



Evangelical observations

Evangelical pastor Harry Strauss attended mass at Roman Catholic parishes throughout Saskatoon during the summer and fall of 2015, and recently shared his observations with staff at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. — page 3

Solidarity visitor

Development and Peace solidarity visitor Yuli Kusworo of Indonesia is speaking in locations across Saskatchewan March 3 - 13, including Saskatoon, Muenster, Yorkton, Regina and Swift Current, Kindersley, North Battleford and Rosthern. — page 6



Mercy

Bishop Donald Bolen, whose motto is "Mercy within mercy within mercy," shared his insights and reflections recently to launch a lenten series during the Year of



Mercy in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. — Page 7

Development and Peace

Each year during Lent, Canadian Catholics are invited to stand in solidarity with communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East who are struggling for dignity and justice. This week the Prairie Messenger highlights the work of Development and Peace. — page 10

Women at the pulpit

A series of essays in the semiofficial Vatican newspaper is urging the Catholic Church to allow women to preach from the pulpit at mass, a role that has been reserved almost exclusively to the all-male priesthood for nearly 800 years, writes David Gibson. — page 13

On 'Mercy Friday' pope visits drug addicts

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In the second of his Mercy Friday gestures, Pope Francis spent two hours with a group of young adults at a Catholic-run residential drug rehabilitation centre.

To the complete surprise of the 55 residents, Pope Francis showed up in his compact Ford Escort at the San Carlo Community Feb. 26 with just a driver. Archbishop Rino Fisichella, organizer of the Vatican's Year of Mercy events, arrived separately at the community outside of Rome near Castel Gandolfo.

"We were speechless when we saw the car with the pope enter our community where every day our young people fight their battle to return to life," said Roberto Mineo, president of the Italian Solidarity Centre, which runs the facility. "The pope, like a caring father, spent a long time with each person, listening to their stories



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE VISITS DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE — Pope Francis accepts a slice of pizza as he visits the San Carlo Community, a Catholic-run drug rehabilitation centre on the outskirts of Rome near Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Feb. 26. The pope encouraged the 55 patients to trust God's mercy to keep them strong.

and embracing them one by one. Some of the young people showed

him photos of their families, their children, and the pope had a word

of hope and a blessing for each of them."

Using tiny photos of past and present community members, the residents had made a mosaic of Our Lady of Lujan, patroness of Argentina, and asked Pope Francis to sign it, which he did "with affection and friendship."

Sitting in a large circle, Pope Francis asked the residents about their activities and learned that one of their therapeutic projects is learning how to cook. "What is the best thing you make?" the pope asked. Their response was not reported by the few people present, but at break time, they shared with Pope Francis some of their cheese pizza, made from scratch.

In a press release, Fisichella said Pope Francis chose the drug rehab centre as a followup to his visit to Mexico where he repeatedly denounced drug traffickers and urged Catholic pastors and parish-

— POPE FRANCIS, page 15

Lutherans, Catholics hear 500-year-old story

By Ramon Gonzalez
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — One main reason for the 500-year-old split between Lutherans and Roman Catholics is "a lack of clear communication between family members," says a Lutheran scholar.



WCR/Gonzalez

Rev. Gordon Jensen

Rev. Gordon Jensen, a professor of theology at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon, compared the split to a failing marriage where couples don't communicate carefully and allow things to become a complete mess.

"That's what happened in the 16th century (between Lutherans and Catholics). If we only had communicated clearly 500 years ago, maybe we wouldn't be working so hard today trying to patch things up."

During Lent, Lutherans and Catholics are meeting at Edmon-

ton's Providence Renewal Centre every Wednesday at 7 p.m. for fellowship and dialogue.

A report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity called From Conflict to Communion is the basis for this lenten dialogue.

The final presentation — Catholics and Lutherans Today — will take place March 15 and will be animated by Dr. Bob McKeon and Rev. Ingrid Doerschel.

In 2017, Lutherans and Catholics will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation together and the lenten series is one means of preparation.

On Feb. 17, Jensen gave the first of five talks — Reformation 500: What is There to Celebrate?

"Too often we look at the Reformation by beginning with the events of Oct. 31, 1517, when Martin Luther posted some topics for debate on the church doors in Wittenberg," he said. In fact, the church had been reforming itself for centuries in an effort to better proclaim the Gospel.

According to Jensen, at the time of Luther, religious orders were seeking reform, especially moral reform. Monastic movements kept thinking "if we just tighten up the morality in our church things will improve."

To bring about reform, the Augustinians and Dominicans, two of the most prominent orders, decided to hold "reform preaching" on Sunday afternoons.

"What a surprise that one of these reform preachers brought more reform than they had planned!" Jensen said. "This reform preacher's name was Martin

Luther — an Augustinian monk who was teaching in Wittenberg."

Luther always considered himself a devout Catholic. "So it's a historical mistake to talk about the Reformation as a Lutheran thing,

as if the Lutherans were a separate, independent entity or a church rebelling against the Roman Catholic Church," Jensen said.

— CHURCH, page 5

Winnipeg boy meets Pope Francis in Rome

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — Pope Francis is a jolly and generous fellow, says one who has met him, and in the eyes of that Grade 3 student the Vatican looks "big" and "old."

Ryan Khandelwal from St. Ignatius School in Winnipeg had quite a week in February: flying to Rome, meeting the pope and telling millions all about it during his appearance on Good Morning America. It was all thanks to a question he had for Pope Francis: "What did God do before the world was made?"

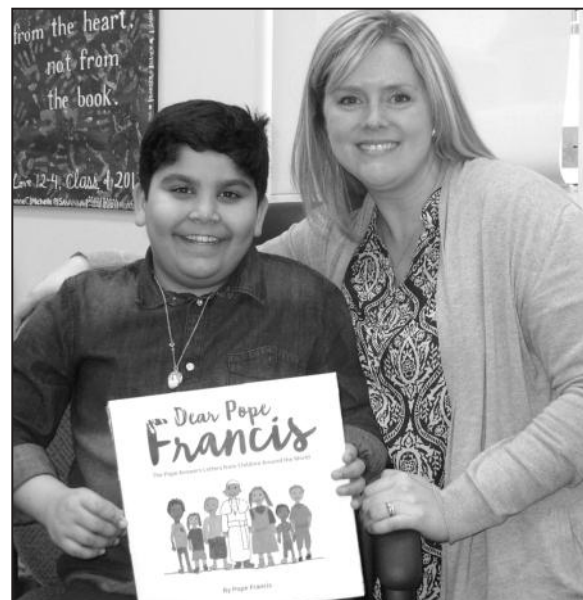
It started as a project organized by U.S.-based Loyola Press that asked Jesuits around the world to collect questions from children for the pope, accompanied by drawings, that would serve as the

basis for a book. Thirty entries were chosen for the book from among 256 children in 26 countries, and one of those was Ryan's.

The questions and drawings chosen, and the pope's responses, have now been published in Dear Pope Francis, released March 1.

Ryan and his 20 classmates at St. Ignatius Jesuit Parish School were encouraged by their teacher,

— KIDS, page 7



J. Buchok

Ryan Khandelwal and his teacher, Kelly Sine

God's 'boundless mercy' celebrated by 35,000

By J.D. Long-Garcia

ANAHEIM, Calif. (CNS) — At the closing mass, before thousands who crowded into the Anaheim Convention Centre Arena Feb. 28, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles challenged Religious Education Congress attendees to be God's mercy to everyone they meet.

It was better to be there for the afternoon mass than at the Oscars, the archbishop quipped, referring to the Academy Awards presentation taking place that night.

The mass, concelebrated by several bishops and dozens of priests, capped four days of religious education workshops and motivational speeches that drew more than 35,000. Speakers in 308 sessions addressed issues of faith in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

"We can trust God because we can trust Jesus," the archbishop said in his homily at a mass for well over 12,000 young Catholics Feb. 25 at the congress' Youth Day,

which was followed by three more days of sessions. "Jesus is real. You can trust your life to him and find joy and peace, that joy and peace that we're all looking for."

The theme for this year's Religious Education Congress, echoed throughout the weekend, was Boundless Mercy, inspired by the Sunday's Gospel and Pope Francis' declaration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Joseph of Medaille, the event's keynote, addressed the need for mercy in her work to end the death penalty.

"One of the reasons we're begging to put the death penalty down in this country is we have wardens testifying: 'I didn't get into this job to kill people. I'm the one who has to officiate at these deaths,'" Prejean said.

"In California, the average wait is 25 years," she added. "The wounded healers among us, they are the ones calling us as a society, as a nation to end the death penalty."

Ansel Augustine, the Youth Day keynote speaker, performed with his troop of dancers from New Orleans.

"Even though we know he's real, we sometimes forget that he's always there," he said about God. "He's waiting for us to turn back to him."

Augustine challenged young Catholics to "shut up, quit tripping and start living," three phrases he used to make his message more memorable. He encouraged the youth to stop gossiping, be silent and listen to God, stop obsessing over unimportant things like sports teams and live out their faith to serve those in need.

Mark Hart, LifeTeen's "Bible Geek," encouraged young people to develop a relationship with Jesus through Sacred Scripture. He said that when he was a teen, he thought being faithful meant getting a "humour-ectomy" — that he would lose his friends, his sense of humour and would wind up watching Walker Texas Ranger re-runs



CNS/Victor Aleman

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONGRESS — A girl carries a candle during a Feb. 24 mass at the 2016 Los Angeles Religious Education Congress at the Anaheim Convention Centre in California.

with his parents on the weekends.

"I was convinced that I was unlovable, and then I learned about a guy named Jesus," Hart said. "Nothing you do can make God love you more or less. Even when you're not thinking about God, God is thinking about you."

Jesuit Father Greg Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries, spoke of St. Ignatius of Loyola's saying that "God, who is always greater."

"I can't imagine a way that I could have learned the tenderness of God better than through these men and women I've come to know," he said of the ex-gang members that he employs through Homeboy.

"Our personal experience tells us that God wants to be close and united and whispering in our ear," he said. "Our God is exhausted

loving us, too busy loving us to ever be disappointed in us."

It's a message he relates to those he works with and their families. As a priest, he has led funerals for 202 young people killed by gang violence.

John Yzaguirre spoke about unity within married life.

"Unity is a gift God has given us, but it is sometimes lacking in our lives because we haven't participated in it," he said. "It's a gift that requires our response."

The most direct way to get to God, Yzaguirre said, is to do God's will. He recommended seven things to help individuals do God's will: Keep reasonable work hours; develop good friendships; deepen union with God; take care of physical health; foster unity in the family; learn constantly; and serve the community.



CNS/J.D. Long-Garcia

LA CONGRESS — An unidentified priest leads a demonstration against the death penalty Feb. 27 as part of the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress in Anaheim, Calif.

Church doesn't want 'dirty money': pope

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Speaking out against exploitation and unfair wages for workers, Pope Francis told benefactors to forget about donating money to the church if their earnings came from mistreating others.

"Please, take your cheque back and burn it," he said to applause.

"The People of God — that is, the church — don't need dirty money. They need hearts that are open to God's mercy," the pope said March 2 during his general audience in St. Peter's Square.

God wants people to turn away from evil and do what is just, not cover up their sins with gestures of sacrifice, he said.

Just as God derives no pleasure from "the blood of bulls and lambs" slaughtered in his name, he is especially averse to offerings from hands dirty with the blood of another human being.

"I think of some church benefactors who come with an offering," he said, and sometimes that offering is "fruit of the blood of

many people, who are exploited, mistreated, enslaved by poorly paid work."

The pope said he would tell these donors to go away because God wants sinners "with purified hands" who have changed course, avoid evil and work for what is good and just, like aiding the oppressed and defending the weak.

"I am thinking of many, many refugees who are landing in Europe and don't know where to go," he said.

At his general audience, the pope continued a series of talks dedicated to the Year of Mercy by focusing on how God is able to unconditionally love, beseech and correct his sinning children.

Just like the father of a family, God cares for his people by teaching them, guiding them to freely choose the good and help others, and correcting them when they make a mistake.

