

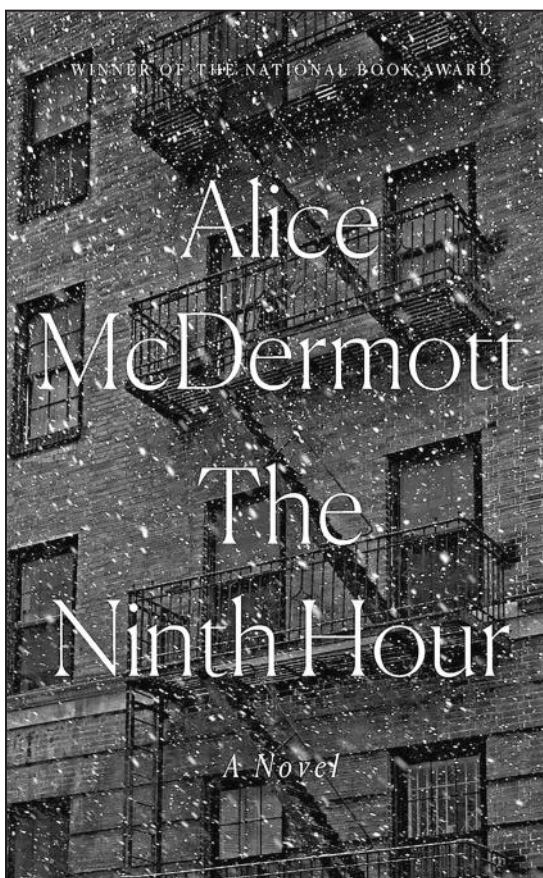
human suffering. There will be loss because we are mortal. It is a delusion to think otherwise. The

years ago," she said. "I think there is — a hunger is too strong a word — but a kind of piqued interest in

talking about what we could define as religious things — faith, human suffering and how we confront it. I am hearing a much more emotional reaction from readers when talking about matters of faith, and I see that as a kind of thirst for a conversation about things of the spirit."

Part of this she attributes to the popularity and openness of Pope Francis, and part of it may be related to disillusionment with organized religion, but not with faith itself.

"Maybe there is a loss of community, maybe we are finding it dif-



one thing I think that often distinguishes people of faith is their inclination to say that even if I am fortunate, even if I am not suffering, I see that others suffer, and if others are suffering, then I suffer with them."

When McDermott began her writing career, she felt interviewers' disdain when she mentioned she is a practising Catholic. ("Though not a very good one," she says.) But that began to change with the publication of her last novel, 2013's *Someone*, and has continued with *The Ninth Hour*.

"Recently I've found that the discussion of Catholicism is more welcome than it was just a few

difficult to find places to gather and talk about how do we live, how do we be better, how do we confront the big issues of suffering and faith and mortality?" she said.

"Outside of a religious context it is hard to have those conversations. If there is one thing that organized religion provides it's a place and an incentive to say, 'Consider this. Consider who we are and what it means to be human.'"

McDermott will continue to consider, too. Her next novel — whatever it may be — will probably also include themes about faith. "It is in my DNA," she said.

Violence against women must stop

Around the Kitchen Table

Donald Ward



The war against women must stop. From female genital mutilation to forced marriage to unequal pay in the workplace, poverty, rape, harassment, human trafficking, revenge porn, honour killing, Internet bullying, emotional and sexual abuse, and exclusion from ministries in the church — it exists everywhere, in every society, and it is fuelled by ignorance and malice.

Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a member of the European Parliament, recently declared that women should earn less than men because they "are weaker, smaller, and less intelligent."

Korwin-Mikke, a Polish politician, is the founder of the right-wing party Liberty. He was formerly the leader of the Congress of the New Right and the Real Politics Union, and is currently chair of the KORWiN party, having been unable, apparently, to find a satisfying consistency in any one movement over the years.

In the United States, web journalist Andrew Anglin wrote of the Aug. 12 rally of white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia: "Woman Killed in Road Rage Incident was a Fat, Childless 32-Year-Old Slut."

On *The Daily Stormer*, a neo-

Nazi website, Anglin wrote that the victim of the car driven into anti-fascist protesters by 20-year-old James Alex Fields Jr., "was fat and a drain on society. Despite feigned outrage by the media, most people are glad she is dead, as she is the definition of uselessness. A 32-year-old woman without children is a burden on society and has no value."

He opined, further, that the only reason Heather Heyer was hit in the first place was because she was "too fat" to get out of the way. Thirty-five other protesters were injured by the speeding automobile.

United States President Donald Trump has referred to women he doesn't like as "fat pigs," "dogs," "slobs," and "disgusting animals." He once said that giving a wife negotiable assets is a mistake: "I would never buy Ivana any decent jewels or pictures. Why give her negotiable assets?"

He has said that sexual assault in the military is only to be expected, tweeting: "26,000 unreported sexual assaults in the military — only 238 convictions. What did these geniuses expect when they put men and women together?"

Of his Democratic opponent in the 2016 presidential election, he

tweeted: "If Hillary Clinton can't satisfy her husband what makes her think she can satisfy America?" He has also commented on negative publicity: "You know, it doesn't really matter what (the media) write as long as you've got a young and beautiful piece of ass."

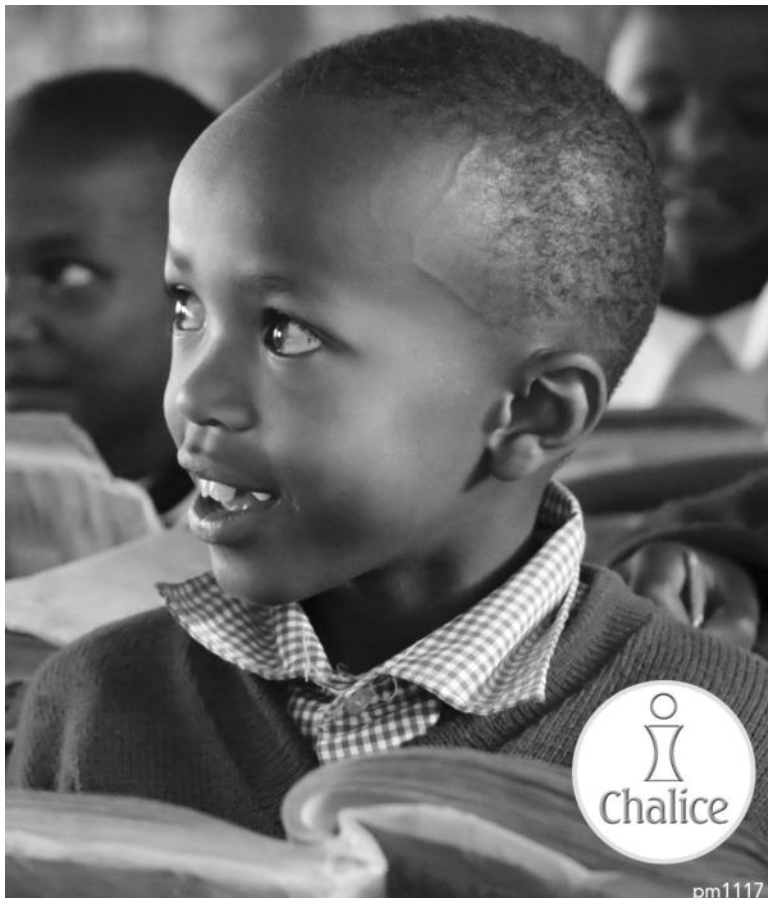
Though they enjoy the trappings of power, these are small, frightened men, and not to be taken seriously.

In stark contrast, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has written, prophetically: "The truth is that male religious leaders have had — and still have — an option to interpret holy teachings either to exalt or subjugate women. They have, for their own selfish ends, overwhelmingly chosen the latter. Their continuing choice provides the foundation or justification for much of the pervasive persecution and abuse of women throughout the world."

"The only thing that can abolish poverty," said the late Christopher Hitchens, author and social critic, "is the empowerment of women."

It is time we laid aside these antediluvian fantasies about the superiority of the male. The solution is simple: allow women to be educated and they will change the world.

I speak as a husband, father, son, brother, uncle, colleague, patient, client, and friend of countless highly intelligent, high-functioning women. I'm 65 years old, and a lifelong observer of the human condition. I have surely seen enough by this time to know what I'm talking about.



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War stories and the paradoxes of the human condition

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Another Remembrance Day has passed with the familiar tributes to the fallen and all who served in the nation's wars. Although there are no surviving veterans of the so-called "Great War" of a century ago, and an ever-diminishing number from the last century's next world war, each subsequent conflict adds to the toll of casualties and leaves new veterans in its wake. With hot wars in the Middle East and a bellicose president in the White House, the portents are less than reassuring.

