



Simbang Gabi

Holy Child Church in Regina was packed Dec. 23 as Filipinos came to celebrate the last day of Simbang Gabi (Christmas Novena), a nine-day event that began Dec. 15. — page 3

A gift to us all

Ninety-five-year-old Theresa Sinkwich is 'a gift to us all,' according to fellow parishioners at St. Alphonsus Church in St. Boniface. — page 5

New dean

Dr. Arul Kumaran has been appointed dean of St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon effective July 1, 2016, for a five-year term. — page 6



Top movies

In eight days the Oscar nominations will be known, capping many weeks of proliferating awards, critics' lists, chatter about surprises and snubs, writes Gerald Schmitz. This week he shares his own list of the best of 2015. — page 7

The pope's man

"What's at stake for Francis and the church — especially as conservative opposition to his reforming ways has at times reached a boiling point — is essentially immersing Francis' innovative pontificate into the river of tradition that sustains and unites Catholicism even as it moves forward," writes David Gibson. Few are as well-positioned as Cardinal Donald Wuerl to advance that goal. — page 9



Interfaith gathering

An Interfaith Gathering for Solidarity, Understanding and Peace brought people together to hear reflections from faith leaders across traditions — Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, Bah'ai, Latter Day Saints — in a gesture to choose unity over extremism, writes Rev. Tom Ryan, CSP. — page 10

Euthanasia is here and it's not going away

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — If Catholics are going to have any chance of limiting the damage of legal assisted suicide they're going to have to get beyond outrage and suggest practical solutions, the lone Catholic representative to the Provincial-Territorial Expert Advisory Group On Physician-Assisted Dying told The Catholic Register.

The panel handed off its recommendations for regulating doctor-administered death at the provincial level early in December. It recommended wider access to assisted suicide.

Sister Nuala Kenny said she was guided by a passage of St. John Paul II's pro-life encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* as she worked to protect conscience rights of



CCN

Sister Nuala Kenny

doctors and Catholic health care institutions and to limit harm to the vulnerable in the panel's recommendations.

Virginia parishioners discover poor need free laundry services

By Zoey Di Mauro

BURKE, Va. (CNS) — Mary Susan Burnett-Miller was reading a magazine in a laundromat while on vacation in July when she read about the desires of a homeless man named T-Bone.

The story she was reading originated in Ventura, California, where years earlier a group of people asked T-Bone how they could serve him.

"If I had clean clothes, I think people would treat me like a human being," T-Bone responded.

Out of that came Laundry Love, an organization providing free laundry services to people in need.

Burnett-Miller, a longtime parishioner of Church of the Nativity in Burke, returned home and knew she had to start the ministry.

With the support of her pastor, Rev. Robert Cilinski, and a template from Laundry Love, she began to research laundromats that might host the group. Only Charlie Johnson and his son Blair, co-owners of a chain of northern Virginia laundromats, answered her inquiry.

The elder Johnson was ecstatic to get her call, said Burnett-Miller, and knew just the place that would work: Laundry World in Falls Church, a facility that serves many people who could use a little help.

Support came pouring in when Burnett-Miller announced the group at the church's ministry fair and at Sunday masses.

"I thought we were going to get like 15 people signed up, but we had 75," said Sydney Grace Miller, Burnett-Miller's daughter who is a senior at Thomas

Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria.

"When we had the detergent drive, we ended up with over 100 bottles of detergent. We calculated and (that's) 7,000 loads," she said. "We're not going to need detergent for a long time."

As a bonus, the detergent bottles and dryer sheets, which are stored in the family's basement, make the house smell great.

The next step was to advertise in the laundromat so that customers would understand their mission. When volunteers from the parish arrived the first Saturday of October, the lines were out the door, Burnett-Miller said. Volunteers set out coloring books and toys for the children and a table of snacks and hot chocolate. Then they got to work on the laundry.

Men and women loaded their own clothes after which volunteers came by with several detergents from which they could

— LAUNDRY LOVE, page 11

Parishes seek to implement covenant

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle and the Regina Roman Catholic Archdiocese in January 2011 signed a historic covenant that committed both dioceses and their parishes to work and worship more closely. In the almost six years since, much has been accomplished toward that goal, but as a 2015 Advent Newsletter put out by the Covenant Implementation Committee points out, not all parishes are on-board.

In a joint letter preceding the

In paragraph 73 of *Evangelium Vitae*, the pope addresses how Christians should respond to an unjust law that promotes either abortion or euthanasia. To vote for or promote a law which limits the damage when an outright ban is not politically or legally possible is the duty of Catholics who have exhausted all other alternatives, he said.

"This does not in fact represent an illicit co-operation with an unjust law, but rather a legitimate and proper attempt to limit its evil aspects," said Pope John Paul II.

On protection of conscience for doctors and Catholic institutions, Kenny fought for a recommendation that provinces set up a central referral agency that performs assessments for all forms of end-of-life care.

Doctors who object morally to any involvement in deliberately killing a patient can refer patients who request assisted dying to that agency. The agency would perform assessments and help patients access whatever form of care is most appropriate.

Kenny likens the system to the patient navigator agencies for cancer now operating in most

provinces. The result of such an assessment would not be predetermined as medically assisted dying. Such assessments may also result in palliative care at home or hospice care.

"The problem, of course, is going to be the advocacy like mad now to make sure that every province has this resource, and the resource is a full resource for all end-of-life care options," Kenny said.

Such a system also fulfils the moral obligation of doctors not to abandon their patients because they disagree over the course of treatment, said Kenny, who was once head of medical education at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto and founder of the department of bioethics at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

Protection for the vulnerable — the poor, those less educated, people whose first language is not English or French, the intellectually disabled, those with dementia — is much more difficult to address in regulation, Kenny said. It's a matter of day-to-day clinical practice that must be carefully monitored.

— PRACTICE, page 4



CNS/Muhammad Hamed, Reuters

WAITING TO GO TO CANADA — Syrian refugees wait to register at the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Amman, Jordan, Dec. 11. More than 1,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan were interviewed for a potential chance to go to Canada. See story, page 3.

newsletter, committee co-chairs Anglican Canon Michael Jackson and Susan Klein of the Regina archdiocese note accomplishments the covenant has achieved but also suggest there are some parishes "that don't show the same enthusiasm" as the two dioceses have shown in their joint activities.

"We are seeking ways to address these issues," the co-chairs said.

The accomplishments the newsletter highlights include annual joint services alternating between St. Paul's Cathedral and

Holy Rosary Cathedral in Regina, and in 2015 for the first time the two hosted a First Nations Ministry workshop with presentations from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals who work in First Nations ministry. More than 50 people attended the workshop held in St. Paul's Cathedral.

One of the clear objectives of the Covenant is personified in the examples of St. Cecilia Roman Catholic Church and St. James the Apostle Anglican Church

— ACTIVITIES, page 5

Chinese government-religious relations worsened

HONG KONG (CNS) — When Chinese Minister of Housing Chen Zhenggao travelled to bustling Yiwu in mid-October, news reports said he told housing and law enforcement officials to “battle against illegal constructions” by learning from Zhejiang.

Zhejiang has used the pretext of illegal building to bulldoze churches and remove their crosses. By Christmas 2014 reports said 500 churches had been targeted in the province. By this past Christmas, the number had exploded to more than 1,500, reported ucanews.com.

After claiming 2014 to be the worst year for religious persecution in China since the Cultural Revolution, observers in and outside the country say this year saw the situation deteriorate further. Relations between China’s faithful and the Communist party have not been this strained since the days of chair Mao.

In Tibetan monasteries, monks and nuns complained the Communist party is interfering more in daily life than it has for years.

In Xinjiang, burqas were banned; so too was “terrorist clothing.”

“Authorities have lost the hearts of the people after the cross-removal campaign,” said a former Catholic journalist in Zhejiang who gave only her Christian name, Clare.

Although authorities succeeded in forcing churches to display less-conspicuous crosses in Zhejiang, few doubt the provincial government’s campaign has achieved anything except harden Christian resolve, let alone curb an appetite for evangelism.

“It helped unite all the clergy to fight for their rights,” said John, a catechist in Wenzhou.

As the cross-removal campaign reached a crescendo mid-year, ordinary Christians and priests took to social media to announce a campaign making mini-crosses, and bishops took the rare step of publicly denouncing authorities.

With the campaign winding down in Zhejiang, Christians say they now face something even worse: the cross-removal campaign was all about controlling

the church facades, but in recent weeks authorities have interfered inside churches.

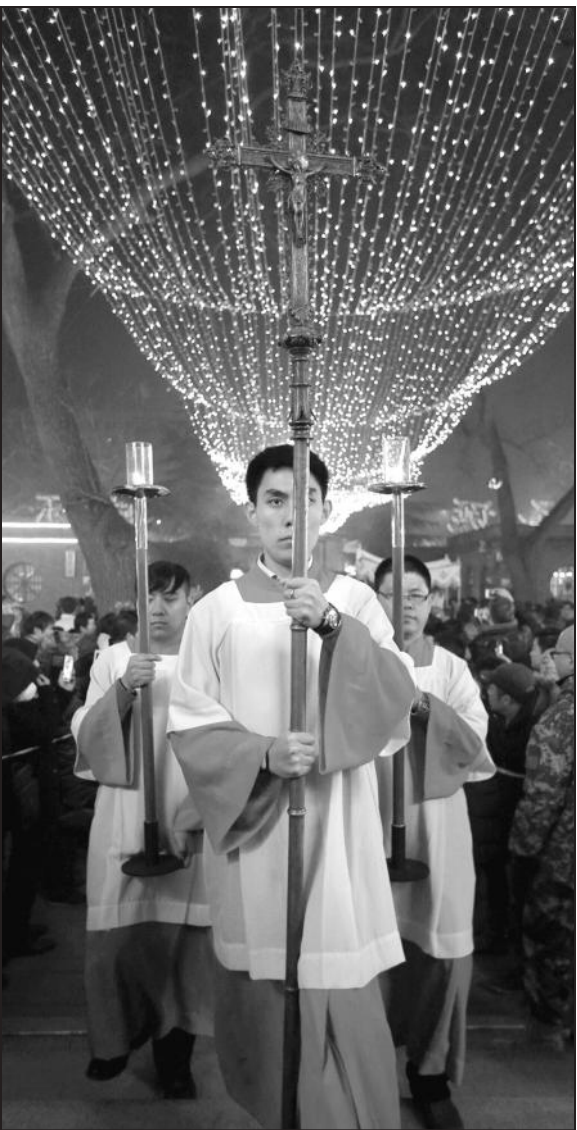
In Wenzhou, Christians reported state officials attending church on Sundays to silence critical voices. In other areas of Zhejiang, authorities put up propaganda notices on church pin-boards, according to state media. This is all part of a new campaign called “five entries and transformations,” which aims to make churches more Chinese — and by default less foreign — while picking and choosing Bible verses that correlate to party doctrine.

Ucanews.com reported that some estimates put the number of Christians in China at more than 100 million, and the Communist party is attempting to co-opt Christianity to its own political ends. But it remains unclear whether its policy comes from the very centre of the party, and therefore whether it will endure, said Fenggang Yang, director of the centre on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

High-ranking party officials

appear to disagree about whether Christianity should adapt to China, or the other way round, he added, and a firm direction won’t be made until a delayed religious meeting led by President Xi Jinping takes place.

Fenggang told ucanews.com the fact that the meeting had been postponed multiple times “is a sign of Xi’s dissatisfaction with the work and direction of religious affairs,” and probably a sign of an impasse of internal debates and disagreements.”



CNS/Wu Hong, EPA

CHINA’S RELATIONS WITH CHURCH DETERIORATE — An altar server carries a crucifix as he leads a procession during Christmas Eve mass at a Catholic church in Beijing. After claiming 2014 to be the worst year for religious persecution in China since the Cultural Revolution, observers in and outside the country say 2015 saw the situation deteriorate further.

Baby Jesus teaches us to be humble: pope

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Christmas season is a time to learn from baby Jesus to let go of selfishness and be humble and giving as he is, Pope Francis said.

In fact, people should take the little figurine of Jesus from their Nativity scene and kiss it, “and tell Jesus, ‘I want to humble like you, humble like God,’ ” the pope said Dec. 30 during his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square.

The pope dedicated his catechesis to the importance of contemplating baby Jesus. The Christmas season offers a timely occasion for this reflection, since many people customarily set up a Nativity scene at home, he said.

Pope Francis said the figure of the holy infant in his simple crib invites people to adore the child

Jesus and to contemplate the mystery of the incarnation as a revelation of God’s saving love.

“In order to grow in the faith, we need to reflect more often on baby Jesus,” who came into the world in such a humble way “for us,” he said.