The prophet Isaiah presents God as an "affectionate, but also an alert and strict father," the pope said.

God points out the infidelity and corruption of his people, and shows his bitterness and disappointment in order to help them recognize their sin and "bring them back to the path of justice," he said.

"Even though he is hurt, God lets love do the talking and he appeals to the conscience of these degenerate children so they mend their ways and let themselves be loved again," the pope said.

One role parents have is to help their children use their freedom responsibly, but it is human sin which causes people to see freedom as a "pretense for autonomy, for pride," and pride leads to conflict and "the illusion of self-sufficiency."

People belong to God as his children, and as such, should live in loving, trusting obedience, recognizing that "everything is a gift that comes from the father's love," he said.

Pope Francis said refusing God and his paternity renders life rootless, bare and unlivable.

South African inequality leads to violence at university

By Bronwen Dachs

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (CNS) — Violence and vandalism at South African universities are reactions to inequality in the country, said Archbishop William Slattery of Pretoria, spokesperson for the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

At least four university campuses have been turned into battlegrounds with protests by students who last year, after nationwide marches, won their demand for no increases in fees in 2016.

North-West University in Mafikeng has shut down indefinitely after students burned an administration compound that included a science centre Feb. 24. The students were protesting the suspension of a student council leader.

"The science centre was also used by schools in the region that do not have their own laboratories," and thousands of younger schoolchildren, as well as university students, will be affected, Slattery said in a Feb. 29 telephone interview from Pretoria.

At the University of Pretoria, protesting students are demanding to be taught in languages other than Afrikaans, which they identify with apartheid. Other universities where studies have been dis-

rupted through violence include the University of Cape Town and the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein.

The objection to being taught in Afrikaans "has a lot to do with a feeling among South Africans that their languages are pushed aside," Slattery said.

"Very few white South Africans have made the effort to learn even a few words" of local African languages, he said.

"There is institutional racism throughout the country, which is still dominated by white culture," he said.

Apartheid, South Africa's system of racial segregation that ended in 1994, "was successful in separating people racially, economically, geographically and linguistically," Slattery said. "Integration is happening in churches and other places, but the pace of change is too slow."

"While inequality is felt acutely at universities and this is being articulated with force, it is present throughout South Africa and needs to be resolved by the whole country," the archbishop said.

There is a worrying lack of strong leadership, he said, noting that "it seems that the country's leaders are trying to catch up" with events on campuses.

Toronto's Office for Refugees grows to meet demand

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — As refugees come streaming down the ramp at Pearson International Airport, there are screams, sighs, tears and laughter. Mothers, aunts, fathers, brothers extend their arms to touch, to encircle their daughters, nieces, sons and friends. It's a mad, mysterious, inspiring breakdown of order and decorum.

It goes on and on in English, French, several languages. Exhausted refugees fall into groups for photos. Children peer up at all these laughing, crying adults — at first fearfully and then with excitement.

This is the moment Martin Mark and the Office for Refugees lives for. The tiny office of five staff and dozens of volunteers puts in crushing hours struggling with the stack of forms and reports that goes into every refugee sponsorship application. Their work days stretch into long nights meeting with volunteers to ensure parishes are fully part of the process of bringing refugee families into their communities. They keep in touch with hundreds of Toronto families who are waiting to be reunited with their refugee relatives. They check back in on the hundreds of refugees who have already arrived and maintain contact with thousands more around the world waiting to exit their camp.



Catholic Register/Swan

JOYFUL MOMENTS — The joy is widely evident on the face of Tehetche Herve Mility as he greets members of his family among 50 refugees who arrived in Toronto with the aid of the Archdiocese of Toronto's Office for Refugees. Martin Mark, the executive director, says it is moments like these that make the countless hours devoted to securing a place in Canada for people fleeing oppression in their homelands all worthwhile.

All this work stops for celebration each and every time a refugee steps through the sliding doors at Pearson and into their new life in Canada.

On Feb. 25 it was 30 refugees arriving on a flight — 11-and-a-half hours — from Istanbul, the end of a gruelling journey that started at the Krisan and Ampian

refugee camps near the border between Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.

Over those hours their world transformed. In the refugee camp they fended off snakes that came up from swamp water that frequently invaded the camps. They feared the parasitic chiggers that would burrow between toenails and flesh. On reaching Toronto

wearing old, odd and vastly inadequate winter coats, their first stop was the airport chapel where they prayed and sang in thanksgiving.

Waiting for them at the other end of a quiet car ride along Hwy. 401 was a fully furnished house the St. Anthony of Padua Parish refugee committee had secured and stocked with groceries, tow-

els, bed linen and clothing for a family of eight.

Mark, Office for Refugees executive director, is immensely proud of the African refugees the Archdiocese of Toronto continues to aid in resettlement. On the same weekend that Canada surpassed its goal of bringing in 25,000 Syrian refugees, the Office for Refugees continues to serve a much wider world of refugees in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Which is not to say the office hasn't been fully and completely part of the effort to bring Syrians out of the camps and into safety in Canada. Before Cardinal Thomas Collins launched Project Hope last September to bring 100 refugee families to Toronto, the Office for Refugees was on pace to start the process for about 200 refugees worldwide in 2015. For seven years the office has averaged between 100 and 200 new cases annually. By Dec. 31 the Office for Refugees had submitted paperwork for 2,300 individual refugees. Those 2,300 new cases are added to an inventory of about 1,500 cases currently on the books.

Volunteers and staff worked into the wee hours, through weekends and every holiday.

"We did our best, however, it became clear that either we catch up with the logistics and human resources and everything or we

— OFFICE, page 4

Evangelical pastor visits Roman Catholic parishes in Saskatoon

By Blake Sittler

SASKATOON — Harry Strauss spent his time going to church this past summer. This is not too surprising because Strauss is a pastor. What is unique is that he is an Evangelical pastor who spent this past year attending Roman Catholic masses around the city of Saskatoon.

Strauss is a pastor at Forest Grove Church in Saskatoon. He has served as co-chair of the local Evangelical-Catholic dialogue over the past five years.

"I had a couple of months off and I didn't really plan to attend all the Catholic churches, it just kind of evolved," said Strauss.

Strauss presented his observations to the staff of the Catholic Pastoral Centre in February.

"I wanted to get a sense of Catholic witness and reflect back to my Evangelical brothers and sisters what we share in a positive way," shared Strauss.

Over the summer and fall of 2015, Strauss attended 20 Sunday celebrations at Catholic parishes in Saskatoon, sometimes up to three times on a given Sunday.

He was able to quickly and accurately outline the components of a Catholic liturgy. He was initially taken by the penitential rite. "Our Evangelical circles have opportunities to confess their sins but not with the same intentionality," he noted.

Strauss was impressed by the number and the variety of Scriptures heard in a Catholic mass, and was aware of the three-year rotating canon of readings.

When he attended several liturgies on one weekend, Strauss got to know the readings well. As a pastor, he found it enlightening to experience how, after hearing the readings a second and even a



B. Sittler

Pastor Harry Strauss

third time, he would have trouble remembering what he heard at an earlier celebration — and how he was hearing new messages with each new proclamation.

"It was a lesson to me that families are dealing with a lot of distractions and sometimes it took until the second or third liturgy until I remembered the readings," he admitted. "This was an important lesson for me as a preacher — to appreciate how difficult it is just to be present to the readings."

He pointed to the helpful practice of one pastor who offered a brief precursor to the readings in which he asked the congregation to listen for certain phrases,

themes or characters in the readings they were about to hear.

Strauss said that he appreciated the lay involvement in ministries during the liturgy, including the prayers of the faithful and the sign of peace.

"The whole idea of sharing the peace of Christ is a good practice for a group of Christians," he said.

Strauss noted that many people think that one of the main areas of difference between Catholics and Evangelicals is in the area of preaching, but he did not agree.

"These messages that I heard in the Catholic settings could have easily been preached in an Evangelical church and been well received," he said. "The only exception would have been the Sunday when the readings were from John and the homilies were about transubstantiation."

Homilies ranged from five to 17 minutes. In Evangelical communities, most sermons are closer to 30 minutes.

"I was very much engaged by the messages, even the one Sunday when I attended the Chaldean church and the priest preached in Aramaic," he said.

Strauss noted the diversity of ordained leadership ranging from African, Vietnamese, Columbian, Iraqi, Irish, Filipino, Polish and Canadian-born priests as well as the gathered faithful. "This brings a richness to you as a diocese," he said. "I saw beaded First Nations presider garments and lots of communities of people from various nations of the world."

Strauss was pleasantly sur-

prised at the large number of Chaldean Catholics at Sacred Heart Church.

"I thought there would be 80 or so, but there was more like 350," he said. "These are a biblical people, Syrian, Iraqi."

He also picked up bulletins at each parish and what he noticed right away was how busy Catholic priests are.

"They do masses daily, reconciliation, pastoral duties, counselling, visiting, funerals, and sometimes (for) more than one parish," he commiserated. "There is a lot of good ministry going on in your churches."

One aspect of the Catholic faith that intrigued Strauss is the beliefs around the communion of the saints. By way of example, Strauss shared a story from his own ministry about visiting an Evangelical family who had just lost their mother.

"One of the sons who lived out of town noted that he didn't feel as safe driving because his mom was no longer praying for him when he travelled," he shared. "The line between heaven and earth might be a little more set than it is for Catholics. A Catholic might think that when a parent dies they will have even more time to pray," he reflected.

Strauss also noted some architectural features of the many churches in Saskatoon, from the earth tones of St. Francis Xavier Parish to the dramatic sloped roof of St. Philip Neri Church and the stained glass windows of the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

He noticed one other thing.

"No screens, no PowerPoint," he smiled.

"We live in an age when we are so focused on the image, and for you as Catholics, art and image and statues and Stations of the Cross, images are all over but none of you are taking advantage of (new technology)."

Strauss agreed that there may be some good reasons not to project images or Scripture passages, but he shared how, when done well, these forms of technology can add to a liturgy a different level of dynamism and interaction.

One of the insights that those who attended Strauss' presentation found comforting was his sense that mass attendance was strong in all parishes, no matter the time.

"In the Evangelical mind, the sacred time is between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, so to see a mass at noon that is basically full was surprising," he said.

Strauss ended with a prayer: "May the Catholic witness in the city of Saskatoon flourish. May your emphasis on the new evangelization bring much fruit in your community as you bear witness to Christ . . . to him be glory in the church and the world throughout all generations."

Lois McKay, who works at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, shared her thoughts on Strauss' message.

"I would like every parish to hear this message," she said. "What you said is so positive and practical. There is always room for improvement, but we are doing some things well. We need to hear that sometimes."

Toronto students take on gender, cultural biases

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Nerissa D’Souza and Sajesha “Sunny” Manoharan are trying to break the double whammy of gender and cultural barriers by forging careers as auto mechanics.

The aspiring mechanics from Toronto’s Jean Vanier Catholic Secondary School made history by becoming the first all-female team to place in the Toronto Automotive Technology Competition. D’Souza and Manoharan, both 17-year-old Grade 12 students, took third overall in the 17th instalment of the annual competition held during the Toronto International Auto Show.

“Coming top three is huge for us since we are women,” said D’Souza.

Manoharan was less enthusiastic about their finish and more focused on their cultural victory.

“I’m disappointed because we wanted to come in first obviously, but very, very happy because we basically made history,” she said. “It is about time to break down all of those stereotypes that only men can be able to work in the automotive industry.”

For Manoharan, it goes much further than gender barriers, however.

“Because I’m Sri Lankan, you don’t see women at all in heavy duty industry,” said Manoharan. “My parents were shocked be-



Courtesy of Centennial College

BREAKING BARRIERS — Nerissa D’Souza and Sajesha Manoharan want to pursue careers in automotive engineering and break down barriers in the predominantly male industry.

cause they thought that I was going to go on a different type of career path. My parents are very supportive of my decisions . . . but they were kind of disappointed and tried to talk me out of it.”

