



Consecrated life

Most religious orders have members all over the world and are growing, says Sister Theresa Frey, IBVM, but almost exclusively in the Third World. The Eastern world is not providing many vocations for consecrated life. — page 3

Failure to communicate

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops quietly axed its communications committee the last week of January, hard on the heels of news that Canada's newspaper industry had killed off two small city dailies in Guelph, Ont., and Kelowna, B.C., and merged the competing Sun and Postmedia newsrooms in Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, sending 90 journalists out onto the job market. — page 3

Dangerous Christians

Jesus Christ was considered dangerous to many because of the message of love and mercy he preached, says Rev. Mike Dechant, OMI. People need to have a dangerous heart, which is a heart that is full of God's love. — page 6



Sundance 2016

If there was any doubt the Sundance Film Festival has become as important a world cinema destination as Cannes, it was erased by the 32nd edition of Jan. 21 - 31, writes Gerald Schmitz. "Minus the superficial glitz, glamour, and beaches, the snowy venues of Park City, Utah, showcased a global cornucopia of breakout and heavyweight talent." — page 9

Radical Ash Wednesday

Jacob Lupfer, a columnist who writes about religion, says he struggles with some aspects of faith and isn't particularly devout. "Why, then, do I seek out a church on Ash Wednesday, but rarely on Sundays?" — page 12



Moscow hugs Vatican in Cuban visit

By Cindy Wooden

HAVANA (CNS) — At long last, Pope Francis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow embraced, kissing each other three times.

"Finally," the pope told the

patriarch Feb. 12 as they met in a lounge at Havana's Jose Marti International Airport. "We are brothers," he told the patriarch.

Amid the clicking of cameras and multiple flashes, Kirill was overheard telling the pope, "Things are easier now."



CNS/Paul Haring

AN HISTORIC MEETING — Pope Francis presents gifts to Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow after the leaders signed a joint declaration during a meeting at Jose Marti International Airport in Havana Feb. 12.

Power of One is to give another life

By Andréa Ledding

SASKATOON — Saskatoon Catholic and public schools, Congregation Agudas Israel, and the Saskatoon Human Rights Commission recently commemorated

the Feb. 5 event. "What are we going to do about it?"

She challenged youth to recognize the Power of One and to make a positive impact by standing up to bullying, welcoming those who feel isolated, and being mindful of daily actions in positively affecting others.

"Even though I am just one person, I believe that we all can make that change and stand up. The things that I have done don't even compare close to what Raoul Wallenberg did, but I believe that I am making a change and a difference in the world," noted Kitchen. "So today I challenge each of you to do the same, with just one simple step or act of kindness — to be the movement of change and empower others around you."

She added that the SRC at Centennial Collegiate has a fundraising initiative to help children go to school.

Paige Chevaldayoff noted that she and other students of St. Joseph Catholic High

— **THOSE IN NEED**, page 6



Ledding

POWER OF ONE — From left: David Arnott, Heather Fenyes and Eleisha Mueumbo.

the Power of One, as inspired by Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands in the Second World War.

"We each have the power to make someone's day better, but we also have the power to make it worse," noted Natasha Kitchen, a student from Centennial Collegiate in Saskatoon, which hosted

"It is clearer that this is God's will," Pope Francis told him.

A flight of almost 12 hours capped months of intense negotiations and more than two decades of Vatican overtures to bring a pope and a Russian patriarch together for the first time.

Cuban President Raul Castro played host to the pope and patriarch, who was on a visit to Russian Orthodox communities on the island-nation. Pope Francis had a pastoral visit to Mexico planned for months; the stop in Havana was announced only a week before the meeting.

The addition of a stopover in Cuba was widely seen as a sign of Pope Francis' willingness to go the extra mile to reach out a hand in friendship. At the same time, observers said, it gave those

Russian Orthodox opposed to ecumenism a sense that their church is special and that it bowed to no one in agreeing to the meeting.

In a commentary distributed Feb. 11, Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Borys Gudziak of Paris said: "The pope is demonstrating humility; he is going to the territory of the other. In the eyes of nostalgic Russians, Cuba is almost home territory, a last outpost of a lost Soviet Empire."

For decades, the Russian Orthodox told the Vatican that a meeting between the patriarch and pope was impossible because of the activities of Latin-rite Catholics in Russia and, especially, the Eastern-rite Catholics in Ukraine.

— **PERSECUTED**, page 15

Laudato Si' a call to cultural change

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* may focus on climate change, but the essence of the pope's environmental encyclical is really a call for cultural change, said the director of the Vatican Observatory.

"This book, *Laudato Si'*, really is not about climate change," Brother Guy Consolmagno told a Toronto audience Feb. 8. Consolmagno was in Toronto to deliver the 2016 Faith and Reason Lecture at the Newman Centre.

"It is a call for spiritual renewal, a way of looking at the entire world in a new spiritual way . . . (where) every creature reflects something of God."

A key catalyst to bringing about the understanding that all creation is connected on a spiritual level is a genuine, open dialogue, just what Pope Francis' encyclical aims to produce, said Consolmagno.

And while many claim to be willing to have such a conversation with opposing sides, Consolmagno noted that achieving a genuine debate is easier said than done.

"One key essential to having an open and honest debate is walking into it saying I'm willing to have my mind changed," he said. "Be prepared to be challenged."

For solving climate change will involve a change in human culture.

— **CONSOLMAGNO**, page 4



L'Arche Arnprior (Shawn Gibson)

VOICING PERSPECTIVE — The Sugar Bush in February is a painting by Shawn Gibson. Gibson lives at L'Arche Arnprior, in Arnprior, Ont. His painting is part of the Voicing Perspective event at Toronto's Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, a joint disability arts event combining two exhibits, Disability/Visibility (featuring local photographers with disabilities) and L'Arche International's exhibition Songs of the Heart. See story, page 13.

Don't judge sinners who want to repent, pope says

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — On the eve of sending off “missionaries of mercy” to all corners of the globe, Pope Francis told his specially appointed men that the reassuring strength of God’s love — not the “bludgeon of judgment” — will bring the “lost sheep” back to the fold.

“Being a missionary of mercy is a responsibility that is entrusted to you because it asks you to be a first-hand witness of God’s closeness and his way of loving, not our way, which is always limited and sometimes contradictory,” he said Feb. 9.

Meeting with hundreds of missionaries who came to Rome to receive in person their special papal mandate on Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis said he wanted to highlight the unique aspects of their new ministry so they would carry it out properly and be “a real help” to the people they encounter.

The pope designated 1,142 religious and diocesan priests from all over the world to preach and teach about God’s mercy and serve especially as confessors during the Year of Mercy, which ends Nov. 20. The men were to receive their special mandate during a ceremony in St. Peter’s Basilica Feb. 10.

He told the missionaries that they need to recognize that people’s desire for forgiveness might be obscured by their inability or embarrassment to talk about their sins.

“It’s not easy to go before another person, knowing he represents God, and confess one’s sins,” he said. Confessors should be respectful and encouraging, he said, because the penitents can easily feel exposed and vulnerable “with their weakness and limitations, with the shame of being a sinner.”

“Do not forget, there isn’t a sin before you, but a repentant sinner,” a person who wants to be listened to, forgiven, and brought home again, he told them.

With the little strength they have on their own, sinners want to do everything to be a child of God again, therefore, do not be a judge “with a sense of superiority, as if we were immune from sin,” or be too invasive with inappropriate or prying questions, the pope said.

Help the sinner — who may be feeling the same shame of nakedness Adam and Eve felt in the Garden of Eden when they recognized the evil they had done — by “covering the sinner with the blanket of mercy, so they will no longer be embarrassed and can regain the joy of their filial dignity,” he said.



CNS/Paul Haring

MISSIONARIES OF MERCY — Priests who are Missionaries of Mercy during the Holy Year attend Pope Francis’ celebration of Ash Wednesday Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Feb. 10. More than 700 of the 1,142 missionaries specially appointed by the pope attended the mass. “Look upon your servants, Lord, that we are sending as messengers of mercy, salvation and peace. Guide their steps” and sustain them with “the power of your grace,” the pope prayed.

He said he wants the missionaries to be a living expression of “the church who, like a mother, welcomes anyone who approaches her,” knowing that through her they will become one with Christ.

In the confessional, the pope said, they must remember that it is Christ who welcomes, listens, forgives and grants peace. “We are his ministers and we always need to be forgiven by him first,” he said.

The pope said whatever sin a priest hears, he must always remember his own sinful nature and be a humble channel of God’s mercy.

He said he still feels the joyful, life-changing moment he experienced as a teenager Sept. 21, 1953, after he went to confession.

Speaking off the cuff, he said, “I don’t remember what the priest said” because what he said was not as important as his smile and the overwhelming sense of God’s presence.

“It was like being received by a father,” he said.

Giving to the poor is part of jubilee year

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A jubilee year that does not open people’s wallets to share what they have with others is not a true jubilee, Pope Francis said.

“This pope isn’t inventing that,” he insisted. “It’s in the Bible.”

At his weekly general audience Feb. 10 in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis spoke about the description of a jubilee year in the Book of Leviticus. The religious feast also had serious social implications, he said, because it proclaimed a forgiveness of debts, the freedom of indentured servants and special generosity toward the poor and the stranger.

“It was a kind of ‘general

amnesty,’ which permitted everyone to return to their original situation with the cancellation of every debt, the restitution of land and the possibility of enjoying once again the freedom proper to members of the people of God,” he said.

For God’s chosen people, who are called to holiness, the pope said, the jubilee prescriptions help “to combat poverty and inequality, guaranteeing a dignified life for all and a fair distribution of the land on which to live and draw sustenance.”

During the Catholic Church’s jubilee year, each Christian should think about what they have, he said, and “if they have too many things,” they should “give some to

someone who has nothing; 10 per cent or 50 per cent. The Holy Spirit will inspire you.”

Pope Francis told the crowd gathered in St. Peter’s Square that “a jubilee is for conversion so that our hearts become bigger, more generous, more (like) a child of God, with more love.”

“I’ll tell you something,” he said, “if this jubilee doesn’t reach our pockets, it’s not a real jubilee. Do you understand? This is in the Bible, eh, this pope isn’t inventing that. It’s in the Bible.”

“The biblical message is very clear: courageously open yourselves to sharing; this is mercy,” the pope said. “If we want mercy from God, let us begin by being merciful ourselves.”

A biblical jubilee is about sharing and solidarity, Pope Francis said. “The biblical jubilee was a ‘jubilee of mercy’ because it was lived with a sincere search of the good of one’s needy brothers and sisters.”

The laws governing God’s people in the Bible, he said, also had other means for encouraging people to help others experience God’s mercy. One of those things was the command to tithe a tenth of one’s earnings to the temple and to widows and orphans or to give a portion of the first fruits of one’s harvest.

In addition, he said, the Bible had harsh words for those who charged high interest rates when loaning to the poor. In many countries, he added, usury is still a huge problem and families lose everything and end up on the streets.

“Please, let us pray that in this jubilee the Lord would remove from all our hearts this desire to have more,” he said.

New initiatives prepared to help Catholics enrich Lent

WASHINGTON (CNS) — What do a new social media campaign, a new fundraiser and new features for a popular app have in common?

Launched by different Catholic organizations for Lent, the three efforts aim to help Catholics enrich their lenten prayer experience, sacrifice to help others in need and learn more about the church’s penitential season overall.

Chicago-based Catholic Extension announced development of a social media campaign that will create a video chain of lenten mercy prayers.

“The three pillars of Lent are fasting, prayer and charity,” it said, and the new campaign “is promoting the second pillar and asking American Catholics to focus their lenten prayers on mercy” during the church’s Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Extension’s National Year of Mercy Prayer — launched Feb. 10, Ash Wednesday, and running all through Lent — is asking people to share their prayer intentions through short digital videos. The website www.mercyprayer.org invites Catholics to use their smartphones to record short videos — about 10 seconds long — of themselves stating a simple prayer intention followed by “Lord, have mercy.”

The Knights of Columbus, based in New Haven, Connecticut, is asking those considering a lenten sacrifice to give “40 Bucks

for Lent” and use the hashtag #40BucksForLent to help Middle Eastern Christians and other religious minorities suffering religious persecution in that region of the world.

“Since many people give up something for Lent, we wanted to provide an opportunity for their sacrifice to make a difference — not only in their own life, but in the lives of others,” said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson in a Feb. 9 statement.

The Knights of Columbus began its Christian Refugee Relief Fund in 2014. To date, nearly \$10 million has been raised to provide housing, food, medical aid, education and general relief to persecuted Christians and other religious minorities especially from Iraq and Syria, and to raise awareness about their plight.

In Denver, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, known as FOCUS, has added several new features to its Lentsanity app this lenten season.

The app features illustrated guides, daily mass readings and reflective articles for Lent. The app-exclusive Meat Police Early Warning System sends reminders to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Fridays during Lent.

The Lentsanity app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play. The app also can be accessed at focus.org/lentsanity.



CNS/Carlos Garcia Rawlings, Reuters

POPE VISITS GUADALUPE BASILICA — Pilgrims react as they walk on their knees during their Feb. 11 arrival at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. Pope Francis arrived in the city Feb. 12 for a six-day visit to the country.

Society must use media to help us understand ourselves

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has decided it doesn't need a communications committee any more.

The bishops' conference quietly axed its communications committee the last week of January, hard on the heels of news that Canada's newspaper industry had killed off two small city dailies in Guelph, Ont., and Kelowna, B.C., and merged the competing Sun and Postmedia newsrooms in Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, sending 90 journalists out onto the job market.

The CCCB communications committee had once been a full-scale commission of the bishops with separate groups to deal with communications issues in French and English Canada. It was downgraded to a single, bilingual consultative committee in 2007. In its recent configuration the committee was largely concerned

with internal communications issues and the CCCB's website.