“This is a great mystery: God is humble. We, who are proud, full of vanity, who think we’re a big deal, yet we’re nothing. He is great, he is humble and he became a child. This is a true mystery. God is humble. This is beautiful,” the pope said.

While the New Testament offers few accounts of Jesus’ infancy and early childhood, the pope said people can still learn a lot by looking at the children in the world.

“We discover, most of all, that children want our attention. They

have to be at the centre of attention — because they’re proud? No. Because they need to feel protected,” he said.

“We, too, have to put Jesus at the centre of our lives and realize, even if it seems paradoxical, that we have a responsibility to protect him.

“He wants to be in our arms, he wants to be looked after and be able to fix his gaze onto ours,” he said.

Just as being affectionate to a child can make him or her smile, people can “make baby Jesus smile by demonstrating our love and our joy because he is among us.”

“His smile is a sign of that love that gives us assurances of being loved,” the pope said.

Children also show that when it’s playtime, adults have to let go of their own mindset and enter into the world of that child, the pope said. “We have to understand what he likes and not be self-centred and make him do what we like. It’s a lesson for us.”

“Before Jesus, we are called to let go of our pretension of autonomy — and this is the heart of the problem, you know, our pretense of autonomy — in order to embrace instead the true form of freedom, which consists of recognizing whom we have before us and serving him,” he said.

“He, the child, is the son of God who comes to save us. He came among us to show us the face of the father so full of love and mercy. So hold the baby Jesus tight in our arms and let us put ourselves at his service. He is the source of love and serenity.”



CNS/Nic Bothma, EPA

NUCLEAR PROTEST IN SOUTH AFRICA — Members of the South African Faith Communities’ Environment Institute protest in late July outside parliament in Cape Town, South Africa. The risks of adding nuclear energy to South Africa’s power grid outweigh its economic benefits, the country’s Catholic justice and peace commission said.

Vatican says 3.2 million pilgrims visited in 2015

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — More than 3.2 million pilgrims visited and attended papal events, liturgies or prayer services at the Vatican in 2015, the Vatican said.

The statistics, released Dec. 30, were compiled by the Prefecture of the Papal Household, which co-ordinates papal events and distributes free tickets to papal audiences and liturgies. The prefecture said more than 3.2 million people attended a papal event in 2015.

The total was a significant drop from the 5.9 million visitors received by Pope Francis in 2014. It was also slightly more than half the 6.6 million pilgrims who visit-

including Urumqi.

Alarmed by a series of attacks blamed on Uighurs and recent violence overseas by the Islamic State group, which released its first call to arms in Mandarin in December, the Chinese government has pushed ahead with drafting a new, controversial anti-terror law.

International rights groups acknowledged China needs to tackle a surge in violence in the west of the country, but also warned repeatedly that the draft risks enshrining a vague catch-all to help Beijing target opponents, real and imagined.

ed the Vatican during the first nine and a half months of his pontificate in 2013.

During 2015, at least 704,000 people attended the pope’s 42 weekly general audiences; more than 408,000 attended a special group audience; at least 513,000 pilgrims participated in papal liturgies in St. Peter’s Basilica or St. Peter’s Square; and more than 1.5 million attended the pope’s Angelus address on Sundays and major feast days in St. Peter’s Square.

The papal event statistics do not include papal events in the city of Rome or international visits made by Pope Francis. They are also based on the number of ticket requests and estimates of crowd size.

Canada is on track to welcome Syrian refugees

By Dale Gavlak

AMMAN, Jordan (CNS) — As a cautious world rang in the New Year with concerns over terrorism and security, Catholics in Canada were continuing to welcome Syrian refugees to their newly adopted homeland.

The Canadian target of accepting 25,000 Syrian refugees by late February “is well in hand, and we should meet it with no problem,” Bruno Saccomani, Canadian ambassador to Jordan, told Catholic News Service Dec. 30. “That includes privately sponsored and government-sponsored Syrian refugees.”

Martin Mark, who directs the Office for Refugees in the Archdiocese of Toronto, told Catholic News Service in early January, “Even in the night, we received new people and also new notices from Amman, the Jordanian capital, that we will be getting around 300 people.”

Canada has one of the biggest resettlement programs in the world for Syrian refugees, and the Toronto archdiocesan office, known as ORAT, provides advice, support and assistance to civic sponsors in Canada, including parishes, communities and universities wishing to aid refugees.

“I consider it as an emergency evacuation because of the large number of people coming and the last-minute arrangements,” Mark told CNS. “The refugees were en route for one or two days and with the excitement, everyone was really tired when they arrived.”

Mark was a refugee from Hungary 15 years ago and said he personally understands the difficulties faced by those escaping conflict and discrimination. The former veterinarian was forced to

flee factions in his native Hungary who resented his work on behalf of victims of racism.

Mark said ORAT focuses mainly on privately sponsored refugees. “Only if there is a special need, the government asks us to help with government-sponsored refugees under the joint-assistance sponsorship program,” he said. This is mainly for refugees who face severe medical needs.

“We identify our refugees, select and screen them, do all the preparations and pay the bill,” Mark said of ORAT’s private sponsorship. “So we are financially responsible for each and every refugee that we bring into the country.”

Mark said that in 2015, ORAT initiated sponsorship and resettlement for 2,300 refugees worldwide. Ninety per cent, mainly Iraqis and Syrians, came from the Middle East.

Saccomani said increased numbers of Canadian government personnel on the ground in the Middle East have permitted the processing of refugees to go faster to reach the February goal, without sacrificing stringent security measures.

He said immigration, security, medical and military services have been mobilized for the effort in which “normal vetting processes involved with any immigrating to Canada have been maintained.”

“Let’s not forget that security begins with some of the criteria that we have established when it comes to our selection of Syrian refugees,” the diplomat said. “We are selecting from the most vulnerable groups, including resettling intact families, single women, and people with debilitating diseases and injuries.

“The objective is to help Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon move some of the most compli-

cated and vulnerable cases out of their hands and allow us the opportunity to support such countries,” Saccomani added.

The Catholic Church in Canada recognizes that it is not just Syrian refugees that need help at this time, despite Syria representing the largest humanitarian crisis in the world at the moment. Recently Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins established Project Hope, a special appeal to help refugees from the Middle East.

Mark said the program helps “everybody from the Middle East, not only Syrian citizens, but Iraqis.

And we have some cases of Sudanese in Jordan. We include them also to help, because we feel that we cannot send them away, just because they carry different passport.”

Often Iraqi Christians who fled the Islamic State takeover of their property in the Ninevah Plain in 2014 have been overlooked by the West’s resettlement efforts of Syrians.

“We are very inclusive, but we want to make sure that the persecuted Christians have a significant place. We should never abandon them among other refugees,” Mark added. “We try to make sure

that it is a balanced selection of persecuted Christians and other minorities who need help.”

Jordan hosts some 630,000 registered Syrian refugees, but the government says when unregistered refugees are included, the figure is much higher. Jordan has praised Canada’s resettlement program and called on other countries to follow suit, particularly those urging Syria’s neighbours to host even more refugees.

Saccomani said it would be impossible to carry out such a

— CANADIANS, page 6

Filipinos celebrate Simbang Gabi

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Holy Child Church Dec. 23 was packed with close to 300 people, almost all of them Filipino; they came to celebrate the last day of Simbang Gabi (Christmas Novena). The nine-day event began Dec. 15 and attracted an average of 250-300 people according to Holy Child pastor Rev. Danilo Rafael, who is of Filipino heritage.

“I started this nine years ago when I was at St. Mary’s,” he said in an interview with the PM. “I wanted to bring a little bit of our tradition here.” He brought the tradition with him when he transferred to Holy Child.

The Dec. 23 celebration was sponsored by the Regina chapter of El Shaddai, a Catholic Charismatic movement that originated in the Philippines in the late 20th century and now boasts more than six million followers in the Philippines and chapters in at least 65 nations with an additional two million members according to the



Flegel

SIMBANG GABI — Holy Child Church was packed Dec. 23 as Filipino people celebrated the last day of Simbang Gabi (Christmas Novena). The nine-day event began Dec. 15. The music in the mass was in English, but all other hymns and carols were sung in Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines, including one performed by five-year-old Alejandro Gahite.

Internet. El Shaddai is one of many names for God and is literally translated as God Almighty. The movement encourages traditional church prayers such as the rosary and the Angelus.

Chapter members were highly visible during the evening mass with even children wearing red tops with an El Shaddai crest clearly visible, and white slacks or skirts. The El Shaddai choir provided the music and the readers for the mass celebrated by Rev. Lorne Crozon filling in for the ailing Archbishop Daniel Bohan. Several Filipino priests concelebrated the mass, including Rafael. Crozon also brought Christmas greetings from the archbishop.

The music with- in the mass was in English, but all other hymns and Christmas carols were sung in Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines, including one performed by five-year-old Alejandro Gahite who never missed a beat as he sang multiple verses with confidence.

When the priests and servers left the altar after mass, El Shaddai children, a few of

the youngest dressed in costumes representing Mary, Joseph and all the characters usually represented in the crib scene, performed a traditional dance to upbeat music with dancers shaking tambourines as they danced. The performance was greeted with enthusiastic applause when it ended.

A potluck supper with traditional foods was available following the mass and children’s performance.

Refugees face similar plight as Jesus

By Agnieszka Krawczynski
The B.C. Catholic

VANCOUVER (CCN) — As 163 Syrians woke up on their first day in Canada, a local Christian community reflected on the plight of another famous group of refugees.

“What Jesus experienced, or Joseph and Mary because Jesus was a baby, is in many ways parallel to the stories we hear from refugees,” said Tom Cooper, president of City in Focus, Dec. 11.

“They had lost their family, they had lost their friends. Joseph had lost his job,” as they fled from Bethlehem to Egypt.

Cooper was speaking in a room full of refugees, settlement workers, and other guests at an event called Jesus and Other Refugees at the Vancouver Club Dec. 11.

It was the morning after the first wave of the 25,000 Syrian refugees the government promised to take in were welcomed in Toronto Dec. 10.

“Watching the prime minister at midnight, with his coat off, his tie off, his shirtsleeves rolled up, greeting and welcoming people from Syria, was mind-boggling and touching,” Cooper said.

The stories of many refugees in the room had parallels with the Holy Family’s flight to Egypt and

the airplane of Syrians.

“There’s a similar theme of faith. God, his mercy, his guidance, were at work. For Jesus’ family it came in the form of a star, . . . in the form of angels in dreams warning Joseph to flee from Galilee to Egypt,” he said.

“In our refugee friends, it also comes. They also have their own history of how God stayed with them, how God heard their prayers, and how God guided them. They have also felt the love of God’s people as they hit Canada in a variety of ways.”

Rawnaq Paikar, of Muslim background, fled Afghanistan a year and a half ago with his wife and young child.

“It was one of the biggest decisions and most difficult decisions we ever made,” he said.

Paikar, who has a background in public policy, was a consultant for the government. He felt increasingly unsafe in Afghanistan until, afraid for the lives of his family members, he decided to flee.

“We could not stay there. We decided to leave in a matter of a week.”

Two days after landing in Canada, his family was connected with Journey Home Community, based in Burnaby. The non-profit Christian group was supportive,

and connected his family to many helpful resources.

Paikar was shocked. In Afghanistan, “a mosque is a place for religious formalities. That’s it.” In Canada, he found, “the church connects people to God, people to each other, and people to resources. I was thinking if I have the chance I would tell the mosques to do this.”

Rita Kharikian, a Chaldean Catholic from Kirkuk, Iraq, landed in Canada 20 years ago.

“We left in 1992, right after the Gulf war,” she said. Her father, a tailor, sold his shop and their furniture and they fled to Jordan. “When we left, we had no idea where we were going. It was very scary.”

They headed to Italy, where they met a woman who worked for Canadian immigration services.

Once in Canada, the sponsoring parish “welcomed us, they brought us mattresses, they brought us food, and they invited us for a Christmas dinner. Everybody was kind and generous,” she said.

Now a member of Sts. Peter and Paul Chaldean Mission, Kharikian helps file applications for such things as refugee sponsorship, MSP, child benefits, and GST for new and arriving refugees from the Middle East. It’s an opportunity to give back, she said.



Lynda Putzlocher

SASKATOON SEMINARIAN — At a celebration at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome Nov. 17, diocesan seminarian Edward Gibney was enrolled as a candidate for Holy Orders with 10 other candidates. Bishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, who was in Rome at the time working on an ecumenical dialogue, attended the celebration.

Euthanasia arguments will be heard on Jan. 11

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The battle to bring euthanasia to Canada heated up Dec. 22, when the Quebec Court of Appeal said the province could go ahead with its so-called “medical aid” in dying law.

The Quebec Court of Appeal overruled an injunction that had been granted Dec. 1 by a lower court after an appeal to block euthanasia launched by Montreal physician Dr. Paul Saba and a disabled woman, Lisa D’Amico.