Her extended family was even less understanding and got a little revved up by the idea of their niece becoming a grease monkey.

“My uncles and my aunts on the other hand were pretty shocked,” she said. “They always thought that it was an industry sort of just for men. I told them it is changing and that whatever a man can do a woman can do.”

Words alone weren’t enough to

warm them up to that idea. It took action, commitment and results.

“All of the family members that told me this was a really bad choice are now saying, ‘Oh, I knew you had it in you,’ ” said Manoharan.

D’Souza too said her parents, though supportive, were caught off guard by her interest in the automotive industry as a career, even though her father had an unexpected hand in her decision, buying her toy cars every Christmas.

“My parents come from an Indian background,” she said. “In our culture our parents want us to

be lawyers, doctors, engineers.”

The girls’ school, specifically their mentor Isaac Ozah — who spent nearly every weekend with the girls this school year preparing for the competition — was supportive all the way.

“I feel very blessed and I know Nerissa feels very blessed too to have a support system like I do at this school,” said Manoharan. “Mr. Ozah spent a countless number of hours showing us that we are capable.”

“(He) gave me the confidence to break the news to my parents that this is what I actually want to do and not become a doctor or a

lawyer or an engineer like an Indian parent would want their child to do,” said D’Souza.

Having taught both girls since Grade 10, Ozah, the school’s tech director, said he always believed in the duo.

“(When) they came to me and told me, ‘Look Mr. Ozah, we want to be automotive service technicians,’ I said if that is what you girls want to do then you’d be good candidates for this competition,” he said. “I thought they would come in first place, I thought they were going to win.”

An immigrant himself, Ozah said he strives to instill in all his students that traditional gender roles do not apply in Canada.

“I am personally trying to break down the barriers,” he said. “This is a free country. Whatever a man can do a woman can do.”

Both girls are already enrolled in level 1 of the automotive service technician program at Toronto’s Centennial College and dream of one day owning their own automotive shops.

And that’s exactly where Manoharan feels she belongs.

“When I am in the shop I feel at my best,” she said. “It is a powerful thing when you have something that is broken and you get to fix it, alter it or change it to your liking.”

The Feb. 11 competition, won by a team from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Secondary School in Mississauga, challenged the teams to perform a number of timed technical tasks. The top three schools are to receive a vehicle from GM Canada for training purposes.

Western bishops meet in Victoria

By Peter Novocosky, OSB

VICTORIA — Archbishop Richard Gagnon of Winnipeg was elected president of the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops at their annual meeting here Feb. 21 - 25. Joining him for a two-year term as vice-president is Bishop Paul Terrio of Saint Paul.

The annual meeting of 23 bishops from Western Canada and the North provided an opportunity for bishops to exchange information on what is happening in their various dioceses and the challenges they face. Liaison bishops representing eight western committees also reported on what is happening in the region.

A major presentation given at the assembly was on the recent *motu proprio* on marriage annulments issued by Pope Francis and effective Dec. 8. Canonist Rev. Francis Morrissey, OMI, outlined the scope of the document. He noted that it may not mean any major changes in Canada, but it will have an impact on poorer countries that are not as well organized as Canada and that don’t have marriage tribunals to investigate failed marriages.

The assembly also began discussing preparations for their *ad limina* visit to Rome next March when they meet Pope Francis and visit various congregations.

The meeting ended with a presentation on a new catechetical program for primary school children entitled Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ.

Office workers demonstrate Gospel values every day

Continued from page 3

will not be able to manage it,” said Mark.

So the Office for Refugees is hiring new staff and moving into new offices across the street from archdiocesan headquarters on Yonge Street in midtown Toronto.

Since it was launched as an archdiocesan department in 2009, the Office for Refugees has maintained a tradition of shoe-string improvisation. Volunteers pay their own way on mission trips to refugee camps in the Middle East and Africa where they interview and select refugees who can be successfully sponsored. Invited to a United Nations conference on refugee policy in Amsterdam last month, as part of an official Canadian delegation, Mark arranged his lodgings through AirBNB. He couldn’t imagine paying Amsterdam hotel rates. Office for Refugee staffers avoid making long-distance phone calls. They use the free WhatsApp application on their cellphones.

“They definitely did carry over that grassroots approach with a Christian mission to help others,” said interim operations director John Ecker. “They were very successful doing that.”

Ecker has been added to the Office for Refugees to help the office grow.

“The archdiocese was keen to make sure they had all the advantages that other departments have as a department,” Ecker said.

Ecker has a history of working with non-profits and in government, helping turn ideals into a functioning organization. His most recent assignment was getting the Family of Faith campaign up and running for the Archdiocese of Toronto. With the Office of Refugees, Ecker is working with an organization whose ideals and idealism have been enough to get it over huge obstacles.

“They are demonstrating Gospel values every day,” said Ecker. “And in everything that they do. They are saving lives. They are making a huge difference for people who otherwise have no hope.”

Outreach worker Luciano Moro knows the truth of Ecker’s judgment because he came to Canada from South Sudan 16 years ago, a young war refugee sponsored by Catholics who wanted to make the world a little better. He was a volunteer with the Office for Refugees back when it was a small part of Catholic Crosscultural Services and became a staffer in 2009.

“In a way it was sort of paying it forward,” Moro said.

Moro visits parishes to explain refugee realities and the Catholic response.

“Few have the opportunity to

tell it as I would,” he said. “Refugees are simply people, ordinary people, whose circumstances have changed in dramatic ways so that they have to start all over. But they need our help. They also need our understanding that they have dreams, they have hopes and also they deserve human dignity.”

More resources, a bigger office with more staff, better computers — all that’s nice but it doesn’t turn Moro’s crank.

“The work of refugees will not simply end tomorrow with the establishment or the growth of the office,” he said. “The more conflicts or situations where people are uprooted beyond our borders, the more the demand is for us to reach out and to help more people. That requires us to dig deep as a community and to reflect on how we can better be able to assist more people.”

Mark is convinced the 2,300 applications to sponsor refugees in 2015 will become the new normal. Toronto Catholics are on board. His new role becomes one of advocacy. He will have more time to engage with the federal government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, where he’s known and respected for his dedication to civic sponsorship and his thorough knowledge of the complicated system.

“I need to ensure that we raise the profile of this work. Reaching out can help more people to be involved in the program.”

Mark is unafraid of the political entanglements of advocacy work. If some would make refugee policy a Liberal or a Conservative cause, he’s uninterested. There’s another kind of politics that stands up for voiceless refugees and advocates for an open and accessible sponsorship system.

“We have to step up for our values, to ensure Catholic social teaching — our main guidance in our work — is really publicly emphasized. We have to be prepared to defend and to represent our value system — to make sure the Catholic voice, supportive or not supportive of politicians, is there when we talk about refugees and their lives.”

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Students respond to God’s call to CCODP

By Thandiwe Konguavi
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — Holy Family School in southeast Edmonton has found a formula to get junior high students galvanized into active and dignified service to the poor.

Start with a leader who truly inspires them to do what they are taught by living out their Catholic social teachings.

“I’m inspired by Pope Francis because he donated his motorcycle to charity and would just ride the bus like any other normal person,” said Grade 9 student Mary-Jane McIntyre.

“It’s easy for a preacher to get up there and say, ‘Be humble,’ but it’s a different thing to actually do that,” McIntyre said.

Add some in-depth knowledge about justice issues with simulations, graphic videos and a talk by a refugee. Then pose the question: What is Jesus calling us to do and how have I answered the call?

Over two months, students at Holy Family partnered with Development and Peace to learn about those suffering in the Global South.

Under the leadership of assistant principal Suzanne Rozycki and teacher Laurie Bonanni-

McGee, they looked into their hearts to choose a justice response that Jesus has called them to perform.

Rozycki said almost 270 people — students, staff and parents — are now supporting the students and learning about Development and Peace themselves. Students are examining their own skills and talents to determine how they can serve others. “That’s ultimately, what Jesus is asking of all of us,” she said.

Struck by the global food crisis, the students learned how the food distribution system has left countries with the largest populations with the least food and those with much smaller populations with so much food that some is wasted.

“It made me feel horrible because I live here and other people are starving,” said Grade 9 student Caleb Prcevich.

“I felt the food crisis was really unfair,” added Anita Pynadath, in Grade 8.

As the students narrowed down the justice response they were being called to do — prayer, advocacy or charitable action — focus included the theme that no one journeys alone, said Rozycki.

Students come to understand that project development improves when people work together

and share their gifts, talents and treasures, she said.

The student initiatives are now in full swing. One group will give presentations to draw awareness to the devastating effects of an earthquake in Nepal.

“Even though it happened a long time ago, they still need help,” said Grade 8 student Matthew Mamchur.

Others are selling pens with information about kids in the Global South who do not have opportunities for education.

“If they don’t have educations, who is going to lead our world in the future?” asked Grade 8 student Jennica Rae Marquises.

Many students decided to help refugees after hearing Rozycki’s father tell of his parents who were taken into forced labour camps from Poland near the end of the Second World War.

They also learned through graphic videos of refugees fleeing Syria without enough resources to bring their children.

“It’s just shocking that all the stuff they worked hard for they’re leaving behind, and they’re leaving their family behind,” said Anu Coonghe, in Grade 9.

Grade 8 student John Neil Carlos Rodis said his group is organizing a sportathon to raise



WCR/Konguavi

RESPONDING TO GOD’S CALL — Student Ava Alexis-Seggumba works under the watchful eye of CCODP volunteer Martin Blanchet at Holy Family School in Edmonton.

money and spread awareness about Syrian refugees.

Parent Monique Mamchur was moved to tears as she said the students’ work helping the poor has gone hand-in-hand with a noticeable spiritual growth.

“You could teach all you want at church and try to be an example at home but to have it at the school level, now it’s not just Mom lecturing him, not just the church lecturing him,” she said.

Sara Farid, regional co-ordinator for Development and Peace, said young people often want to act for social justice.

“It’s inspirational. You feel like, ‘Thank you Lord, this is the next generation.’”

Church officials responded quickly to Luther’s proposals

Continued from page 1

The Augustinian superior assigned Luther to preach at the Sunday afternoon reform services. When attacked, Luther always said he was only doing what his superiors had ordered him to do.

Jensen thinks this puts a different spin on the reform movement. “If Luther had stuck to that preaching and tried to improve the morality in Wittenberg, we probably wouldn’t have heard of him.

“Nor we would have heard of him if it wasn’t for a Dominican monk who came to nearby Wittenberg to preach and to sell letters of indulgence” to raise funds for an archbishop’s office.

The Dominican would have made a good marketer today. One slogan he used to sell indulgences

was: “When the coin in the coffer clings, the soul from purgatory springs.”

Luther reacted to the Dominican’s preaching, “not because at this time he disagreed with indulgences or even because he disagreed with purgatory, but because he had a pastoral concern for those who were spending hard-earned money buying indulgences.

“He thought something was wrong when a person could buy time off in purgatory or even purchase salvation if one bought enough indulgences,” Jansen said.

Luther’s response was to write 95 theses, or items for discussions.

“That’s important to remember because Luther was not planning to spread these 95 theses all over the countryside,” Jensen said. “He actually mailed them to his

bishop to get permission to have a discussion on them.”

However, a printer translated Luther’s theses from Latin to German, and soon large numbers of people were reading them.

Also, as a district official in the Augustinian order, Luther had the right to set up such theses and call a debate on them.

Luther’s proposals touched a raw nerve, and church officials responded quickly. “What really bothered the church was that Luther had raised questions about authority in the church, suggesting that Scripture has authority over the church and not vice versa.”

This issue fuelled the fire. “Yet what was really troubling for Luther wasn’t so much the authority issue but that salvation seemed to be for sale.”

In response, Luther articulated what became the cornerstone of the Lutheran Reformation — that one is justified or made right in the eyes of God by faith alone apart from works.

“Right from the start the Lutherans and the Roman Catholics were talking past each other,” Jensen said. “Roman Catholics saw authority as the big issue and the Lutherans were saying ‘No, it is all about justification.’”