Television has brought the terror and tragedy of war into our living rooms. We can relive it as in the recent monumental 18-hour PBS series *The Vietnam War*

productions set during the world wars.

Veterans Day in the U.S. coincides with the availability of a spate of films about vets. Two from 2016 deal with the consequences of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). This is largely seen as a male problem. But coming to video-on-demand is Remy Auberjonois' *Blood Stripe* (<https://www.blood-stripefilm.com/>) about a female marine sergeant (Kate Nowlin) returned from a third tour of duty who proves unable to cope. Broadcast on the PBS *Point of View (POV)* series is director Michael Collins' documentary *Almost Sunrise* (<http://sunrisedocumentary.com/>) about two Iraq vets, Tom Voss and Anthony Anderson, who confront their depression by undertaking a cross-country trek from Wisconsin to California. (Not to leave out the canine experience, HBO is showing the documentary *War Dog: A Soldier's Best Friend* on Nov. 13.)

First to be released theatrically is writer-director Jason Hall's *Thank You for Your Service* (<https://www.thankyouforyourservicemovie.com/>), a dramatization of David Finkel's 2013 non-fiction book. Miles Teller is Sgt. Adam Schumann, returning home with several buddies from an infantry battalion he commanded in Iraq following a 2008 IED attack in Baghdad that killed another sergeant who had taken Schumann's place. (Teller is also convincing in *Only the Brave*, as the sole survivor of an elite group of firefighters known as the Granite Mountain Hotshots, who perished in a 2013 Arizona wildfire.)

Schumann, PFC Will Waller (Joe Cole), and Specialist Tausolo Aite (Beulah Koale) are all wrestling with demons, desperate for help and frustrated by the wait to get it through the Veterans Affairs bureaucracy. Schumann, confronted by the dead soldier's widow, has a double case of guilt as his absence on the fateful day resulted from an incident with another comrade shot in the head the day before. Unable to relate to his wife, Saskia (Haley Bennett), young daughter and baby son, he withdraws into a dark place.

Wall, finding that his fiancé has split, is bereft, becoming an early casualty that underscores the statistic of 22 American veterans taking their own lives every day. Aite has a pregnant wife but descends into a nightmare of drug addiction. Fortunately Schumann's anxiety is relieved by visiting the widow and the injured fellow soldier. He pulls

back from the brink of suicidal despair. After finding a sympathetic therapist's ear at the VA directing him to a program at The Pathway Home in California, he does a noble thing for his friend Aite. (Pathway's work features prominently in the excellent 2014 documentary *Of Men and War*.)

Richard Linklater's *Last Flag Flying* gets terrific performances from Steve Carell as ex-Navy medic Larry "Doc" Shepherd, Bryan Cranston as Sal Nealon, and Laurence Fishburne as Rev. Richard Mueller, both ex-Marines and Vietnam vets reunited after three decades in late 2003 on a mission to lay to rest Doc's son Larry Jr., who was killed in Iraq. Co-written by Daryl Ponicsan adapting his eponymous 2005 novel, the movie is in a sense a sequel to Hal Ashby's *The Last Detail* (1973) based on Ponicsan's 1970 novel.

Doc has also recently lost his wife to cancer. In the throes of loss, he has never had greater need of these old army buddies as he faces accompanying his son's body to Arlington cemetery. But with a cloud over the circumstances of Larry Jr.'s death, Doc resists the official burial plans and the threesome embark on an eventful road trip from Virginia to the hometown of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The hard-drinking Sal is the disturber, while pastor Mueller brings the consoling presence of a faith deeper than that which they've lost in the military and political leadership, sending young men to die for the flag in a deceptive war. As always Linklater is a keen observer of the cultural moment and brings a deep humanity to these characters as they reflect on



Amazon Studios

LAST FLAG FLYING — The best moments in Richard Linklater's *Last Flag Flying* are the three men (Steve Carell as ex-Navy medic Larry "Doc" Shepherd, Bryan Cranston as Sal Nealon, and Laurence Fishburne as Rev. Richard Mueller) talking about their lives and challenging each other.

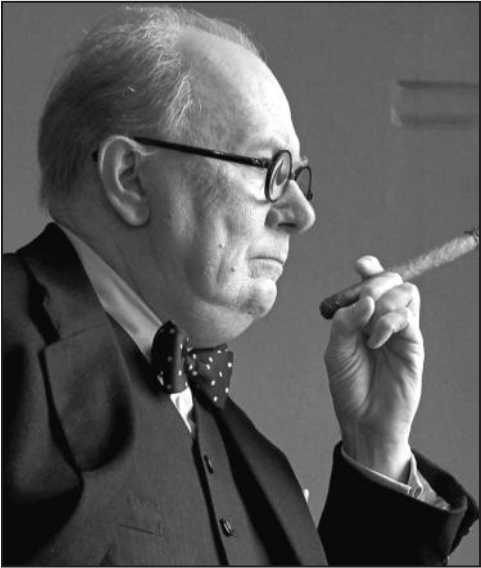
war. The focus is on the Pardier farm family in rural France in 1916, the year of the great battle of Verdun. With husbands and sons off fighting, the household is led by Hortense (screen veteran Nathalie Baye, magnificent) who despite her age works backbreaking hours in the fields. She has help from her daughter Solange and a young woman, an orphan Francine (newcomer Iris Bry, also excellent), brought in to help at harvest time and kept on. Except for several brief scenes of the terrors at the front — gas attacks and assaults from the trenches — the narrative centres on the women and the farm.

On a short leave home the dashing son, Georges, is attracted to Francine and makes plans. His older brother Constant will suffer shell shock. While Hortense bears the greatest burden, Solange dreads news of her husband, Clovis, and in that depression seeks solace among Yankee soldiers who arrive in the area. Things happen that should not, there is terrible news, secrets are held and withheld, a

terrible war of attrition and futile slaughters. The focus of this all-male affair is on three officers: the fatalistic commander Captain Stanhope (Sam Claflin), who calms his nerves with alcohol; the steadier Lt. Osborne (Paul Bettany), a teacher looked up to as "uncle" by the men; some mere boys including the just-arrived naive fresh-faced teenager 2nd Lt. Raleigh (Asa Butterfield), who has chosen this unit in order to serve under Stanhope, an admired former student at Raleigh's elite school.

The tension ratchets up as Osborne and Raleigh are chosen to be the officers to lead a daring daytime raid over the top to assess German numbers. While smoke from an artillery barrage is supposed to lay down a protective shroud over the desolate stretch of no man's land between trenches, it has the feel of a suicide mission. Or perhaps the end can only be delayed, not avoided (700,000 men perished during the actual offensive). The waiting can be as terrifying as it is soul-destroying; the bonds between brothers in arms, man and boy, the sole comfort as the agonizing minutes go by and the hour approaches. Dibbs captures that claustrophobic twilight zone with an unsentimental realism that is utterly convincing, its heartfelt moments bearing witness to the calamity of a heartless theatre of death.

The most extraordinary war story I saw at TIFF is based on actual events in Germany in the spring of 1945 as the Third Reich was collapsing. German-American writer-director Robert Schwentke's *The Captain*, also a world premiere, focuses on young infantryman Willi Herold (Max Hubacher). In the desperate chaos of the Nazi retreat a wild-eyed Herold is pursued as a deserter who could be shot on sight. He escapes and comes across an abandoned vehicle containing the uniform of a high-ranking army commander. Herold puts it on for protection and as the bluff works the imposter "captain" grows ever bolder. He claims to be acting on the direct orders of the Führer. He gathers a gang of soldier followers. He takes command of a camp



Focus

DARKEST HOUR — Gary Oldman delivers a career-topping performance as Winston Churchill.

(<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-vietnam-war/watch/>). We can watch it unfold as in Olivier Sarbil's exceptional 40-minute documentary *Mosul* (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/mosul/>), first broadcast on PBS *Frontline* Oct. 18, which follows an Iraqi special forces squad through the 266 days of the battle to retake Iraq's second largest city from the so-called Islamic State, at great personal cost and a toll of 20,000 civilian deaths.

Movies about war have been a staple genre of the cinema from the beginning, including as a propaganda tool. But truth doesn't have to be the first casualty when films are unafraid to show how wars and wartime affect what human beings do to and for each other, to plumb the paradoxes of the human condition — the courage and the folly, malice and selfless love, madness and stoic resolve, fearful frailty and fearless resilience, tragedy and comedy. In war we see these paradoxes play out, individually and collectively, sometimes to terrible even absurd extremes.

In the following I look at American movies on legacies of war from Vietnam to Afghanistan and Iraq, then, from the Toronto film festival, four new European

Thank You for Your Service (U.S.)

The Last Flag Flying (U.S.)