In its Dec. 22 ruling, the Court

of Appeal declared Quebec’s euthanasia law valid in light of last February’s Supreme Court of Canada decision that struck down the Criminal Code prohibition against assisted suicide. Canada’s high court gave the federal government 12 months to come up with new law to regulate assisted suicide. During this legislative vacuum, Quebec’s Appeal Court said the province was justified to proceed with its euthanasia legislation.

However, the Appeal Court also said that Quebec may eventually be compelled to abide by the federal Criminal Code when Parliament passes assisted suicide law sometime in 2016. If Parliament eventually adopts legislation that is at odds with the way medical aid in dying is applied in Quebec, it will then be necessary to re-examine Quebec’s Bill-52 to see how it conflicts within the larger legislative framework, the Quebec court said.

The Appeal Court also said that those who oppose Bill-52 have a right to continue to voice their objection and launch further appeals.

“We going back to court,” said Saba. “We’re going to keep fighting this.”

“The solution to this is not euthanasia,” he said. “Doctors are not God. We don’t know when people are going to die.”

Saba, who is president of the Coalition of Physicians for Social Justice, said Quebec should provide good palliative care rather than opt for lethal injections.

The focus will now shift to the Supreme Court of Canada which will hear arguments Jan. 11 on the federal government’s request for a six-month extension until Aug. 6 to draft new laws concerning assisted suicide.

The high court will also consider whether Quebec can receive an exemption from the extension and proceed with its so-called “medical aid in dying” euthanasia law, which it implemented Dec. 10. The federal government does not oppose Quebec’s request for an exemption.

The federal Attorney General has requested the additional six months for Parliament to craft legislation in response to the Supreme Court ruling last February which struck down as unconstitutional the Criminal Code’s blanket ban on assisted suicide.

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (EPC) executive director Alex Schadenberg said the “politics is very interesting.” He noted the federal government intervened on the side of Saba in late November, but have now changed their position in favour of allowing an exemption.

The EPC intervened in Saba’s action.

“It’s our view the intentional killing of patients by doctors is not health care and falls outside the jurisdiction of the Quebec legislature,” said EPC legal counsel Hugh Scher.

The EPC also opposes the SCC granting Quebec an exemption.

“If Quebec is exempt from the extension and there’s a Quebec case going to the Supreme Court challenging the law, we have a very interesting situation,” said

Schadenberg. “Granting them an extension would say the law is acceptable.”

Schadenberg stressed the Supreme Court struck down laws against assisted suicide, but not euthanasia.

“Euthanasia can only be legalized by an exemption to the Criminal Code,” he said. “The Supreme Court did not legalize wide-open euthanasia.”

The position is reinforced in an affidavit submitted by Dr. Will Johnston on behalf of the EPC.

“EPC is committed to having the boundaries of the law relative to homicide and assisted suicide determined by Parliament and not by provincial legislatures as we submit that this is fundamentally a matter properly reserved for Parliament, a point repeatedly made by this court,” it said.

If Quebec is granted an exemption, that would mean “federally there is a homicide law in place, yet in Quebec, they would be doing euthanasia, which is lethal injection, which is homicide,” said Schadenberg. “The Quebec law should be null and void until the federal law is in place.”

Quebec Superior Court Judge Michel Pinsonnault, who had granted the Dec. 1 injunction, took a similar position, ruling “medical aid in dying” was in fact a euphemism for euthanasia, which is still illegal under the Criminal Code until the Supreme Court decision comes into effect or Parliament crafts a new law.

Quebec has argued medical aid in dying is health care and under provincial jurisdiction. Quebec has instructed its prosecutors not to prosecute any charges under the

Criminal Code of doctors who give lethal injections under the so-called medical aid in dying law.

Schadenberg said he was not surprised by the Quebec Court of Appeal ruling.

Schadenberg and other euthanasia opponents have also expressed concern the federal External Panel on Options for a Legislative Response to Carter vs. Canada report has not been released publicly, allowing the “radical” provincial-territorial panel released Dec. 14 to frame the debate.

The non-partisan federal panel, struck by the Harper government last summer, made its final report to cabinet on Dec. 15. The Provincial-Territorial Advisory Group on Physician-Assisted Dying published its pro-euthanasia recommendations the day before, including euthanasia for children who are deemed to have the capacity to consent.

“By releasing the provincial report before the federal report, the public debate is shaped by the radical nature of the provincial report,” said the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) Canada in a Dec. 17 news release.

“It does appear the provincial-territorial report, essentially put together by the Ontario government and made up of a majority of pro-euthanasia leaders is going to control the debate,” said Schadenberg.

Ian McLeod, a spokesperson for Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, said the report was delivered in English and needs to be translated into French before it will be released to the public. He said the report would be “available in the next few weeks.”

(With files from Alan Hustak)



Allison Weber

HOLIDAY CHEER FOR A NEW YEAR — A mild winter so far on the prairies has meant outdoor activities are more enjoyable. These two horses pulled a sleigh full of joyful children and their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles as they gathered between Christmas and New Year’s Day near Bredenburg, Sask.

Practice must be regulated

Continued from page 1

“If you’re going to have this egregious practice of assisted death, for God’s sake somebody has to regulate it. Somebody has to monitor it,” she said.

To oppose a solution that allows Catholic doctors to work with a third-party assessment agency could have far-reaching implications, Kenny said.

“The wrong way (to oppose euthanasia) would be to hold to a standard that is so rigid that really what it means is . . . that people of Christian, Catholic faith can’t practise medicine,” she said. “This is not a compromise that is morally compromising.”

If there’s anything positive Catholics can do at this point, with the Supreme Court ruling in place, it’s to push hard for more and better-funded palliative and hospice care, said Kenny. “Or people don’t have any meaningful options.”

Participating in a panel where she was the only member who wasn’t an enthusiastic supporter of the new legal regime was far

from easy, Kenny said.

“This is one of the most difficult things I’ve ever done in my life,” she said. “It took me a while to actually understand that if nothing was done by Feb. 6 of this coming year, 2016, we would have in Canada the most liberal, if we want to use that language, assisted-death regime in the world. It has nothing to do with terminal illness. It has nothing to do with end-of-life care.”

Many Catholics Kenny speaks to seem not to understand that the Supreme Court’s ruling to allow assisted suicide is now the law of the land and no delaying tactic will change the basic law.

“I’m totally opposed to assisted death, both as a Christian and as a physician. I think this is a horrific thing that’s happened to medicine,” said Kenny.

“But we don’t live in a Christian world any more.”

Kenny hopes Catholics will find a positive way of witnessing to their faith in medicine and in politics.

“Our biggest problem as Catholics, my boy, is that Catholics don’t understand that this is wrong.”



BOSCO FOUNDATION

**John Bosco
Child & Family Services Foundation**

The John Bosco Child and Family Services Foundation (Bosco Foundation) is a public foundation dedicated to the provision of buildings and facilities used for the treatment, education and housing of children, adolescents and adults who are in need of support.

Bosco Foundation believes in assisting non-profit and charitable organizations who provide vital services which aid vulnerable people in our society. We do this by providing our facilities to various non-profit and charitable agencies at below market level rental rates.

Our facilities are used for social services group care, foster care, adult mental health care, the St. Francis Food Bank, two AA groups and a NE Edmonton cadet core among others.

In addition, we provide volunteer services to assist two small non-profit organizations working with low income seniors and victims of stroke with fundraising and volunteer recruitment assistance.

The Bosco Foundation is currently working with a large service organization on a joint project with the aim of providing affordable housing for low-income seniors.

**100% of donations go toward charitable purposes.
Administrative expenses are covered by other sources.**

Please forward your donation to:

Bosco Foundation

**315-6770 129 Avenue NW,
Edmonton, AB T5C 1V7**

Tel: (780) 809-8585 ♦ Fax: (780) 809-8586

www.boscofoundation.com

Charitable Tax Number: 85985 8664 RT0001

Four disciplines for parish growth defined

By Pierre-Alain Giffard

ST. BONIFACE — According to Jim Rohn, entrepreneur and personal development coach, success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines, practised every day.

In the context of our local church, a question arises: which disciplines should we practise to successfully accomplish the mission that Christ has given us (Matthew 28:19)? There are of course personal spiritual disciplines, such as forgiveness (Luke 6:37) and charity toward the poor (Matthew 25:40), but at the pastoral and parish level, toward our mission to make disciples, what should these disciplines be?

Prayer. Church growth is first a spiritual matter. The Word of God tells us that it's God who ensures growth (1 Corinthians 3:7); without him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). To begin a journey toward growth, a parish should start praying for its renewal and development: ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you (Matthew 7:7). These activities of prayer need to be planned and organized by parish leaders.

Spiritual Renewal. The church began to grow right after Pentecost, and what growth! This phenomenal expansion can be attributed in large part to 1) the action of the Holy Spirit, which was poured out on the disciples (following their prayers in

the upper room), 2) the disciples' life testimony, and 3) the supernatural power that accompanied their preaching.

But Pentecost was not meant to be just a one-time event; outpourings of the Holy Spirit occur each time Christians seek to be renewed by sacraments, by personal and community prayer, by the reading and studying of the Word, by eucharistic adoration, by spiritual retreats, by participation in small faith sharing groups, by occasional fasting, and by other spiritual disciplines. Renewal will occur in a parish if activities like these are planned and organized by parish leaders.

Evangelization. For decades, Catholics have been encouraged and invited to evangelize, to reach out to those who do not know or follow Christ. But how can this be done at the parish level? Fortunately, there are programs and methods, like the Alpha Course, Parish Evangelizing Cells and others. Running such evangelization programs or courses contributes greatly to the renewal and growth of a parish.

The Sunday Experience. Invited guests and occasional Sunday visitors will most likely come back to church after a first visit if their Sunday experience is positive. This Sunday experience depends on how they are welcomed, the quality of the homilies, the beauty of the music, if children's services are offered, the cleanliness of the facility, opportunities to get involved in volunteer activities and opportunities to form friendships.

To grow, parishes need to think in terms of integrating visitors and find a strategy to help newcomers experience fellowship and get involved in parish activities. As is the case of prayer, spiritual renewal, and evangelization, the Sunday experience has to be planned and organized by the leaders of the parish and supported financially by the board of administration.

These four pastoral disciplines come from the solid experience of growing parishes. They can become a reality in our parishes if

our pastors, parish pastoral councils and our boards of administration make them a priority.

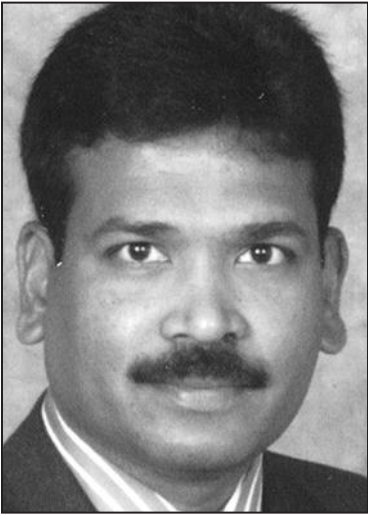
Parish leaders, like Jesus, should be driven by a God-given desire to make disciples. They need to move from maintenance to mission and encourage new pastoral initiatives that enable the parish and all its members to seek, welcome and integrate new people into the church.

Without this desire, most of our parishes will continue to decline and eventually die because their pastors and members will not have fulfilled the fundamental divine mandate of the church: to bring God's love to all and integrate into the Body of Christ those whom God invites to forgiveness, peace, love and eternal life through an authentic loving relationship with Jesus.

New dean appointed for St. Thomas More College

By Jacquie Berg

SASKATOON — President Terrence Downey announced that the St. Thomas More College (STM) Search and Appointment Committee for the Dean has completed its deliberations and the board of governors has accepted



STM

Dr. Arul Kumaran

his recommendation that Dr. Arul Kumaran be appointed dean of St. Thomas More College for a five-year term effective July 1, 2016.

With a focus in his new role to continue improving and expand-

ing student offerings, which historically have made STM in its federated status a unique and valuable complement to the University of Saskatchewan, Kumaran states, "I am confident that the college's commitment to excellence in teaching and research, incorporated within the key pillars of the new strategic plan, will serve to maintain and strengthen the legacy of STM moving forward."

Kumaran received his BA, MA, and MPhil degrees in English literature from the Madras Christian College in India, where he also taught as an assistant professor. Specializing in early modern literature, Kumaran came to the University of Saskatchewan in 1994 to complete his PhD. While finishing his doctoral work, Kumaran worked as a sessional lecturer at St. Thomas More College. He has also taught at St. Francis Xavier University and UBC — Okanagan.