Things escalated and in 1518 Luther was called to Augsburg and asked to recant. “Luther escaped that night from Augsburg and went back to Wittenberg because he didn’t want to be dragged to Rome for disciplinary action.”

In January 1521, the Catholic Church declared Luther a heretic. Four months later the Holy Roman Empire declared him a traitor. “It was a very common practice; if you were against the church, you were against the state as well. It’s amazing he lived 25 years after that.”

Lutherans tried to work within the Catholic Church, but by the late 1530s his followers realized that if they were to survive, they had to establish their own structures.

The Council of Trent gave reformers hope when in 1545 it clarified the doctrine of justification, saying one can be justified by faith and “works” and prohibited the purchase of indulgences. Even though the council set clear boundaries for dissent, it never condemned the Lutherans.

“That’s important to remind us how important language is and how dangerous it can be and how carefully we need to use language, especially in the midst of a family feud,” Jensen said.

Yet, Lutherans and Catholics were still trying to get together. In

1542 they reached a tentative agreement, which in the end failed because the parties couldn’t agree on matters such as transubstantiation or the limits of papal authority. At that point, any possibility of reconciliation ended.

Lutherans and Catholics even went to war against each other. The first war broke out in 1547 and the Lutheran parties were quickly defeated. Hostilities broke out again in 1618 and lasted 30 years. It was settled by the Treaty of Westphalia, which mandated that the religion of the ruler will be the religion of the people.

“So if you lived in a territory that had a Roman Catholic ruler you had to be a Roman Catholic; otherwise, you had to move to a territory where there was a Lutheran ruler and vice versa.”

After 500 years of not treating each other well or not talking to each other, “a thaw started in 1962 when the windows of the Roman Catholic Church were thrown open by the Second Vatican Council.

“For the first time in centuries, non-Roman Catholic churches were being recognized to a certain degree as ecclesial communities,” Jensen said.

Soon, Catholics and Lutherans began holding official dialogues. “What they first discovered is they agreed on probably 90 per cent of the things; not a surprise at all.”

One of the most surprising things happened almost 20 years ago when the two churches signed the Joint Declaration of the Doctrine on Justification.

“It was signed 482 years to the day after Luther had posted the 95 theses for debate,” Jensen said. “One of the very things that had split the family for hundreds of years was now agreed to.”



Art Babych

LATE WINTER — A Snowy owl rests on a fence post in a farmer’s field near Ottawa Feb. 29. “What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.” — John Steinbeck

D&P solidarity speaker visits Saskatchewan

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — The Development and Peace partner organization Arkomjogja builds housing for the urban poor in disaster-prone areas of the world in a grassroots way that also builds a spirit of community.

Co-ordinator Yuli Kusworo was in Saskatchewan recently, describing the work of Arkomjogja and how it is addressing issues of poverty, inequality and climate change in Indonesia.

The Development and Peace solidarity visitor spoke in several locations across Saskatchewan from March 3 - 13, including Holy Spirit and St. Mary parishes in Saskatoon and St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster, with presentations also scheduled in Yorkton, Regina and Swift Current, Kindersley, North Battleford and Rosthern.

Armella Sonntag, provincial animator for Development and Peace, introduced Kusworo



K. Yaworski

Yuli Kusworo

March 3 at Holy Spirit Parish in Saskatoon.

An award-winning architect, Kusworo is the co-ordinator and one of the founders of Arkomjogja, which works in the historical city of Yogyakarta and on multiple projects in other regions of Indonesia. He also acts as a consultant on

Development and Peace's reconstruction program in the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.

Kusworo began his presentation by describing his home country. Consisting of some 17,508 islands, Indonesia has a population of nearly 260 million, with 746 local languages and more than a thousand ethnic groups. "We have a national language, Bahasa, to connect with each other."

Millions of hectares of rainforest in Indonesia are being lost at a rate of about seven per cent each year, he reported. Climate change is having a big impact on the country, he added. "Before we had six months of rainy season, now, only three months."

In addition, the island nation is located in the so-called "ring of fire," prone to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis, including the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami on Boxing Day 2004.

In responding to housing needs

in the wake of disaster or in the midst of poverty, Arkomjogja works closely with the people they are serving, involving them in all stages in a process of consultation and empowerment. This is in contrast to projects by a developer or a government, which don't take into account what the poor need or want, he said.

"We are not only building physical things," he said, admitting that it takes more time and effort to tend to the "non-physical things" — such as community building, social cohesion and a self-help spirit.

"Poor people have a tradition of building housing for themselves," he noted. "We work as friends with poor people in the community."

The Arkomjogja team includes senior and junior architects, community organizers, an engineer and an accountant, and has worked in 16 cities in Indonesia. Kusworo has also worked in

other countries after disasters, including the Philippines and Nepal. They tailor their response to the nature of the community — for instance, taking a different approach in urban and rural areas.

The team uses local knowledge and materials, and fosters a spirit of cohesion in a process that includes a co-operative and consultative process of community mapping, community planning and community implementation. "Houses are built by the community together," said Kusworo. This is more cost effective as well as building community spirit.

The process also increases the capacity of the people to advocate for themselves, to find a voice and speak to government or work together to achieve other goals, he noted. He also shared video testimony from some of those whom Arkomjogja has worked with, in which they described the impact of having "support for what we are lacking."

Jason Evert speaks on chastity with passion, energy and humour

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Jason Evert of the Chastity Project spoke with passion, energy and humour about sex, the virtue of chastity and a range of related issues to thousands of youth and adults in Saskatchewan Feb. 24 - 26 at a series of events organized by One More Soul Canada.

Based in Denver, Colo., Evert and his wife Crystalina operate the Chastity Project ministry, which offers seminars, distributes free or low-cost resources, and uses social media to "promote the virtue of chastity so that individuals can see God, and be free to love (Matthew 5:8)."

Some 4,000 youth and adults in Regina and Saskatoon heard Evert's message, reported Mary Riendeau and Marcy Millette of One More Soul.

"Jason's topic of chastity as a virtue was relevant to all over the age of 12 years. The importance of modesty and abstinence for happy marriages and lower divorce rates underscored his presentations," said Riendeau.

Evert spoke at Resurrection Parish in Regina Feb. 24 in a presentation entitled The Truth, as

well as speaking at two Catholic high schools in Regina: Archbishop M.C. O'Neill and Dr. Martin Leboldus schools. Hundreds more attended Evert's presentation Feb. 25 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon. He also spoke at Bethlehem Catholic High School and Holy Cross Catholic High School in Saskatoon.

"It was amazing to have so many local organizations partner to help put this on," said Colm Leyne, co-ordinator of youth ministry for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, citing the collaboration of One More Soul with groups such as Pure Witness Ministries and TeenAid, as well as the diocesan youth office.

Many participants lined up for confession and participated in eucharistic adoration held in conjunction with the event at the Saskatoon cathedral, Leyne said, noting the spiritual impact of the event.

"I was so encouraged seeing parents and teens flock to the free resource table picking up reading material, CDs and more, to continue their formation," Leyne said. "I have no doubt lives were changed."

One More Soul organizers agreed. "Audiences were held captive with Jason's stories and truth, both straightforward and entertaining," said Riendeau.

"He touched on all aspects of human sexuality, including damage done by pornography, damage done to women's health through the use of hormonal contraceptives such as the pill and Depo-Provera. He explained the extensive side effects such as weakening bones, lowered libido, increased risks of breast cancer, as cited by WHO and the

Mayo Clinic," she said.

In addition, Evert provided information about sexually transmitted diseases, including human papillomavirus (HPV), which is now the most common STD across North America. "He revealed the inaccuracy of the safe sex message and beautifully framed the difference between love and lust," Riendeau added.

At a high-energy presentation to students at Holy Cross Catholic High School in Saskatoon Feb. 26, Evert challenged messages bombarding youth about sexuality in our culture. He encouraged youth to recognize the difference between lust and love, and offered examples and options for choosing a healthier, more virtuous path.

"Today, relationships we all know are in an absolute mess. We all want love, we just don't know where to find it. But God offers it," said Evert. Real love is sacrificial and puts the good of the beloved above all else — just as Christ did on the cross, he said.

"Guys, that begins by not sacrificing girls for the sake of ourselves," Evert said, tackling the issue of pornography. While acknowledging that women also look at pornography, Evert stressed the overwhelming impact of Internet porn on male sexuality.

"Porn is the best way for a guy to shoot his future marriage in the head, teaching you that girls are to be used for your kicks," he told the crowd. "When you look at porn you are not looking at someone's naked body, you are looking at somebody's daughter, who has probably sexually abused as a little girl . . . and we laugh it off."

He noted that some of the women featured in widely circulated pornography are no longer alive, lost to drug overdoses, suicide or violence. "How sad it is: how many guys are still lusting after pictures of these girls on the Internet without even knowing whether they are dead or alive. The sickness of lusting after a woman who could be dead should make any guy who looks at porn step back and say, 'Who have



K. Yaworski

CHASTITY PROJECT — Jason Evert of the Chastity Project spoke at Holy Cross High School Feb. 26 in Saskatoon, one of a number of presentations in Saskatoon and Regina organized by One More Soul Canada.

women become to me? Who have I become to women?" said Evert.

Evert said research that shows that sexual activity is going down among high school students, with many choosing not to have sex or choosing to start over. "Two out of three high school students who have had sex privately admit they wished that they had waited," he told the crowd.

Evert pointed to pressures of the culture that says the worth of a woman is in how she looks and that she only has value if she is desired by a man. "A girl convinces herself that the priceless gift of her body is not a big deal, and something starts to die inside," he said. "She's so afraid of being alone, she settles for less (than real love): hooking up, having friends with benefits . . . and something dies in her."

Evert pointed to the longing in every heart for real connection, for true love, that respects the dignity of a person. "Love can't wait to give, but lust can't wait to get," he said, pointing to the signs of an authentically loving relationship, grounded in respect and chastity, rather than one of exploitation, use and abuse.

Evert also addressed those

experiencing same-sex attractions, stressing "your identity is not your sexual desire." Every person's true identity is that they are a beloved child of God, he said. "What does that mean on a daily basis? Living out chastity, which applies to all of us," he said, pointing to testimonies from friends struggling with homosexuality who have found "amazing peace and joy" in choosing a life of chastity and holiness.

Evert encouraged all of his listeners to pursue virtue, to take advantage of the sacrament of reconciliation and turn to Scripture such as Psalm 51 to start anew. "The point is that the redemption of the human heart is possible," he said, urging youth to draw on the strength of mass and devotion to Mary as part of an effort to live a life of virtue.

"Your life is going to go way, far beyond the four walls of school," he added, urging youth to reject the pressures to "have a girlfriend, have a boyfriend."

"Take your time, find yourself. Love will find you," he said. Evert concluded his talk by assuring students of the deep and never-ending love that God has for them.



F. Flegel

NASH LECTURE — It took politicians moving out of their comfort zone and "adult conversations" to finally end the conflict in Northern Ireland, said Dr. Kieran McEvoy, Professor of Law and Transitional Justice, Queens University, Belfast. McEvoy delivered the Nash Lecture Feb. 23 in the Riffel Auditorium, Campion College, University of Regina. The lecture was titled Truth, Justice and Reconciliation: Dealing with the Past in Northern Ireland.

Mercy is at the heart of things: Bishop Bolen

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — The bishop whose motto is “Mercy within mercy within mercy” shared insights and reflections Feb. 21 to launch a lenten series during the Year of Mercy in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.



K. Yaworski

Bishop Donald Bolen

In his presentation entitled “Mercy all the way down,” Bishop Donald Bolen wove together poetry and story, philosophy and physics, personal experience and Scripture, offering the first of three presentations about God’s mercy organized by the diocesan Foundations: Exploring Our Faith Together office. The diocesan series for the Year of Mercy continued Feb. 28 with speaker Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner, OMI, and March 6 with author and theologian Leah Perrault.