"The hope of the executive committee and the permanent council is that we can work more in collaboration with dioceses at the communication level, and maybe also the media — I mean the religious press," said spokesperson René Laprise.

At the Holy See, Pope Francis' message for World Communications Day is concerned not so much with how the church portrays itself in media as how society and individuals understand themselves through media.

"Communication has the power to build bridges," writes the pope. "To enable encounter and inclusion and thus to enrich society . . . to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony."

These are high ideals for journalists at a time when traditional journalism is under threat. Catholic Register columnist Peter Stockland, who worked more than 30 years in newspapers, including four years as editor-in-

chief of the Montreal Gazette, said newspapers bear some responsibility for their own demise in Canada.

"The economic structures were a train wreck waiting to happen for decades. The idea that the Internet killed newspapers is a partial truth at best," Stockland said.

For many years Canada's newspaper industry typically took 30- and 40-per-cent profits out of their operations without reinvesting in either technology or journalism, said Stockland.

"We clearly need a different economic model. We also need a different editorial model."

From the time that The Washington Post effectively brought down the Nixon administration with investigative reporting, the ideals of journalists subtly shifted through the 1980s and '90s. Instead of the daily grind of ordinary reporting on city council, police, courts, sports and trends, newspapers lived for the next major scandal and thought of themselves as the one institution

that could hold public figures to account.

"Everybody became Woodward and Bernstein. There was a kind of pomposity," said Stockland. "That sort of unworkable or unsustainable economic model ran headlong into an editorial model of 'We know best.' . . . Journalists should never pretend that we know best."

It is the problem of authority and how it is misused both online and in print that most concerns the Pontifical Council on Social Communications, said Salt + Light Media Foundation CEO Rev. Tom Rosica. Rosica has been a longtime member of the council.

"This year the message is in the very specific context of the Year of Mercy," said Rosica. "But language is everything. The church recognizes that there are very serious problems with the language that is being used and the pseudo-authority that is being invoked. We have to apply the principles of charity to the Internet as well."

Pope Francis puts the problem in terms of "vicious circles of condemnation and vengeance which continue to ensnare individuals and nations, encouraging expressions of hatred."

In the context of mercy, media can't engage in a game of "gotcha" or self-righteous poses, Francis said.

"Where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication," says Francis' Communications Day message.

The basic ethos of news reporting in Canada began to lose its credibility and connection with ordinary readers when editors and reporters lost sight of both sides of their mission, said Stockland.

"The old phrase used to be that the job of a newspaper was to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable," he said. "What happened was that the afflicting the comfortable part came very much at the expense of the comforting the afflicted part. Even within whatever remains of print publication, that comforting of the afflicted is really what needs to take precedence again. The balance needs to be restored."

Pope Francis argues for exactly that balance in how the church communicates with itself and the world.

"May our way of communicating help to overcome the mindset that neatly separates sinners from the righteous," he writes. "Our primary task is to uphold the truth with love."

World Day of Communication this year is celebrated on May 8. The patron saint of journalists is St. Francis de Sales, whose feast day is Jan. 24.



CONSECRATED LIFE — Sisters of the Archdiocese of Regina gathered at St. Martin's Parish for the last celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life, which ended Feb. 2.

Consecrated life celebrated in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — They stood up in order as the name of their community was called, and were recognized by the congregation at St. Martin's Parish. They represented all the men and women living a consecrated life in the Regina archdiocese. It was the last celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life, which ended Feb. 2.

Pope Francis last year wanted consecrated life celebrated in a special way, so he declared most of 2015 and part of 2016 as that special year.

The Regina archdiocese has, for several years, recognized the men and women who live as sisters, including those in secular institutes, brothers, deacons and priests who serve in ministries throughout the archdiocese. The celebration rotates among Regina parishes and this year it came to St. Martin's, which used its regular 10 a.m. Sunday mass to honour them.

Several sisters carrying slen-

der, colourful banners, took part in the opening procession and deposited the banners, along with others, in containers below the altar steps.

Sister Yvette Plessis, SCSL (Sisters of Charity of St. Louis), following communion and just before mass ended, read out the individual names of communities and asked members of that community to stand and be recognized. She also noted how long the community had been in Saskatchewan and the particular ministry in which they serve.

Marian Grady of the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate read out the names of the religious order of priests, giving the same information. No priests or deacons were present, with the exception of Rev. Gary Lindenbach, St. Martin's pastor, who celebrated the mass. It being Sunday, the priests and deacons were serving in their parishes.

The celebration has always been organized by SARA (Sisters Association of Regina Arch-

diocese). SARA president Sister Theresa Frey, IBVM, said there are 16 religious communities, two secular Institutes and two associations of the faithful serving in the archdiocese. Canon law separates those who take vows, the religious communities, and those who make promises. The two secular institutes are the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate and the Sisters for Christian Community. There are two associations of the faithful, the Marian Centre Madonna House Apostolate and the Myriam Family of the Prairies. All serve in a variety of ministries in the archdiocese. There is also one person living the eremitical life as a Carmelite solitary. She lives alone in a rural area and was not present.

Most of the religious orders are international and have members all over the world. Frey said most are growing, but almost exclusively in the Third World. The Western world is not providing many vocations for consecrated life, and membership in most communities is declining.

Canada asked to recognize genocide of Christians

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA — The Canadian government should join the European Union in labelling the persecution of Christians by Islamic State jihadists a genocide, said Aid to the Church in Need.

The Catholic charity, which supports the church worldwide, has asked the Canadian government to follow the EU Parliament's Feb. 4 resolution that called ISIS attacks on Middle East Christians a genocide, a crime punishable under international law.

Canada, however, shows no signs of doing so. In announcing changes to Canada's Middle East military mission on Feb. 8, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau skirted the issue of genocide and the EU resolution. He confirmed the withdrawal of Canadian combat aircraft, while increasing military personnel to train fighters and gather intelligence.

He also pledged \$840 million over three years in direct humanitarian assistance and \$270 million for countries hosting refugees.

A spokesperson for Global Affairs Canada declined to single out genocide in the Middle East in response to questions from Canadian Catholic News.

"Canada continues to be concerned by the violence perpetrated by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) against civilians, including members of religious and ethnic minorities," said Diana Khaddaj in an email.

"Canada is committed to preventing and halting genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Canada

is also committed to holding perpetrators of such serious international crimes to account."

The EU Parliament's Resolution 2091 (2016) states: "the individuals acting in the name of the terrorist organization which calls itself Daesh . . . have perpetrated acts of genocide and other grave crimes punishable under international law."

Aid to the Church in Need Canada's national director Marie-Claude Lalonde suggested Canada should follow the EU example in a Feb. 3 letter to the prime minister and foreign affairs minister.

In a news release, Lalonde



CCN/D. Gyapong
Marie-Claude Lalonde

pointed out Iraq had 1.5 million Christians in 2004 but today only 250,000 remain. A similar population remains in Syria, which had 1.1 million Christians in 2011.

— FUNDING, page 5

Crosscultural Services teams with federal government

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The federal government is seeking to pair displaced Syrian refugees fleeing the civil war in their homeland with their families already in Canada or with groups ready to sponsor them.

Syrian Family Links allows Syrians in Canada to identify members of their extended family currently in refugee camps in Turkey, Lebanon or Jordan by filling out a form on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website. Similarly groups ready to sponsor a refugee identify themselves as such by filling out a form. Then the website helps facilitate a match.

It is a joint effort between Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Catholic Crosscultural Services.

“There are very few ways for people who want to sponsor to find a case unless they happen to be personally, or otherwise through an organization, acquainted with someone who has family who needs to be sponsored,” said Carolyn Davis, executive director of Catholic Crosscultural Services. “So if you didn’t know a family or know of someone who knew of a family that wanted to be sponsored you would have no way of connecting. There isn’t a registry somewhere that is publicly accessible.”

Catholic Crosscultural Services is a non-profit agency that assists in the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Canada.

The program launched in late January and is expected to be utilized by many of the government-assisted refugees who began arriving in Canada on Dec. 10.



Catholic Register/M. Swan

Catholic Crosscultural Services CCS Caroline Davis

Although the government is committed to sponsoring 25,000 Syrian refugees by Feb. 26, many families will have been broken up, which can make resettling more difficult.

“When a family unit is settled, say here in Canada, it is easier for them to settle and integrate more effectively if their whole family is here,” said Davis. “You can focus your time and your

energy on doing what you need to do to settle and to be integrated into life in Canada. It is sometimes difficult to make those moves if you are spending a lot of time and energy thinking about and stressing about family who are overseas.”

Davis said because the Syrians being targeted by this program “have been displaced out of their own country of course family is important to them, and now even more so.” She noted that when she returned to work the morning after the website was launched 45 cases had been filed.

The Canadian Council for Refugees is pleased with the new federal government program, noting that unified families make for strong societies.

“We belong in families. It makes us a stronger society in general if we support family reunification,” said Janet Dench, the council’s executive director. “If you are separated from your family that is a difficult situation and it is even more difficult for refugees who have not chosen to move. Refugees in Canada cannot feel completely comfortable and focus entirely on settling in Canada if they are constantly in a state of great anxiety (about their separation from their family.)”

Dench said the program addresses a number of gaps, such as the identification of refugees, pairing sponsors with refugee candidates likely to succeed in Canada and reunification by utilizing modern technology trends.

Although the program is scheduled to end on March 31 and is limited to three regions, there is no cap regarding how many pairs can be produced, how many matches will be made, during the next two months.

For more information or to fill out one of the forms visit cic.go.ca

New bishop has been appointed for Hearst

OTTAWA (CCN) — On Feb. 1, Pope Francis appointed Rev. Robert Bourgon Bishop of the Diocese of Hearst and apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Moosonee.

At the same time, he accepted the resignation of Bishop Vincent Cadieux, OMI, who had served as Moosonee bishop for the previous 24 years and Hearst bishop since 2007.

Cadieux had reached the age limit of 75 last year and offered his resignation then. He remains apostolic administrator of both

dioceses until the bishop-elect takes canonical possession.

Since 2012, Bishop-elect Bourgon has been serving as vicar-general of the Sault Ste-Marie diocese. Born in Sudbury, Ont., on March 10, 1956, he studied at Saint Paul University in Ottawa where he received a master’s of divinity and a doctorate in canon law. Ordained a priest to the Sault Ste-Marie diocese on May 8, 1981, he pastored several parishes before becoming the judicial vicar of the diocesan matrimonial tribunal in 1988.

After completing his doctoral studies in 1998, Bourgon returned to serve as the diocese’s judicial vicar and as the Toronto Regional Matrimonial Tribunal’s associate judicial vicar. In 2000, he became canonical affairs episcopal vicar in addition to his tribunal duties, and served three parishes in Levack, Cartier and Dowling.

Cadieux was born in Alfred, Ont., in 1940. He was ordained a priest of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1966. Appointed Moosonee bishop Dec. 5, 1991, Cadieux was named apostolic administrator of Hearst in 2006, after Bishop André Vallée retired in 2005. He was named Hearst bishop in 2007.

As a member of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cadieux served on the former

ecumenism commission, and the former evangelization of peoples commission. He chaired the latter commission from 2003 to 2008 as well as the former French Sector Christian education commission. Cadieux also participated in the conference’s programs and priorities committee.

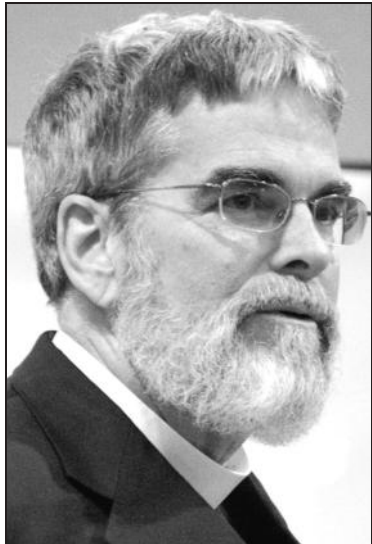
The Hearst diocese services a Catholic population of 31,790 in 28 parishes and missions with 23 diocesan priests, four religious sisters, two permanent deacons and 13 lay pastoral assistants.

The Moosonee diocese serves a mostly indigenous Catholic population of 3,830 in 14 parishes and missions that are served by three religious priests, one permanent deacon, one religious brother and three lay pastoral assistants.

We have to change the way we live: Consolmagno

Continued from page 1

“There is a need for a solution but the solution is not merely a technological fix or economic fix or a political fix but a change in the way we as human beings behave,” said Consolmagno. “We have to change the way we live. The first thing that we do is that we start talking to each other and listening to each other.”



Catholic Register/E. Boudreau

Brother Guy Consolmagno

Not only do individuals need to change their minds, there is also a systemic problem inherent to capitalism in a free market — profits have become the driving force of industry.

“Profit in the narrow sense is an inadequate tool to use to make decisions about what do I really want to do because it loses sight of the questions that we ought to be asking (such as) what is the outcome that I really want to have,” he said. “That is the root cause of the environment breakdown of everything, the sinfulness of everything that we do.”

And while changing the main motivation of a global economy may seem impossible, Consolmagno said it is as simple as changing what we desire.

“Don’t desire health, riches, honour, longevity,” he said. “None of those things are bad but none of those things are the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is to desire that which helps us be with God.”

About 200 people were in attendance for Consolmagno’s hour-long talk, among them environmentalist Cathy Lacroix, a member of Citizens Climate Lobby. Lacroix agreed that cultural change is necessary before the impact of climate change can really be addressed.

“We’re not going to solve climate change by putting on a sweater,” she said. “There does need to be institutional change. We need a change in our own way of thinking before we get into solutions.”