Kumaran was hired by St. Thomas More College as assistant professor in a tenure-track position in 2005. He currently holds the rank of associate professor of English and served as head of STM's English department from 2012 - 2015.

ing student offerings, which historically have made STM in its federated status a unique and valuable complement to the University of Saskatchewan, Kumaran states, "I am confident that the college's commitment to excellence in teaching and research, incorporated within the key pillars of the new strategic plan, will serve to maintain and strengthen the legacy of STM moving forward."



Kiply Yaworski

HOLY DOORS — Rev. David Tumback and Bishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon walk through the Holy Doors that were blessed and opened at the Cathedral of the Holy Family Dec. 13. Designated doors of mercy were also opened earlier in the day at St. Paul's Co-Cathedral in Saskatoon. For the Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis invited dioceses around the world to designate holy doors, following the example of opening Holy Doors at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome to mark a jubilee. Throughout the year of mercy, the faithful are invited to pass through the Holy Doors as an act of pilgrim prayer, in conjunction with the sacrament of reconciliation, celebrating the eucharist, and praying for Pope Francis' prayer intentions.

Joint activities described

Continued from page 1

described in the newsletter. The two churches are about a block apart in Regina and have held joint services during Advent.

"We started last year and did the same this year," said St. Cecilia pastor Rev. John Weckend in an interview with the PM. "We average between 30-40 people, with the largest group at our Blue Christmas which we hosted this year on the last Sunday in Advent."

Blue Christmas is for people who have lost loved ones in the past year. "It seems to resonate with people at this time of year," said Weckend.

In 2014 the alternate services had Weckend celebrating a Catholic prayer service with the St. Cecilia choir in St. John the Apostle Anglican Church and Archdeacon Malcolm French, pastor of St. John

the Baptist Church, celebrating a vespers service in St. Cecilia's.

"This year it's more of a combination of the two," said Weckend.

"In doing things like this it makes the covenant live itself out," French told the PM.

The newsletter also described several joint activities of other Anglican and Roman Catholic parishes in Regina as well as in Kenaston, Davidson, Swift Current and Qu'Appelle.

The Roman Catholic diaconate program had Jackson address the first deacon candidates and their spouses in 2014 and this year Archdeacon Catherine Harper addressed the group. Dr. Brent Salkeld, Archdiocesan Theologian and director of the diaconate program in return gave what the newsletter describes as a "stimulating address" to the Anglican deacons in May 2015.

Sinkwich 'a gift to us all,' say parishioners

By Lynda Pisa

ST. BONIFACE — When Theresa Sinkwich bought a new red Honda in the spring of 2014, she had people's attention. Nothing unusual about that, you might say, but Sinkwich was 94 at the time.

Sinkwich's parish community of St. Alphonsus Church — since the late 1970s — love and admire this woman of faith, strength and courage. These qualities, along with her sense of purpose and humour, have carried her well through her life journey.

Sinkwich recently celebrated her 95th birthday with cards, cake, flowers and wishes for continued good health and blessings in the coming year. We had to wonder at the ingredients that have made her an inspiration for so many women.

Theresa (Rougeau) Sinkwich said that she grew up in Norwood, St. Boniface in Manitoba as the oldest child in a family of eight. Her faith grew through the example of her mother, who prayed with deep humility and devotion. Her father's untimely death in his 40s was difficult and deeply felt.

At 21 years, Sinkwich joined the Women's Army Corp, rising to the rank of sergeant. For five years she was able to serve in the military yet live at home and help support her family. Her favourite memory is that she enlisted Ed, her husband to be.

After attending business and secretarial school she joined the Catholic Women's League and later moved to Montreal where she served as sacristan at her church. Illness forced her return to Winnipeg where she nursed Ed until his death in 1980.

Sinkwich's grief was overwhelming. It took months for her to regain her feelings and place in the world. Through prayer and writing, she began to recover and recognized many "God moments" in her life. She was gifted with grace and healing while gazing at a crucifix on her bedroom wall. Each night a luminous cross appeared and slowly circled the crucifix. Sinkwich



Pisa

Theresa Sinkwich

called this her "comfort cross" which continued to appear each evening for 25 years. One day while at a meeting, the cross, enlarged, appeared to her for the last time. Sinkwich also cared for her mother in Notre Dame de Lourdes, Man., until her death.

As a member of the Third Order of St. Francis, she put her secretarial skills to good use at the Franciscan Friary. In time she also became involved in the Catholic Charismatic movement. Sinkwich then asked the Lord, "What is my purpose in life?" Since that moment of grace she has answered "yes" to all of God's invitations.

Sinkwich has served as a director of formation at St. Alphonsus, taught adult and children's catechetics, and has been the sacristan for many years. She is a lector at daily mass, helps to count collections and prepares monthly schedules for lectors and eucharistic ministers.

Sinkwich is a faithful member of the CWL. She received a certificate of merit in 1993 and her 50-year pin in 2011.

Sinkwich lives each day with gratitude and says, "Thank the Lord for every circumstance in life as there is a reason for everything and count your blessings!" Her infectious and hearty laugh, her positive attitude inspire all to do more. She is a gift to us all.

Son of Saul unflinchingly portrays Holocaust horrors

By Patrick Ryan
©2015 USA Today

For decades, dramas such as Schindler's List, Life Is Beautiful and The Boy in the Striped Pajamas have taken audiences behind the barbed wire fences of Nazi concentration camps, where 11 million people were executed during the Holocaust.

But *Son of Saul*, Hungary's submission for the Academy Awards, aims for a more visceral depiction of the death camps. The film (opening at the Roxy Theatre in Saskatoon Feb. 12) is told from the perspective of Saul Ausländer (Géza Röhrig), a Jewish prisoner working in the gas chambers at Auschwitz in 1944, who saves a

child's body from the cremation ovens and attempts to find a rabbi to give him a proper burial.

"Films dealing with the Holocaust seem to have taken the Holocaust for its dramatic value, and not really interrogated its essence and the human situation," says first-time director László Nemes. "It's not a story about survival — the rule is death. All the films try to avoid crematoriums, whereas the crematoriums are the heart of the Holocaust."

When Nemes read victims' journals a decade ago at the Shoah Memorial in Paris, he was introduced to the moral dilemma of *Sonderkommandos* (command units of Jewish inmates forced to help in the extermination and disposal of bodies). Years later, he wrote a script and found financing through the national film fund in

his native Hungary. Since winning the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes Film Festival in May, "Saul" has earned a Golden Globe nomination for best foreign language film and is widely considered an Oscar front-runner in the same category.

The film is shot mostly in a tight close-up on Röhrig, and blurs out much of the chaos and carnage that surrounds him. The narrow vantage point was done in part to separate it from other Holocaust movies, which "always have this establishing shot of the camp or high-angle perception of everything," Nemes says. "My assumption is that one couldn't see much and the limitations were part of the unbearable plight of the individual. I wanted to find a way to communicate that."

"Saul" is the first major acting role for Röhrig, a Hungarian-born



Sony Pictures Classics

SON OF SAUL — Hungarian actor Géza Röhrig stars as Saul, a Jewish prisoner working in the gas chambers and cremation ovens at Auschwitz.

poet who lives and works in New York as a Judaic studies teacher. "In so many ways, components of my personal journey came into this movie in a very beneficial way," says Röhrig, who was orphaned at age four, expelled from high school for anti-Communist activities, and later published his first poetry book about Auschwitz.

Through "Saul," Röhrig hopes to humanize the *Sonderkommandos*, who were often seen by other prisoners as willing participants in the Nazis' crimes.

Although *Sonderkommandos* were generally executed after a few months on the job, some committed suicide out of guilt.

"We're not in a position to pass judgment because we're not in their shoes — this is such an extreme human situation," Röhrig says. In a way, the Nazis "basically deprived (*Sonderkommandos*) even the solace of seeming innocent. They brought the Jews down to the bottom levels of their own morality and made partners of them. They made Cain out of Abel."

Canadians embrace project

Continued from page 3

comprehensive refugee resettlement program without backing from the Canadian public.

"This would never be able to work had we not received the complete support of the Canadian population. After the Syrians land in Toronto or Montreal," Saccomani said, "they will be received in over 40 communities across the country."

"That's the real secret of this operation. Canadians as a whole have embraced this project as a national Canadian one, and we are all very, very proud to be part of it," the ambassador added.

Mark described Canadian reaction as wonderful.

"This is faith in practice," he added. "You can see different groups, some with no personal interests getting involved, just because everybody understands that we need to do something," he added.



M. Weber

Winter Sleep

Snowfall slumbers
on cedars,
stretches along the length
of limbs —
silent, until the sun
awakens.

By Nancy Compton Williams

PRAIRIE MESSENGER PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY

KAPOOR, SELNES, & KLIMM

Barristers & Solicitors

W. Selnes, B.A., LL.B.;
G. Klimm, B.A., LL.B.;
J. Streeton, B. Comm., LL.B.

Phone (306) 752-5777, P.O. Box 2200
Melfort, Saskatchewan S0E 1A0
Phone (306) 873-4535, P.O. Box 760
Tisdale, Saskatchewan S0E 1T0

WEBER & GASPER

Barristers & Solicitors

Russel Weber (B.A., LL.B.)
Tabbatha M. Gasper (B.A., LL.B.)
517 Main Street, Humboldt, Sask.

Phone: 306-682-5038

Fax: 306-682-5538

E-mail:

weber.gasper@sasktel.net



Assante Financial
Management Ltd.

Peter Martens, FICB 301 - 500 Spadina Crescent East
Financial Advisor Saskatoon, SK S7K 4H9

T: (306) 665-3244
Cara Martens, CFP 1-800-465-2100
Financial Advisor E: pmartens@assante.com

VOLUNTEER INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SERVICE

requires Teachers, Administrators, Medical Professionals and Trades People, aged 21 - 65. If you are interested in serving overseas for two years, we may have an assignment for you! Please call 306-374-2717, Email: vics1@telusplanet.net or visit our Website at www.volunteerinternational.ca

MCKERCHER LLP BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS

SASKATOON:

(306) 653-2000
L.J.(Dick) Batten, QC
Michel G. Thibault
David M.A. Stack, QC
Curtis J. Onishenko

REGINA:

306.565.6500
David E. Thera, QC

Committed to serving the needs of
Religious Organizations for over 80 years.



mckercher.ca



John Schachtel
1201 - 8th St. East
Saskatoon, Sask.
(306) 978-5200

Schuler-Lefebvre Funeral Chapel

"Dedicated to those
WE SERVE"

Ph: 306-682-4114 Humboldt, Sask.

MALINOSKI & DANYLUK FUNERAL HOME

HWY 5 EAST HUMBOLDT
Humboldt's only 100%
locally owned and operated.
PH : 306-682-1622



Hearing Aid Sales, Service & Repair

Ph: 306.979.4543 #16-1945 McKercher Dr.
Cell: 306.881.8602 Saskatoon, SK S7J 4M4



Muenster, Sask.
S0K 2Y0
Ph: 306-682-1770
Fax: 306-682-5285
press@stpeterspress.ca

Place your professional ad here
Call 306-682-1772

MAURICE SOULODRE Architect Ltd.

Maurice Soulodre, B.A., B.Ed., M.Arch., SAA, MRAIC
1815C Lorne Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7H 1Y5
Tel: (306) 955-0333 Fax: (306) 955-0549
E-mail: soularch@sasktel.net

Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre

Retreats & Workshops

Maranatha Yoga — Kate O'Gorman.

Mondays, Jan. 11 - March 21, 7:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$96/12 weeks or \$10 drop-in.

The Book of Exodus — Paul Fachel, OMI.

First Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Jan. 6, Feb. 3 March 2.

Cost: \$15.

A Day Away — Gisele Bauche.

Second Wednesday of the month, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 9. Cost: \$25, w/lunch.

An Introduction to the Enneagram

Sarah Donnelly and Sister Marie Gorsalitz, OSU.

Saturday, Jan. 30, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Cost: \$55, includes lunch.

Silent Directed Retreat: "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10) — Dianne Mantyka and Bishop Gerry Wiesner, OMI.

Friday, Jan. 29, 7 p.m. - Sunday, Jan. 31, lunch.

Cost: \$345, live-in only (please register by Jan. 18).

Exploring Ecological Spirituality for Today

Sr. Judy Schachtel. Tuesday evenings, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23, 7 - 9 p.m.

Cost \$20/session or \$60/series.