“With the God who is revealed to us in history and in the Scriptures, who is also revealed to us in the depths of our human experience, it is mercy all the way down,” said Bolen. “The well that never exhausts is the well of mercy; it is mercy that is at the heart of things, mercy by which we live. The name of God is mercy within mercy within mercy.”

The bishop of Saskatoon tackled questions of ultimate meaning as he opened his talk, citing a First Nations story about the nature of the universe, Stephen Hawking’s Brief History of Time,

and a childhood friend’s haiku poem: “did you ever wonder / how big is the universe? / don’t think about it.”

“Poetry is good at asking ultimate questions, asking what is going on here, what are we here for,” said Bolen, noting that the many distractions of our life and culture can keep us from reflecting on the central meaning of existence until some circumstance brings it to the fore.

“How do we live deeply? How do we live with our ears to the ground of the most fundamental questions: why are we here, what is being asked of us, what’s going on here?” he said.

“Those questions also arise out of human suffering,” noted Bolen, relating a moment bringing communion to a dying friend, when the response “Only say the word and I shall be healed” resonated profoundly with the experience of suffering. “What is that word? What is the word that governs all things? What is at the foundation of things?” Bolen queried, before exploring Scripture and experience to offer an answer — namely, the “inexhaustible well” of God’s mercy.

The mystery of God that Moses encounters in the burning bush in the Book of Exodus is revealed in an invitation to relationship, as God acts in history, “forming a people and accompanying them in time,” responding to suffering by sending Moses to set his people free.

“Thirty chapters later, after this has all happened and God has led the people of Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness, Moses again has an encounter with God, and on that occasion, in chapter 34, Moses hears these words: ‘The Lord, the Lord: a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation.’ So, the God cloaked in mystery — ‘I am who I am’ — is revealed also as a God boundless in mercy,” described Bolen, “concealed and revealed as a source of mercy and life.”

That boundless mercy becomes incarnate in Jesus Christ, Bolen continued. “That Word that

God speaks, the Word that God speaks in creation, the Word that God speaks through the prophets, the Word that God speaks in the wisdom literature — that Word takes flesh,” he said, describing the message of mercy that fills the New Testament.

The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy proclaimed this year by Pope Francis has as its theme Merciful Like the Father, which resonates in parables from the Gospel of Luke about the shepherd who leaves 99 sheep to find the one that is lost, the woman who does everything to find the lost coin, and the merciful father who eagerly runs to restore relationship with the returning prodigal. “Those are images of God going in search of us, the God who comes mercifully to find us.”

Reflecting on what word Jesus may have been writing on the ground when the crowd brought forward the woman caught in adultery (John 8), Bolen asked, “What word did Jesus’ whole life speak? What did his ministry speak? It spoke mercy.”

Bolen reflected on his own personal encounter with the mercy of God. He described being surprised to find a scrapbook he created at the age of 21 that includes the Thomas Merton quote that would eventually be the source of his episcopal motto.

“By 21, I was starting to learn that I had an abiding sinfulness which I couldn’t deal with well. I tried to be a great disciple and kept falling flat. I came to realize in some way, shape or form that Christian discipleship wasn’t about what I would become, and it wasn’t about what I was going to do, and it wasn’t about achievement. It was ultimately about being a recipient of God’s mercy,” said Bolen.

Bolen quoted Pope Francis, who writes in The Name of God is Mercy: “God does not want anyone to be lost. His mercy is infinitely greater than our sins, his medicine is infinitely greater than our illness that he has to heal.”

That belief allows us to live with “a kind of joy, freedom and hope that nothing can vanquish,” said Bolen, stressing that belief in God’s mercy is grounded in the Paschal Mystery.

“The core of Jesus’ life isn’t just something he said. It is what happened to him. It’s how he gave himself fully. Pope Francis says about the death of Jesus that ‘it’s the greatest act of love of all history.’ It is God taking on our darkness and shining light. It is God enduring the worst, and forgiving it,” said Bolen. “It is where the worst moment in human history breaks open by God’s grace to be the greatest moment, the definitive moment: God will not abandon us. God can transform even the worst that human beings do.”

Responding to suggestions that it is love at the centre of things, rather than mercy, Bolen reflected on the profound love of God that underlies all of creation, asserting that there is no contradiction between mercy and love. “Mercy is the sort of the love that we need when our lives are marred by wounds, when our world is scarred by conflict and violence and injus-

tice. Mercy is the kind of love that we need from God, the love which restores relationship, the love that gives us the strength to keep living, which plants a hope within us that we can live by.”

Bolen added that he is also sometimes challenged by those who say, “What’s all this mercy business, what about justice?” The bishop agreed that God desires justice for every human being, for all of creation. “Justice is the name of love in action, love trying to make broken situations whole, and distorted relationships right. And to do so, justice requires strong action that sometimes might not look like mercy or love.”

Bolen pointed to strong and angry words that Jesus has for scribes and Pharisees. “But there is mercy in that, too. It is a call to justice. It is Jesus calling them to wake up. God’s justice is always shaped by mercy,” he said.

Asked about the call to work for both charity and justice, Bolen added: “God’s mercy is always attentive to human suffering, and the church’s impulse toward justice issues isn’t an ideological thing. It is when we hear the suffering of others, what does God implant in us? I think (it is) a desire to address that suffering, a desire to reach out compassionately.”

Ukrainian Easter eggs an ancient art form

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Ukrainian Easter eggs — *pysanka* — are not just colourful works of art; they are full of Christian symbolism.

“These designs are symbols of Christ’s resurrection and eternal life,” said Eleanor Bernakevitch of St. Athanasius Parish, who was hosting an Easter egg workshop March 5. She gave the PM a description of the designs, their meaning and the tools required to “write” on the egg.

It’s an ancient tradition, said Bernakevitch, that has been going on since about AD 500. The tradition evolved from a pagan tradition that paid tribute to the natural world. The meaning of the designs was changed over time to align with Christian beliefs.

One does not “colour” Easter eggs; the designs are written on the egg using beeswax and dyes. *Pysanka* means to write, explained Bernakevitch.

Before dyes were available, colours came from nature. “Yellow came from an onion peel,” said Bernakevitch, “orange came from cheese, red from beet juice, green from spinach leaves and black from tree bark.”

The colours are applied in sequence: the design is written on a raw white egg, usually with a pencil, and a special stylus applies melted beeswax to the design. The egg is then dipped in the first colour, which is usually yellow, and the process continues through the remaining colours, ending in black.

“The egg will be all black,” said Sonia Pillipow, one of the teachers instructing the group. “You take a candle and a piece of paper and take off all the wax and there is your pattern.”

The colours permeate the shell

and become permanent, said Pillipow. The raw egg eventually dries out and the shell is empty.

Why not a boiled egg? “Tradition,” said Pillipow.

The stylus itself is unique. A chicken bone was used by the ancients, but now a thin round



F. Flegel

PYSANKA — Kaliegh Tress shows off her design at a Ukrainian Easter egg workshop held March 5 in Regina.

Kids ‘like a family’

Continued from page 1

Kelly Sine, to put on their thinking caps and put pens and crayons to paper.

“They came up with some great questions, really insightful,” said Sine.

That was last May and by August the school was informed that Ryan’s letter had been selected from hundreds of letters to be published in the book. In December the school received even more exciting news: Ryan would be going to Rome to meet Pope Francis personally.

During their five-day stay in Rome, the children visited the Roman Coliseum and the former residence of St. Ignatius. “We spent every day with the other kids; we did everything together; we were like a family,” said Ryan,

who took his dad along on the trip.

Each of the kids presented the pope with a gift and Ryan wanted his to be uniquely Canadian, so he presented Francis with a bottle of maple syrup. Ryan also brought gifts from his school, including a St. Ignatius T-shirt and key chain, and a book about the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg.

In the Good Morning America coverage, which can be seen on YouTube, the pope is visibly delighted with the syrup. “This is good,” says the pontiff.

From the pope Ryan received a medal with an image of St. John Paul II on one side and Pope Francis on the other.

As to the pope’s response to Ryan’s question, “What did God do before the world was made?” Francis replies that God simply loved.

Desert wilderness of parenting lasts more than 40 days

Soul Searching

Tom Saretsky



Shortly after Jesus’ baptism by John, he is driven to the desert. Jesus stays there for 40 days and the devil uses the opportunity to tempt him a number of times. Each temptation is more enticing than the last, but Jesus stands firm and rebukes each one rather handily. Frustrated, the devil finally leaves him alone, and Jesus is left to the care of his angels. I had a spirited discussion about this very occurrence in Jesus’ life with my class not long ago.

The desert is a wild wilderness environment. In geological terms, the desert is commonly referred

Saretsky is a teacher and chaplain at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon. He and his wife, Norma, have two children.

to as a forsaken area of land where little precipitation occurs, making hostile living conditions for plant and animal life. It can be a dangerous, lonely and difficult place to survive.

I think we all live in this wilderness at various times in our lives. Life “out there,” which can be in the hallways of a school, in family life, on the job or in public life, isn’t always pleasant or easy. Life is tough and demanding and sometimes one needs to be a survivalist in order to make it. Jesus experienced that firsthand.

We discussed the different kinds of desert wilderness young students experience. For example, they deal with the issues of peer pressure, exerting their own independence, identity (as we all do at times), friends, family, and future.

As the discussion was nearing its end, one student asked me the question, “Mr. Saretsky, what is your wilderness?” It was a good question and, after pondering it for awhile, I submitted that my wilderness was parenting.

For most parents, parenting can be a frightening wilderness. Though it is a wonderful, life enriching, “stones-into-bread” experience, it can be punctuated with doubt, fear and loneliness. Even when it comes to decisions, parenting is difficult. The decisions parents make for their children aren’t always popular.

Parenting is stressful — there is no manual on how to parent, no formalized training. It is the most important job in the world, but it’s learn-as-you-go. Parenting and family life contain great joy, but it is a wilderness experience that sometimes leaves us hoping for angels to minister to us.

I experienced this wilderness when I came home from school one Friday afternoon. As soon as I got into the house, my daughter Jenna was requesting to have a sleepover with a couple of her friends. I’ve never been a fan of sleepovers and when I told Jenna the answer was “no,” she, in the

blink of an eye, somehow managed to summon and unleash the emotional power of the underworld. I swear Jenna has those spirits on speed dial. So much for a peaceful end to the week.

It was a back-and-forth battle and our stubborn natures were colliding head-on. Apparently, Jenna had already made the arrangements with her friends at school. All the plans were in place and she really didn’t want to make the phone calls explaining that her dad was tired and wasn’t up to anyone sleeping over. This wasn’t going well for Jenna, even though I was getting battle weary. However, my reinforcement was arriving in the form of my ally, my wife, Norma, as I heard her enter the house.

I whisked Norma into the briefing room and got her up to speed on the situation. We had the tactical advantage, but it was still necessary that Norma fall into place and assume the battle position. However, much to my surprise, nothing was said, except for her small whispered statement, “Memories are more important than moods.” Her silence usually tells me some-

thing more than her words do, but this time her words struck a chord.

There was a point, in my exchange with Jenna, where I was going to relent, but I usually try to match Jenna’s stubbornness. Maybe I simply found it difficult to launch myself from the high peak of my pride. Scripture says that God will send his angels to catch you lest you dash your foot against a stone. Apparently that doesn’t work with pride. You simply have to swallow it quickly, but I do admit it’s never given me indigestion. In the end, Norma delivered me and Jenna to the promised land of peace and harmony, and the sleepover went ahead without a hitch or a late night.

Throughout the time I’ve been a parent, there’s been a constant mixture of pain and joy; of confrontation and reconciliation; of windswept deserts and life-giving oases; of fighting hard and loving harder. Parenting is the most monumental blessing I’ve ever experienced, and it is an experience I wouldn’t trade for all the kingdoms of the world. I pray that you all feel the same way.

Ideas around attractiveness are a distraction from what’s actually important

By Caitlin Ward

A few years ago I dated someone who told me almost constantly how pretty he thought I was.