The Guardians (France/Switzerland)

Journey's End (U.K.)

The Captain (Germany/France/Poland)

Darkest Hour (U.K.)

their pasts and struggle to come to terms with doing the right thing as citizens.

TIFF was blessed to have the world premiere of *The Guardians* (*Les gardiennes*), the latest film from French writer-director Xavier Beauvois, best known for his transcendent *Of Gods and Men* awarded the Grand Prix at the 2010 Cannes film festival. Beauvois' introduction included a tribute to the Canadians who fought to liberate France from German occupation.

Adapted from a 1924 novel by Ernest Pérochon, *The Guardians* refers to the women left to labour on the home front, to hold together family and society in time of

prisoner of war returns and in the aftermath of war men still struggle over land while the women must endure. Emotionally powerful and poignant, stunningly lensed, Beauvois brings a measured mastery to this moving all too human story.

Another TIFF world premiere, director Saul Dibb's *Journey's End*, is the second screen adaptation of R.C. Sherriff's eponymous 1928 play (the first by James Whale was in 1930), set over a mere six days in March 1918 as a group of war-weary British soldiers are on a frontline rotation. They pass the time holed up in the hellish trenches of Mont Saint-Quentin, waiting on orders to face an expected German spring offensive, cannon fodder for another chapter in this long

Desire to serve the church involves obedience

Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



Most of us lead fairly settled lives. We have our homes, our jobs, and the routines which bring us, if not happiness, at least comfort. When life brings us changes, it is usually because we have instigated them: a promotion we have been working toward, time off for a long-awaited holiday, or perhaps the birth of a child we have been longing for. There is, however, a group of people for whom life's settled way is not part of their reality — the priests who serve us.

Take, for example, the life of Rev. Greg Faryna. His story is not unique, but it does serve to remind us that these men have dedicated themselves to a way of life which often brings unexpected change. It is a life which does not necessarily revolve around their own desires, but rather around obedience. At the time of his ordination, every Catholic and Orthodox priest takes a vow of obedience to the local bishop.

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.

For the past four years, Father Greg had been pastor of the Ukrainian Catholic parish in Camrose, a rural centre about 100 km southeast of Edmonton. Although not guaranteed the posting, he had requested it as a change from the challenges of being Eparchial Chancellor. The Camrose parish actually consists of the home church along with nine other mission parishes stretching over a distance of 195 km from end to end.

Needless to say, travelling became a major part of Father Greg's new ministry, as he explains. "The challenge was to try and spread my ministry equally over that area. I needed to balance my travel time so I would be able to give all of my parishioners the attention they deserve. In the end, I divided the area into three sections in order to make the travel more manageable."

There were dividends for Father Greg serving in Camrose. He had grown up on a farm in the district, so the assignment had the feeling of coming home. Many of the parishioners remembered him as a boy, so it really did feel like coming home to family. "I can say that I was well-received and

enjoyed the ministry." The posting was expected to last for the usual five-year rotation, standard in the Edmonton eparchy and every priest has the right to expect this to happen. An extension for an additional five years was quite possible. The rationale for this is that it brings stability not only to the parish, but the priest as well, in such considerations as domestic arrangements.

Unfortunately for Father Greg, that changed. Earlier this year Bishop David Motiuk determined St. Stephen Parish in Calgary needed a change in ministry before the five-year rotation came due. He approached Father Greg and asked him to reflect on whether a move to Calgary was something he might be called to do, and whether this was the proper time to do it. Although it was a request, not an order, Father Greg still felt the strong devotion to obey Bishop David.

"Sometimes things happen in mid-stride and unexpected changes need to be made," he reflects. "It is important as a priest to remember that my calling is to the church. I am called to serve Christ where I am needed most. In my heart I have accepted



VOW OF OBEDIENCE — Rev. Greg Faryna is an Orthodox priest who serves at St. Stephen Parish in Calgary. "The Holy Spirit often calls us to the unexpected. We pray that we're attentive to the call and respond in faith," he says.

Calgary is where I am needed most right now."

Although Father Greg accepted the new direction, it was not easy. "From a personal standpoint the timing was unfortunate, but I fully understand and honour the decision that was made."

The Calgary assignment could not be less different from Camrose. "St. Stephen's congregation is twice the size of all 10 parishes I had in the Camrose area combined. In that small community I was often recognized as the Ukrainian Catholic priest. "It was wonderful to be greeted with a 'Good morning father' or even a simple 'Hi padre' from total strangers. In a large city like Calgary I'm afraid that just will not be so. That anonymity will be a new reality for me, not that it is a life-changing consideration."

After three weeks in Calgary, Father Greg has learned he is now

pastor of a vibrant community, with active lay involvement in all areas of parish life. For him, the new challenge is to relate to the people spiritually and socially where they are, and not to expect them to come to him.

"It is my responsibility to meld into the existing structure and not disrupt the good work that is being done," he remarks. "The people here are very good and devoted to their parish; they have been very generous to me. Now it is up to me to meet the sacramental needs of the parish and continue the good work that has been accomplished by previous pastors. Eventually I will be looking to continue to build up the community and further nourish its spiritual life. The Holy Spirit often calls us to the unexpected. We pray that we're attentive to the call and respond in faith."

Wars leave legacy of human carnage

Continued from page 9

for German soldiers detained for desertion and looting. He directs a massacre. Indeed he turns into a preening homicidal little Hitler. Even when a stop is put to his debauched murderous rampage, a Nazi military court judge is inclined to absolve him.

Herold's story, strikingly shot in black and white, shows the crazed extremes of human behaviour that can occur amid the violent catharsis of war. After working in Hollywood for many years, Schwentke returned to his native Germany in order, as he explains, to tell this little-known episode of German Second World War atrocities "from the perspective of the perpetrators." Seldom has a movie been more graphic on how the evils of war can turn even its victims into monsters.

Joe Wright's *Darkest Hour* sheds light on the more conventional narrative of heroic British resistance to the Nazi blitzkrieg advancing across continental Europe in the first year of that war. The focus is on the intense back-room politics of Westminster in May 1940 as ailing Conservative prime minister Neville Chamberlain (Ronald Pickup) is forced to resign. The Tory establishment wants his replacement to be the Foreign Secretary Viscount Halifax (Stephen Dillane), an advocate of peace negotiations with Hitler. They actively scheme

against Winston Churchill whom they regard as an unsuitable has-been. Gary Oldman delivers a career-topping performance as the aging bulldog with a fondness for liquor and cigars. King George VI (Ben Mendelsohn) is no admirer either, worried that "his record is a litany of catastrophe." But the Labour opposition insists on Churchill as its price to enter a wartime grand coalition.

With Belgium and France facing imminent defeat, dire events thrust Churchill into the spotlight. He may grouse that "I'm getting the job only because the ship is sinking." But after getting the king's confidence at a critical moment, he becomes prime minister on May 10 with an iron determination that it will not. Loyal supported by wife Clementine (Kristin Scott Thomas) and young personal secretary Elizabeth Layton (Lily James), encouraged by the spirit of the common people, Churchill rallies the war cabinet. He puts in place Operation Dynamo to avert a military disaster at Dunkirk (the subject of Christopher Nolan's epic IMAX movie released in July), and promises "we will never surrender" in a famous June 4 speech to the House of Commons, after which a chastened Halifax concedes: "He mobilized the English language and sent it into war."

This is stirring stuff. At the same time, the sorrow and the pity is that all wars, including the

"good" ones, leave behind a legacy of human carnage, for the victors as well as the vanquished. War is always a failure of our common humanity, lest we forget.

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Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

We live in a distant suburb of our 100,000+ light-year-wide Milky Way galaxy. (Remember it takes only eight minutes and 20 seconds for the light from our sun to reach earth.) Our solar system spins around the galactic hub on the inner side of one of the loose spiral aggregations of gas and dust that branch out from the central bulge of our elliptical galaxy. Our cosmic neighbourhood is called the Orion Arm by astronomers, because some of the stars of the well-known winter constellation of Orion lay within it, including Betelgeuse, and Rigel and the stars making up this hunter of Greek myth's belt.

The nearest star to us on the Orion Arm is Proxima Centauri some 4.3 light years away. Estimates place the number of stars in our galaxy as high as 200 billion stars, each with potential planetary systems of their own. The nearest galaxy to ours is designated M31, which can be seen

Feast of Christ the King November 26, 2017	Ezekiel 34:11-12 Psalm 23 1 Corinthians 15:20-26 Matthew 25:31-46
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in a dark night sky just at the limits of what a sharp human eye can see in a constellation we call Andromeda. This spiral galaxy some 2.5 million light years away from us likely has a trillion star systems like our solar system within it.