Ongoing Events at Queen's House

Centering Prayer: Monday evenings 7 p.m. ♦ **Taizé Prayer for Christian Unity:** Second Tuesday of the month, 8 p.m. ♦

Personal Day(s) of Private Prayer: Book anytime ♦

Queen's House Weekly Celebration of Holy Eucharist:

Wednesdays, 3 p.m. (call to confirm time — all are warmly welcome!) ♦

24-Hour Eucharistic Adoration:

Fourth Monday of the month, 12 p.m. - Tuesday, 12 p.m.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION Have you considered inviting a spiritual director to journey with you as a trusted companion? The **spiritual director** is a dedicated traveller of the interior pathways and has the skills to accompany another person who is experiencing the joys and challenges of life. The director listens, encourages, supports and assists the seeker in paying attention to their life. Queen's House has a number of trained spiritual directors who come from the ecumenical Christian community and offer a wide variety of interests and experience. To learn more about spiritual direction please visit our website or contact our coordinator, Sr. Adeline Behm, 306-242-1916 x234.

For program details visit www.queenshouse.org

To register please call 306-242-1916

or email: receptionist@queenshouse.org

601 Taylor Street West, Saskatoon, SK S7M 0C9
tel: (306) 242-1916 fax: (306) 653-5941

DO YOU NEED A FACILITY FOR:

Inservices, seminars, workshops, retreats, or any occasion? **BOOK QUEEN'S HOUSE TODAY!**
(306) 242-1925 or bookings@queenshouse.org

Fifteen reasons to look back on the best of 2015

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



In eight days the Oscar nominations will be known, capping many weeks of proliferating awards, critics’ lists, chatter about surprises and snubs. By then most of the nominees will have had Canadian releases. My own list — a top 10 and five honourable mentions — is necessarily personal, based on a viewing of some 400 features. Sometimes I don’t get the critical love for cer-

ters forced to do the death camps’ dirty work). The sole fleeting smile is heart-rending. Tough but essential viewing.

2. **Inside Out** (U.S.)

This Disney Pixar animated triumph, co-directed and written by Pete Docter and Ronnie Del Carmen, is the year’s most delightfully imaginative experience for any age. A jumble of memo-

adaptation of the Michael Lewis book about how a collection of outsiders and oddballs outsmarted Wall street by shorting (i.e. betting against) the corrupt subprime mortgage market that triggered the second biggest financial crash in history. Hilarious and tragic.

6. **Carol** (U.S.)

Based on Patricia Highsmith’s 1952 novel, director Todd Haynes’ story of a forbidden romance between a rich older married woman and a young New York shopgirl achieves a striking emotional depth and intelligence thanks to superlative nuanced performances by Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara as well as masterfully evocative cinematography.

7. **Dancing Arabs** (Israel/Germany/France)

The Israeli cinema is among the world’s best and this compelling co-production directed by Eran Riklis from Sayed Kashua’s semi-autobiographical novel penetrates the fault lines of a divided society when a West Bank Palestinian boy, Eyad, and an Israeli girl, Naomi, fall in love. Eyad’s destiny is forever changed after a friend’s death opens the way to a borrowed identity.

8. **Room** (Canada/Ireland)

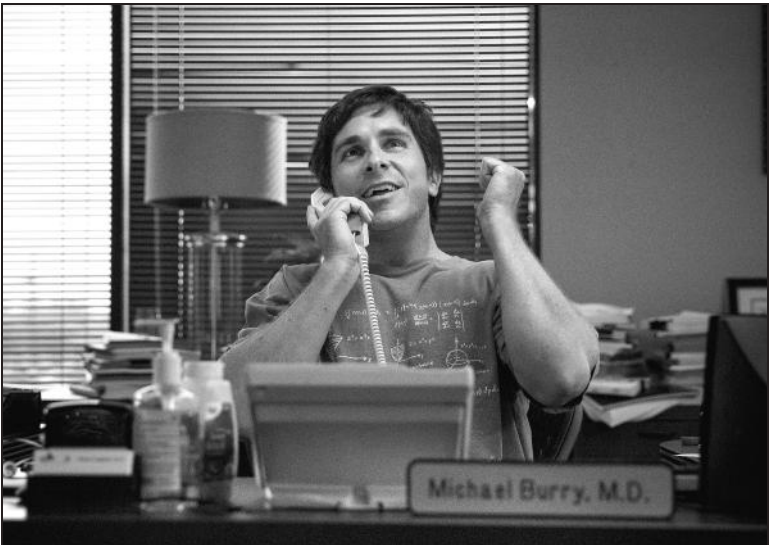
With a screenplay by Emma Donoghue adapted from her acclaimed novel, director Lenny Abrahamson brings a sensitive touch to this moving story of an abducted young woman who gives birth to a son in confinement and lives to protect him for five years before escaping. Brie Larson and Jacob Tremblay are extraordinary as mother and child.

9. **Me and Earl and the Dying Girl** (U.S.)

Director Alfonso Gomez-Rejon’s sophomore feature, written by Jesse Andrews adapting his novel, is the best young-adult and American independent film of the year, fully deserving of its Sundance grand jury and audience awards. A trio of Pittsburgh high-school seniors learn about life and loss, marvellously played by Thomas Mann and R.J. Cyler as movie-making misfit buddies and Olivia Cooke as the afflicted girl.

10. **Star Wars: The Force Awakens** (U.S.)

Everything about “Episode VII” is epic, and as importantly the effects (shot on traditional film not digitally and best appreciated in IMAX 3D) are accompanied by a story that reconnects to the magic of the original trilogy. Director/co-writer J.J. Abrams renews the force in giving it to a new female heroine. There’s also a father-son encounter almost as awesome as that between Luke



CNS/Paramount

THE BIG SHORT — Christian Bale stars in *The Big Short*, one of the top films of 2015.

Skywalker and Darth Vader in *The Empire Strikes Back*. More than just a box-office wonder, this space opera conquers the big screen.

Honourable mentions:

Mad Max: Fury Road (Australia/U.S.): Director/co-writer George Miller’s dynamite revival of this post-apocalyptic franchise, which bowed at the Cannes festival, has wowed critics and audiences, even topping some “best of” lists. Tom Hardy is terrific as Max and Charlize Theron even better as the aptly-named new character Imperator Furiosa.

Macbeth (U.K./France/U.S.): As much as Michael Fassbender excelled as Steve Jobs in the eponymous movie about the late tech giant, he commands the screen in the title role of Justin Kurzel’s magnificent adaptation of the Bard’s great Scottish tale of regicide and retribution. With Marion Cotillard compelling as the usurper’s ambitious lady doomed never to remove the “damned spot” of bloody betrayal.

Brooklyn (Canada/Ireland/U.K.): Saoirse Ronan deserves an Oscar nomination for her role as a young Irish immigrant to 1950s America torn between past and future. Directed by John Crowley and adapted by Nick Hornby from the Colm Tóibín novel, it was among the best to premiere at last January’s Sundance festival.

Dheepan (France): Jacques Audiard’s searing story of Sri Lankan refugees to France, focused on a fugitive former Tamil Tiger fighter who acquires a family of convenience en route, seems to have been forgotten since winning the Cannes festival’s highest honour. It should not be overlooked.

Trumbo (U.S.): Bryan Cranston captures the fighting spirit of famous Hollywood screenwriter Dalton Trumbo, blacklisted during the anti-communist hysteria of the 1940s-50s. Helen Mirren steals scenes as his most venomous antagonist in the show business world. The movie, directed by Jay Roach, is also a timely cautionary tale about the consequences of the politics of fear.



CNS/Open Road Films

SPOTLIGHT — Rachel McAdams, Mark Ruffalo and Brian d’Arcy James star in *Spotlight*, the story of the Boston Globe’s *Spotlight* team that broke the story of the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church in 2002. The film that has been named one of the finest films of 2015 by many publications.

tain choices. Case in point: The Assassin for which Hsiao-Hsien Hou was named best director at Cannes. Gorgeous to look at but I found it confusing and the pace glacial. On the other hand, *Mad Max: Fury Road* was a praiseworthy reboot of that franchise, though now overshadowed by the *Star Wars* juggernaut.

So here goes:

1. **Son of Saul** (Hungary)

Astonishingly this is director and co-writer László Nemes’ first film. Winner of the grand prix at Cannes, it’s an unforgettable Holocaust drama like no other — a vision of hell from the point of view of a Hungarian member of the *Auschwitz-Birkenau Sonderkommandos* (Jewish prison-

ries and emotions — terrifically voiced by actors like Amy Poehler (Joy) and Phyllis Smith (Sadness) — jostle and collide inside the head of 11-year-old Riley as she moves with her family from the Midwest to San Francisco.

3. **Leviathan** (Russia)

Director and co-writer Andrey Zvyagintsev’s Oscar-nominated saga of injustice takes place in an isolated village on the shores of the Barents Sea where the bleached skeleton of a whale stands as a metaphor for the corruption of state and church that picks society’s bones clean. What happens to Kolya and his family becomes a Book-of-Job parable of Putin’s Russia. This 2014 film was not released in Canada until 2015.

4. **Spotlight** (U.S.)

Director/co-writer Tom McCarthy shines a sobering spotlight on the scandal of clerical sexual abuse of children that plagued the Boston archdiocese, covered up by the church hierarchy until exposed by the Boston Globe’s dedicated team of investigative reporters. A disturbing but necessary story, superbly told.

5. **The Big Short** (U.S.)

Adam MacKay helms a terrific ensemble cast in this brilliant



David M. Benett/Getty Images

ROOM AN AWARD-WINNING FILM — Accepting the Best International Independent Film award for *Room* at the Moët British Independent Film Awards in December are, from left, Ed Guiney (producer), Jacob Tremblay (who plays Jack in the film) and director Lenny Abrahamson.

To advertise in the

Prairie Messenger

call

306-682-1772

or fax

306-682-5285

email:

pm.ads@stpeterspress.ca

In Christ’s new order, best has been saved for last



This Sunday’s gospel is the well-known story of the Wedding Feast at Cana. When the church was looking for a Scripture to ground their conviction that Jesus himself had instituted the sacrament of matrimony, they would appeal to this story. However, later theologians and Scripture scholars have found this to be quite a “stretch.” Much more likely, this event, found only in the Gospel of John, was an introduction and beginning to the public life and ministry of Jesus. As John says himself, “this was the first of his signs in Cana of Galilee.”

If we recall last week’s gospel, this one serves a similar purpose. While Luke has Jesus’ ministry beginning with the baptism of John in the Jordan, John’s introduction to a public Jesus begins with this event of the wedding feast. Since Jesus is ushering in the reign of God, John makes use of this event to draw some contrasts between the “old way” and the “new way.”

In the “old way,” there were limits to love and joy (symbolized in the wedding feast and the wine). The old wine could run out! In the new way, there was a seemingly limitless supply. No wine? Let’s make some! The resources of the “old way” left us with only six large jars of water used for ritual washing. In the “new way,” Jesus uses these meagre

Williston is a retired Parish Life Director for the Diocese of Saskatoon and a former missionary with the Redemptorists. He is also a song writer and recording artist.

resources to make a wonderful wine, in fact, the steward said this was the best wine of the night! The old way of limited resources suggested that the good wine be served first, and later, when the crowd is less “discerning,” one would bring out the cheap wine, the stuff that brought on nasty hangovers! But the steward proclaims with an almost liturgical hallelujah: “But you have saved the best for last!”

I have enjoyed using this gospel when presiding at some weddings. Not so much for the fact that Jesus shows his approval of marriage by attending a wedding, but because the sacredness of this moment of commitment has at its source a spiritual calling from a world of “mine” to a world of “ours.” It is also a moment when we realize that, through the journeys these two people have embarked on, they have found themselves at this church, at this time promising each other a future filled with mystery. Like the steward at the wedding feast of Cana, I get excited to proclaim to this couple that “they have saved the best for last!” For with these promises, Jesus has promised to be at their wedding feast, and that’s what makes this an awesome sacrament.

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time January 17, 2016	Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 96 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 John 2:1-12
---	---

Resources have little to do with the outcome of a marriage. We have all known wonderful, life-giving couples who have next to nothing, and the opposite is also true. We have seen very well-heeled couples who have little to show for their relationship.

How many of us have heard or experienced the limits of our resources as we embarked on married life? Many even brag about the fact that they didn’t have two dollar bills to rub together! As Tevye (in Fiddler On The Roof) comments about his newly married daughter: “They were so much in love, they didn’t realize how miserably poor they were!” The “new way” is that as long as we’re together, we’ll find a way!

The reign of God is shown in the stories of Jesus

showering abundant blessings on those around him. The feeding of the 5,000, the healing of the lepers, the extravagance of his redemptive sacrifice on the cross; all of these are meant to be a sign that Jesus is ushering in a new life of God’s overwhelming grace. This “table of plenty” is contained in the hospitality stories told of our mothers and grandmothers inviting our friends or neighbours in need to stay for dinner with the phrase: “We can just put a little more water in the soup and there’s plenty for everyone.”