RETREATS at MARTHA RETREAT CENTRE

SIX-DAY SILENT GUIDED RETREAT
May 7 - May 14, 2016
Director: Rev. Peter McKenna, SCJ
“The Emmaus Journey”
During this retreat we will be invited to become more fully God’s work of art by realizing how faith has led and can lead us to experience newness of life emerging from losses or from any kind of transition or change.
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SIX-DAY SILENT GUIDED RETREAT  
June 4 - June 11, 2016  
Director: Bishop Gerald Wiesner, OMI  
“I have come that you may have life,  
and have it abundantly” *Jn 10:10*  
*The phrase, “have it (life) abundantly” is part of the Good Shepherd theme and will be used to help retreatants gather up their experiences in life and come to see one’s life as rich in God’s grace and mercy.*

These guided retreats begin at 7:30 p.m. on the first evening  
and close after breakfast on the last day. **Cost: \$450**

MARTHA RETREAT CENTRE  
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# NDP MP tables motion on palliative care

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The lone NDP MP on the parliamentary committee on physician-assisted dying tabled a motion Feb. 4 to establish a right to palliative care.

MP Murray Rankin’s (Victoria, B.C.) motion would have the committee call on the government to “work with the provinces and territories on a flexible integrated model of palliative care by establishing the right to universal palliative care and implementing a Pan-Canadian Palliative Care and End-of life Care Strategy that is tied to dedicated funding.”

Rankin read that motion and

several others related to palliative care into the record Feb. 4, as the committee heard the last of 62 witnesses. He told CCN he “moved a series of motions to make sure palliative care is front and centre in the committee’s report.

The committee has now gone behind closed doors to brief analysts who will draft the report that must be finished by Feb. 25.

Rankin said he does not include physician-assisted dying as part of palliative care. “No, we see them as separate issues,” he said. Palliative care is treatment to manage pain and provide dignified care “when it is clear the patient can’t be cured.”

A number of witnesses to the committee, however, have urged the government to include assisted death as part of a continuum of health care, such as that in Quebec’s euthanasia law.

Seventy per cent of Canadians can’t access palliative care and “some estimates are even higher than that,” Rankin said.

The committee “must be committed to implementing the Carter decision and providing recommendations on how it goes forward,” Rankin said, noting that was only one wing of a bird. The other wing “has to be a serious commitment to palliative care,” making it a “reality and a right.”

My motion is the very first one ensuring there is actual funding for palliative care by the federal government, he said. “We need to put our money where our mouth is.”

Euthanasia opponents welcomed the motion.

“The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition has always supported a right to palliative care, so long as they do not define assisted death as a part of palliative care,” said the Coalition’s executive director Alex Schadenberg in an email.

The Coalition’s legal counsel, Hugh Scher, said palliative care already “is a right.” He expects a court will be asked to



Murray Rankin



Art Babych

**BUSY LUNCH COUNTER** — A deer buck in woods near Ottawa recently approaches a feeder only to find a hare in his food. Don’t you just hate when that happens?

## B.C. college receives gift from Sisters of Saint Ann

VANCOUVER — Saint Mark’s College at the University of British Columbia is pleased to announce that the Sisters of Saint Ann have contributed \$3 million to the college to establish the Marie Anne Blondin Chair in Theology. The endowment represents the largest in the college’s history, and also one of the largest

gifts received by a Catholic theological college in B.C.

The Sisters of Saint Ann is a congregation of women religious founded in Vaudreuil, Que., in 1850. The Endowed Chair memorializes the congregation’s founder, Marie Esther Blondin, now Blessed Marie Anne Blondin.

The congregation was origi-

nally formed to educate children in rural Quebec. Starting with just 30 pupils shortly after their arrival in B.C. in 1858, by 1958 the congregation’s sisters counted over 6,000 students in 34 schools throughout B.C., the Yukon and Alaska. The order maintains a commitment to religious education in rural areas to this day.

“This generous gift will help continue the congregation’s 150-year strong legacy of supporting education throughout British Columbia,” said Dr. Peter Meehan, principal of Saint Mark’s College.

“Having an Endowed Chair will enable the college to expand our academic and outreach mission by supporting important areas of teaching and research, including the social teachings of the Catholic Church, pastoral theology, theology and culture, Catholic ethics and morality, and the Second Vatican Council and its legacy,” continued Meehan. “In keeping with Pope Francis’ call for the church to embrace the need for encounter and dialogue, the gift will benefit students from all walks of life, including those working in education, health care, pastoral care, volunteer positions, and countless other endeavours.”

The chair will provide sustainable funding to support teaching and research activities at the college, made possible by annual gains earned from the endowment. The endowed gift will also

provide opportunities for the college to develop outreach and distance education programs accessible to undeserved areas of the province.

“Religious education in B.C. is now mainly the responsibility of Catholic lay people, yet there is a lack of opportunity for continuing theological development in many parts of the province,” said Sister Marie Zarowny, provincial leader of the Sisters of Saint Ann. “With the evolution and promising future of Saint Mark’s College, the sisters desire to support a stable theology department of excellence, one that responds theologically to our evolving times and is at the forefront of the church’s dialogue with culture and the modern world.”

“Saint Mark’s College was founded by the Basilian Fathers, and for many years has been educating leaders to become well-versed in the Catholic tradition,” said Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver and Chancellor of Saint Mark’s College. “Along with expanding its programs in theology, the college recently launched an undergraduate program to prepare future teachers. With a Saint Mark’s education, these women and men will be capable of strengthening the ever-growing role and mission of the laity in their service as a leaven to the world.”

the NDP knew the Carter decision was coming, as the case was working its way through the courts. The Supreme Court of Canada heard arguments in the Carter case in October 2014.

He did not expect the Carter decision to “be as broad as it was.” Angus said he was disappointed the previous federal government “never moved on it and the Supreme Court came down like a ton of bricks and now we’re really behind the eight-ball here.”

Angus expressed concern the new government was going to be coming up with legislation that will have a “profound impact on society” with little consultation and without getting a “broad base of Canadians involved,” and “without a serious commitment to palliative care on the table.”

“This is all supposed to be wrapped up in June by law,” he said.

## Increased funds are welcome

Continued from page 3

“International law imposes on states and on the international community the obligation to prevent genocide, to defend those groups that are the object of genocide and to convict and punish those responsible,” the Aid to the Church in Need release said.

Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace In-Canada Programs deputy director Ryan Worms said he welcomed Trudeau’s announcement of increased financial assistance for the Syrian population displaced inside the country and for refugees in neighbouring Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

“We hope that the government will do everything in its power to ensure the humanitarian support reaches the most needy and that includes working to ensure access to the worst areas in Syria under siege,” he said. “At the same time we welcome with hope the increase of financial support, we are worried to see the Canadian government pursuing a military solution to the conflict.

“We think the only long-lasting solution will come from diplomatic efforts and negotiations between the belligerents and the inclusion of civil society.”

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# Christians called to be dangerous, says Oblate

By Paul Paproski, OSB

MUENSTER, Sask. — “When you hear the word ‘dangerous,’ what comes to mind?” Rev. Mike Dechant, OMI, asked the participants of the annual Newman Retreat, Jan. 29 - 31, at St. Peter’s Abbey. The word “dangerous” conjures images of threats to one’s life or way of thinking, some of the respondents said. Others felt that dangerous could mean a warning or something that is challenging.

Reflecting on the theme of the retreat, Heart to Heart, Dechant told the true story of a teenage girl who was cyberbullied by some teenage boys. The boys thought she had an attitude problem at school and decided to get even by sending her demeaning text messages. One of their peers knew that what they were doing was wrong and opened his heart to her by counterbalancing the degrading messages with positive texts. The power of all the text messages was related by the girl to the kind boy. She thanked him for his support and revealed that she was overwhelmed by the cyberbullying and was going to “do myself in,” but his many affirmations gave her the strength to keep on.

When the young man was asked what he discovered in all of this, he said, “I realize I am dangerous,” Dechant remarked.

Pope Francis said we need to



Paproski

Rev. Mike Dechant, OMI

be champions of service, but in that service there needs to be the message that God is good and that God is good all the time. People need to have a dangerous heart which is a heart that is full of God’s love.

Jesus Christ was considered dangerous to many around him because of the messages of love and mercy that he preached. Jesus said that if anyone wants to be his disciple, then that person must follow him. Jesus often challenged his followers to look at their perceptions of others. In doing so, Jesus was sometimes accused of violating sacred laws and traditions. Jesus cured a man on the Sabbath and was criticized of breaking the Sabbath law

which forbids work. The actions of Jesus were not meant to demean the Sabbath but to illustrate that the person is what matters, Dechant remarked.

The critics of Jesus believed in clear laws and rules, but they enforced them without hearts of compassion and mercy. A lawyer informed Jesus of the laws he was following to inherit everlasting life. Jesus was pleased with the lawyer and then told him the story of the Good Samaritan, where a man went against the precepts of the law by showing mercy to someone in need.

Mother Teresa is someone who challenged norms and customs simply by the way she lived, Dechant said, and as a result she was dangerous to many. When Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian work, she was invited to a lavish banquet in New York City. She declined the invitation and asked that the money for the banquet be sent to her religious order where the money could be used for charity. Mother Teresa disrupted the pattern of recognition because of her different priorities which were to spend money where it was needed.

Pope Francis is dangerous to some because he is shaking up the church hierarchy, Dechant commented. Shortly after being elected, Francis did a dangerous thing by going to a prison and washing the feet of prisoners and

kissing their feet. The pope later changed the way the Vatican soup kitchen operated because he felt it was not reaching enough people. The pope fired the cardinal in charge and hired another official, telling him to sell the desk in his office and use the money for the soup kitchen.

Some students from St. Albert, Alberta experienced the meaning of dangerous when they travelled with Dechant to New Orleans to help people whose homes had been damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The students assisted parishioners of two Oblate parishes in the French quarter. Dechant and the students helped clean and renovate homes. The people there were very welcoming and gracious. The students brought them prayer shawls.

“The shawls were knitted by

moms and nuns. Well, the hugs and kisses and tears. It was overwhelming. And it was overwhelming for the kids to see the gratitude of the folks.”

The experience of the love and mercy changed both the students and those they helped. A simple act of goodness and opening one’s heart to others can be so dangerous and powerful that it changes both the giver and the receiver.

“Did you have anyone come into your life who was dangerous?” Dechant asked.

St. Paul encouraged everyone to become saints and to live a life of holiness. Always be thankful, be grateful. What matters is how people treat others, he said. Put on holiness, put on love. Be open to be transparent and to take a risk.

“Don’t wait till you are dead to be a saint,” Dechant said.

## Zarowny wins Kurtenbach Peace Pen Award

QUALICUM BEACH, BC — Yvonne Zarowny from Qualicum Beach, B.C., has been selected by an independent panel as the recipient of the 2015 Leo Kurtenbach Award presented to a contributor to Letters to the Editor of the Prairie Messenger. Relevant, well resourced and challenging are some of the words used to describe Zarowny’s winning letter for 2015. Her letter, titled “ISIS responding to corporate capitalism’s equally nasty war” drew the attention of the panel as one presenting a fuller story of the ISIS crisis and what may offer potential for more peaceful solutions. Zarowny has received the third Peace Pen Award which was established honouring Leo Kurtenbach, now 96, avid reader



Yvonne Zarowny

and researcher, dedicated and influential writer for peace.

## World Religion Day observed

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Extra chairs were required to accommodate the almost 200 people who attended the annual World Religion Day held Jan. 18 at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Regina.

all nations be one. She was followed by a Buddhist monk dressed in the traditional saffron robe, who suggested everyone knows the meaning of peace but doesn’t realize it. They were followed by Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Regina Qu’Appelle Spiritual Care, Satya Sai Baba, Sikh, Unitarian and Christian traditions. Several of the eastern religions chanted in their traditional languages, followed by an English translation.

Rabbi Jeremy Parnes greeted everyone with the traditional “Shalom.”

“We are gathered here to share our faith to live free and express our faith in harmony.” He referred to a tapestry hanging at the front of the gathering which he commissioned. It contains symbols of the various faith traditions and the four Hebrew letters that spell out God’s personal name.

“It is unpronounceable,” said the rabbi, “but if it were it would sound like this,” and he gave out a deep breath. “It is the breath of life.”

Rev. Mary Brubacher of the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region chaplaincy also prayed for refugees from the world’s wartorn countries and an end to poverty. There were several references to ecology, care and health of the earth. The Unitarian representative said it was inspiring to hear the words of others and called for peace for Mother Earth. The Christian representative simply recited the Prayer of St. Francis which calls for peace and forgiveness.

The service was opened with the traditional blowing of the shankh and closed with the blowing of the ram’s horn. The shankh is a symbol in Hindu and Buddhist rituals, and the rams horn is used in Jewish rituals and symbolizes the presence of God.

## Help those in need by even smallest way

Continued from page 1

School in Saskatoon had recently welcomed Syrian refugees, greeting them at the airport, and gathering winter gear such as toques and mittens for the newcomers.

“Understanding of the Power of One is not that we expect you to cure diseases and to end riots and wars, but we help those in need by even the smallest ways possible. Reaching out to make a difference, helping to make others welcome and warm,” said Chevaldayoff. “Because as we all learned today change starts with the Power of One and the difference of one person, so what can you do to help?”

The high school students were responding to the day’s program, which included highlights presented by Heather Fenyes of Congregation Agudas Israel, about Raoul Wallenberg, who saved some 100,000 lives during the Second World War.

An estimated 50,000 of those saved were granted immunity with diplomatic passports and safehouses. Wallenberg additionally undertook humanitarian efforts to establish soup kitchens,

hospitals, and orphanages. And finally, when the Nazis were advancing on the Budapest ghettos, “he had the Nazi generals put on notice that they would be held accountable and brought to justice, if not executed, for their war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Nazi generals desisted from their assault and some 70,000 more Jews were saved, thanks to the indomitable courage of one person prepared to confront radical evil.”

Fenyes noted that the Power of One to make a difference was an inspiration to all of us to follow Wallenberg’s example in as many ways as possible.