The numbers just keep getting bigger when you try to imagine the galactic count in the observable universe. Using today's instruments the expanding universe is believed to stretch out 13.8 billion light years in all directions from us. Scientists analyzing the data from the Hubble Space Telescope last year set two trillion as their

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

estimate for the number of galaxies in the universe. The new James Webb Space Telescope will surely see even more.

Two trillion galaxies with billions of stars each, which in turn having planetary systems spinning around them, leave us with mind-boggling planetary numbers. One estimate placed the numbers of far-off worlds at well beyond the total number of all the grains of sand on earth!

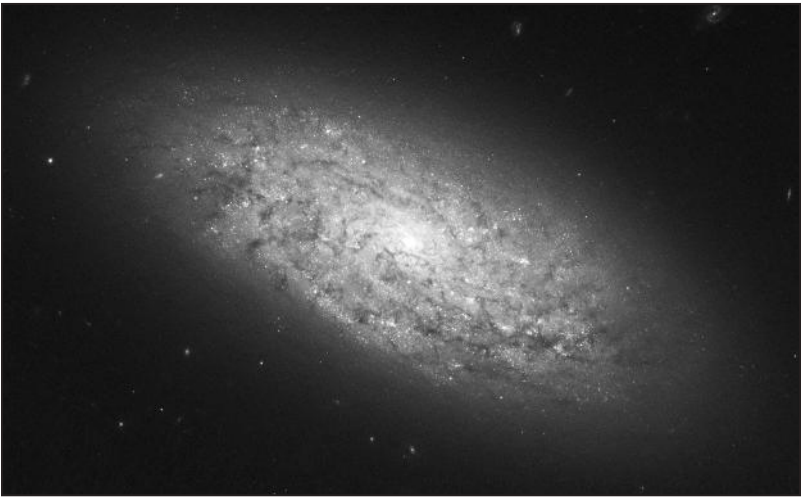
Life on our small, blue planet Earth is truly a miracle as would be life on other planets also. Way back during my undergraduate days in the 1960s at the Jesuit-run St. Louis University I wrote a paper on the concept of cosmic polygenism for one of my theology classes. Theologians have long debated the concept of polygeny here on earth, which posits the descent of humans from two or more independent pairs of ancestors. When dealing with our increasingly complicated family tree, recent information such as the discoveries that Homo neanderthalensis and Homo sapiens ssp. Denisova genes appear in European and Asian populations, our Homo sapiens sapiens species, freshens this debate. Add to this the increasing possibility of intelligent life spread out across our universe and new perspectives open.

Can we see the theological possibility of multiple creation episodes, the God spark touching creatures across the universe? My research found many theologians decades ago at the dawn of the Space Age contemplating God's presence mirrored in all the universe as a given. They saw that we had to at least consider the possibility of multiple creations.

We celebrate the end of our liturgical year with the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. The first reading on this last Sunday in Ordinary Time comes from the prophet Ezekiel. When written in the sixth century BC, Ezekiel and his wife lived in Babylonia along with other exiles forced from Judah. Far from his homeland, Ezekiel understood how previous kings had been false shepherds. Writing for a beaten, frightened and weary people, he has the Lord God speaking directly and intimately to his scattered people as a good shepherd. Comfortingly he says, "I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick

darkness." Psalm 23 reinforces this image in the refrain "The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want."

Paul writing to the Corinthians in the second reading foresees a long struggle until the risen Christ "has put all



NASA/ESA

his enemies under his feet," including death. At that point, "When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all."

The Gospel reading from Matthew connects the totality of God's creation with the Son of Man who comes to "sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him." Using image of a king he portrays a very unorthodox image of his kingdom where king and the humble, whether sick, imprisoned, homeless or hungry, are synonymous. He tells those who are judged worthy it is by their actions attending to the needs of the poor and outcast that they inherit the kingdom. "Truly I tell to you, just as you did it to one of the least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

On this feast Jesus is characterized as a king and as a shepherd, glorious and humble at the very same time. While today these regal and agrarian images may seem distant and alienating, they are certainly far less challenging than the cosmic reality that science now opens before us. Whatever images we chose, our triune God, the Alpha and Omega, the primum mobile of all creation, remains for us at the centre of the cosmic story and the message proclaimed truly universal.

When we are paralyzed with exasperation, our helplessness is our prayer

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



Several years ago I received an email that literally stopped my breath. A man who had been for many years an intellectual and faith mentor to me, a man whom I thoroughly trusted, and a man with whom I had developed a life-giving friendship, had killed both his wife and himself in a murder-suicide. The news left me gasping for air, paralyzed in terms of how to understand and accept this as well as how to pray

in the face of this.

I had neither words of explanation nor words for prayer. My heart and my head were like two water pumps working a dry well, useless and frustrated. Whatever consolation I had was drawn from an assurance from persons who knew him more intimately that there had been major signs of mental deterioration in the time leading up to this horrible event and they were morally certain that this was the result of an organic dysfunction in his brain, not an indication of his person. Yet . . . how does one pray in a situation like this? There aren't any words.

And we have all experienced

situations like this: the tragic death of someone we love by murder, suicide, overdose, or accident. Or, the exasperation and helplessness we feel in the face of the many seemingly senseless events we see daily in our world: terrorists killing thousands of innocent people; natural disasters leaving countless persons dead or homeless; mass killings by deranged individuals in New York, Paris, Las Vegas, Florida, San Bernardino, Sandy Hook, Texas, among other places; and millions of refugees having to flee their homelands because of war or poverty.

And we all we know people who have received terminal sentences in medical clinics and had to face what seems as an unfair death: young children whose lives are just starting and who shouldn't be asked at so tender an age to have to process mortality, and young mothers dying whose children still desperately need them.

In the face of these things, we aren't just exasperated by the senselessness of the situation, we struggle too to find both heart and words with which to pray. How do we pray when we are paralyzed by senselessness and tragedy? How do we pray when we no longer have the heart for it?

St. Paul tells us that *when we*

don't know how to pray, the Spirit, in groans too deep for words, prays through us. What an extraordinary text! Paul tells us that when we can still find the words with which to pray, this is not our deepest prayer. Likewise when we still have the heart to pray, this too is not our deepest prayer. Our deepest prayer is when we are rendered mute and groaning in exasperation, in frustration, in helplessness. Wordless exasperation is often our deepest prayer. We pray most deeply when we are so driven to our knees so as to be unable to do anything except surrender to helplessness. Our groaning, wordless, seemingly the antithesis of prayer, is indeed our prayer. It is the Spirit praying through us. How so?

The Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is, as Scripture assures us, the spirit of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, fidelity, mildness, faith, and chastity. And that Spirit lives deep within us, placed there by God in our very makeup and put into us even more deeply by our baptism.

When we are exasperated and driven to our knees by a tragedy too painful and senseless to accept and absorb, our groans of helplessness are in fact the Spirit of God groaning in us, suffering all that it isn't, yearning for good-

ness, beseeching God in a language beyond words.

Sometimes we can find the heart and the words with which to pray, but there are other times when, in the words of the Book of Lamentation, *all we can do is put our mouths to the dust and wait.* The poet Rainer Marie Rilke once gave this advice to a person who had written him, lamenting that in the face of a devastating loss he was so paralyzed he did not know what he could possibly do with the pain he was experiencing. Rilke's advice: *Give that heaviness back to the earth itself, the earth is heavy, mountains are heavy, the seas are heavy.* In effect: Let your groaning be your prayer!

When we don't know how to pray, the Spirit in groans too deep for words prays through us. So every time we are face to face with a tragic situation that leaves us stuttering, mute, and so without heart that all we can do is say, *I can't explain this! I can't accept this! I can't deal with this! This is senseless! I am paralyzed in my emotions! I am paralyzed in my faith! I no longer have the heart to pray,* it can be consoling to know that this paralyzing exasperation is our prayer — and perhaps the deepest and most sincere prayer we have ever offered.

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Rainbow hues and fragile petals: refracted glory

By Edna Froese

On the highway between Lake Louise and Banff, cars pulled onto the shoulder and camera-wielding drivers and passengers tumbled out — not to immortalize one more grizzly bear on social media, not this time — but to render awed tribute to the full, double rainbow that arose out of the earth in the far valley and returned to the earth on nearby slopes still clad in mists of retreating rain. The upper rainbow a soft-focus version of the brilliant lower arc, each colour band was intensely itself yet merged seamlessly into the next, the red and purple declaring themselves against a backdrop of mountains and clouds.

The physics of light refraction, most certainly familiar to most of the open-mouthed photographers, meant little in the moment. It would have taken a truly hardened, indifferent soul not to see this unearthly beauty and then to bless the web of coincidence that had prompted light to undress itself behind a veil of retreating raindrops.

Can a rainbow know its admirers? As a peacock might self-consciously fan out iridescent tail feathers and strut before its admirers? Surely it cannot be sacrilegious to imagine such mysterious conversation.