One can contrast this approach with the advertisements on TV that suggest what a nightmare it will be if we don’t have “enough” (here you can fill in the blank) money, car, life or health insurance. In this scenario there is never enough! Resources are scarce and limited and we can develop an aching fear that feeds into our hoarding and storing, and our self-centredness, just in case. . . . This is exactly what spawns reality shows like Storage Wars. Since we have just finished the season of Christmas, we are reminded of this attitude when we see the conversion of Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol.

The church has proclaimed this Sunday as World Day for Migrants and Refugees. We have just heard the story of one such family — Joseph, Mary and Jesus — with arduous travel to Bethlehem and then a hasty escape to Egypt to avoid Herod’s murderous hand.

We are asked to pray for migrants and refugees, but to also be involved somehow in making room for those who come to our shores with hope of a better world. Let us be more like the mothers who always made room for one more, and less like the unconverted Scrooge that had no heart for the poor.

For those of us who can, let us make a table of plenty for people without food, home, transportation or relatives to rely on. This is what the “new wine” of Jesus is all about. It’s a new world order, a space and a place for everyone around God’s banquet table. As we all enter that great Banquet Hall at the end of our lives, we will hear the voice of Jesus saying: “Come on in. There’s plenty for everyone! The wine is the best! We have saved the best for last. We’ll just put a little more water in the soup!”

Rolheiser shares annual list of his favourite books of the year



Taste, as St. Augustine said some 1,700 years ago, is subjective. That should be acknowledged upfront whenever someone recommends a reading list. In my case, I need to state too that I’m not a full-time critic. It’s not like I’ve read 200 books this past year and these rose to the top. I read when I can, follow book reviews, am fortunate enough to live with academic colleagues who tip each other off on good books, and I have friends who will occasionally tell me that a certain book “has to be read.” From out of that, comes this list. These are the books that most touched me this past year.

Among books on spirituality, I single out these:

The Taste of Silence, Bieke Vandekerckhove. They say that the book you need to read finds you at the time you most need to read it. That was the case here. Vandekerckhove is a young Belgian writer who, 20 years ago, was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Lou Gehrig’s disease. Her normal life ended with that sentence and, after an initial descent into darkness, she found strength by making an inner journey into the deep silence that resides inside us all. Her descrip-

tion of her journey is remarkable.

Beyond the Abortion Wars, a way forward for a new generation, Charles Camosy. This is an important book that will healthily shake up both pro-life and pro-choice readers by showing that, not only are we closer to each other than we thought, but there is a way, together, to walk out of the present political, social, religious and legal stalemate within which we find ourselves.

The Reluctant Disciple, Daring to Believe, David Wells. Wells, a young British layman, offers us a warm, witty and exquisitely balanced insight into how spirituality and life interface in today’s world for a person caught up in the ordinary duties and concerns of life. Among other things, it’s a spirituality for those who don’t like the word spirituality.

Mercy in the City, Kerry Weber. Weber, a young writer on the editorial staff at America Magazine, chronicles her own journey through a lenten season. This is a warm read, very good book, with deceptive depth.

A Religion of One’s Own, A Guide to Creating a Personal Spirituality in a Secular World, Thomas Moore. This book will

upset a lot of people for its rather existential concept of community and ecclesiology, but Thomas Moore writes, as always, with a freshness, insight, and depth that brings a healthy challenge to everyone.

The World Beyond Your Head, On Becoming an Individual in an Age of Distraction, Matthew B. Crawford. Not a spirituality book *in se*, but this book delivers on its title. If you can wade through the philosophical parts, which are taxing, Crawford gives you a lot, really a lot, to think about.

In terms of novels, I particularly liked these:

The Children Act, Ian McEwan. A major, world-class novelist, McEwan gives us here a warm, easy-to-read story that packs a deeper metaphor.

The Anchoress, Robyn Cadwallader. Did you ever wonder how people like Julian of Norwich lived? What really was an anchoress? Cadwallader gives us a fictional picture of what someone like Julian of Norwich would have lived out.

Purity, Jonathan Franzen. It takes 600 pages for this story to sort itself out. But it’s vintage Jonathan Franzen. He tells a good story

Lying Awake, Mark Salzman. The story of a young Carmelite nun who has to discern illness from mysticism. This book is 15 years old, but well worth the read.

The Painter of Silence, Georgina Harding. Set in Romania just after the Second World War, Harding sets humanity and soul into the tragedy of war and into

human brokenness in general. A great read, along the lines of All the Light We Cannot See.

Finally, a special category. Each year I write a column on suicide. I don’t claim any special insight into that singular sadness that surrounds a suicide, both in society at large and in church circles. I write on this issue simply because there’s just too little out there to help anyone understand and cope with the loss of a loved one through suicide. During the past year I received three separate books, all written by a mother who had lost a child to suicide. The stories, while stunningly unique in that each person is his or her own mystery, bear an eerie resemblance

to each other, not because they are each written by a mother trying to come to grips with a tragic loss of her own child, but that in each case a grieving mother is describing a very similar kind of person, namely, a beautiful, over-sensitive young person who, in effect, is too bruised to cope with ordinary life. All three of these books are worth the read and, read together, will scar your heart.

Healing the Wound of my Daughter’s Suicide, Lois Severson.

Damage Done, Suicide of an Only Son, Gloria Hutchinson.

My Daughter, Her Suicide, and God, Marjorie Antus.

Happy reading!



A SACRED SPACE IN A BUSY WORLD

3005 - 119 St., Edmonton, AB T6J 5R5 Ph: 780-701-1854
email: retreats@providencerenewal.ca
www.providencerenewal.ca

NEW! STARTING IN JANUARY 2016

FOLLOWING SACRED PATHWAYS

A Six-Month Journey with Others — January to June 2016

Are you spiritually hungry or thirsty? Would you enjoy being part of a community of seekers who are interested in the spiritual life? Would you like to deepen your relationship with God? This six-month program is an opportunity to deepen your spiritual life in a safe environment where you can pray together, share faith, learn and explore what you are being called to at this time in your life’s journey.

Program starts **January 22**. For more information go to www.providencerenewal.ca or call 780-701-1853. **Register now! Space is Limited!**

USHERING IN THE NEW YEAR: LACED WITH SILENCE AND SONG

A 24-Hour Quiet Retreat

Fri., Jan. 22 (7 p.m.) to Sat., Jan. 23 (7 p.m.)

Margaret Clark and Debbie Doornbos

Each turning of the New Year invites us to focus on possibilities, hopes, and dreams. This 24-hour retreat is a unique opportunity to slow down, to rest, and to reflect. Laced with silence and song, it will open space and time to explore your life; your hopes and dreams for this year, and your spiritual resolutions. Spiritual direction is available. Add another night, if you choose, for more time in the stillness.

Private Suite: \$175 Single Room: \$150

Cardinal Donald Wuerl: the pope’s man in Washington

By David Gibson
©2015 Religion News Service

Cardinal Donald Wuerl is an eminently approachable churchman, and unfailingly polite, yet the archbishop of Washington is hardly the type to wear his emotions on his sleeve.

So it surprised even Wuerl at how moved he was when he hand-delivered his official letter of resignation to Pope Francis’ representative to the U.S. on Nov. 12. That was Wuerl’s 75th birthday, the date every bishop is required to submit his request for retirement to the pontiff.

“Now if the Holy Father were to accept it tomorrow, I would be well-prepared to take time to write, to read, to pray a lot more,” Wuerl said in a reflective moment during an interview with RNS a few days after the milestone.

But don’t wave goodbye just yet.

Wuerl is far too valuable to the pope where he is, in his high-profile job in Washington, and on half a dozen Vatican bodies. “One of the world’s most influential bishops,” The Washington Post has called him.

The most critical of those Roman posts is on the Vatican Congregation for Bishops, which vets candidates for the pope to name as bishops and archbishops around the world.

More important for the 65 million-member U.S. church, Wuerl is one of just two Americans on the congregation — the other, retired Cardinal William Levada, will cycle off when he turns 80 in June. Along with Boston Cardinal Sean O’Malley, Francis relies heavily on Wuerl’s counsel given that the Argentine pontiff has little familiarity with the U.S.

When Francis named Wuerl to the bishops’ congregation in December 2013, he also removed another American and longtime curial official, Cardinal Raymond Burke, a vocal culture warrior who has been seen as a leader in the opposition to Francis’ reformist agenda.

Vatican insiders say Wuerl’s influence in bishops’ appointments has already been seen in the pope’s surprise choice last year of Archbishop Blase Cupich to head the prominent Chicago archdiocese, helping Francis shape the future of the American church in a more pastoral and moderate mould.

What’s at stake for Francis and the church — especially as conservative opposition to his reforming ways has at times reached a boiling point — is essentially immersing Francis’ innovative pontificate into the river of tradition that sustains and unites Catholicism even as it moves forward.

Few are as well-positioned as Wuerl to advance that goal.

He has lived through seven papacies, and he is both deeply orthodox and committed to making the church more open and pastoral. It’s a paradoxical mix that allows critics on the left dismiss him as an ambitious “company man” and critics on the right to rip him as a doctrinal squish.

Yet Wuerl is, in short, a lot like Francis, even though the two seem to differ so dramatically in temperament and background: the Latin American pope with little Roman experience who loves to press the flesh and talk off the cuff, and the Vatican-savvy North American cardinal, friendly but formal, and impeccably dressed, disciplined and organized to the point that he always seems to be speaking in crafted paragraphs, even in casual conversation.

Gibson is a national reporter for RNS.

Between reforms and ‘aberrations’

Wuerl was born in Pittsburgh in 1940, one of four children in a devout Catholic family where faith was “the frame of reference.” His father worked nights weighing freight cars for the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Wuerl landed in Rome as a seminarian just as the Second Vatican Council, a three-year re-examination of the church’s teachings and way of doing ministry, was getting underway in the early ’60s.

“It was an extraordinarily exciting time,” Wuerl says. The council’s reforms and opening to the world profoundly shaped his outlook and became the touchstone that he constantly refers to — as does Francis, who was also studying to be a Jesuit priest in Argentina at the same time.

Yet Wuerl also worried that some took the council’s reformist template too far, and in 1985, John Paul II, in his campaign to reinforce doctrinal orthodoxy in the American church, made Wuerl a bishop and sent him to Seattle with a special brief to rein in the liberal ways of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen.

Hunthausen was a progressive icon at the time who had questioned the ban on women’s ordination and let gay Catholic groups hold liturgies in the cathedral.

It was an unprecedented move by the Vatican. Wuerl, then 45, was the good soldier cast in the role of the bad guy. “The unwanted bishop,” as Ann Rodgers and Mike Aquilina call him in their



CNS/Matthew Barrick

THE POPE’S MAN IN WASHINGTON — Pope Francis embraces Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl during mass and the canonization of Junipero Serra outside the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington in this September 2015 photo. Wuerl has reached the age of 75, but he “is far too valuable to the pope where he is, in his high-profile job in Washington, and on half a dozen Vatican bodies,” for the pope to accept his resignation, writes David Gibson.

chapter on the controversy in a new biography of Wuerl.

Now, 30 years later, Wuerl recalls the episode gingerly. He says Seattle did have real problems and insists his mission was “an institutional issue.”

But he acknowledges the hostility he faced, and says he learned from that experience that “if you’re going to work with people you’re going to have to get to know them. . . . You’re going to have to listen. You have to invite people into the discussion with you, and you have to go to where they are to be part of that discussion.”

‘You have to express your convictions’

To Wuerl’s relief, he was made bishop in 1988 of his old hometown Diocese of Pittsburgh.

“It was a joy,” says Wuerl. But also a huge challenge.

The heavy industry that had anchored the community was tanking, along with the U.S. economy. During Wuerl’s early years the diocese saw an exodus of some 200,000 residents, about half of them Catholic. In the end, Wuerl had to shrink the diocese by a third, from 333 parishes to 219.

What was not followed as closely or quickly was Wuerl’s aggressive policies against priests who molested children, a decade before the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops would take concerted action.

When the Vatican in 1993 ordered him to return to ministry a priest Wuerl insisted was credibly accused of abuse, he travelled to Rome six times over several years in a dogged effort to overturn that ruling.

Wuerl eventually won the battle and in 2002 successfully petitioned John Paul to involuntarily laicize the priest. It was a surprising victory in the face of Vatican resistance — and an episode that goes against the idea that Wuerl was only interested in keeping his superiors happy.

“You have to be able to express your convictions,” Wuerl says today of that episode. “What I hope I’ve learned over the years is that you have to be able to do it in a respectful, loving way. But you

have to speak the truth in love.”

When the prestigious Washington archdiocese came open in 2006, Wuerl was a natural fit. With the job came the prestige and influence of a cardinal’s red hat but also intense opposition from the Catholic right — an unusual position for Wuerl, so often seen as the quintessential insider. But the conservatives’ criticism then was only a prelude to the deeper anger that would burst forth after the election of Francis in March 2013.