Judge David Arnott of the Human Rights Commission echoed her sentiments. Eleisha Muembo, a recent graduate of St. Joseph Catholic High School, shared his story of fleeing Kenya and the Congo as a refugee, and the Power of One to hide him and his family so that they survived to see another day, and ultimately be transported safely to Canada to begin new lives.

“That’s the Power of One, to give another person life each and

every day,” he noted, adding that the Syrian conflict seems to him to be even greater than that of the Congo. “I see the pictures and it looks like it is being utterly destroyed, so we need to make a difference to those refugees who have nowhere to go.”

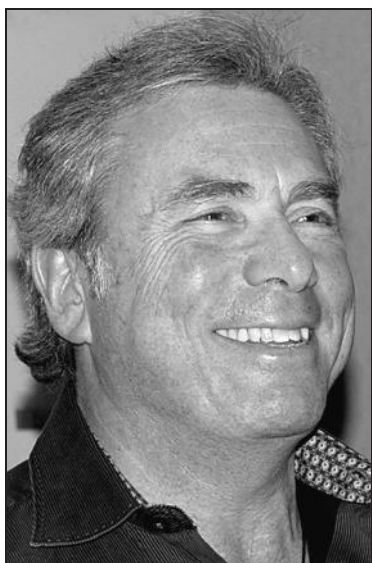
The afternoon also included music provided by the students, who packed the Centennial High School theatre to listen to the messages of the days’ speakers.

“Each of us can make a difference,” stressed Natasha Kitchen. “I think that’s really inspiring and hopeful.”

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PM File

Rabbi Jeremy Parnes

“It’s getting bigger every year,” said Krishan Kapila, the first president of the Regina Multi-Faith Forum that organizes the event.

World Religion Day brings together local representatives of religions who each present a short prayer, usually asking for peace and harmony among nations. This year a few gave short speeches as well.

The Baha’i representative led off the 11 religions and asked that



# Sister Frey recognized for 65 years of service

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Sister Theresa Frey, IBVM, was a teacher for 30 years, including two years in Toronto where she taught after she took her final vows as an IBVM (Institute of the Blessed



Flegel

Sister Theresa Frey, IBVM (Virgin Mary) sister. That was followed by 28 years of teaching in various Saskatchewan communities before she took up parish work for the Regina archdiocese as an administrator in parishes around Sedley and Marquis. Since retiring “for the third

time” she settled in Regina, where she has volunteered and served in various churches. In recognition of her 65 years as teacher, parish administrator and volunteer, the Regina Catholic School Board, at a Feb. 2 luncheon honouring men and women in consecrated life, presented her with a Wilf Perreault print. She had no idea she was to receive the print and was very surprised and pleased.

In an interview with the PM, Frey described her vocation as a call from God. “I was a typical teenager. I went to dances and had boyfriends, but there always seemed to be something missing in my heart. I know now it was God calling me to service.”

She is the middle child in a family of 14 who grew up on a farm near Kronau, Sask., about a half-hour’s drive southeast of Regina. “We went to public school and learned our catechism at our mother’s knee and at church,” said Frey.

The well-known archdiocesan retired priest Joe Frey is Sister Theresa’s brother.

Frey, along with Sister Veronica Hagar, entered the Loreto novitiate in Toronto in 1950, and both in time returned to Saskatchewan. Hagar opened an art studio in Regina, where she taught adults pottery, oil and watercolour paint-

ing. Both are now retired. Frey continues to “help out,” but Hagar’s eyesight has prevented her from being involved.

Frey celebrated the 65th anniversary with her community in Toronto in September 2015. Hagar was not well at the time and was unable to attend.

## Director of Education resigns

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Regina’s Roman Catholic School Division Director of Education, Rob Currie, has resigned to take on new challenges with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. He said the division is in a good position in terms of growth, facilities development, a dedicated and committed staff, and it was time for a change in leadership.

“So after much discernment, prayer and reflection I made the decision to approach the board to make a change,” said Currie in an interview with the PM.

He described the position with the Ministry of Education as an opportunity to serve what he called the learning agenda in a provincial perspective. He will become an assistant deputy minister in the Ministry of Education Aug. 1. He will remain with the school division until the end of July and will be involved in the mentoring of the new director whenever that individual is hired.

Currie is a product of Regina Catholic Schools, where he obtained his elementary and high school education. He obtained a

The IBVM sisters are generally known as Loreto Sisters. It goes back to their foundress, who had a devotion to the Holy House of Loreto at Loreto, Italy. The legend is that the house in Nazareth in which the Blessed Virgin conceived and raised Jesus was, because of political unrest, moved

by angels several times until it landed in Loreto. There is an ancient small house encased by a basilica at the site, and it is a major site for pilgrimages. It is also the site where many miracles are said to occur. IBVM convents became known as Loreto Convents and the sisters in them as Sisters of Loreto.

Bachelor of Arts degree through Campion College, University of Regina, then his Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Victoria. He began his teaching career at St. Joseph School in Smithers, B.C. He began



Flegel

Rob Currie

his Regina Catholic School Division career in the fall of 1985.

He taught in various schools, became a principal, then moved to the school board office as a supervisor of Education Services

with responsibility for daily operations within the schools. He applied for the director’s position after the resignation of the previous director and has served in that position for eight years.

“It has been eight glorious years of opportunity,” he said.

He described the opening mass for the school year, which the entire school board staff attends, as a highlight of his 31 years with the division. “It has an enthusiasm and an energy that is contagious. It brings together the entire school division, the clergy of the archdiocese, and it is a celebration of renewal at the start of a school year. It sets a fire under everyone for the whole year.”

Another highlight has been the faith-based support of the Catholic School Division. “This is a faith community that values not only education but also faith, a Catholic faith, and they are absolutely wanting that Catholic faith to be an opportunity for each and every child.”

He said he will miss the faith-based component that starts and ends every meeting with a prayer. “I have been truly blessed to serve 31 years in a faith-based Catholic education system.”

## Rev. Bill Mahoney dies in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — For 46 years Rev. F. William (Bill) Mahoney served first the Diocese of Gravelbourg then the Archdiocese of Regina not only as a diocesan priest but in various other ministries as well. Mahoney died at the age of 78 after failing health forced an early retirement in 2009.

Mahoney was born in Swift Current, obtained his early education in Success, Sask., high school at Campion College in Regina and St. Peter’s College, Muenster. He studied philosophy at St. Joseph’s Seminary, Edmonton, then transferred to Le Grande Seminaire de St. Boniface, where he studied theology. He completed his studies at Le Grande Seminaire d’Ottawa and was ordained a priest May 19, 1963, in his home parish of Sacred Heart in Swift Current.

He served first in the Marriage Tribunal of the former Diocese of

Gravelbourg as well as in several rural parishes. He studied psychology at the Illinois University of Professional Psychology in 1980 and became a psychotherapist at Bosco Homes, treating troubled youth until the organization closed its doors.

Mahoney developed the archdiocese’s first set of guidelines for dealing with sexual abuse. He was also the co-ordinator of the archdiocesan Lay Ministry Program and for many years provided personnel support for the Regina archdiocese. He spent time working with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, and was also involved in the organization of Development and Peace in Saskatchewan. The last 13 years of his ministry were spent as parish priest at Regina’s Little Flower Parish, where he worked with Sister Melvina Hruska, RNDM, who became his caregiver in the latter years of his life.



Rev. F. William Mahoney

“He was very compassionate and merciful,” said Hruska in an interview with the PM. “He had a heart as big as he was.” Hruska said Mahoney had a tremendous capacity for knowledge.

Hruska was with him and three members of his family when he died Jan. 19. “It was a gift for me to be there, as he greeted death joyfully. He gave to his dying the same energy and zest he gave to every other ministry he had in his lifetime, and he never lost his sense of humour.”

A celebration of Mahoney’s life was held Jan. 29 in Little Flower Parish Hall with a funeral mass following in the church.

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Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers. Wed. evenings, Feb. 24, March 2, 9, 16, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Cost: \$10/session or \$45/series. **\*Please note: this series is being offered at St. Andrew’s Anglican Church in Humboldt.**

**The Book of Exodus** — Paul Facht, OMI.  
Wednesdays, March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Cost: \$15.

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Tues., March 8, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Cost: \$10 or by donation.  
**Webcast location:** Queen’s House, Saskatoon.  
**Facilitator:** Sarah Donnelly.

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Second Wednesday of the month, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
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**Celebrating God’s Mercy During Lent**  
Bishop Gerry Wiesner, OMI. Mon., March 14, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Cost: \$10.

**Exploring a Non-Violent God: An Ecumenical Lenten Retreat.** Sarah Donnelly.  
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# Resist the urge to rush things; practise patience

## Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



My mother was notorious for her inability to keep a secret, and she didn't seem to like being surprised. My dad tried to surprise her with gifts over the years, but her impatience made it difficult to keep anything from her. In fact, she often nipped a potential surprise in the bud by telling us in detail exactly what she wanted

for birthdays or Christmas. Mom wasn't really one to "hold things in her heart and ponder them." She was more a *let's get this out into the open and talk about it right now* kind of person. Dad, on the other hand, could ponder things endlessly. As much as Mom loved to spill the beans, Dad loved to sit with things, turn them over and over in his mind, contemplating a secret he would not share. Sometimes it drove me crazy. As a kid, I was definitely like my mom. I didn't want to wait for

anything. But I remember a particular Christmas gift when I was 11 or 12 years old. I love rings and had put the suggestion on my Christmas list, not really expecting to get one, but when my aunt Mary Ann arrived home before Christmas and she and Mom went into the bedroom, I figured they were looking at my gift. I couldn't contain myself. A day or so later, when I was alone, I rummaged through Mom's dresser until I found the treasure: a small jewelry box that contained an exquisite pearl ring. My delight lasted only as long as it takes to inhale, and was replaced instantly by shame. On Christmas morning I feigned surprise and no one knew of my transgression. Except for me. I had to live with the fact that I had spoiled the surprise for myself, and it didn't sit well. I never again tried to search for another hidden gift. Keeping secrets is similar, except it's from the inside, rather than without. A secret sits inside, tickling, like a sore throat. *Swallow it down.* Or urgent, like a quickened heartbeat. *Take a deep breath.* Or painful, like a sore stomach. *If I just divulge the secret I'll feel so much better.* Will I? I've read that people are attracted to the characteristics they admire in others but don't necessarily have. Could be true, because I married Russ, the best secret-keeper I know, and our children have taken after him.

Our son Gerard kept his intention to propose to Sarah a secret for more than four months. On Christmas Eve in 2014 Gerard swore Russ to secrecy when he told him of his intention to give Sarah an engagement ring on Christmas Day. Russ didn't even tell me. I was a bit crushed, but not because I wasn't in on the secret until everyone else found out. It was because I realized I probably couldn't have kept the secret anyway, and I wasn't the only one who knew that. As it turned out, to be so taken by surprise was completely wonderful. The tension of holding something inside is both unbearable and exquisite. Maybe if I could think of myself as the oyster that made the pearl for my long-ago ring, holding something precious yet irritating, I could gently incubate, rather than prying the thing open before it is ready to be revealed in all its lustre. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, has often written on the subject of patience and holding tension: "Life unfolds according to its own innate rhythms which try our patience and will not let themselves be rushed, except at a cost. . . . Whenever, because of impatience, selfishness, or our unwillingness to stay inside a tension, we short-circuit that process we, in slight or deep ways, violate their reality." If there's one thing about life, it's that we keep getting chances to practise.



AWARDS SEASON — Winners in the Oscar race will be determined on Feb. 28. Meanwhile, the film *Spotlight*, about the Boston Globe investigative reporting team that uncovered the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church, has been winning numerous awards. In this photo actors Billy Crudup, John Slattery, Michael Keaton, Liev Schreiber, Mark Ruffalo, Brian d'Arcy James and Rachel McAdams accept the Cast in a Motion Picture award for *Spotlight* during the 22nd Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards Jan. 30 in Los Angeles. The film also won the ensemble cast award at the recent Critics' Choice Awards.

## Listen to messages instead of rejecting them because of how they are delivered

By Caitlin Ward

I've been thinking about . . . stuff, lately. I know. I'm so deep, me.