The belief that rainbow hues have spiritual dimensions is very old: from the original makers of mandalas, Buddhist monks who wove sand into magnificent sacred

Froese taught English literature at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon for many years until her retirement. She currently works part time as academic editor while relishing the freedom to read and write for pleasure.



Edna Froese

works of art, to today’s devotees of Zen adult colouring books, human beings have known that each vibrant colour must mean something. Even those who have stripped all that is sacred from the colour spectrum — interior decorators, web-designers, and ad-makers — still know very well that the exact shade matters. Paint the walls bright yellow and we’ll consume more food! Use subtle greys and blues and we’ll stay longer, become more pliable to the message, whatever it is.

Fortunately, the rainbow, co-opted as it has been for various purposes, is not the only divine gift to the human eye. The world is “charged with the grandeur of God,” to use Hopkins’ immortal phrase, through a reckless profusion of flowers, from the grandiose diva-like spread of tropical plants to the infinitesimal delicacy

of alpine flowers growing far above normal human tread.

Gardeners the world over confess their immoderate obsession with the unending possibilities in the intimate marriage between colour and texture. Have you ever fingered the petals of a rose in full bloom? Velvet itself is pedestrian in comparison. Or noted how the leaves of the paintbrush transfigure themselves into flowers, adopting whatever shade of red or orange or magenta or pink or yellowish white is *de rigueur* at a particular altitude? Or pondered how it is that the leaves of fireweed in fall turn a dormish brown in one valley, yet in another choose to wear gorgeous purples and magentas and oranges? Or asked a lily enthusiast to describe the patterns of lines and dots in Amber Flame or Chocolate Canary?

When I immerse fragile petals

of black pansies in boiling water in the first stage of making jelly, a brilliant turquoise precedes the deep amethyst of the final product. That rose petals should yield a soft blue before turning the expected shade of red is no less miraculous to me. No wonder medieval alchemists, looking for the elixir of youth, or that which would change all to gold, knew that at the heart of all things is a congruence of elements that none but the Creator understands.

Our subconscious responses to the symbolic resonances of colour are particularly evident in how we react to the contrast between what is black and white (literally or metaphorically) and what is colour-full. Remember *Schindler’s List* (1993)? Most of the movie is filmed in black and white, shifting to colour only in the last scenes as

attention turns from those who perished to those who survived. Other than that, colour appears only in a couple of poignant scenes, in which one little Jewish girl wears a red coat, such a contrast to the inhuman categories of Jew or not Jew that she provokes tears long before the sheer scale of the tragedy makes weeping the only reasonable response.

Black and white, as a metaphor, has come to stand for immovable regulations and an avoidance of all nuance. In religion, black and white distinguishes between the saved and the damned (no in-between, or compassion); in politics, black and white sorts all people and positions into the evil and the good (with the sorter seemingly always among the good). Most unfortunately, that metaphorical thinking has attached itself to race as well: when blackness is connected to absence of colour (which in physics holds true — think of black holes) and white is connected to light (which is the sum total of all colours), then those whose skin pigmentation is too dark find themselves in an uncomfortable place.

Although it seems prudent not to rely too heavily on physics as a source of moral wisdom, especially since the beautiful calls for awe, not moralizing, I cannot help but ponder what physics might teach me. Light is essential for the perception of any colour whatsoever; colour cannot be seen in the dark. Even more striking, light itself must be broken (refracted) before rainbow colours appear. A consistent rejection of all variances, fragments, ambiguities, irregularities — terminal black-and-white categorization, in other words — impoverishes us, whether we know it or not.

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Yesterday’s papal loyalists are today’s dissidents

By Thomas Reese, SJ
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Scripture tells us that they will know we are Christians by our love (John 13:35), but the media tell us they will know we are Catholics by our fights.

There have been lots of fights in the Catholic Church lately as reactionary cardinals, theologians and commentators have gone after Pope Francis and his emphasis on God’s compassion and mercy. These dissenters believe he should stress the rules and divine judgment.

What is remarkable about these critics of Pope Francis is that many were papal loyalists during the papacies of John Paul and Benedict. During these papacies, they harshly criticized as dissidents and heretics anyone who questioned papal teaching. What is clear now is that their loyalty was not to the successor of Peter, but to their own theological opinions.

No one epitomizes this transformation more than Capuchin

Reese, a Jesuit priest, is a senior analyst at RNS. Previously he was a columnist at the National Catholic Reporter (2015 - 17) and an associate editor (1978 - 85) and editor-in-chief (1998 - 2005) at America magazine.

Father Thomas Weinandy, who recently released his letter to the pope accusing him of confusing the faithful. Weinandy was executive director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Doctrine from 2005 - 2013 and used his office like a grand inquisitor to persecute those theologians who questioned papal teaching. True, he did not physically torture his victims, but he did everything he could to destroy their reputations and their careers.

To my knowledge, none of these theologians had the chutzpah to write a letter to the pope and then release it to the press. Rather, they wrote as academics on topics in the areas of their expertise. Most of them were highly respected in their fields.

Now the inquisitor is questioning the pope.

His letter begins by stating that “a chronic confusion seems to mark your pontificate.” Too often, the light of faith “is obscured by the ambiguity of your words and actions,” which “fosters within the faithful a growing unease.”

Weinandy and his friends may be confused, but the faithful at large love and support Pope Francis. A Pew Research Center survey released in January found that 87 per cent of Catholics express a favourable view of Pope Francis. It should be noted that

these Catholics also liked Popes John Paul and Benedict, but unlike the conservative dissidents, they did not abandon the papacy when Francis was elected.

The first problem Weinandy points to is Chapter 8 of “*Amoris Laetitia*,” which deals with the role of conscience and discernment in guiding divorced and remarried Catholics. He joins his voice to those of the four cardinals and some theologians who have criticized this chapter. He accuses the pope of being “intentionally ambiguous, thus inviting both a traditional interpretation of Catholic teaching on marriage and divorce as well as one that might imply a change in that teaching.”

He even asserts that this “seemingly intentional lack of clarity inevitably risks sinning against the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth.” He accuses the pope of “calumny” in calling his critics “Pharisaic stone-throwers who embody a merciless rigorism.” This coming from a man who did not worry about calumny when he was accusing some of America’s most prominent theologians of being unorthodox!

Weinandy ignores that fact that “*Amoris Laetitia*” was the product of wide consultation in the church, including two synods of bishops.

A second issue that Weinandy has with Pope Francis is that he “seems to demean the importance of church doctrine.”

There is no question that Pope Francis gives a priority to how we live the faith rather than how we explain it, or as theologians would say, he gives more importance to orthopraxis than orthodoxy. As Matthew 25 explains, we will be judged by how we live the faith in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty and clothing the naked. We will not be judged by whether we can answer all our catechism questions.

Weinandy appears to confuse the faith with theology or how we explain the faith. Many in the church, in response to the Reformation, equated the faith with everything in the catechism. Rather, theology is always an imperfect attempt to explain the faith, which is a mystery. Theology is simply an attempt to explain the faith using the best thinking of the day. Augustine used Neoplatonism; Thomas Aquinas used Aristotelianism.

What Weinandy and his inquisitorial colleagues never understood is that it is the job of the theologians not simply to quote Augustine and Aquinas, but to imitate them by using the best thinking of their day to explain the faith to their generation. One cannot use 13th-century theology to explain the faith to people in the 21st century. The suppression of theological creativity during the papacies of John Paul and Benedict hurt the church badly.

Weinandy’s third complaint is that the pope is scandalizing the believers by appointing bishops “who seem not merely open to those who hold views counter to Christian belief but who support and even defend them.” Again, Weinandy confuses the faith with his theology. He is shocked that a pope would appoint men who reflect his priorities for the church when this has been done by every

pope. Under John Paul, loyalty was the most important criterion for episcopal appointments, trumping pastoral qualifications and good judgment.

Weinandy’s next complaint is that Pope Francis is fostering disunity in the church by encouraging “a form of ‘synodality’ that allows and promotes various doctrinal and moral options within the church (and) can only lead to more theological and pastoral confusion.” Again, Weinandy believes any views that are different from his theology are wrong. He even asserts that “Such synodality is unwise and, in practice, works against collegial unity among bishops.”

In reality, collegiality and synodality are trying to explain the same reality — the union of the pope with the college of bishops where there is shared responsibility for the church under the primacy of the pope. Sadly, collegiality under John Paul became defined as the obligation of the bishops to agree with him in all things. Synods became a joke, where bishops quoted the pope to himself and told him how great he was.

Pope Francis, on the other hand, encourages free discussion and debate, which he sees as the path to theological and pastoral development. Ironically, Weinandy complains about the pope allowing too much freedom of discussion and then takes advantage of this freedom to tell the pope that he is all wrong.