I don’t think I reacted the way I was supposed to react. Or, more appropriately, the way he thought I would react. At first, I’d just smile and say something to the effect of, “oh, that’s nice of you to say,” or “thanks.” But as time went on, “thanks” turned into “yeah, well . . .” or “oh, OK. What are we having for supper?”

I knew I was supposed to be flattered, but I wasn’t. It made

Video

India.Arie

me feel uncomfortable. Eventually, I asked him to tone it down, if not stop entirely. At the time I couldn’t quite articulate, to him or even to myself, what I didn’t like about it. It’s a fairly normal sort of compliment to give a woman you’re dating, and it’s not as if I thought he meant anything bad by it at the time. But I didn’t like it.

Yeah, I know. I’m a riot. Can’t I just take a compliment?

Well . . . yes, and no. The thing about compliments — any compliment — is that they carry unspoken assumptions about what is good or important. No one comes into my house and says, “wow, it looks great in here,” when my

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bicycle is in pieces on the kitchen floor and I haven’t done the dishes in two weeks. People say my house looks great when I’ve just cleaned it up. The unspoken assumption is that a clean house is a better house.

Now, clean houses often are better houses, as no one wants an ant infestation. But unspoken assumptions aren’t always particularly reasonable or fair, when you unpack them. In the years since I had that conversation with my then-boyfriend, I’ve gotten a better handle on what made me uncomfortable. The way I looked wasn’t what I primarily valued about myself, so I didn’t like the idea that it seemed to be the most important thing about me in his eyes. There was a certain amount of pressure it put on me that stressed me out.

Back in 1969, Carol Hanisch coined the term, “the personal is political,” and when it comes to women’s issues, it’s hard to disagree with that phrase. Things like “equal pay for equal work” and “universal suffrage” are broader political issues, it’s true. There are other things, though, that are more subtle, very personal, and harder to articulate. The personal compliment about a single woman’s appearance, for example, carries a lot of embedded assumptions that affect all women: physical attractiveness is a lot more about socially constructed ideas of beauty than it is about anything innate in a person. When you think about it, it’s a bit of a non-compliment to say, “your appearance adheres to our society’s largely arbitrary ideas of what it means to be considered pretty.” I’ve travelled fairly extensively, and I can tell you that how attractive I am considered varies wildly depending

on what country I happen to be in at the time. I haven’t changed — it’s just what people think about me has changed.

If I were part of the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, at this point I’d say something like, “so we’re all pretty to someone!” I’d rather take it a step further, though, as I’m not trying to sell you anything: whether or not a woman is considered pretty — it shouldn’t actually matter, should it? If physical attractiveness is as arbitrary as all that, we probably shouldn’t place any stock in it; it doesn’t mean much.

Of course, there are things that are less arbitrary than sim-

ply “prettiness” — things like health, life expectancy, and wellness are all important. It’s amazing, though, how we use those things to reinforce the same arbitrary standards on people in general, and women in particular. That’s actually what got me thinking about all of this in the first place. I recently read an article about a fitness model who called out a plus-size model by basically saying, “body acceptance is all well and good, but this woman is not healthy.”

The thing is, though, that excepting certain very obvious ailments (e.g., jaundice), you can’t easily tell how healthy a

person is based on appearance alone. Blood pressure, vitamin deficiencies, organ health? That’s all on the inside. Telling a woman she’s not healthy simply because she’s not thin is an outright lie, and a damaging one, at that.

And, in the end, these ideas around attractiveness all seem like a massive distraction from what’s actually important. God called us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, build the City of God. God didn’t call us to obsess over our physical appearance — I don’t think that’s what was meant when God made us in God’s own image.

Sometimes I shave my legs and sometimes I don't
Sometimes I comb my hair and sometimes I won't
Depend of how the wind blows I might even paint my toes
It really just depends on whatever feels good in my soul

CHORUS
I'm not the average girl from your video
And I ain't built like a supermodel
But I learned to love myself unconditionally,
Because I am a queen
I not the average girl from your video
My worth is not determined by the price of my clothes
No matter what I'm wearing I will always be India.Arie

When I look in the mirror and the only one there is me
Every freckle on my face is where it's suppose to be
And I know my creator didn't make no mistakes on me
My feet, my thighs, my lips, my eyes, I'm loving what I see

CHORUS
Am I less of a lady if I don't where panty hose
My momma said a lady ain't what she wears but what she knows . . .

But I've drawn the conclusion, it's all an illusion
Confusion's the name of the game
A misconception, a vast deception,
Something got to change

Now don't be offended this is all my opinion
Ain't nothing that I'm saying law
This is a true confession
Of a life learned lesson
I was sent here to share with y'all
So get in when you fit in
Go on and shine
Clear your mind
Now's the time
Put your salt on the shelf
Go on and love yourself
'Cause everything's gonna be alright

CHORUS
(Out)
Keep your fancy drink, and your expensive minks
I don't need that to have a good time
Keep your expensive cars and your caviar
All's I need is my guitar

Keep your crystal and your pistol
I'd rather have a pretty piece of crystal
Don't need you silicone, I prefer my own
What god gave me is just fine . . .

CHORUS

Sundance showcases wealth of documentary excellence

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Documentaries have always been a Sundance strong suit and 2016 was no exception. Among these is one focusing on the work of Texas filmmaker Richard Linklater. Indeed I'm flying today to his home base of Austin for the South By Southwest Festival where his latest feature will premiere in a couple of days.

Here then are the dozen world premieres that most impressed, bearing in mind that I wasn't able to see all of the prize winners.

Lo and Behold, Reveries of the Connected World (U.S.)

Master filmmaker Werner Herzog turns his attention to the impact of the online world on human civilization, acutely observing its possibilities and pitfalls. Divided into 10 chapters, this often probing philosophical journey starts in a university laboratory in 1969 when computer scientist Leonard Kleinrock was present at the creation of the Internet. As we contemplate the enormous traffic of today's World Wide Web and the futurist prospects of artificial intelligence, that first communication between computers seems positively prehistoric. But are we becoming smarter as a result? Ever the humanist, Herzog is the perfect guide to a critical appreciation of where this technological revolution is taking us.

Sonita (Germany/Iran/Switzerland)

This engaging story of a young Afghan refugee in Tehran took both the world cinema grand jury and audience awards. Iranian director Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghami introduces us to teenager Sonita Alizadeh (<http://www.wmm.com/sonita/>) who is living a precarious existence, without any identity documents, in a Tehran shelter for working and street children. Her conservative mother who lives in Afghanistan comes to fetch her

back for a traditional arranged marriage with a "bride price" that will allow an older brother to get married. Sonita, an aspiring rap artist with a vibrant personality, is having none of that. Somehow she manages to get a birth certificate, to record videos (one, "Daughters for Sale," was posted to YouTube), and to get to the U.S. where she is currently studying at a Utah academy.

Weiner (U.S.)

The U.S. documentary grand jury award went to this fascinating account of the driving passion and downfall of disgraced former New York City Congressman and 2013 mayoral candidate Anthony Weiner, an activist liberal Democrat whose wife, Huma Abedin, was a top adviser to Hillary Clinton (raising inevitable comparisons to Hillary standing by Bill). The Weiner scandal first erupted in 2011 when explicit photos he sent to other women using his Twitter account became public. Within months he was forced to resign. A second "sexting" scandal torpedoed his campaign for mayor. Terrifically paced, with extraordinary behind-the-scenes access to key moments, Weiner exposes a cautionary episode in American politics.

Jim: The James Foley Story (U.S.)

By any measure, the late James Foley was an exceptional person. Growing up in a large Catholic family in New Hampshire, he became an accomplished journalist in the world's worst conflict zones, including Syria where he was abducted with several others near the Turkish border in November 2012. His fate came to worldwide attention in August 2014 when the terrorist Islamic State released the grisly video of his execution. Recipient of the U.S. documentary audience award, and picked up for broadcast by HBO, the film, directed by childhood friend Brian Oakes,



G. Schmitz

AWARD-WINNER — Sonita, the engaging story of a young Afghan refugee in Tehran, took both the world cinema grand jury and audience awards at the Sundance Film Festival in January.

looks back at what made Jim and his contributions so special in the eyes of family, fellow journalists and those imprisoned with him. Although Jim converted to Islam, desperate efforts to obtain his release failed (perhaps because he was American with a brother who had served in Iraq). He retained his courage, dignity and composure to the very end.

How to Let Go of the World (and Love All the Things Climate Can't Change) (U.S.)

With the support of HBO Documentary Films, banjo-playing activist director Josh Fox (Gasland, Gasland Part II) embarks on a rousing personal odyssey that takes him to 12 countries on six continents, both observing the frontlines of climate change impacts and bearing witness to the sites of resistance to the forces of environmental destruction. While the problems can seem overwhelming, the film radiates positive energy. The hope is that the climate crisis can also provoke catharsis and a transformational shift toward renewable energy solutions — solutions that challenge systems of corporate power, that are democratically determined and that empower people at the grassroots level. To that end the Sundance premiere was the kickoff of a crowd-funded "Love and Let Go Tour" that aims to bring the film to free community screenings in 100 cities. More information at: <http://www.howtoletgomovie.com/>

When Two Worlds Collide (Peru/Qatar)

One of the contested sites visited by Josh Fox was Peru's Amazonian rainforest where the rights of indigenous people, supposedly constitutionally guaranteed, have been violated by government laws and concessions to corporate interests seeking to exploit the region's petroleum potential. Directed by Heidi Brandenburg and Matthew Orzel, winner of a special jury prize, this film

probes the tragic consequences of actions taken by the government of President Alan Garcia in the wake of the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement leading to deadly clashes between police and protesters. Much of the focus is on indigenous

leader Alberto Pizango who is made a scapegoat and forced into exile, finding asylum in Nicaragua. He has returned to face prosecution. Meanwhile the exploitation of the Amazon continues despite the repeal of some offensive laws.

The Settlers (Canada/France/Israel/Germany)

New York-based director Shimon Dotan offers a truly eye-opening and comprehensive examination of the Israeli settler phenomenon that has expanded enormously since Israel occupied large Arab territories during the 1967 Six Day War. The main focus is on the West Bank where, in defiance of international law, there are now more than 200 settlements and outposts home to over 400,000 Jewish settlers who enjoy greater rights and access to services than the Palestinian population. Most alarming are the messianic attitudes many settlers — some openly racist — who feel divinely entitled to lands "from the Nile to the Euphrates," knowing full well such biblical manifest destiny dooms any possibility of peace.

The Eagle Huntress (U.S.)

Although programmed under "Sundance Kids," this film by Otto Bell (<http://theeaglehuntress.com/site/>), shot in the mountainous wilds of northwest Mongolia in winter, will enthrall viewers of any age. The "huntress" of the title is 13-year-old Ashol-Pan

who, supported by her master-hunter father Agalai, breaks the gender barrier in the male-dominated 2,000-year tradition of hunting (foxes and small game) with trained golden eagles. Tradition also dictates that the



eagles be set free after seven years of service. Bell captures some amazing scenes close up: of Ashol-Pan getting an eaglet from a nest, training it, winning an eagle festival contest in 2014 and going on her first winter hunt in 2015. It's a winning combination of girl power and real-life adventure in a remote landscape.

The Land of the Enlightened (Belgium <http://thelandoftheenlightened.com/>)

Combining ancient Afghan mythology with the grim realism of war-ravaged modern Afghanistan, Belgian writer-director Pieter-Jan De Pue spent years observing the fate of children in the rugged northeastern region. Children scavenge the remains of Soviet landmines which they sell as explosives to child workers in a lapis lazuli mine. Child gangs from the Kuchi tribe mounted on horseback waylay caravans smuggling opium across awe-inspiring landscapes (the cinematography received a special jury award). As striking to the viewer is that against this savage backdrop the western soldiers who are just visiting might as well be from another planet.

— LINKLATER, page 12



G. Schmitz

THE EAGLE HUNTRESS — Eagle Huntress Ashol-Pan with her mother Alma at the Sundance Film Festival Jan. 24, 2016. Ashol-Pan who, supported by her master-hunter father Agalai, breaks the gender barrier in the male-dominated 2,000-year tradition of hunting (foxes and small game) with trained golden eagles.