### Formation By Beyoncé

I tried to finish that sentence in about five different ways, and then I just gave up. I've been thinking about a lot of things, I guess. It starts with Beyoncé's new single, *Formation* — the one she released right before the Super Bowl and performed at the half-time show. I did not see it in real time, as I'm not really into American football and as a result, I'd have no idea when the half-time show would be performed. The song elicited a strong reaction from many quarters. The National Sheriffs Association in the United States has expressed annoyance at the perceived anti-police message in the video and the performance at the Super Bowl. Certain (generally more conservative) quarters in the States are calling for a general boycott of Beyoncé for . . . hating America, I think. Well, not quite. I'm being flippant. The video ref-

erences the disarray in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, police violence against people of colour in the United States, and the historic oppression of black people in the country. It's been called "controversial" at best and "race-baiting" at worst. Her Super Bowl performance raised even more ire, as her dancers' clothing referenced the Black Panthers, and they danced in an X formation, presumably in reference to Malcolm X. It's a bold stand on race and violence in the United States — the kind of stand that raises hackles. It's been received well in certain quarters, and very very poorly in others. So I've been thinking about . . . race relations, lately. I've been reading about the Jian Ghomeshi trial, too. It's been a study in how very bad the

Canadian justice system is at dealing with cases of sexual assault specifically and gendered violence in general. Popular discourse debates whether or not we should treat sexual assault the same way we treat other crimes. Reality bears out that we already don't. There's a debate about whether or not the burden of proof should be on the prosecution in such cases, but perhaps

more pressing, perhaps the court should put the defendant on trial instead of the accusers. In murder trials, nobody asks if the victim secretly wanted to die, and wasn't the murderer just doing what he/she thought the victim wanted? Not so much in a sexual assault trial; the Ghomeshi trial has once again

— THINK, page 13

What happened at the New Wil'ins?  
Bitch, I'm back by popular demand

CHORUS  
Y'all haters corny with that Illuminati mess  
Paparazzi, catch my fly, and my cocky fresh  
I'm so reckless when I rock my Givenchy dress (stylin')  
I'm so possessive so I rock his Roc necklaces  
My daddy Alabama, Momma Louisiana  
You mix that negro with that Creole make a Texas bama  
I like my baby heir with baby hair and afros  
I like my negro nose with Jackson Five nostrils  
Earned all this money but they never take the country out me  
I got a hot sauce in my bag, swag

*Oh yeah, baby, oh yeah I, ohhhhhh, oh, yes, I like that  
I did not come to play with you hoes, haha  
I came to slay, bitch  
I like cornbreads and collard greens, bitch  
Oh, yes, you besta believe it*

CHORUS 2  
I see it, I want it, I stunt, yellow-bone it  
I dream it, I work hard, I grind 'til I own it  
I twirl on them haters, albino alligators  
El Camino with the seat low, sippin' Cuervo with no chaser  
Sometimes I go off (I go off), I go hard (I go hard)  
Get what's mine (take what's mine), I'm a star (I'm a star)  
Cause I slay (slay), I slay (hey), I slay (OK), I slay (OK)

All day (OK), I slay (OK), I slay (OK), I slay (OK)  
We gon' slay (slay), gon' slay (OK), we slay (OK), I slay (OK)  
I slay (OK), OK (OK), I slay (OK), OK, OK, OK, OK  
OK, OK, ladies, now let's get in formation, cause I slay  
OK, ladies, now let's get in formation, cause I slay  
Prove to me you got some co-ordination, cause I slay  
Slay trick, or you get eliminated

When he f- me good I take his ass to Red Lobster, cause I slay  
When he f- me good I take his ass to Red Lobster, cause I slay  
If he hit it right, I might take him on a flight on my chopper, cause I slay  
Drop him off at the mall, let him buy some J's, let him shop up, cause I slay  
I might get your song played on the radio station, cause I slay  
I might get your song played on the radio station, cause I slay  
You just might be a black Bill Gates in the making, cause I slay  
I just might be a black Bill Gates in the making

CHORUS2  
(Bridge: Beyoncé)  
OK, ladies, now let's get in formation, I slay  
OK, ladies, now let's get in formation  
You know you that bitch when you cause all this conversation  
Always stay\ gracious, best revenge is your paper

(Outro)  
Girl, I hear some thunder  
Golly, look at that water, boy, oh lord

Ward is a Saskatoon-based free-lance writer who spends her days (and most nights) working at a small Catholic college. Her less eloquent thoughts can be found at [www.twitter.com/newsetofstrings](http://www.twitter.com/newsetofstrings)



Sundance at the cutting edge, and a slice of Slamdance

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



If there was any doubt the Sundance Film Festival has become as important a world cinema destination as Cannes, it was erased by the 32nd edition of Jan. 21 - 31. Minus the superficial glitz, glamour, and beaches, the snowy venues of Park City, Utah, showcased a global cornucopia of breakout and heavyweight talent in 123 feature-length and 72 short films, most world premieres, drawn from almost 13,000 submissions. Better still, Sundance gives documentaries equal billing with dramas and its dedication to independent and diverse voices (49 first-time filmmakers and 41 female filmmakers in the feature categories) keeps it at the cutting edge.

Moreover, the festival continues to expand its range of cinematic innovation. The New Frontier section featured both films like documentary cinematographer Kirsten Johnson's haunting photographic memoir *Cameraperson*, and virtual reality installations including, from Canada's National Film Board, *The Unknown Photographer*, a strikingly surreal exploration of battlefield topography drawn from First World War images.

Among a range of special events, Sundance is also recognizing the cinematic qualities of the best new work that is being made for television. J.J. Abrams came to the festival not to talk

new possibilities it also presents challenges for established as well as aspiring independent filmmakers. A "power of story" panel on The Art of Film held in the historic Egyptian Theatre celebrated the virtues of preserving the option to shoot on traditional celluloid. It featured a stimulating conversation among actor-director Alex Ross Perry (who appeared in the U.S. dramatic selection *Joshy*), writer-directors Christopher Nolan (*Interstellar*) and Colin Trevorrow (*Jurassic World*), and cinematographer Rachel Morrison (who lensed the Oscar-nominated documentary *What Happened Miss Simone?*).

The promise of the festival was evident from the opening day press conference in the same theatre with festival director John Cooper, Sundance Institute executive director Keri Putnam, and Institute president and founder Robert Redford. The reason the festival has become such a destination festival of discovery is that it is constantly pushing the cinematic boundaries.

Sundance sees itself not as an advocacy organization but as a platform for supporting artists who are expanding the form for telling great stories; in the case of documentaries addressing important issues and human situations in ways that engage audiences. Cooper observed that this is a time of tremendous evolution in



G. Schmitz

SUNDANCE OPENING — John Cooper, Keri Putnam, and Robert Redford at the opening Sundance press conference Jan. 21, 2016.

miere. *The Birth of a Nation* is the result of a seven-year Sundance-supported passion project by 36-year-old Nate Parker who is the writer, director, co-producer and principal actor in a searing drama that tells the story of Nat Turner, the charismatic leader of an 1831 slave revolt that took place in Southampton, Virginia. For Parker, "Nat Turner was my hero long before I became an artist." But as Parker explained in emotional post-screening question and answer sessions, although he grew up near where those events took place, what was missing was an honest historical portrayal of these narratives of resistance. (Like many African Americans, Parker is sharply critical of William Styron's 1967 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Confessions of Nat Turner*.)

Parker, who is remarkable in the role of the adult Turner, clearly chose the title as a century-later rebuke to the iconic eponymous 1915 epic by D.W. Griffith.

As he told *Filmmaker Magazine*: "From sanitized truths about our forefathers to mis-education regarding this country's dark days of slavery, we have refused to honestly confront the many afflictions of our past. This disease of denial has served as a massive stumbling block on our way to healing from those wounds. Addressing Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* is one of the many steps necessary in treating this disease. Griffith's film relied heavily on racist propaganda to evoke fear and desperation as a tool to solidify white supremacy as the lifeblood of American sustenance. Not only did this film motivate the massive resurgence of the terror group the Ku Klux Klan and the carnage exacted against people of African descent, it served as the foundation of the film industry we know today. I've reclaimed this title and repurposed it as a tool to challenge racism and white supremacy in America, to inspire a riotous disposition toward any and all injustice in this country (and abroad)

and to promote the kind of honest confrontation that will galvanize our society toward healing and sustained systemic change."

Not since the 2014 Oscar best-picture winner *12 Years a Slave* have African-American women as well as men had such prominent roles in a major movie. The timing could hardly be more fortuitous given the controversy over the "so white" nature of the current Oscar nominations. With Fox Searchlight spending a record \$17.5 million to acquire distribution rights, a wide release can be expected. It was no surprise to anyone when the film took both the U.S. dramatic competition's grand jury and audience awards.

I'll do a full review later but suffice it to say that *The Birth of a Nation* is an extremely impressive first feature and a personal triumph for Parker.

From the beginning, Nat Turner is marked as a special boy with a prophetic mission. Unusually literate, he will grow up to become a Baptist preacher and then an almost messianic figure, finally an agent of divine wrath against the manifest evils of slaveholding leading to an explosion of bloodshed. The violence depicted in the movie is extremely graphic but does not overshadow Parker's attention to Turner's character development, the role of strong women around him and his complicated relationship with the plantation owners. However doomed the actual revolt, this epic recreation resonates powerfully as a symbol of struggle against racial oppression.

\*\*\*

Before highlighting more significant dramas and documentaries from the Sundance lineup, worth noting are several features among a dozen seen from the less-hyped ultra-independent Slamdance festival that runs concurrently in Park City.

I thoroughly enjoyed the narrative award winner with the unlikely title *Honey Buddies*.

When David's fiancé cancels their wedding, his German best friend/best man Flula arrives to convince him to go along on the planned "honeymoon" hiking trip, with wacky and witty results.

I wasn't much taken with the Canadian entries: from Quebec *"Mes ennemis"* (My Enemies) — a bizarre morose affair involving a depressed young man's attraction to an elderly pianist played by veteran Louise Marleau; from Ontario the Telefilm-supported *How to Plan an Orgy in a Small Town*, a rather embarrassing sex farce set in the fictional Beaver's Ridge.

There was better news on the documentary side with the Canadian selection *Myrtle Beach*, an absorbing *cinema vérité* look at the lives of some eccentric permanent residents of this Carolina coastal resort town during the tourist off-season.

Jury and audience award winner *The Million Dollar Duck* explored an equally eccentric subculture — that of wildlife artists who compete to have their paintings of migratory birds chosen in the U.S. government's conservation-motivated "duck stamp contest."

A special jury mention was given to *The Art of the Prank*, an affectionate look at the master of media hoaxes, Joey Skaggs, who paved the way for activist pranksters like the Yes Men. Skaggs has long used the media to expose its own manipulations. Now a senior citizen with long flowing hair and beard, he's still at it, gathering a team on the Hawaiian island of Kauai to target the gene-manipulation technologies being exploited by corporate giants like Monsanto.

When the fake mini-documentary they created, *Pandora's Hope*, was shown at several film festivals, with its credibility unchallenged, they even organized their own protests against it to draw attention to the issues. The Slamdance curtain-raiser was a timely reminder to viewers to cultivate the art of critical perception.



about the new Star Wars blockbuster he helmed but as executive producer of a new nine-hour series, "11.22.63," which was mostly shot in Ontario. Directed by Kevin Macdonald, it's based on Stephen King's "what if?" book about averting the 1963 Kennedy assassination. Sundance screened the two-hour pilot episode of the series that has begun showing on Hulu in the U.S. The festival also screened the entire miniseries *O.J.: Made in America* about that notorious murder case which is now showing on the FX channel in the U.S. and Canada.

The very extensive off-screen program of events covered all aspects of the creative filmmaking experience. Even as the ongoing digital revolution opens up

the world of filmmaking both on the production side and in the proliferation of ways that cinematic content is being consumed. At the same time, new technologies have to be judged in terms of what they contribute to the cinematic experience. That goes for being able to watch movies on a smartphone or invent fancy special effects.

As Redford put it: "I guess I'm old-fashioned enough to believe you can't really replace the value of gathering as a community in the dark and being transported," adding, "to me the most important thing is the story."

The benefit of collective audience response certainly held true for the competition feature that quickly became the talk of the festival following its Jan. 25 pre-



# Mass in Maronite church spiritually uplifting

## Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



I have just come from a spiritually uplifting, spiritually rewarding experience — mass at Our Lady of Good Help Maronite Church in Edmonton, presided by Msgr. Joseph Salame.

The Maronite Church is one of 22 Eastern Catholic churches in full communion with Rome. Its spiritual head is His Beatitude Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, Patriarch of Antioch and the Entire East, who resides in Bkerke, Lebanon. The Maronite Church follows the Antiochian or West Syrian Rite, along with the Syro-Malankara and Syrian churches.

The mass was truly moving. For the most part, it gives praise to God in wonderful hymns. These are all sung, for the most part in Lebanese, switching to English on occasion. At Our Lady of Good Help a small choir is accompanied by an electric keyboard. The melodies are those of the Middle East. Listening to them, I easily imagined myself being taken back to apostolic times, rejoicing in the Good News as only those with an immediacy to the events, an immediacy to the life of Christ, would have been able to experience.

The hymns have a richness, a spirituality which might remind you of the Psalms. They hold

*Kostyniuk, who lives in Edmonton, has a bachelor of theology from Newman and is a freelance writer. He and his wife Bev have been married for 37 years and have eight grandchildren.*

nothing back. The words of praise are heartfelt, rejoicing in the gifts we have been given, most especially the gift of God coming down to enter time as Jesus Christ. Most exciting for me, and it sent a shiver down my spine, was to hear the consecration sung in Syriac, a linguistic cousin of Aramaic. I realized that for the first time in my life, I was hearing the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, almost as he would actually have spoken them.

Much emphasis is placed on the anaphora. There are no silent prayers, but rather long and joyous prayers of thanksgiving on the part of the priest as well as the congregation for the privilege of being able to participate in the miraculous event of the consecration.

"We bow before you, O Lord, and ask you to look kindly upon us. Make us worthy to approach your holy altar with pure hearts and holy souls and bodies, and we will raise to you glory and thanksgiving, now and forever."

Differing from western practice, a sign of peace is made prior to the consecration, fulfilling the need for all present to be in peace before it takes place. A symbolic ritual, the sign of peace begins with the priest placing his hands on the altar and the ciborium. He then extends closed cupped hands in front of him to all those serving at the altar. As they approach the priest, they place their hands over his to receive the holiness present on the altar. They, in turn, enter the congregation and extend the same

gesture to those they encounter. Eventually each person present has been touched with peace, spread from the altar. Witnessing this, it is reminiscent of the light from a single candle being passed and spread from one to another until an entire room is filled with light. Indeed, a flame of peace was spread from the priest to all present. It was as if Christ himself was reaching out to the people.

As with other Eastern liturgies, there is much significance in the actions. Only after the great spiritual event of the consecration has taken place is the collection of offerings from the congregation taken.

Similarly, only after Jesus is present on the altar is a litany of petitions offered. As might be expected from a church under severe persecution today, the petitions remember not only those present, but all those of faith, both living and dead. Most of the prayers of the anaphora are similar to those of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom; indeed, many were identical. Both the Our Father and Nicene Creed are used, with all the congregation participating.

The priest truly is the presbyter of the mass, although there is much laity involvement, including reading the Epistle and petitions. However, distribution of the eucharist is the sole preserve of the priest. Wafer hosts are dipped in the precious blood before being placed on the recipient's tongue. In another symbolic act, children too young to receive are blessed with the chalice held over their heads, a practice common throughout the Maronite Church.