Finally, Weinandy accuses the pope of being vindictive. What “many have learned from your pontificate is not that you are open to criticism, but that you resent it.” He goes on, “Many fear that if they speak their mind, they will be marginalized or worse.”

Again, Weinandy appears to have forgotten the fear inspired in bishops and theologians by John Paul, who would allow no discussion on issues on which he had made up his mind. Weinandy has also conveniently forgotten his own role in this inquisition. So far, he can provide no evidence of similar actions against him and his colleagues by Pope Francis.

In brief, Weinandy fails to see that most of his criticisms of Pope Francis are exactly the same as the criticisms that progressive theologians had of Pope John Paul II. While Weinandy believes Francis has betrayed the legacy of John Paul and Benedict, progressive theologians accused John Paul of betraying the documents and spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Progressives too felt that John Paul’s episcopal appointments

were disastrous. And they saw scores of their colleagues subjected to inquisitorial procedures that Weinandy helped carry out for the bishops and the pope.

If a theologian like Sister Elizabeth Johnson of Fordham University had written a similar letter to Pope John Paul, the Vatican and the bishops would have come down on her like a ton of bricks.

Weinandy, on the other hand, got a slap on the wrist from the president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and lost his position as a consultant to the bishops’ Committee on Doctrine.

In his statement, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo noted that “Throughout the history of the church, ministers, theologians and the laity all have debated and have held personal opinions on a variety of theological and pastoral issues.” But, he said, “every good Christian ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbour’s statement than to condemn it.” And, “This presupposition should be afforded all the more to the teaching of Our Holy Father,” DiNardo said.

I don’t disagree with anything DiNardo said, I just wish dissenters had been treated similarly during the papacies of John Paul and Benedict.

Yesterday’s papal loyalists are today’s dissidents. Yesterday’s dissenters are today’s papal defenders. The true scandal in the church is not what one theologian or pope says, it is that we are not capable of dialoguing with each other. That is the fault of John Paul and Benedict, not Francis. They attempted to impose their theologies (their way of explaining the faith) on the church and silenced anyone who disagreed.

With the papacy of Francis, we are being invited to dialogue in a truly collegial fashion. Why does that scare people like Weinandy? Because they can no longer impose their views on the church. They are no longer in charge.



CNS/Paul Haring

INVITATION TO DIALOGUE — Pope Francis passes the statue of St. Peter as he leaves his general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican. With his papacy, we are being invited to dialogue in a truly collegial fashion, writes Thomas Reese, SJ.

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Facing violence in churches

Pope Francis has asked people not to take pictures during mass. This includes even bishops and priests, who like to take advantage of their physical proximity to the pope at papal liturgies. The mass is not a show, but a beautiful, transformative encounter with the true loving presence of Christ, Pope Francis argues.

When the priest celebrating mass says, “Let us lift up our hearts,” he is not saying, “lift up our cellphones and take a picture. It’s an awful thing” to do, the pope said during his weekly general audience Nov. 8.

I agree with the pope that it is inappropriate for the solemnity of the occasion that people, especially clergy, take pictures during mass.

However, there are even stranger developments taking place in this era when even churches are not immune from mass killings, such as happened Nov. 5 at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas. A lone gunman entered the church and shot more than two dozen people, including the acting pastor, in

a cold-blooded act.

This has raised alarms across the United States. According to a news release, Bishop Council Nedd II, rector of St. Alban’s Anglican Church in Pine Grove Mills, Penn., is considering arming himself at the altar. The bishop is also a state constable.

In his commentary as co-chairman of the Project 21 black leadership network, he wrote: “A pistol in the pulpit may sound extreme, but when people of faith increasingly appear to be targets of armed evil a good shepherd must do what he must do to protect the flock from the wolves. From my perspective as both a bishop and a cop, people must be protected. This includes in sacred spaces.”

He said that it’s shocking that, in a nation founded on the idea of religious freedom, there are monsters out there who now think it’s fair game to target people of faith with deadly force. Citing recent church shootings such as those in Charleston, S.C.; Antioch, Tenn., and the latest one in Sutherland Springs, he said this brings religious intolerance to a

frightening new level.

While I don’t agree with the concept of the clergy packing a gun in church, it is ironic that the Canadian Parliament was taking steps to remove from the Criminal Code protection afforded to religious gatherings and those who lead them.

However the planned action was reversed after an avalanche of letters to parliamentarians, including an open letter to the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, minister of justice and attorney general of Canada from more than 60 religious leaders and groups. They urged the government to keep section 176 of the Criminal Code of Canada which was about to be removed by Bill C-51. Section 176 makes it an indictable offence to obstruct or cause violence to an officiating clergy or minister as well as to disturb religious worship or gatherings.

The Justice Committee amended the proposed bill Nov. 8.

It’s a better solution than the one being proposed across the border. — PWN

Transportation in the North has changed, and is changing still



Life In Canadian Arctic

Jon Hansen, CSsR

With the celebration of the opening of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway to take place on Nov. 15, I focus this month on transportation in the North.

As it was for the rest of Canada, the earliest means of transportation in the Arctic and Beaufort delta involved the waterways. From pre-historical times indigenous peoples invented and perfected forms of watercraft including the kayak and the umiak for their needs which included hunting, fishing and travelling. These vessels, built with locally sourced wood and animal skins were ideally suited for use on the ocean and along the inland rivers and channels.

With the arrival of whalers, fur traders and missionaries in the 19th century, modern wooden ship building was introduced to the region as the water was still the only option for long distance voyages. Ships brought trade goods and foreigners into the region and began to influence the lives of the local people, an effect which continues to be raised and debated every time a new era of transportation is faced.

The 20th century brought the advent of the airplane. Small, fixed-wing aircraft turned what would ordinarily be a weeks-long trip into hours and served to open the North to the rest of Canada. Planes could supply necessary commodities all year round and were instrumental in mapping, photographing and studying the northern lands for future resource development that would fuel the North into the new century. Early “bush pilots” gained reputations across the country for their fearless bravado as they navigated the cold, dark skies with only their wits and experience to serve as

navigational aids.

The arrival of airplanes did not diminish the ongoing desire for some type of efficient ground transportation to serve the growing northern communities. Dog sleds and trails had been suitable for early hunting and trading but the need for an all-season road was all too apparent.

With the discovery of oil and gas in the Beaufort Delta, this need came to a head and an overland link between Dawson City, YT, and the newly built town of Inuvik, NT, was begun in 1959. Construction of what was to become the Dempster highway would begin and stop, and begin again for the next 20 years until the highway was officially opened in 1979.

The Dempster Highway was named after Canadian Mounted Police Inspector William John Duncan Dempster who, as a young constable, frequently ran this dogsled trail from Dawson City to Fort McPherson, NT. Travelling the Dempster highway today is still not for the faint of heart as it remains a gravel surface road and is a challenging 700 km drive through some of the toughest weather and geography you can imagine. Nevertheless, it serves as an essential corridor to the south for both commerce and personal transportation.

Over the years other ideas for northern ground routes have come and gone. The CANOL road from Norman Wells, NT, through the Mackenzie Mountains to Whitehorse, YT, was completed in record time as part of the effort to provide supplies during the Second World War. Once the war ended the need for the road disappeared and it was abandoned just as quickly as it was built leaving only a wilderness hiking trail in its stead.

Another overland link which has been on the books for many years is the Mackenzie Valley highway project which would con-



Hansen

HIGHWAY LINK TO THE NORTH — The Dempster Highway is not for the faint of heart as it remains a gravel surface road and is a challenging 700 km drive through some of the toughest weather and geography you can imagine. Nevertheless, it serves as an essential corridor to the south for both commerce and personal transportation.

nect southern Canada to the Arctic coast via the east side of the Mackenzie River corridor. With only a small fraction of the route currently served by winter roads, time will tell whether such a dream will ever come to fruition.

But dreams do come true, at least in the case of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway which is the last section of road needed to connect all of Canada coast to coast. This major infrastructure project has been under

construction for the past four years and has been in the planning stages since the 1960s.

Besides the short-term benefits of job creation, the hope for the road is that it will bring economic growth to a region of Canada that is in dire need. Through tourism and trade many long-term jobs are expected to grow out of the project and residents will also have greater access to health care and educational opportunities.

That is not to say that the com-

pletion of the road is without controversy. Some question whether the advantages of the road will be outweighed by greater exposure to negative influences from the south and other are simply concerned that year-round road access will be one more factor in the continual erosion of an already fragile culture. Whatever the outcome the road is now here and is a part of our Canadian history forged in the uniting of a vast land mass and its diverse peoples.