D&P efforts strengthen entire communities

"Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life." (MV 2)

Adonis Medjine is a survivor of the massive earthquake that struck Haiti on Jan. 12, 2010. For several years she has been involved with the local organization Fanm Deside, a longtime Development and Peace partner whose mission is to improve the status of women in Haiti, who are made vulnerable due to a lack of recognition of their rights.

Fanm Deside has created the social enterprise BON POUL, which specializes in raising and marketing broiler chickens. The profits from this enterprise help to finance Fanm Deside's activities amongst the most poor and vulnerable women in Haiti. The chicken coop is located in Jacmel in the south of the country, and is the only one in the community.

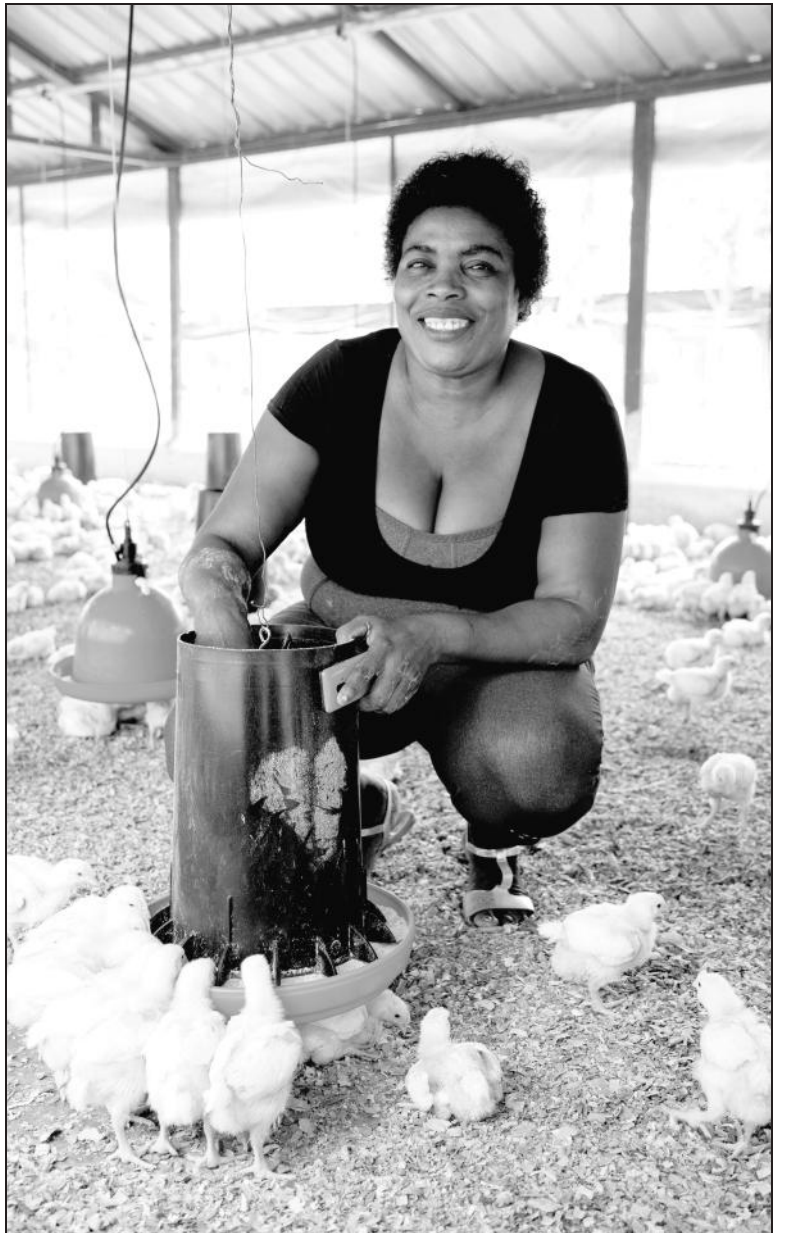
Adonis is one of three people recruited to help run the coop. She is a controller, meaning she feeds, waters and treats the chickens, and checks on the coop conditions (temperature, humidity, lighting, etc.). She also prepares the receipts and the crates of chickens for delivery. With her job, she is able to provide for her family.

"I have a husband and two children. Thanks to this job and the wages I receive, I can take care of my family, send my children to school and complete a few projects."

The creation of the chicken coop has meant steady employment for the community, especially for women. The chickens are sold to shopkeepers who are members of Fanm Deside, as well as at local markets and to hotels located in the capital Port-au-Prince.

"The chicken coop is very useful for all the women in the community. Our Haitian chickens are less expensive than imported ones, so shopkeepers make a better profit, which in turn allows them to send their children to school. And

the women who buy the chickens some way, and our purchasing power goes up!"



D&P

EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN — Adonis Medjine, a survivor of the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010, is involved with the local organization Fanm Deside, a longtime D&P partner whose mission is to improve the status of women in Haiti. Fanm Deside has created the social enterprise *Bon Poul*, which specializes in raising and marketing broiler chickens. It is providing employment for women.

Share Lent: creating a climate of change together

Each year during Lent, Canadian Catholics are invited to stand in solidarity with communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East who are struggling for dignity and justice.

This Lent, inspired by the Jubilee Year of Mercy and Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Development and Peace invites you to join in a Climate of Change solidarity pilgrimage with our sisters and brothers in the Global South.

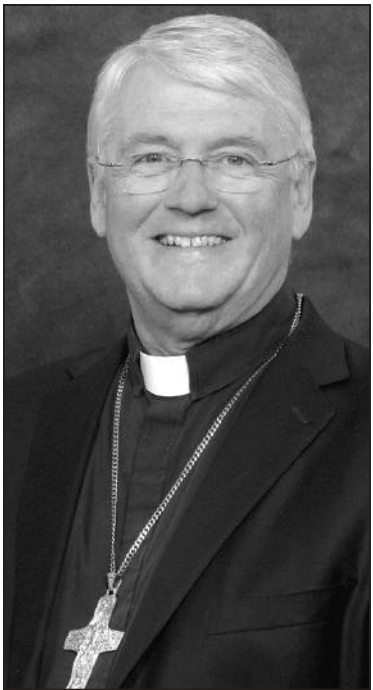
By opening our hearts and walking hand in hand with the most poor and vulnerable, we can contribute to building a world rooted in justice, equality, compassion and love. Your generosity is a source of hope!

With your generous donations, Development and Peace is working to create a climate of change and build a more just world.

Pope's intentions at heart of theme

By Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI

Creating a Climate of Change is this year's theme for the Share Lent campaign of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace. A number of Pope Francis' intentions are at the heart of the campaign: most notably, his encyclical on care for our common home, *Laudato Si'* (Praise be to you), and the Jubilee Year of Mercy he has proclaimed.



Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI

Development and Peace, our church's organization in Canada for international solidarity, offers us concrete ways to respond to the pope's invitations by working together to build a world that is more just and more in keeping with human dignity. What is pro-

posed is truly an experience of the church's long-standing tradition of referring to the "corporal works of mercy," which in turn point to the explicit commands of Jesus Christ. Feed the hungry. Give drink to the thirsty. Clothe the naked. Visit the imprisoned — including those caught in unjust economic and social structures, as the pope has also reminded us.

The Holy Father's encyclical calls us to hope. He invites us to consider a courageous question: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" This, in turn, leads us to other pointed questions: "What is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? What need does the Earth have of us?" (160). Our responses should help us see more clearly and honestly that what is at stake is our own dignity and that of every human being. Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us.

The Earth is a marvellous gift from the Creator, but we are not its owners. We are its stewards. By working together, we can preserve our common home, and strengthened by the Spirit prepare the way toward a new heaven and a new Earth.

The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy invites us to be merciful and forgiving like our heavenly Father. God calls us to compassion, so as to open our hearts and eyes to the sufferings of others, understand them in their distress, and find ways to bring comfort and assistance. Development and Peace gives a wonderful opportunity to join our efforts with our sisters and brothers in the Global South who struggle to improve their conditions of life and to live in full dignity.

Thank you for being in solidarity with the mission and mandate that the bishops of Canada have entrusted to Development and Peace. My brother bishops and I are grateful for your commitment and for being generous in giving to this year's Share Lent collection.

May the Holy Spirit lead us through the lenten desert with joy, as we allow him to reshape and transform our hearts and lives through hope and mercy!

CREATE A CLIMATE OF CHANGE



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Your solidarity is creating a climate of change in over 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East!

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Crosby is Bishop of Hamilton and president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Jesus’ compassion calls us to trust in his mercy

Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



Rev. Douglas Leonhardt, SJ, describes gospel contemplation in the Ignatian tradition as a “form of prayer in which one uses his or her senses in an imaginative way to reflect on a Gospel passage.” Using our imagination in this way “helps make the Gospel scene real and alive.” As we begin this Holy Week, I invite you to join me in an imaginative journey through the two Gospel readings we hear proclaimed today. Focusing on our sense of sight, let us imagine what Jesus might have seen as he walked toward his Passion.

What did that young colt look like, the one Jesus sent his disciples to fetch so he could navigate the crowds that were pressing upon him from every direction? Was it a grey-brown colour, doe-eyed, with extra-long eyelashes? Did it seem a little bewildered as it was called upon to bear Jesus through the throngs of people? How did its hooves navigate the stony paths covered with cloaks? Did Jesus see a beast frightened by the jostling crowds?

What about those crowds? What did Jesus see when he looked upon them singing “Hosanna” and straining

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for a view? Did he see excited children and worried mothers? Zealous disciples and furious Pharisees? Sun glittering off the sweaty brows of people standing in the midday sun, hands of all shapes and sizes reaching up to touch him?

What clues told Jesus that the crowds could just as easily throw stones? It must have been the little things, the sideways glances between the priests and Pharisees, the nervous hand gripping an exuberant teenager, the heartfelt joy mirrored on the face of a leper he had once cured, joy that could not be stifled.

Then a few days later the table was set for the Passover meal, the ritual remembrance of God’s liberating action in the history of the Israelites. The tablecloth was pressed for the occasion, wine poured in clay goblets, the unleavened bread ready to be broken and shared. As dusk set in, the candles were lit, their flickering light exposing the tension on the disciples’ faces. Who was the greatest? Who was the bravest? Who would betray? Judas’ hand was shaking as he reached for the bread . . .

Passion Sunday	Isaiah 50:4-7
	Psalms 22
March 20, 2016	Philippians 2:6-11
	Luke 22:14 — 23:56

Now the sun is setting behind the Mount of Olives. Does Jesus notice anything here or is he overcome with his own dread of what is sure to come? His friends, maybe, can help him through this dark time but, no, they’re fast asleep.

Things move quickly now. The crowd, led by Judas, comes upon them. The sword glints in the moonlight as it cuts off the slave’s ear. Jesus’ hand is covered in blood as he reaches up to heal him. The soldier’s hands are rough and calloused as they clasp Jesus by the shoulders and

lead him away.

The cock is busy minding its own business, pecking at seeds in the courtyard, while the people are warming themselves by the night fires. It’s dark and chilly now, not quite time to sound the dawn alarm. Peter is waving his hands, adamant that he does not know the Galilean prisoner. When the cock crows, Peter’s countenance drops. He realizes what he’s done.

Purple cloaks and crowns of thorns, mocking faces of soldiers who are just doing their job. The dead eyes of Pilate and Herod as they play their political games. The look of confusion mixed with compassion in the eyes of Simon the Cyrene, an innocent bystander conscripted to help with an execution. The tear-stained cheeks of the women who follow Jesus on his way to Calvary.

It’s done. Jesus is hanging on the cross, struggling for breath. Out of the corner of his eyes, he can see the two other prisoners. One is still mocking him, the other believes. “Today you will be with me in Paradise . . .” Life fades and the scene goes dark.