On the Sunday before Christmas a special adoration ritual is celebrated. A procession with the blessed sacrament in a monstrance is made.

"This is to let the people see what God has brought us in the Incarnation," explains Msgr. Joseph.



B. Kostyniuk

**SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING** — Mass at Our Lady of Good Help Maronite Church in Edmonton, presided by Msgr. Joseph Salame, was a spiritually uplifting experience in many ways for Brent Kostyniuk.

Prior to the procession, the priest is covered in a special stole, in honour of the blessed sacrament which he will be holding. "It is to emphasize the holiness that comes when being near the blessed sacrament," he continues. The congregation is blessed with the monstrance. Finally, the priest turns to each of the cardinal points of the compass and makes a sign of the cross with the monstrance. "This is to show that the blessed sacrament is for the whole world."

A good friend once told me that Both Lungs is about more than just breathing through both lungs — East and West. It is about walk-

ing together. When we do walk together, and worship together, as I was able to do at Our Lady of Good Help, we are enriched immeasurably.

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The season of Lent — an invitation to transformation



Liturgy and Life

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI

A hunter always sets a gun or bow to aim higher than the target so that the trajectory of the bullet or arrow will land on the target.

The readings for this third Sunday of Lent invite us to aim high — to set our sights on nothing less than transformation, even divinization, and, ultimately, to see God!

It all begins with the word *repent* in the Gospel, and ends with the encounter Moses has with God through the burning bush.

In the Gospel, in recounting stories circulating at that time of local tragedies, as well as the parable about the gardener fertilizing the ground, Jesus is adamant about our need to repent. This passage brings to mind the first words of Jesus at the beginning of his ministry: “Repent and believe, the kingdom of God is near.” It is clear that repentance is the surest way into the reign of God.

Repentance has three distinct meanings. A first meaning comes from the Greek word *metanoia* that has the sense of “putting on our highest mind” and seeing reality through the lens of love, as God looks on reality. It involves a stance of complete and total trust in God, as opposed to *paranoia*, which is a fearful worldview and distrustful stance toward others and God.

A second meaning is to “let go” of anything that is holding us back from doing God’s will in our lives. In a world when most people want more of everything, especially possessions, prestige and power, we are being asked to trust and to let go of those temptations. We are invited to let go of especially our favourite sins, our negative attitudes, our painful emotions, our self-righteousness, our selfishness, and above all, any addictions in our lives. Good spirituality

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI, Archbishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-The Pas, is chaplain at the Star of the North Retreat House in St. Albert, Alta. He continues to live out his motto, *Regnum Dei Intra Vos* (the kingdom of God is among you), which is his overriding focus and passion.

is all about letting go. “Let Go and Let God,” a slogan of Alcoholics Anonymous, is appropriate here.

A final meaning of *metanoia* is to “turn around,” to make a 180-degree about-face, to reverse directions, to turn back to God and take a new path through life. All three of these meanings lead us to a transformative encounter with God that Moses had in the desert, and that Peter, James and John had on the Mount of Transfiguration.

All of them “saw God” through either a burning bush or a blinding light. Moses even hid his face because he was “afraid to look at God,” the text relates. How is it possible that Moses and the apostles could see what the Eastern divine liturgy calls the “ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, always existing and ever the same” God?

In his writings, Brent Kostyniuk provides an explanation from Gregory Palmas (1296-1359), a monk who lived at Mount Athos in Greece, later becoming Archbishop of Thessaloniki. Palmas teaches that while we cannot see God in God’s *essence*, we can see God in God’s *energies*. Moses and the apostles were given the grace to see the *uncreated light* of God, or God’s energies — that is, to know what God does, and who God is in relation to humanity, as God reveals God’s self to humanity.

|                      |                                                                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Third Sunday of Lent | Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15<br>Psalm 103<br>1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12<br>Luke 13:1-9 |
| February 28, 2016    |                                                                                 |

According to Kostyniuk, Eastern theology tells us that the Transfiguration and the burning bush reveal the possibility of our own *theosis*, or transformative process whose goal is likeness to or union with God. We accomplish this, or more precisely, this happens to us through the effects of *catharsis*, the purification of mind and body. Moreover, we are taught that this *theosis* is the purpose of human life.

The Greek word for transfigured is *metamorpho*. It is a verb that means both to change into another form, and to change the outside to match the inward reality. Until the Transfiguration, Jesus’ divine nature had been “veiled” (Hebrews 10:20) in his humanity. At the Transfiguration, Peter, James and John were shown a unique display of Jesus’ divine character and a glimpse of the glory that Jesus had before all time. And at the burning bush, Moses (who appeared along with Elijah at the Transfiguration) was also shown a glimpse of the glory that God wants us all to experience through faith in his Son, Jesus Christ.

The theology of *theosis* calls us all to a like transformation and to seek to be God-like ourselves. The word that the Eastern Church uses to describe this process is *divinization*. Unfortunately, the Western Church with its bias toward the rational and scientific has largely neglected this process. It is high time to reclaim this beautiful teaching and theology that can make all the difference in our lives. Ultimately, according to Palmas, it is possible for us to see that same uncreated light of God with the help of repentance, spiritual discipline, genuine love, contemplative prayer and doing God’s will.

There are others beside Moses, the apostles and the prophets who can inspire us to aim high and shoot for this ultimate target of divinization, of God-likeness, of transformation, of even seeing this energy and uncreated light of God. People like Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Jean Vanier and Henry Nouwen all went through, to one degree or other, this process of *theosis*, of divinization that they shared with us through their example or writings.

More contemporary examples would be Joe Gunn, Douglas Roche and Bob McKeon, who consistently speak and write about social justice issues in our society. Theirs, too, would be the same process of *metanoia*, transformation, *theosis* and ultimately divinization, as they help us to see our own reality through the lens of love and justice, through the eyes of God, through God’s uncreated light.

The eucharist is itself an experience of transformation. Humble gifts of bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Even more significant, we who receive are in turn transformed into the Body of Christ — a process of *theosis*, divinization.

All we have to do is to truly believe, enter into the process fully, and allow our loving God to transform us into images of God sent into the world to help transform and divinize our world.



Biblical scholarship is clear that ‘difficult’ texts are not to be taken literally

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



A colleague of mine shares this story: Recently, after presiding a eucharist, a woman from the congregation came up to him with this comment: “What a horrible Scripture reading today! If that’s the kind of God we’re worshipping, then I don’t want to go to heaven!”

The reading for that day’s liturgy was taken from Chapter 24 of the Second Book of Samuel where, seemingly, God gets upset with King David for counting the number of men he had for military service and then punishes

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

him by sending a pestilence that kills 70,000 people.

Is this really the Word of God? Did God really get angry with David for doing a simple census and kill 70,000 people to teach him a lesson? What possible logic could justify this? As it stands, literally, yes, this is a horrible text!

What do we do with passages like this and many others where God, seemingly, demands violence in his name? To cite just one example: In his instructions to Joshua when they enter the Promised Land, God orders him to kill everything in the land of Canaan, all the men, all the women, all the children, and even all the animals. Why? Why would God so grossly want all these people destroyed? Can we believe God would do this? There are other similar examples, as, for instance, in the Book of Judges, where God grants the prayer of

Jephthah, the Gileadite, on the condition that he sacrifices his own daughter on the altar of sacrifice. Texts like this seem to go against the very essence of the nature of God as the rest of Scripture reveals it.

God, in Scripture, is sometimes seemingly shown to be arbitrary, heartless, violent, demanding violence from believers, and completely calloused about the lives of anyone not among his chosen favourites. If one were to take these texts literally they could be used to justify the exact type of violence that extremist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida carry out under the belief that God loves them alone and they are free to kill others in his name.

Nothing could be further from the truth and nothing could be further from the meaning of these texts. These texts, as biblical scholarship makes clear, are not to be taken literally. They are *anthropomorphic* and *archetypal*. Whenever they are read they could be preceded by the kind of disclaimer we now often see at movies where we are told: No real animals died while making this film. So too, no real people die in these texts.

First of all, these texts are

anthropomorphic, meaning that in them we attribute our own emotions and intentions to God. Hence these texts reflect our feelings, not God’s. For example, when Paul tells us that when we sin we experience the “wrath of God,” we are not to believe that God gets angry with us when we sin and sends positive punishment upon us. Rather, when we sin, we punish ourselves, begin to hate ourselves, and we *feel as if* God has gotten angry with us. Biblical writers frequently write in this genre. God never hates us, but, when we sin, we end up hating ourselves.

These texts are also archetypal, meaning that they are powerful, primordial images that explain how life works. I remember a man coming up to me one Sunday after a liturgy, when the reading had proclaimed God’s order to Joshua to kill all the Canaanites upon entering the Promised Land. The man said to me: “You should have let me preach today. I know what that text means. I’m an alcoholic in recovery — and that text means ‘cold turkey.’ As an alcoholic, you have to clean out your liquor cabinet completely, every bottle, you can’t be having even a single drink. Every Canaanite has to be killed!” Jesus said the same thing,

except he used a softer metaphor: “New wine, new wineskins.” In essence, that’s the meaning of this text.

But even so, if these texts are not literal aren’t they still the inspired Word of God? Can we just explain them away because we feel them inconvenient?

Two things might be said in response to this. First, all individual texts in Scripture must be seen within the larger, overall framework of Scripture and our overall theology of God and, as such, they demand an interpretation that is consistent with the nature of God as revealed overall in Scripture. And, in Scripture as a whole, we see that God is non-negotiably all-loving, all-merciful, and all-good and that it is impossible to attribute bias, callousness, brutality, favouritism, and violence to God. Moreover, Scripture is binding and inerrant in the intentionality of its message, not in the literalness of its expression. We do not, for example, take literally Jesus’ command to “call no one on earth your father,” nor Paul’s command: “Slaves be subject to your masters.”

Context and interpretation are not rationalizations, they are sacred duty. We may not make Scripture unworthy of God.



# Ash Wednesday is radical and disorienting

By Jacob Lupfer

“You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Every year on Ash Wednesday, I seek out some member of the clergy to say those words to me.

They come from the curse of mankind in Genesis 3, but I find blessing in hearing them in the tale of the loving purposes of God.

Though I think and write about religion, I am not particularly devout. I can accept faith as a way of seeing. But I struggle with faith as a set of theological propositions requiring intellectual assent.

Why, then, do I seek out a church on Ash Wednesday, but rarely on Sundays?

I think the answer has to do with the radical and disorienting nature of the observance.

Our consumer culture promises that attractiveness and eternal youth are just one purchase away. Cash or credit. But Ash Wednesday reminds us we are dead in our sins and, soon enough, dead in fact. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

There is a strong tendency in North American churches to suppose that Christianity condemns

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CNS/Francis R. Malasig, EPA

**ASH WEDNESDAY — You are dust, and to dust you shall return. “Every year on Ash Wednesday, I seek out some member of the clergy to say those words to me,” writes Jacob Lupfer. “They come from the curse of mankind in Genesis 3, but I find blessing in hearing them in the tale of the loving purposes of God.”**

other people’s corrupt values, but never our own. Easily available, grace becomes cheap.

Ash Wednesday subverts the Sunday-best facade many wear to church every week and the happy-clappy shallowness they find there.

To the degree that sin is even a relevant cultural category at all, it is almost completely subjective. And sin, if it even exists, is something other people do.

Yet the Ash Wednesday liturgy recalls memorable lines from Psalm 51: “My sin is ever before me.”

It feels strange to recall my own sins and the manifold social evils in which I am complicit. Is there something rebellious and wicked in my very nature? On Ash Wednesday, I am forced to confront those parts of myself.

Many Catholics and liturgical

devotion.

But even I can approach the altar on Ash Wednesday, suspending for a moment my speculations about what parts of religion are true and what parts are illusions. Even if I do not finally know what Jesus can do about it or how, it feels right to acknowledge my sin, my incompleteness and my mortality.

For all my childhood years of going to church to hear that God

loves me, it seems worth remembering that “the wages of sin is death” (Rm 6:23). Church cannot be a place to have my ideological views, my consumer preferences or my lifestyle choices affirmed. It should be, in the words of a Catholic priest during the Civil War, “one clean spot on earth, uncontaminated by politics, where every sinner may bow his proud head before God.”

And so I will bow my head. I will receive the cross of ashes and hear the words, “Repent, and believe the gospel.” Of course, the meaning of the gospel has confounded the philosophers of the ages. And yet it is so simple, even a child can understand: Jesus “came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Tim 1:15).

I will leave the church in silent contemplation, then go to my home and wash the ashes off my forehead. And I will be vividly aware, for one day at least, that my immortality and righteousness are actually illusions, while my finitude and sin are very real.

I will credit the church, so fashionably and widely accused of trafficking in delusions, with telling me the truth. For the message of Ash Wednesday is indisputable: I am a sinner, and I will die.

And in the penitent days of Lent, my skeptical heart will wonder what other truths the church may possess.

## There is surprising power in choosing the path of gentleness

### Barefoot and Preaching

Leah Perrault



For a long time, just the word *gentle* made me uncomfortable. It was not as if I was incapable of holding a fragile object with great care or speaking softly; it was too many years of absorbing messages about gentleness as a “feminine” ideal, alongside its siblings: nurturing, emotional, and receptive. Gentle sounded like a noun, whose synonym was doormat. Thanks, but no.

My problem, it turns out, was not with gentle at all, but with the way our culture ascribes value to external markers like gender, age, race, ethnicity, education and social status to define how certain types of people ought to behave. Forget simple double standards — there are multitudes of landmines just waiting for unsuspecting unique and authentic human beings to wound.

Too many times I spoke aloud when others would have preferred that I were quiet. I embraced per-

sistence when I was pressured to give up. I refused to allow others’ expectations to define me. In many ways, my bold persistence has served me well: authentic sense of self, creative leadership, a different spiritual perspective. At the same time, that same bold persistence sent me running face-first into the hard edges of a broken world.