Pope Francis ‘is picking up where Vatican II left off’

From the moment that Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires emerged on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica as Pope Francis, Wuerl has seemed transformed. What is it about the revolutionary Francis papacy that has the cautious Wuerl so animated?

“His heart has always been with the people on the margins,” says Rodgers, who covered Wuerl for years as a reporter at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette before joining the Pittsburgh diocese as communications director two years ago. “Pope Francis has freed him to be the bishop he has always wanted to be.”

Wuerl’s enthusiasm for the Francis papacy might also be read as a vindication of sorts — not only a demonstration of his cardinal virtues of perseverance and moderation, and working behind the scenes more than through the media — but also the triumph of the vision of Vatican II that inspired Donald Wuerl from his days as a seminarian.

“I think what we are seeing (with Francis) is picking up where Vatican II left off,” Wuerl says. The turbulence of recent decades has stabilized, and the Second Vatican Council is now the tradition, yet one that allows for reform, even demands it. In that view, Francis is not so much a novelty but part of the continuity.

“So my excitement about Pope Francis is that he sees all this work that went before, and he embraces that and says, ‘Now we have to do it.’”

PROGRAM TEAM MEMBER

Are you a dynamic and energetic person who wants to make a difference in people’s spiritual growth? Do you thrive on being part of an energetic and enthusiastic team? Do you love to create, organize and try new things?

We are looking for a team player who enjoys working with people, and likes to not only plan, but also bring plans to fruition. An integral member of the program team, this person will collaborate with other team members in planning, creating and administering spiritual programs and retreats in keeping with the Mission of Providence Renewal Centre. He or she will be both a creative and practical person, who can take a lead role in marketing and advertising program events, implementing program offerings and growing our retreat community.

Qualifications:
The successful candidate should have:

- Excellent marketing and project management skills
- Experience in program development and coordination
- Outstanding communication skills and experience facilitating groups
- Ability to work in a multi-task team environment
- A Certificate, Diploma or Degree in Theology or a related field
- Training as a spiritual director would be an asset

Starting salary is negotiable, depending on qualifications and experience. This is a full-time position with some evening and weekend work.

Deadline for applications is **January 18, 2016.**

Please submit applications to: **Executive Director
Providence Renewal Centre
3005 119 Street NW, Edmonton AB T6J 5R5
cking@providencerenewal.ca**

Only those candidates considered for an interview will be contacted.

Providence Renewal Centre is an ecumenically based retreat and conference centre committed to Christian hospitality, Christ-centred spirituality, fostering personal and communal renewal and holistic growth. Providence Renewal Centre is owned and supported by the Sisters of Providence.

Faith over fear: choosing unity over extremism

Ecumenism & Interfaith Relations

Thomas Ryan, CSP



With a week to go before Christmas, the president of Georgetown University, John DeGioia, decided to make a contribution to countering the rising tide of tension and fear in the world and the country by bringing together an Interfaith Gathering for Solidarity, Understanding and Peace.

The event brought together members of the Washington, D.C., community to hear reflections from faith leaders across traditions — Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, Bah’ai, Latter Day Saints — and to join together in music and prayer.

In his welcoming remarks, DeGioia said, “At this moment when acts of fear and violence threaten to divide us, we are called to bring the resources of our faiths: a responsibility to work for justice, to serve our communities, to work for the common good. What we share across our traditions is what is needed most in this moment.”

DeGioia noted how “this coming together is the story of our nation, of showing who we are: a deeply religious country, a very pluralistic country and an extraordinarily tolerant people guided by the values of interior freedom, human dignity, human flourishing and the common good. We are all responsible for all. This is our work: to build solidarity, to work together for the common good. To harness the spirit of togetherness, to realize the shared resources of our traditions and to be united in a spirit of compassion and of service to our world.”

Rev. Cheryl Sanders, a professor of Christian Ethics at Howard University School of Divinity, read Jesus’ story of the Good Samaritan from Luke’s gospel (10:29-37) in which a Samaritan traveller comes upon a victim, bandages his wounds, and takes him to a nearby inn to be cared for, putting down his own money to cover the expenses. “Go, and do likewise,” says Jesus to his listeners.

Following the reading, the Archbishop of Washington, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, shared that during Pope Francis’ September visit, “I said to him . . . ‘Holy Father, when you get on the platform for mass, you are going to see the face of our nation.’ And as we stood there looking out over that vast sea of faces, what we encountered was a reflection of ethnic traditions and heritage found all over the globe.”

Ryan directs the Paulist North American Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations in Washington, D.C. (www.tomryancsp.org)

Wuerl told the audience of about 400 that “all of us are one nation of people and our diversity is expressed in the religious pluralism of our land. *E pluribus unum* (from the many, one). How we see one another is at the heart of how we treat one another. The actions of a few must never change all of us. Acts of evil, acts of terror happen because there are those who do them. And then there are those who are silent. We are addressing that silence by our gathering and speaking out today. We know how to answer the question: Who is my neighbour? Let us never forget: We are each other’s neighbour.”

After a reading of verses from the Quran (49:1-13) that instructed those of belief not to let one people ridicule another people, nor to insult one another by offensive names, the Imam and president of The Nation’s Mosque, Talib Shareef, said, “Adam’s identity was not a racial identity nor an ethnic identity nor a national identity. The primary identity given by he who created him was human identity. There are not two types of humans. There is only one type. We have all come from Adam. Our primary identity is human. If you begin to call each other names and do violence to one another, you have lost your identity. All of the prophets are given family names. God calls us to be a family. To work together for a better world. We are one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Rabbi Batya Steinlauf read from the Book of Genesis (1:26-27) “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness. In the image of God, God created humanity, male and female God created them.”

Then the Senior Rabbi of the Washington Hebrew Congregation, Bruce Lustig, reflected on the responsibility that is ours to make choices that glorify God. “We have free will. We are masters of our own destiny. If religion can be taught to engender hate, it can also be taught to engender love. We often don’t create our circumstance in this world but we do fashion our response. A self is formed from effort and from faith. At each moment we make a moral choice. Let this gathering be our promise that we will choose love over hate, peace over violence. That we will endeavour to live as God’s children, bringing compassion and tolerance, and building a better world for our children and our children’s children. May we act as if we were worthy of being created in God’s image.”

Laila Brothers, a Muslim Georgetown University student, reaffirmed Rabbi Lustig’s message with her own: “In these



T. Ryan

INTERFAITH GATHERING — Vice-President Joseph Biden spoke at the Interfaith Gathering for Solidarity, Understanding, and Peace in Washington, D.C., before Christmas.

times of turmoil it is easy to lose sight of the good in the world. To be divided along political and religious lines. To stay silent and not to speak up. We must stand by each other as writers of history, as architects of our children’s future, as collective caretakers of this world.”

When Vice-President Joe Biden took to the podium, he turned to the diverse set of lead-

ers on stage in the university’s Gaston Hall, many of whom were dressed in religious wear, and said: “This is America.”

“I believe faith is a gift,” Biden said, after lamenting what he called hate speech and phobia following the recent terrorist attacks. “It’s a gift that should be embraced, and it embodies not just what we believe, but it dictates what we must do. We must

demonstrate our faith in actions.”

Four days later, on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 20, people from all faith communities joined together in a three-kilometre walking pilgrimage from the Washington Hebrew Synagogue to the National Cathedral to the Islamic Centre offering prayers at each one under the banner of Faith Over Fear: Choosing Unity Over Extremism.



“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”—Hebrews 13:16

Your support will keep the church heated during winter liturgy services at St. Peter’s Church in St. Paul’s River, Northern Quebec, Diocese of Baie-Comeau.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES OF CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN CANADA.

Here is my gift of: ☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ \$ _____
☐ Cheque (made payable to Catholic Missions in Canada) ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX
Credit Card No. _____ Expiry _____

Name _____ Signature _____
Fr./Sr./Br./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms.
Address _____
City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Mail to: Catholic Missions In Canada
201 - 1155 Yonge Street, Toronto ON M4T 1W2
Tel: 416-934-3424 **Toll-free:** 1-866-YES-CMIC (937-2642) **Website:** www.cmic.info



PM_0116

Homilies made understandable

Pope Francis is known for speaking off the cuff, sometimes to the consternation of his advisers, but often to the delight of his audience. He is known for using colourful metaphors. One of his more memorable ones is that shepherds should have “the smell of the sheep.” The point is immediately made.

Pope Benedict, on the other hand, was known for making more erudite speeches. This is natural given his academic background. However, while erudite, his speeches were not necessarily dense. He was able to teach complicated theology in an understandable way.

Pope Benedict, while not known for off-the-cuff, colourful comments as Pope Francis is, also had a gift for that.

In a recent book, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, published 10 homilies that are informal, colourful and off-the-cuff reflections made in a small Bavarian parish. The 100-page book — currently available only in Italian — is titled, *The Homilies of Pentling*, the German village where the cardinal vacationed and kept a home he had hoped to retire to one day.

“Imagine God as a kind of really strict school teacher who assigned humanity homework that only very few are able to do,” the cardinal said to his vil-

lagers. “For the majority, the notebook of life will be handed back with the grade: ‘Poor!’ ” That’s an analogy his parishioners could readily understand.

The god of Mammon is “like a wild animal, trying to clutch me with his talons and enslave me,” he once said. And people not open to the Holy Spirit, he said, “are like swamps that give off foul-smelling gases.”

According to a Catholic News Service story, Pope Benedict kept the familiar style of his homilies just as they were delivered years ago. He said he hoped the homilies, taken from transcribed audio recordings between 1986 and 1999, would help not just “my fellow citizens of Pentling,” but all readers in “understanding and living the word of the Gospel.”

Pope Benedict’s gift of warm and informal instruction found few outlets in his busy pontificate. The best ones were often rare Q&A sessions, especially with children.

One young boy, who had recently celebrated his first communion, asked Pope Benedict how Jesus was really present in the eucharist when “I can’t even see him.”

With a polite laugh, the pope smiled and explained that there were lots of important things that exist even though they cannot be seen. Electricity, for example, is invisible, but people know it is there because “we see the light” it produces — people can

see its effects, the pope said during a festive ceremony featuring clowns and stilt-walkers in St. Peter’s Square in 2005.

And just as people cannot see Jesus with their eyes, they can see him through what he affects. “We see that where Jesus is, people change, they become better,” he explained.

In a 1987 homily, then-Cardinal Ratzinger used words reminiscent of those of Pope Francis in describing how the church needs to be open to the Holy Spirit. “A church community that closes up inside itself saying, ‘It’s so nice here, just us, we understand each other so well that all the other things that come from Rome or elsewhere bother us so that’s that,’ — such a community would collapse upon itself and shrivel up. It wouldn’t have any more life force.”

And speaking of our tendency to judge others, then-Cardinal Ratzinger said, “It is none of our business, so to speak, to check on God’s bookkeeping, to take hold of his accounting ledgers, to outguess his thinking. . . . The task of deciding the destiny of other people has not been entrusted to us. We are before him and we need to have him look at us and allow him to address us. The others are in his hands.”

As noted earlier, the book is just out in Italian. We hope it will be translated into English. It might make a good gift for one’s pastor. — PWN

Church hesitates before imposing a penalty on a community member



Canon Law For Today

Rev. Frank Morrissey

As we saw in the previous column, the church hesitates before imposing a penalty on a member of the community who has seriously offended. Penalties are to be used only as a last resort. Nevertheless, even if it is considered necessary to proceed, the Code of Canon Law still sets out a number of checks and balances, to make certain that an arbitrary or excessive use of the right to punish someone is avoided.

Thus, for instance, canon 1323 provides that no one under the age of 16 is subject to a church penalty; someone who without fault was ignorant of violating a law is also exempted. (This is why we sometimes say that “ignorance is bliss.”) The same provision applies to those who acted under physical force and were not free; those who acted under grave fear, unless the act they carried out was intrinsically evil; someone who acted in legitimate self-defence against an unjust aggressor; someone who lacked the use of reason, and so forth.

In other instances, guilt remains,

Morrissey is a professor emeritus of canon law at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, and has been very active over the years in the field of canon law, especially as it applies to dioceses and religious institutes. This is his 40th article in a series.

but the penalty must be lessened (see canon 1324). For instance, in the case of someone who had only an imperfect use of reason; certain cases of drunkenness can also diminish responsibility; someone between the ages of 16 and 18. The ecclesiastical judge is also given leeway to diminish a penalty if there were other circumstances present which would reduce the gravity of the offence, for instance, a person who suffered from serious addictions or who was well advanced in age.

Obviously, if someone intentionally became drunk in order to be free of inhibitions, the guilt remains and, if appropriate, a due punishment is to be imposed (see canon 1325).