People find it hard to deal with opposition

By Gerry Chidiac,
Prince George, B.C.

It’s interesting how open minded people are to the opinions of others. News programs regularly present debates that end with people coming around to opposing perspectives or at least agreeing to respectfully disagree.

Of course, I’m only kidding.

In fact, we see conservative news programs where hosts shout down guests with opposing views. We see liberal audiences disrupting and walking out of auditoriums where more right-

wing views are presented. We see online arguments that go on ad nauseam, with each side getting more and more entrenched, even as legitimate counter arguments are presented.

What’s happening in these cases is the backfire effect. When evidence is presented that contradicts a deeply held belief, we don’t change our viewpoint. On the contrary, we tend to become more entrenched and oppositional.

The key to dealing with any challenge is to increase our awareness, understand what’s happening and make a mindful response.

There may have been a time when embracing certain beliefs was a matter of life and death. This could explain our tendency to entrench ourselves in our points of view. Rituals for prepar-

ing food, for example, prevented people from being poisoned. There was much that we didn’t understand and the rules established by communities kept members safe in their environment.

These structures have their limits and there must be room for evolution. The more homogeneous an organization remains, the more likely it is to fail. This was illustrated in European royal families of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Genetically, they developed serious issues. And politically, they became unable to rule. They fell out of touch with their populations, resulting in loss of power and influence, dissolution of empires and even revolution.

Today, as world travel and communication become easier,

— DISSENTING, page 15

Hansen is a Redemptorist priest and pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish, Inuvik. See his website: www.jonhansencsr.com

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Pope Francis puts John Paul I on path to sainthood

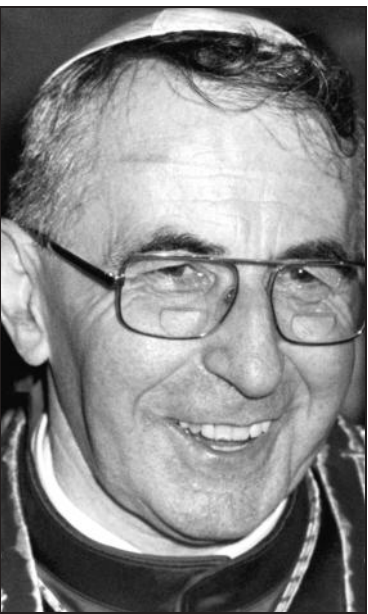
By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis recognized that Pope John Paul I, who served only 33 days as pope, lived the Christian virtues in a heroic way. The Vatican announced Pope Francis’ decision Nov. 9. It marks the first major step on the path to sainthood for the pope who died in 1978 at the age of 65, shocking the world and a church that had just mourned the death of Blessed Paul VI. Pope Francis would have to recognize a miracle attributed to the late pope’s intercession in order for him to be beatified, the next step toward sainthood. A second miracle would be needed

for canonization. Stefania Falasca, vice-postulator of Pope John Paul’s sainthood cause, said one “presumed extraordinary healing” had already been investigated by a diocese and a second possibility is being studied, but the Vatican does not begin its investigations until a sainthood candidate is declared venerable. Although his was one of the shortest papacies in history, Pope John Paul left a lasting impression on the church that fondly remembers him as “the smiling pope.” “He smiled for only 33 days,” read the front page of the Italian newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*, while the Catholic Telegraph of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati reported: “Saddened church seek-

ing another Pope John Paul.” The surprise of his death after just over a month in office opened a floodgate of rumours and conspiracy theories, running the gamut from murder to culpable neglect. The Vatican doctor insisted then, as the Vatican continues to insist, that Pope John Paul died of a heart attack. His papal motto, “*Humilitas*” (“Humility”) not only emphasized a Christian virtue but also reflected his down-to-earth personality and humble beginnings. “The Lord recommended it so much: Be humble. Even if you have done great things, say: ‘We are useless servants.’ On the contrary, the tendency in all of us is rather the opposite: to show off.

Lowly, lowly: This is the Christian virtue which concerns us,” he said Sept. 6, 1978. Born Albino Luciani in the small Italian mountain town of Canale D’Agordo Oct. 17, 1912, the future pope and his two brothers and one sister lived in poverty and sometimes went to bed hungry. His father, a bricklayer by trade, would often travel to Switzerland and Germany in search of work. During a general audience Sept. 13, 1978, the pope told pilgrims he was sickly as a child and his mother would take him “from one doctor to another” and watch over him “whole nights.” He also said he had been hospitalized eight times and operated on four times throughout his life. Despite his weak health and poverty, his father encouraged him to enter the minor seminary. He did so, but would return to his hometown in the summers and often was seen working in the fields in his black cassock. He was ordained a priest in 1935 and was appointed bishop of Vittorio Veneto in December 1958



CNS/L’Osservatore Romano

Pope John Paul I

by St. John XXIII. More than 10 years later, he was named patriarch of Venice by Blessed Paul VI and was created a cardinal in 1973. During his time as patriarch of Venice, then-Cardinal Luciani was known for his dedication to the poor and the disabled.

Refugees need employable skills

Continued from page 1

refugees should provide teacher training, not just educational materials, and also should consider adapting the curriculum from the refugees’ countries of origin. Learning employable skills and then being able to get a job is often easier said than done for many refugees. Elias Bakhsh, a Villanova University student and Syrian refugee working with Catholic Relief Services, can attest to this first-hand. He fled Syria and lived in Jordan, Turkey and briefly in Dubai, before coming to the United States, but was unable to find work or get a job for which he was qualified in part because, he said, people think “refugees are here to take our jobs.” Enabling refugees to get work permits would be one solution, said Bakhsh, one of the panelists at the CRS event. He also said he was “not sure how to address the tension between host countries

and refugees” and added: “It’s very complex.” Some of the complexities are outlined in the CRS report: “Little by Little: Exploring the Impact of Social Acceptance on Refugee Integration Into Host Communities.” It looks at the social integration of refugees in Ecuador, Jordan and India. The report notes the sheer number of people in exile — 22.5 million — and says the capacity of countries to cope with these numbers requires serious conversation about how to best meet short- and long-term needs. Panelists noted that just a year ago the UN General Assembly called for a two-year review process to develop a comprehensive refugee response framework, known by its acronym CRRF. A year into the review amid a growing refugee crisis and polarized views about refugees around the world heightens the call to come up with a clear way forward, noted a few of the panelists. The CRS report says almost 75

per cent of refugees are displaced for more than five years and developing countries “bear a disproportionate burden of hosting refugees.” “The sheer number of people seeking protection and the capacity of host countries to cope with those numbers are changing the conversation around how the international community should best respond,” the report adds. A case in point is the current situation in Bangladesh, where more than 600,000 Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar have fled, escaping violence. The small country is bracing for a massive humanitarian crisis because of a lack of food, sanitation, medicines and even basic housing, but as McPherson pointed out, education and pastoral care are also priorities for church-sponsored relief agencies. “We’ll be held accountable for how we respond to the Rohingya,” she said, adding that the situation of “dire, dire circumstances is unprecedented.”

Dissenting views now more common

Continued from page 14

societies grow more heterogeneous. So we are increasingly confronted with dissenting views. Psychological research is shedding light on how we respond to cognitive dissonance, which happens when what we see or hear contradicts what we believe to be true. In essence, we can fight or we can try to understand the other world views. Stephen Covey, the author of “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,” tells us to “Seek first to understand, and then to be understood.” This doesn’t mean that we embrace the views of the other and forget our own. What normally happens when we follow this

principle, however, is that when others feel listened to, they in turn become more open to our perspectives. From here, we can understand and embrace what’s good in both points of view, and even celebrate diversity. Covey refers to this as creating synergy. By sharing and brainstorming, we come up with the best possible solutions, where everyone feels respected and everyone wins. The most effective institutions embrace diversity. As a teacher, for example, I know how important it is to listen to my students and to use their input in creating and maintaining a positive and respectful environment in the classroom. In order to do so, however, I need

to be confident in my own leadership and effectively communicate my goals and my vision. The ideal is to create a learning environment where students are respectful in challenging other points of view and comfortable in having their opinions questioned. If we’re aware of our tendency to react negatively when others express differing viewpoints and know that this is indeed the backfire effect, we can consciously move beyond it with an open mind. The result will be a better way, one that embraces and celebrates our differences. More effort is required but it’s worth it. As American civil rights activist Maya Angelou says, “In diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”



Janice Weber

it is November.

a dusting of snow covers the Herschel hills. charcoal darkness outlines contours and deep ravines of thick bare brush where deer fattened on farm fields will hide to shelter from harsh winter winds.

blue sky has been obscured by pastel layers of soft atmosphere over the long line of hills, high rise of land, fertile valley grid stretched far below where this year’s harvest thankfully is done. a silent graveyard keeps it’s constant view.

midwinter drama awaits above the hills, shifting sheers of iridescent coloured light, stars like snowflakes in a gauzy Milky Way. constellations sharply clear in cold dark space. these familiar hills murmur their memories, ancient whoops of joy, moans of misery.