While I sometimes attempted to move the landmines out of my way before stepping on the space they occupied, I began to step on them with proud intention. Let the wounds come if they must. At least it is one less landmine for someone else to hit. Over time, I hardened myself in response to the pain of these wounds. Refusing gentleness was a bit of a straw horse, though, because I was rejecting gentleness when I was really upset with injustice.

The biggest cost of hardening my heart was losing my ability to be gentle with myself. When I made a mistake, I began to lecture myself, to heap on expectations for perfection, load myself with guilt, and talk myself out of feeling disappointed and frustrat-

ed. I began to believe that *I* could accomplish anything if *I* had enough discipline.

The second, and perhaps more tragic consequence, is that I began to see all invitations to gentleness as landmines. I extended my expectations of myself to those around me: my spouse, my kids, my colleagues and even strangers. In my attempts to both avoid and destroy landmines, I was increasingly impatient, aggressive and demanding — until God allowed me the gentle grace of falling apart.

The falling apart did not feel gentle. It felt like waking up naked in a snow storm on a bed of frozen branches, with the wind rattling my weakness and burning my tears. But it was gentle inasmuch as God slowly showed me how I had walked into the storm, given away my clothing, refused to let others come with me and proudly traded my comforts for branches. I was a force of nature creating a storm, and it stopped snowing and blowing when I fell apart. I still had to walk out of winter, and out of the forest. I was inclined to do so with the same force that got me there. But it turns out that yelling at the kids to use their nice words is pretty ineffective. Expecting hurting people to toughen up only deepens their hurt and creates distance. I needed a new way and the path God offered was labelled gentle. Since all other roads had led to falling apart, I decided to try the one God offered.

Gentleness proved to be a path for dancing and not walking. I was invited to learn new steps and ways of holding my body, because when I reverted to forceful language, pushing for my way, speaking before listening, I would feel the sting of the cold and the pull of the falling apart again. I began to try out asking questions, pushing back deadlines and cancelling plans. Not only did the world not fall apart when I was gentle, but I was surprised to discover that not everyone and everything was a landmine, and that injustice would also move out of the way in unpredictable ways.

That first year after falling apart I chose to be kind to myself for Lent, a discipline that proved more difficult and more fruitful than any other year. There was more laughter and re-

laxation in our home. My interactions at work and in the community were less efficient and more effective. And there was so much more failure, as well as starting over.

I am slowly learning that gentleness is the way of the strong who reject strong-arming. It is a path toward peace that refuses violent means. Gentleness disarms real landmines with honest and earned vulnerability, while at the same time refusing to create landmines for self-protection. It is a road for all of earth’s travellers to walk toward calm in the middle of a mess. The way of gentleness is harder than the way of force, and infinitely more creative and life-giving. I am learning that gentle is a verb whose synonyms are listen, hold, empathize, disarm and begin again.

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# Art from L'Arche takes us beyond the disability

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Conversations with Andrea Frizon can take a while. Words don't come easily. The best way is to sit across from her and hold out both hands. She will lightly lay her hands on yours then withdraw them. Ask her questions that call for a choice and indicate the choice with your hands. "Does painting make you happy (indicate your right hand) or unhappy (indicate your left)." Andrea chooses the right hand with a light touch.

But it would be wrong to think of Frizon as inarticulate. There are no long speeches or explanations or justifications from her, but with paper and brushes she pours out her soul.

Frizon has been living in L'Arche Toronto, a community just east of downtown Toronto, for the last 16 or 17 years. While she loves being part of everything that happens in her house — cooking, singing, making puzzles, reading — each week builds up to her time in the Sol Express creative arts program where she gets to paint.

This year one of Frizon's

the event hosts and exhibit curators.

The packed opening night Feb. 4 at the downtown community centre gallery was not her first art opening. While the crowds are exciting, Frizon is just as happy painting with Sol Express, transforming her powers of observation into a story or a feeling on paper.

L'Arche assistants who watch Frizon at work in the Sol Express studio program are uniformly impressed with her concentration.

Also featured in the international show, Tom Krysiak from L'Arche Daybreak in Richmond Hill, Ont., has a drawing of his house at 47 Centre St.

Krysiak loves parties — loves to joke and laugh. Asked whether he would prefer to be at a party or back in the L'Arche Daybreak craft studio drawing, his emphatic answer is "both."

Krysiak has been part of the craft studio at Daybreak since it was founded in 1998. He's a potter, candlemaker and painter, but best known for his detailed drawings of his surroundings, especially his house and the people he lives with.

Krysiak likes to talk and is always tempted to joke and tease.

duction of one of the L'Arche paintings in the show.

"I love L'Arche," said Baxter.

But it's more than solidarity that has moved her to buy the print. The art will liven up her office wall at Oolagin, a downtown children's mental health agency.

L'Arche art shows are never really a fundraising opportunity, said Marianne McQuillan, L'Arche Canada Foundation's director of major gifts. Rather they are an opportunity for everybody to see beyond the disability and into the humanity of L'Arche members.

"We have to identify with them for the gifts they bring to the community," McQuillan said.

Almost from the moment the first L'Arche community was established in Trolly-Breuil, France, in 1964, art has been a part of life at L'Arche. Today active in 38 countries, there is no such thing as a L'Arche community without art.

The Songs of the Heart gallery exhibits are an outgrowth of an online gallery L'Arche International launched in 2014 to celebrate its 50th anniversary. It can be seen at [art.larche.org](http://art.larche.org).

Giving people with disabilities a new means of expression can be a revealing process, said art therapist Shauna Balshin, who helped out on the Disability/Visibility photography project.

"What I was surprised by was how different their point of view was," she said.

Members of the group explained their images in terms that lack the pretension and the platitudes of the art world. "One of them said, 'I'm watching my mother as she goes down the path to find her life,'" recalled Balshin.

Photographer Shauna Weinroth chose a photo for the show that



L'Arche London/Peter Ogrodnik

**SKY — Sky is by Peter Ogrodnik, who lives at the Bethany home with L'Arche London, Ont. The watercolour painting is part of L'Arche's Songs of the Heart exhibit.**

tion inside the church and bustle and energy on the outside that attracted Yashinsky-Zavits.

Voicing Perspective, bringing together the two exhibits, Disability/Visibility and Songs of the Heart, runs until Feb. 24. The gallery at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre is at 750 Spadina Ave., Toronto.

Prints of the five Ontario pieces are available from

L'Arche Toronto. They come in 8x10 matte prints, 8x12 canvas reproductions, and 12x16 canvas reproductions. Information regarding prices and shipping will soon be available on the website (<http://www.larche-toronto.org>), as well as an automated purchase process. In the interim, those interested can email [katie@larchetoronto.org](mailto:katie@larchetoronto.org) to order.



L'Arche Betzata/Martynas Simkus

**WINTER IN THE PROVINCES — Winter in the Provinces is a watercolour by Martynas Simkus, who lives in L'Arche Betzata Community, Vilnius, Lithuania. The painting is part of L'Arche's Songs of the Heart exhibit.**

paintings is part of a travelling gallery show called Songs of the Heart, featuring L'Arche-based artists from 10 countries.

Her 2013 watercolour on paper called Woman hangs with 18 other paintings and drawings at Toronto's Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre (MNjcc) as part of an event called Voicing Perspective. Voicing Perspective is a joint disability arts event combining MNjcc's Disability/Visibility exhibit (featuring local photographers with disabilities) and L'Arche International's exhibition Songs of the Heart into one united gallery show. L'Arche Toronto and MNjcc are

With a pen in hand, Krysiak has more to say. He's especially anxious to share the world he lives in.

Canadian Catholic philosopher Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, points out how talking can be overrated.

"Many people are good at talking about what they are doing, but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don't talk about it; they are the ones who make a community live," Vanier wrote in his 1989 book Community and Growth.

Alison Baxter was barely through the door on the opening night when she had already put down her money to buy a repro-

"makes me feel like I am exploring a cave, even though it's really the wall of a subway station."

For Weinroth, photography is all about the shapes, colours, weights and densities of abstract patterns she sees. She can't imagine herself directing her camera at people.

For Jacob Yashinsky-Zavits, the idea that photography could be a serious way of expressing himself without being entirely caught up in the technical details of camera operation was a revelation.

"It was freedom, really," he said. "We weren't trapped in the idea of learning everything about a camera."

His image for the show was taken from inside a church, using the door to frame people passing by on Bloor Street. It was the combination of peace and protec-

## Think about respect, truth

Continued from page 8

demonstrated that the potential motivations and feelings of the accusers is more important than what actually happened. Unless each accuser is a model citizen in every. single. aspect. of her life, she doesn't have the right to justice. She doesn't have the luxury of being believed unless she's never done anything remotely questionable.

So I've been thinking a lot about . . . respectability politics, lately.

Also important in an assault trial: how the defence lawyer looks. Toronto Life recently profiled Ghomeshi's lawyer, an article in which it became apparent that the kind of handbag she uses and the price of her shoes and how she looks younger than her 50 years are equally important to her ability to defend the accused.

I find it hard to believe people don't make the connection between these two realities. No matter what her capacity or profession, it needs to be established early on what that woman looks like, and how attractive we should think she is. We have a right to know. It's what's most important. Her body, in some sense, does not belong to her. We must pass judgment on it.

And then, we react in surprise and horror when a man thinks he has ownership over a woman's body, and enacts his will upon that body through assault, abuse, or rape. That's not to say, of course, that every man will enact his will upon a woman's body in that same way. But I don't think we should be surprised that some men do, when we live in a society that tacitly agrees with him that it's the case.

So I've been thinking a lot about . . . objectification, lately.

When I sat down to write this article, I so badly wanted to write about this Beyoncé song. I thought it was amazing that she was so unapologetic, when people of colour and women must often justify their right to speak before they're allowed to speak at all. But then I wasn't sure. The song is a bit rough in places, and I wasn't sure it would be OK to talk about here. I was afraid it might offend. I was afraid it might be inappropriate.

And then I thought about how many times Beyoncé has been called out for somehow being *wrong*. Never mind she's a musician, a producer, an icon: she talks about sex and dances suggestively sometimes and she swears, and therefore everything else she does is irrelevant. Never mind that we can forgive Sean Penn for kicking the crap out of his wife as a young man, we can turn a blind eye to the sexual crimes of people like Jimmy Page. Nope, if it's a black woman, she can't be anything but completely serious and completely virginal, or else she doesn't count. She's inappropriate. She's vulgar.

And then I thought . . . nah, whatever. We're all grownups here. The song doesn't lose its power because she talks about her husband suggestively in it. We should listen to the message instead of rejecting it because of how she said it.

So really, I've been thinking about . . . respect, this week. Equality. Truth. Fairness. And I'm asking you to think about how you think about women, and people of colour, and whether you judge them by the same standards as you would judge a man or a white person. Because that's what's more important. Not whether or not Beyoncé said f--k.



## Changing papal habits

Customs are changing aboard papal flights. In my Dec. 2, 2015, editorial, I noted the change in the pope's style on papal flights, according to John Allen Jr. Each pope has his own style, and it is different, said the veteran Vatican journalist.

Pope Francis' most recent flight was to Cuba and then to Mexico for his five-day pastoral visit.

Inés San Martín, one of the Vatican correspondents on-board the plane, reported that journalists are also adjusting their interactions with the pope. With Pope Francis it is more informal and friendly. "Even the most seasoned journalists drop their professional cool," she wrote in her blog on Crux.

"As Francis made his way around the press compartment, even normally cynical journalists seemed to melt," she wrote. A CNN journalist, for instance, gave the pope a set of letters written by Mexican

immigrants from Chicago. The pope welcomed the gift, saying: "I really enjoy reading letters from children!"

An NBC correspondent presented Pope Francis with a basket of homemade cookies. You certainly wouldn't see that happen from a reporter covering a political campaign. They keep their distance and are often antagonistic toward the politician who is the centre of attention.

A Mexican journalist covering the Vatican gave the pope a mariachi hat which had been presented to her during Pope Francis' trip to Cuba last September. It was made by a Mexican family with a long tradition in the hat industry. When she was unable to present it to the pope then, she obliged them with the favour on this plane trip.

The most unusual incident involved a TV journalist. Noel Diaz, founder of the Catholic network *El Sembrador*, is covering this trip for his news outlet.

Diaz was born in Tijuana, on the U.S. border. At age 17, he moved to Los Angeles, where he became a successful businessman.

"I'm the son of a single mother, and when I took my first communion, we couldn't afford the clothes," Diaz told San Martín. "So I started shining shoes in the streets of Tijuana to pay for them."

When the time came for Diaz to greet Pope Francis, he got down on his knees and shined the pope's black orthopedic shoes. It wasn't reported if the shoes were scuffy and needed a new shine. But it didn't hurt if the pope had good looking shoes for his next appointment.

Pope Francis was on his way to Cuba to meet Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow. It was the first time the patriarch has agreed to meet with the pope in centuries. Time will tell if that relationship will have a new shine in the years to come. — PWN

## Professions of faith explain in more detail the contents of our belief



### Canon Law For Today

Rev. Frank Morrissey

Book III of the Code of Canon Law is particularly concerned with the teaching office of the church — usually called the Magisterium.

The canons in this part of the code refer, among other things, to preaching the word of God, catechetical formation, missionary activity, and Catholic education. There is also a section on books and other publications which we will examine in our next column. However, today, we could take a look at the last part of Book III, canon 833, which speaks of the Profession of Faith; it could be noted, though, that the canon

makes no particular reference to what is being solemnly professed in this act.

Originally, the Profession of faith was made at baptism or when a person was received into full communion with the Catholic Church. Generally, it consisted of the Apostles' creed. However, as time went on, other creeds were drawn up, explaining in more detail the content of belief. Probably the best known of these other creeds is the Nicene creed, approved by the ecumenical council of Nicea in AD 325, and often recited on Sundays and major feast days.