At the same time, canon 1326 allows the judge to impose a more serious punishment on a person who continues to offend, or on someone who has a position of dignity in the church, or has abused a position of authority. Thus we have seen how Pope Francis, in certain special cases involving bishops, has intervened directly and removed them from office because of the scandal caused by their acts.

In certain instances, a canonical offence has a parallel in secular legislation, such as cases of robbery, physical and moral abuse, seriously harming a per-

son’s reputation, and so forth. In others, the matter is entirely an internal church matter (such as celebrating certain sacraments without proper authorization).

It is important to distinguish clearly between the two categories of acts. If the matter is being handled by the secular authorities, sometimes it is preferable for the church not to act, at least immediately — to avoid conflicts of jurisdiction.

Canon 1329 contains a very important principle. An accomplice incurs the same penalty as the perpetrator if, without his or her assistance, the crime would not have been committed. Thus, for instance, in the case of a procured abortion, the person who pays for the procedure might fall under the same censure as the woman who undergoes the abortion.

In some instances, the code speaks about applying “appropriate” or “just” penalties. This is left to the discretion of the judge who has to impose the sanction. Thus, in the case of someone who has already taken serious steps to repair the harm done by an act, the judge could be more lenient. The judge can also delay the sentencing until other matters have been resolved. For instance, if, as noted above, a given matter were also a crime in the secular arena (for instance stealing church money), and the person had to serve jail time, the church court could wait until the person was released before proceeding with internal church decisions. A sentence can also be suspended, and the person placed on what we could call “probation” for a given period of time.

For major penalties, except for those which are automatic, a person must have been given a formal

warning beforehand not to proceed with the act. For instance, if it became known that a person was teaching heresy, he must first be warned to cease and desist from doing so; if he continues to express the same heretical opinions, then a penalty can be imposed.

In the church, a penalty imposed on a person continues to bind even though the one who imposed it is no longer in office. On the other hand, before a penalty is removed, there must be serious signs of repentance and reparation of damages and scandal.

In cases of danger of death,

any confessor can absolve a penitent from a penalty imposed, even if the absolution was ordinarily reserved to the Holy Father (as in certain major cases, such as breaking the seal of confession). This provision is another sign of the church’s concern for the spiritual well-being of its members.

No ecclesiastical judge likes to be involved in this painful area of church life. However, for the well-being of all and the repentance and conversion of the guilty person, it is necessary to be able to proceed — carefully and discreetly, but also with certainty.

Laundry Love cleans clothes

Continued from page 1

choose and swiped the money card that started the machines. After their third laundry day, Dec. 5, Nativity’s Laundry Love had provided 1,145 free loads of laundry to the community.

“We are so blessed to be able to help them in this small way,” Burnett-Miller said.

In addition to helping people with their laundry, the group hopes to be able to befriend the people they serve. On one Saturday, a mother came in with two children and a baby. The volunteers held the baby and played with the children to give the mother a chance to fold her laundry.

“It’s nice to make their day a little easier,” Burnett-Miller said.

The simplicity and impact of the project is what first attracted Burnett-Miller to Laundry Love. The laundromat is a safe, warm environment where entire families can come to volunteer, she said.

Her daughter added, “People

mostly think people need food (and) clothes, but they don’t think people need clean laundry. If you think about the less fortunate kids in school, they’re maybe embarrassed because their clothes smell bad or their sheets are dirty,” Miller said.

“Also, (with Laundry Love) it’s not just donating to a random cause; you actually get to come out here and help everybody out.”

Amy Smith, an eighth-grader at Lake Braddock Secondary School in Burke, first heard the announcement for Laundry Love at mass and immediately asked her mother if they could volunteer.

“I needed service hours for school and also it sounded like a cool thing to do because I want to fix poverty and this seemed like a good thing to do to help that,” she said. Her mother, Diane, added, “I’m here because she wanted to be here. It’s a lovely thing to be able to help these people.”

Nativity parishioner Barbara Olson also came because her 13-year-old daughter asked to volunteer.

Pope prescribes spiritual virtues to fight curial ills

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — If Pope Francis sees the church as a field hospital after battle, then his annual Christmas address to the Roman Curia often looks like the triage tent, with him holding the charts.

Instead of a typical gathering to

exchange just thanks and best wishes, Pope Francis uses this year-end moment with cardinals and top officials to offer “fraternal correction,” spiritual direction and his clear expectation of their role as servants, not masters, of the church.

After diagnosing last year what was ailing the Vatican, this year he prescribed a strong dose of medicine — a long list of “antibiotics” or virtues — to fight the disease of bad leadership.

In Pope Francis’ first Christmas speech in 2013 to cardinals in Rome and heads of Vatican offices, he extolled the qualities they should possess, pointing to the figure of St. Joseph as the model to live up to. Holiness, quiet professionalism and a spirit of humble service were the main

job requirements, he said.

In 2014 — and well into the start of the reform of church governance — the pope took it up a notch, going from good role models to red-flag warnings.

Choosing clarity and colour over vague politeness, that year the pope listed 15 “illnesses” the curia is often prone to, such as “spiritual Alzheimer’s,” “existential schizophrenia,” “hypocrisy typical of the mediocre,” the “terrorism of gossip” and even a poor sense of humour.

The pope showed his own sense of humour this year when presenting his new verbose list of virtues, like “innocuity” and a rare Italian term for “plethora.”

“My vice is neologisms,” he admitted.

Diseases need “prevention, vigilance, care, and sadly, in some cases, painful and prolonged interventions,” he said in this year’s talk Dec. 21.

The spiritual problems he highlighted last year are still lingering, he said, and were “evident in the course of the past year, causing no small pain” to the whole body of the church and “harming many souls, with scandal, too,” he said in his 30-minute talk.

Treatment is necessary and the regimen entails getting back to basics, he said, for which he offered a “catalogue of needed virtues.”

This constant examination of what Christ demands of his disciples always will be necessary, he said. “The reform will move forward with determination, clarity and firm resolve,” since the

church is always to be reformed, he said.

The papal catalogue was actually an acrostic, a list in which the first letter of each word spells out another word. In this case the word was “*misericordia*,” Italian for mercy. In an aside explaining his poetic format, he told his learned audience that Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci used to do acrostics when he evangelized in China.

Mercy, the pope explained, isn’t some “fleeting sentiment.” It’s the core teaching of the Gospel, the living “heart of Jesus” and, therefore, the light that needs to guide one’s life, reforms and decisions.

“May it be the basis of all our efforts. May it teach us when to move forward and when to step back. May it also enable us to understand the littleness of all that we do in God’s greater plan of salvation and majestic and mysterious working,” the pope said.

The list of 24 virtues, listed as one dozen pairs, reiterate the pope’s approach since the start of his pontificate: honesty, humility, open doors, trust in God and others as well as his Jesuit focus on mission, community and discipline.

The “practical guide” of essential virtues to cultivate, the pope said, includes being or having:

— Missionary and pastoral spirit: Show the joy and your belief in the Gospel with your lives and work.

— Appropriate and wise: Work hard, be creative and smart to get good at what you do; don’t rely on “connections” and “bribes” to get ahead or face situations.

— Spiritual and human: Let the Spirit protect you from human frailty, but don’t become a “robot.” If you can no longer laugh or cry with sincerity, “we have begun our decline.” Show tenderness, kindness and courtesy to everyone.

— A good model and faithful: Avoid scandals that harm souls and hurt the church’s credibility. “Woe to the world because of things that cause sin.”

— Reasonable and gentle: Avoid being too bureaucratic or too lenient. Find balance between rationality and kindness.

— Harmless and determined: Don’t be hasty or impulsive; be cautious in your judgments; act carefully, but with determination, clear vision, obedience to God and for the spiritual welfare of the faithful.

— Charitable and truthful: Speak the truth with charity and practice charity in truth, otherwise charity without truth is “a destructive ideology” of do-goodism and “truth without charity becomes blind legalism.”

— Open, honest and mature: Don’t be good only when you know people are watching. Don’t lord over people, never deceive. “Honesty is the foundation on which all other qualities rest.”

— Respectful and humble: Show respect to everyone as well as for documents, dossiers, confidentiality and privacy. Listen carefully, speak politely. You are and can do nothing without God and his grace.

— Generous and stand guard: What good is it to open all the Holy Doors around the world if our hearts, homes and hands are closed to others? Do your best and never let your guard down with vices and weaknesses.

— Fearless and ready: Be proactive; face troubles boldly with determination and resolve. Don’t get bogged down by ambition and material things; be ready and free to pick up and go where God calls.

— Accountable, trustworthy and sober: honour your commitments, renounce the superfluous. Practice prudence, simplicity, balance, temperance, live the essentials. Put God and others first; cut back, salvage, “recycle, repair, and live a life of moderation.”



CNS/Paul Haring

HOLY DOORS IN ROME ALL OPENED — Pope Francis prays after opening the Holy Door before celebrating mass at the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome Jan. 1, 2016. The Holy Doors of Rome’s four major basilicas are now open. Earlier, Pope Francis was selected to be the 2016 recipient of Germany’s Charlemagne Prize for his commitment in promoting European unity. The announcement was made Dec. 23 in Aachen, Germany, by the prize’s executive committee. Citing his address to the European Parliament in 2014, the committee commended the pope’s message of “peace and understanding” as well as “compassion, tolerance, solidarity and the integrity of creation throughout his pontificate.”

God’s mercy knows ‘no limits,’ frees people, pope says

By Carol Glatz and Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — God’s ability to forgive “knows no limits” as his mercy frees people from bitterness and despair, Pope Francis said.

“The church’s forgiveness must be every bit as broad as that offered by Jesus on the cross and by Mary at his feet. There is no other way,” he said after opening the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. Mary Major Jan. 1, the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and the World Day of Prayer for Peace.

On the first day of the new year, Pope Francis opened the last holy door in Rome as part of the extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy.

“The door we have opened is, in fact, a Door of Mercy,” he said in his homily, referring to the Roman basilica’s large bronze doors depicting Mary presenting her resurrected son, Jesus.

“Those who cross its threshold are called to enter into the merciful love of the father with complete trust and freedom from fear; they can leave this basilica knowing with certainty that Mary is

ever at their side,” especially during times of trouble and sorrow, he said.

At the church dedicated to Mary and on her feast day as Mother of God, the pope explained how Mary is the mother of mercy because she bore “the very face of divine mercy,” the son of God “made incarnate for our salvation.”

“Mary is an icon of how the church must offer forgiveness to those who seek it. The mother of forgiveness teaches the church that the forgiveness granted on Golgotha knows no limits. Neither the law with its quibbles, nor the wisdom of this world with its distinctions, can hold it back,” he said.

Mary offers the world Jesus, who in turn, offers that forgiveness which “renews life, enables us once more to do God’s will and fills us with true happiness,” the pope said.

“The power of forgiveness is the true antidote to the sadness caused by resentment and vengeance,” which do nothing but “trouble the mind and wound the heart, robbing it of rest and peace.”

After the mass, the pope sym-

bolically opened another door, this time the large iron gates in front of a smaller chapel housing a Marian icon he is particularly devoted to — the *Salus Populi Romani* (health of the Roman people).

A deacon told the congregation to pray together with the Holy Father and ask Mary “to take us by the hand and lead us to the Lord Jesus.” After the pope pushed open the gates, he brought up a small floral arrangement of white lilies to the altar and prayed in silence before the icon.

Earlier in the day, the pope further marked the World Day of Peace in his noon Angelus address, when he said peace must not only be cultivated but also conquered in a spiritual fight being waged by war and indifference.

Christians are called at the beginning of the new year to open their hearts and “reawaken the attention to one’s neighbour, to those who are closest,” he said.

“War is not the only enemy of peace, but also indifference, which makes us think only of ourselves and creates barriers, suspicions, fears and closures. These are the enemies of peace,” the pope said.

In an Angelus address Jan. 3, the pope reminded visitors in St. Peter’s Square to keep a small book of the Gospels with them at all times and read at least one verse each day “in order to know Jesus better, to open our heart up wide to Jesus” and share him with others.

The pope warned against “the mystery of evil which threatens our lives, too, and demands our vigilance and attention so it not prevail.”

“Woe to us if we let in” sin which always lies in wait “at the door,” he said.

He also asked people take on the title of his World Day of Peace message, “Overcome Indifference and Win Peace,” like a New Year’s resolution to “put into practice” with God’s help.



CNS/Sid Hastings, EPA

FLOODING DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON — Floodwaters from the nearby Meramec River fill the traffic lanes of I-44 and Missouri Route 141 Dec. 30 in Valley Park, just outside St. Louis. Pope Francis called on Christians to pray for victims of several natural disasters that have hit parts of the United States, Great Britain and Paraguay.

The moment a child is born, the mother is also born. She never existed before. The woman existed, but the mother, never. A mother is something absolutely new.

— Rajneesh