Native peoples hunted buffalo in Herschel hills. newcomers fresh from Europe settled near. annually the untamed hills carpet themselves with an abundance of flowering plants and grasses, although all is blanketed in serenity for now, peaceful until the burst of spring in March.

By Shirley Dawn Salkeld

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Prairie

Messenger

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Canada

Iraqi teen fights for all women and minority groups

By Beth Griffin

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — The day she succeeded in her fourth attempt to escape six months of daily rape and humiliation by her Islamic State captors, Iraqi teen Ekhlas Khudur Bajoo made a vow.

“(I) promised myself not to stop until I brought justice. I’m fighting for all women and minority groups inside Iraq,” she said.

Bajoo, now 17, told a Nov. 2 UN forum she sees herself as a symbol of hope for religious and ethnic minorities victimized by IS.

She is a Yezidi, an ancient ethno-religious minority indigenous to what is now northern Iraq. IS militants attacked Yezidis in August 2014, when Bajoo was 14. They kidnapped 6,000 women and girls and killed 5,800, including Bajoo’s father.

Using the common Arabic name for IS, Bajoo said through an interpreter: “We want justice for the Daesh perpetrators, that they will be held accountable. What happened to us was a genocide. We want safety so we can live in peace.”

A receptive, capacity crowd heard Bajoo, a former Syrian captive, UN ambassadors and leaders of aid organizations discuss “Peace, Reconciliation and Justice: The Future of Religious and Ethnic Minorities Victimized by Daesh” at a conference organized by the Vatican’s Permanent

Observer Mission to the United Nations.

“Gabi,” a 48-year-old Syrian Christian man whose identity was obscured in a taped interview, described being abducted and prepared for beheading for being “an infidel Christian.”

He said his status as a husband and father apparently persuaded his captors to settle for a cash payment from his family in lieu of his execution. He was blindfolded, handcuffed and fitted with an explosive belt for his ride to freedom.

Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Vatican’s permanent observer

to the United Nations, said: “The international community must respond to the outrages systematically committed by Daesh with a rock-solid resolve to prevent similar future abominations from recurring.

“Those entrusted with protecting the innocent and safeguarding respect for fundamental human rights must live up to their indispensable and inescapable responsibility to defend those in danger of suffering atrocity crimes,” he said.

Jonathan Allen, deputy permanent representative of the United

Kingdom to the United Nations, said it would be a mistake to think recent losses by IS mean that the job of the world community is complete. There must be “no hiding place” for those who perpetrate evil, he said.

“Where countries work together, it’s harder for poisonous ideologies to take root,” Allen said. The community of nations must work together, but each is responsible for a localized, effective approach to identify and monitor citizens who “try to slip away” to fight with IS, he said.

Auza said religious leaders “have a grave and specific duty to confront and condemn the abuse of religious belief and sentiment

to justify violence and terrorism against believers of other religions.”

These leaders “must constantly and unequivocally affirm that no one can justly kill in God’s name and say a clear and adamant ‘no’ to every form of violence, vengeance and hatred carried out supposedly in the name of God or religion.”

The archbishop and other speakers said the effort to defeat, punish and disband IS must be concurrent with the eradication of hateful ideologies that motivate extremist groups.

In addition, displaced survivors need immediate assistance with basic needs such as food, water, shelter, education and health.



CNS/United Nations

UN FORUM ON RELIGIOUS VICTIMS — Ekhlas Khudur Bajoo of Iraq gestures as she listens to Jacqueline Isaac during a Nov. 2 forum at UN headquarters in New York. Bajoo, 17, experienced six months of daily rape and humiliation by Islamic State militants who kidnapped her when she was 14. She said she sees herself as a symbol of hope for religious and ethnic minorities victimized by IS.

Pope names two women to Vatican posts

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis named a bioethics expert and a seasoned canon lawyer, both women, as undersecretaries of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life.

The appointments of Gabriella Gambino, a bioethics professor at Rome’s Tor Vergata University, and Linda Ghisoni, a judge on the regional tribunal of the Diocese of Rome, were announced Nov. 7 at the Vatican.

Gambino was appointed undersecretary of the dicastery’s section for life, while Ghisoni was named to the section for the laity, the Vatican said.

Born in Milan in 1968, Gambino obtained her doctorate in bioethics at Rome’s University of the Sacred Heart.

She was named in 2002 as a scientific expert for the Italian National Committee for Bioethics. From 2013 to 2016, Gambino was also a featured speaker at various meetings sponsored by the former Pontifical Council for Laity and the Pontifical Academy for Life.

She also serves as a professor at the newly renamed Pontifical John Paul II Theological Institute for the Sciences of Marriage and Family and has authored several books on life, marriage and the family.

Ghisoni was born in Piacenza in 1965. After completing her studies in philosophy and theology in Tubingen, Germany, she obtained her doctorate in canon law at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. She did further specialized studies and

earned diplomas from the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments in 1994 and, in 2002, from the Roman Rota, a Vatican court that deals mainly with marriage cases.

An experienced jurist, Ghisoni has served as both a lawyer and a judge on the Diocese of Rome’s tribunal, the Roman Rota and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

She also authored several scientific publications relating to canon law.

U.S. Cardinal Kevin Farrell is prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, which began operating in September 2016. It was formed by uniting the former pontifical councils for laity and for family.

According to its statutes, the dicastery is responsible “for the promotion of the life and apostolate of the lay faithful, for the pastoral care of the family and its mission according to God’s plan and for the protection and support of human life.”

Irish priests falsely accused of abuse offered assistance

By Nick Bramhill

DUBLIN (CNS) — Irish priests who have been falsely accused of sexually abusing children are being offered group therapy sessions in a bid to improve their mental health.

Ireland’s Association of Catholic Priests will run its first so-called “Circle of Healing” later in November in Cork, as part of an innovative new move to help innocent churchmen who have been affected by past abuse scandals.

Rev. Roy Donovan, a spokesperson for the 1,000-strong priests’ group, said the purpose of the workshops was to not only “help heal the scars” of clergymen cleared of abuse allegations, but also to provide support to clerics who still felt traumatized or a sense of collective guilt over crimes carried out by the minority

of pedophile priests in their fold.

“A lot of good, decent priests have been affected by the abuse carried out by other priests in the past,” he said. “They’ve suffered shock and a sense of shame over what’s happened, and that’s partly why we’re holding a circle of healing.”

He said the sessions were in response to demand from the group’s members.

“Hopefully, those who attend will find some benefit and, if it goes well, then it’s quite likely that we’ll hold regular circles of healing around the country,” he said.

The Association of Catholic Priests, the largest priests’ representative group in the country, has advocated for change in the church, including women priests, allowing former priests who have married back into the fold, and relaxing strict celibacy rules for ordained clerics.

Philippine bishops begin prayer vigil to protest deaths

MANILA, Philippines (CNS) — The Philippine bishops’ conference started a prayer vigil to protest thousands of killings in the government drive to eradicate drug abuse and drug dealing.

Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, outgoing president of the conference, led the “Lord, Heal Our Land” mass Nov. 5. He called for repentance and an end to the killings and warned that “the journey of healing for the values of our nation turned upside down will be a long journey still.”

In his message at the Shrine of Mary Queen of Peace on EDSA, the avenue where the 1986 peaceful overthrow of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos took place, Villegas said clergy, politicians and security forces needed to repent for complacency, ambition for power and instilling fear rather than respect.

“Peace to you in the armed forces and police,” he said in his homily. “Stop the violence and uphold the law.”

Villegas called on the faithful to pray the rosary daily until Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Many churches across the country have been winding down the exercise of tolling bells nightly to remember those killed.

Philippine National Police reported more than 3,900 suspected drug dealers and addicts were killed in the 17 months since President Rodrigo Duterte took office after running on a platform to rid the country of criminals. They said the suspects resisted arrest.

Rights groups and local media have reported 7,000 - 12,000 deaths as a result of police operations and unexplained killings.

Duterte’s drug war had strong support, with human rights advocates and the church as its most vocal critics. But the deaths in August of three Manila-area teen boys sparked public outrage.

Police tallied 3,000 - 5,000 protesters who marched against all the killings following the archbishop’s mass.



CNS/Jason Szenes, EPA

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR — A homeless man is seen feeding pigeons as he sits on a sidewalk Oct. 30 in New York City. Pope Francis will celebrate the Catholic Church’s first World Day of the Poor Nov. 19.

There has never been a good war or a bad peace.

— Benjamin Franklin