Normally, a creed follows a four part division: reference to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Then follows a reference to the church and its members.

There is, however, a particular type of profession of faith, which is made by certain persons when they assume a special office in the church — such as those who take part in an ecumenical council or a synod, those who are appointed to the dignity of cardinal; newly appointed bishops, diocesan officials, parish priests, professors at Catholic universities who teach subjects related to faith and morals, and superiors in clerical religious institutes.

This special profession of faith consists of the Nicene creed, and of three additional paragraphs.

The first of these paragraphs concerns belief in those teachings contained in the word of God, or handed down by tradition, which the church has solemnly declared to have been divinely revealed. These teachings are usually known as "dogmas"; failure to accept a dogma of faith leads to excommunication (if all the conditions laid down in the law are met).

The second concerns those matters which have been "definitively" proposed by the church regarding teachings on faith and morals. For instance, the teaching on abortion has been definitively declared, although it is not proposed as a dogma of faith. Likewise, Pope John Paul II declared that the teaching on the admissibility of women to ordination to priesthood was in this second category.

The third paragraph is much broader. It refers to a person's acceptance of those teachings put forward by the Roman pontiff, or by the college of bishops, even

though they are not yet definitively proposed. Of course, not every statement of the pope or of the bishops falls into this category. The profession of faith clearly notes that what is implied here are those statements whereby the pope or the college of bishops wish to exercise "their authentic magisterium" or teaching office. In other words, this is not presumed, but the intent must be manifestly demonstrated (see canon 749.1 in relation to infallible statements).

The "oath of fidelity" is a companion piece. The code does not

refer directly to the oath to be taken by parish priests; it was added to the legislation by Pope John Paul II. This new oath applies also to professors of theology and superiors in religious institutes.

There are a certain number of oaths of fidelity, depending on the office being assumed. For instance, there is the special oath that cardinals take upon their admission to the College of Cardinals, and that bishops take when appointed as bishops.

— FIDELITY, page 15

## Human rights seen as a safety net guarantee respect

### Building a Culture of Life

Mary Deutscher



I heard an analogy recently that I feel I have to share with the world. This fall I attended a talk on human rights by Kevin Fenwick, Saskatchewan's deputy minister of justice and deputy attorney general. I had gone into the talk expecting to be either bored to death by legalese, or angered by yet another person putting all his trust in a human rights framework. Imagine my surprise when instead I was delighted by a surprisingly effective comparison between human rights and a net.

I have heard a number of analogies about human rights. Human rights can be thought of as one side of the coin, with the other side being human responsibilities. You can't have one without the other, no matter how hard some people may try. I've also heard people talk about human rights as a shield they can use for protection. This is usually contrasted with the idea of using human rights as a sword to assert

one's will on others.

But let me tell you about human rights being a net! There are two ways that human rights can be a net: it can either be a safety net or a trap. First, let's look at the analogy between human rights and a trapeze artist's safety net.

Conflicts are inevitable, but when they occur, our focus should be on trying to mediate a resolution that will satisfy both parties. This is hard work! It's a delicate balancing act, just like the trapeze artist's show.

In this context, human rights exist to guarantee everyone is treated with respect, and they should only be used if the situation cannot be resolved in any other way.

We have run into problems in our legal system because instead of focusing on the mediation — the trapeze artist is where the real show is after all — we have been staring at the safety net. We have become so obsessed with the win/lose framework of human rights, that we have forgotten about our responsibility to balance the needs of different persons or groups.

And this is where human rights can become the type of net that

— VULNERABLE, page 15



CNS/Paul Haring

**PAPAL MASS IN MEXICO** — People attend Pope Francis' celebration of mass with the indigenous community from Chiapas in San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico, Feb. 15.







# Pope Francis urges Mexican bishops to be prophetic

By David Agren

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis demanded forceful denunciations of drug violence in Mexico from the country's bishops, who have preferred timid pronouncements instead of speaking prophetically on a tragedy that has claimed more than 100,000 lives over the past 10 years and left another 25,000 Mexicans missing.

Speaking Feb. 13 to an audience of bishops in Mexico City's Metropolitan Cathedral, Pope Francis urged them to confront the scourge of drug cartels and organized crime by raising their voices, developing pastoral plans, and "drawing in and embracing the fringes of human existence in the ravaged areas of our cities."

"I urge you not to underestimate the moral and anti-social challenge, which the drug trade represents for young people and Mexican society as a whole," Pope Francis said. "The magnitude of this phenomenon . . . and the gravity of the violence . . . do not allow us as pastors of the church to hide behind anodyne denunciations."

The pope spoke to the Mexican bishops for more than 40 minutes, delivering a tough talk on matters the pope plans to highlight in his six-day Mexican trip, including violence, migrants and indigenous issues. In off-the-cuff remarks, he warned of "the temptation of aloofness and clericalism" for bishops, called for clerical transparency and asked for unity in the Mexican bishops' conference, which has pursued closer ties with political leaders in recent years, while speaking softly — if at all — on uncomfortable issues such as corruption.

Pope Francis hit hardest on the drug issue, something retired

Pope Benedict XVI said nothing about in his 2012 trip to Mexico. It's an issue that has vexed Mexico and the Catholic Church over the past decade as a crack-down on drug cartels and organized crime has caused violence to rise, along with offences such as extortion and kidnap. Many of those victims and victimizers were baptized Catholics.

The violence has claimed the lives of more than a dozen priests over the past five years, while some dioceses have been accused of collecting "*narcotimosnas*" or "drug alms," and drug bosses — who often consider themselves proper Catholics — construct and fix parishes and sponsor patron saint feast days.

Pope Francis urged "prophetic courage" and implementing a pastoral approach of going to the peripheries, working with families and building bridges with parish communities, schools and the authorities, saying that only then "will people finally escape the raging waters that drown so many, either victims of the drug trade or those who stand before God with their hands drenched in blood, though with pockets filled with sordid money and their consciences deadened."

Pope Francis also alluded to the folkloric *Santa Muerte*, a skeletal pseudo-saint attracting hordes of followers in Mexico and Latin America, including many in the illegal drug trade.

"I am particularly concerned about those many persons who, seduced by the empty power of the world, praise illusions and embrace their macabre symbols to commercialize death in exchange for money which, in the end, 'moth and rust consume,'" he said.

The rise of *Santa Muerte* worship over the past 15 years has

alarmed the Mexican church and drawn Vatican condemnations, said Andrew Chesnut, religious studies professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, who has studied the pseudo-saint and estimates it now has 10 million followers in Mexico and abroad.

"It's the chief concern of the Mexican church in terms of religious rivals," he said. "A week doesn't go by in which some Mexican bishop or priest denounces it as satanic."

Still, Pope Francis praised popular piety, common in Mexico, where the faithful adore the saints and participate in pilgrim-



CNS/Paul Haring

**POPE VISITS SHRINE — Pope Francis places flowers before the original image of Our Lady of Guadalupe after celebrating mass in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City Feb. 13. The Marian image was rotated for the pope to pray in the *camarin* ("little room") behind the main altar.**

ages, while ignoring the sacramental part of the church.

"I invite you to give yourselves tirelessly and fearlessly to the task of evangelizing and deepening the faith by means of a mystagogical catechesis that treasures the popular religiosity of people," Pope Francis said. "Our times require pastoral attention to persons and groups who hope to encounter the living Jesus."

He also lauded the church for its work with the many mostly Central American migrants transiting the country on trips that expose them to crime such as extortion, robbery and rape.

"There are millions of sons and daughters of the church who today live in the diaspora or who are in transit, journeying to the North in search of new opportunities," he said, calling migration, "the challenge of our age."

Pope Francis celebrated mass a stone's throw from the U.S. border in Ciudad Juarez Feb. 17.

The pope urged the bishops to build a church more inclusive for indigenous peoples, who often live in impoverished conditions and in communities where Spanish is seldom spoken.

"I ask you to show singular tenderness in the way you regard indigenous peoples and their fascinating but not infrequently decimated cultures," Pope Francis said.

"Mexico needs its American-Indian roots so as not to remain an unresolved enigma. The indigenous people of Mexico still await true recognition of the richness of their contribution and the fruitfulness of their presence."

Pope Francis expressed his admiration for Our Lady of Guadalupe, who "teaches us that the only power capable of conquering the hearts of men and

women is the tenderness of God."

He also told the bishops, "We do not need 'princes,' but rather a community of the Lord's witnesses."

"Do not allow yourselves to be corrupted by trivial materialism or by the seductive illusion of underhanded agreements," he added in an allusion to suggestions that bishops sometimes smooth things out behind closed doors with corrupt officials and even criminals, instead of acting publicly. "Do not place your faith in the 'chariots and horses' of today's pharaohs, for our strength is in the pillar of fire that divides the sea in two, without much fanfare."

He ended with a call for unity, departing from his prepared comments to do so.

"If you have to fight, then fight; if you have to say things, say them but like men, face-to-face, like men of God, who can pray together, who can discern together, and if you argue to ask for forgiveness," he said. "But always maintain the unity of the episcopal body."

Church observers said the pope's message was unprecedented for Mexico, where the bishops' conference has become quite conservative over the past quarter-century as the church and government restored relations. In some Catholic circles, critical voices on issues such as human right have been considered an impediment to that process.

"Francis is saying something along the lines of 'I am aware of the differences among you,'" said Rodolfo Soriano Nunez, a sociologist and church observer in Mexico City. "There are lots of 'sects' within the Mexican bishops, groups that fight bitterly with each other while trying to offer themselves as the most reliable partners to the government."

## Pope Francis admonishes Mexican politicians to renounce privilege

By David Agren

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — Shortly after arriving in Mexico City Feb. 12, President Enrique Pena Nieto introduced Pope Francis to most of his cabinet and senior staff. The next morning, he introduced the pope again to his team at the National Palace in central Mexico City, where presidents and leaders have projected power to the country since colonial times.

Pena Nieto, whose Institutional Revolutionary Party was founded by anti-clerical revolutionaries and governed for most of the last century, spoke in platitudes during his address to an audience of politicians and diplomats. He also highlighted the privilege of receiving the pope, who was in Mexico for a six-day visit.

Pope Francis spoke of privileges, too — though in a less-flattering form to a political class accustomed to high pay and perks, along with impunity, in a country where almost half the

population is poor and their numbers stay stubbornly steady.

"Experience teaches us that each time we seek the path of privileges or benefits for a few to the detriment of the good of all, sooner or later the life of society becomes a fertile soil for corruption, drug trade, exclusion of different cultures, violence and also human trafficking, kidnapping and death, bringing suffering and slowing down development," the pope said.

The pope's admonishment struck a chord with many in Mexico, where the media in parts of the country are controlled, corruption is commonplace and outspokenness can come with consequences. It also spoke to the advances in church-state relations since St. John Paul II visited the country in 1979 and then-President Jose Lopez Portillo told him, "Welcome to Mexico. I'll leave you with your flock."

Mexico and the Vatican only restored relations in 1992. Prior to that, politicians largely kept their

distance from prelates, though it was an open secret that some presidents maintained quiet and sometimes close relations with the church — but always out of sight.

Pope Francis spoke plainly in Mexico, touching on topics such as corruption, violence and inequality. He even went to Pena Nieto's home state to celebrate mass, speaking of dignity and denouncing improperly obtained wealth, which he compared to bread that "tastes of pain, bitterness and suffering."

Observers say the pastoral and political agendas are the opposite of those pursued by St. John Paul on his five Mexico visits. St. John Paul was personally well-received and is still a beloved figure in the country, even after his death.

"Pope John Paul II came to prolong the existence of the establishment. This pope, Francis, is trying to extinguish this establishment," said Ilan Semo, political historian at the Jesuit-run Iberoamerican University. "This is what the church is doing to recover its legitimacy."

Church ties with the political elites appeared warm well in advance of Pope Francis' arrival, warm enough that documents produced by investigative reporters

and published Feb. 5 suggest the Archdiocese of Mexico City fast-tracked an annulment for first lady Angelica Rivera. It allowed Rivera to marry the leading presidential candidate, Pena Nieto, in a 2010 church ceremony.

Rev. Hugo Valdemar Romero, Mexico City archdiocesan spokesperson, said the annulment request was properly reviewed, proceeded without haste and is irreversible.

"A publication that calls into question a canonical process is irrelevant" to the papal visit, he said.

Even with the expectation of tough talk during the papal visit, politicians were eager to tweet about their encounters with the pope or post pictures with the pontiff on social media sites. Some, such as the governor of Michoacan state, where the pope was to visit Feb. 16, welcomed the pope by tweeting a tourism ad — since deleted.

Former President Felipe Calderon, whose National Action Party has been traditionally church-friendly, attended the Feb. 13 mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with his wife Margarita Zavala, a probable presidential aspirant in 2018.

Photos appeared in the Mexican media of Pena Nieto receiv-

ing communion. Outrage stirred on social media over the governors of Chiapas and Sonora kissing the pope's ring. One senator even sent her young son over the security barriers so he could hug the pope in the National Palace.

Even Mexicans and media outlets not fond of the Catholic Church or its values were quick to spread the pope's comments, although there were grumblings about the costs of associated with the trip. Non-Catholics also voiced support for the pope's message.

"The pope's moral authority has revealed the vacuum of ethical leadership in Mexico," tweeted public intellectual and historian Enrique Krauze.

Whether the pope's message has relevance after he leaves remains an open question in a country where perceptions of corruption, poverty and security have all deteriorated over the past decade, and dissatisfaction with democracy has increased.

"The Mexican political class, responsible for its own degradation, showed up to take pictures with him, kiss the ring and say that they were there and showing it off," wrote political science professor Denise Dresser in the newspaper *Reforma*.

Not only medicine but also 'kindness therapy' can make you live your time here with greater joy.

— Pope Francis, to young cancer patients, Feb. 14.