On Divine Mercy Sunday in 2013, Pope Francis called us to remember Peter who, after his betrayal, “meets the gaze of Jesus, who patiently, wordlessly, says to him: ‘Peter, don’t be afraid of your weakness; trust in me.’ Peter understands, he feels the loving gaze of Jesus, and he weeps.”

We don’t really know what Jesus saw in those final days leading up to his Passion. What we do know is that his eyes were full of compassion for our broken humanity, calling us not to be afraid of our weakness but to trust in his mercy. For his compassion breaks all bounds and proclaims that sin and death cannot prevail. So we begin this Holy Week with the end in mind, rejoicing in the mystery of a God who sees all of our humanity and loves us anyway.

Recognizing our finitude can lead to a healthier self-understanding

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



What most moves your heart? I was asked this question recently at a workshop. We were asked to

respond to this question: When do you most naturally feel compassion in your heart? For me, the

answer came easily. I am most moved when I see helplessness, when I see someone or something helpless to tend to its own needs and to protect its own dignity. It might be baby, hungry and crying, too little to feed itself and to safeguard its own dignity. It might be a woman in a hospital, sick, in pain, dying, helpless to get better, also unable to attend to her own dignity. It might be an unemployed man, down on his luck, unable to find work, the odd man out when everyone else seems to be doing great. It might be a little girl on the playground, helpless as she is teased and bullied, suffering indignity. Or it might just be a kitten, hungry, helpless, pleading with its eyes, unable to speak or attend to its own need.

Helplessness tugs at the heart. I am always touched in the softest place inside me by helplessness, by the pleading of finitude. I suspect we all are.

We’re in good company. This is what moved Mary, Jesus’ mother, at the wedding feast of Cana, to go over to Jesus and say: “They have no wine!” Her request here has different layers of meaning. At one level, it is a very particular request at a particular occasion in history; she is trying to save her hosts at a wedding from embarrassment, from suffering an indignity. No doubt the shortage of wine was due to some poverty on their part, either a shortage of

money or a shortage of good planning, but, either way, they stood to be embarrassed before their guests. But, as with most things in the Gospels, this incident has a deeper meaning. Mary isn’t just speaking for a particular host on a particular occasion. She’s also speaking universally, as the mother of humanity, Eve, voicing for all of us what John Shea so aptly calls, “the cries of finitude.”

What is finitude? The finite, as we can see from the word itself, contrasts itself to the infinite, to what is not limited, to God. God, alone, is not finite. God, alone, is self-sufficient. God, alone, is never helpless, and God, alone, never needs help from anyone else. Only God is never subject to sickness, hunger, tiredness, irritation, fatigue, bodily and mental diminishment, and death. God, alone, never has to suffer the indignity of need, of getting caught short, of inadequate self-expression, of not measuring up, of being embarrassed, of being bullied, of being unable to help himself, and of having to beg silently with his eyes for someone to come and help.

Everything else is finite. Thus, as humans, we are subject to helplessness, illness, lameness, blindness, hunger, tiredness, irritation, diminishment, and death. Moreover, within all these, we are also subject to indignity. So many of our words and actions are, in the end, cries of finitude, cries for assistance, the cries of a baby for food, for warmth, for protection, and for a safeguard from indignity. Although we are infinitely more sophisticated in our humanity, we are all still, at one level, the kitten, pleading with our eyes for someone to feed us, and all the assertions of self-sufficiency of


the rich, the strong, the healthy, the arrogant, and of those who seemingly need no help are in the end nothing other than attempts to keep helplessness at bay.

No matter how strong and self-sufficient we might believe ourselves to be, finitude and mortality admit of no exemptions. Tiredness, illness, diminishment, death, and painful hungers will eventually find us all. Our wine too will eventually run out. Hopefully someone like the Mother of Jesus will speak for us: *They have no wine!*



What’s the lesson in this? A number of things.

First, recognizing our finitude can lead to a healthier self-understanding. Knowing and accepting our finitude can help quell a lot of frustration, restlessness, and false guilt in our lives. I once had a spiritual director, an elderly nun, who challenged me to live by this axiom: *Fear not, you are inadequate.* We need to forgive ourselves for our own limits, for the fact that we are human, finite, and are unable to provide ourselves and those around us all that we need. But inadequacy is a forgivable condition, not a moral fault.

Beyond forgiving ourselves for our helplessness, recognizing and accepting our finitude should challenge us too to hear more clearly the cries of finitude around us. And so whether it’s the cry of a baby, the humiliation in the eyes of someone looking for work, the ravaged eyes of the terminally ill patient, or simply the pleading eyes of a young kitten, we need, like Mary, to take up their cause and ensure that someone spares them from indignity by changing their water into wine, by calling out: *They have no wine!*



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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. Follow Father Ron on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser

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Vatican newspaper essays: women should preach at mass

By David Gibson
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A series of essays in the semi-official Vatican newspaper is urging the Catholic Church to allow women to preach from the pulpit at mass, a role that has been reserved almost exclusively to the all-male priesthood for nearly 800 years.

“This topic is a delicate one, but I believe it is urgent that we address it,” Enzo Bianchi, leader of an ecumenical religious community in northern Italy and a popular Catholic commentator, wrote in his article in *L’Osservatore Romano*.

“Certainly for faithful lay people in general, but above all for women, this would constitute a fundamental change in their participation in church life,” said Bianchi, who called such a move a “decisive path” for responding to widespread calls — including by Pope Francis — to find ways to give women a greater role in the church.

Two nuns also contributed articles in the March 1 special section that is part of a new *L’Osservatore Romano* series on women called Women-Church-World.

In her column, Sister Catherine Aubin, a French Dominican who teaches theology at a pontifical university in Rome, noted that Jesus encouraged women to preach his message of salvation, and she said that throughout church history there have been many extraordinary women evangelists. Women today also lead retreats and in effect preach in other ways, she argued.

“Let us sincerely pose a question then,” Aubin writes. “Why can’t women also preach in front of everyone during the celebration of mass?”

Another Dominican, Sister Madeleine Fredell of Sweden, wrote that preaching “is my voca-

tion as a Dominican, and although I can do it almost anywhere, sometimes even in the Lutheran Church, I believe that listening to the voice of women at the time of the homily would enrich our Catholic worship.”

If it happened, such a change would be a controversial shift.

In the early 13th century, as part of the movement toward consolidating church power in the papacy and the clergy, Pope Gregory IX effectively barred lay people — both men and women — from preaching, especially on theological or doctrinal matters that were considered the province of educated clerics.

While occasional exceptions were allowed, it wasn’t until the early 1970s that there were hints of a reconsideration of the ban, spurred by the growing calls for women — and all lay people — to assume greater roles and responsibilities in the church. In his article, Bianchi noted that in 1973 the Vatican gave the German bishops permission to allow lay people, most of them women, to preach with special permission for an experimental eight-year period.

But the election of St. John Paul II, a doctrinally conservative pope, in 1978 launched a period of stricter bans.

The revised Code of Canon Law that John Paul promulgated in 1983 stated that the homily “is reserved to a priest or deacon” because it is an integral part of the mass and must be done by an ordained male acting in the role of Christ.

Then, in 1997, a Vatican document backed by eight offices in the Roman Curia sought to further reinforce the proscription against lay preaching; it also warned bishops that they could not allow any exceptions.

Yet at the same time as the Vatican was bolstering the dis-



Design Pics

WOMEN AT THE PULPIT — A series of essays in the semiofficial Vatican newspaper is urging the Catholic Church to allow women to preach from the pulpit at mass, a role that has been reserved almost exclusively to the all-male priesthood for nearly 800 years, writes David Gibson.

inction between the laity and ordained clerics, lay people — many of them women — were playing a more visible role at mass as lectors and eucharistic ministers. Girls were also allowed to be altar servers, a practice that has become widespread.

Those changes have led a number of conservatives to decry the “feminization” of the Catholic Church, and any serious proposals to allow women to preach would certainly heighten their anxiety.

The argument for a change is not that it is “modernizing” the church but rather that it is returning to the tradition of the first thousand years of Christianity, when, as Bianchi and the other essayists note, women were regularly given permission to preach, and often did so in front of priests, bishops and even the pope.

Mary Magdalene, in fact, was

known as the “apostle to the apostles” because the Gospels recount how Jesus appeared to her first on Easter morning and sent her to deliver the news of his resurrection — the foundational Christian belief — to his male followers.

So what will Pope Francis do? The pontiff has repeatedly called for women to have a greater role in the church, but he has also reiterated the ban against ordaining women as priests and

has warned against “clericalizing” women by trying to make them cardinals or to focus on promoting them to higher church offices.

Then again, that the Vatican’s own newspaper would dedicate so much space to the issue of women preachers is intriguing, said Massimo Faggioli, a church historian at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota.

“I think it is a big signal,” he said.

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Welcome the stranger

Parishes that want to welcome and integrate new members into their community could do well to look at what the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Saskatoon is doing.

Twice a year those who have joined the parish are invited to gather for lunch, to introduce themselves and be welcomed by the dean.

According to the March Saskatchewan Anglican newspaper, after people register with the parish, “a letter of welcome is sent to each newcomer and they are given the date for the next newcomers’ lunch.”

There, they are joined by cathedral staff members, key ministry leaders and a selection of long-time parishioners.

After a period of socializing and enjoying a meal together, the group forms a circle where they take

turns introducing themselves. A recent event welcomed immigrants from India and South Africa, as well as members from Manitoba and residents of Saskatoon who have joined the parish.

Susan and Charles Mowat said, “We felt very welcomed when we joined the welcoming committee because we wanted to be part of passing this on to others.”

“The cathedral is not just a gathering of individuals on a Sunday morning,” added Kris Nevland, a member of the welcoming committee and a choir member. “It is a family; we know each other and we care for one another. There is enough diversity here for all of us to feel that this is our spiritual home.”

The group then uses A Service of Welcome, a Celtic prayer service taken from the Iona Worship Book. The service invites participants to recognize the gifts that all people bring to a community of faith.

Creating a place of warmth and hospitality in Saskatoon’s cathedral is very important to Dean Scott Pittendrigh, Sarah Donnelly says in the article. “Because of our visibility we often receive people who are new to this city and perhaps even new to Canada,” he said. “This congregation is very committed to opening their hearts to those they don’t yet know. The cathedral is a large building, but the parishioners do a great job creating an intimacy here that is greatly appreciated by those who walk through our doors. It’s a wonderful community of faith.”

For parishes, or parish groups, looking for ideas on how to welcome newcomers to their faith community, this seems like a fine model to follow. Pope Francis has encouraged major churches and shrines to establish a Holy Door this year. A Welcoming Door could be a permanent fixture on any churches well into the future. — PWN

Religion misused puts a plank in one’s eye, even in today’s society

Soul Mending

Yvonne A. Zarowny



“You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from the eyes of your brothers and sisters.”

— Matthew 7:5 & Luke 6:42

Long before anthropologists documented the important role of religious beliefs to justify or chal-

lenge a society’s social order, socio-political and economic elites within some societies knew about

and used it to their advantage.

This is particularly true with respect to the treatment of the poor, women and “the other” within hierarchical patriarchies.

When we are told an “established order” is of the Divine or “God’s will” we are less inclined to challenge it even if it greatly disadvantages us, leads to our death or the deaths of our children.

When we are told “the other” is “demonic,” “evil” or “Satanic,” we are more inclined to kill, pillage and rape while feeling self-righteous.

Religion can be an effective “plank” in our eyes and hearts.

History is littered with such examples — as is our present times.

So, what does it mean to “die” or “be persecuted” for one’s religion?

The first episcopal inquisition was set up in 1184 by Pope Lucius III of the Roman Catholic Church. It was to rout the “heresy” of the Cathars and Waldensians.

These “Christian” movements stressed poverty, service and reading the Bible for oneself — together with others. They grew in response, in part, to the increasing wealth and moral corruption of the Roman clergy.

When the inquisition did not succeed in routing this “heresy,” it was denounced as the “Church of Satan” and Pope Innocent III

launched the Albigensian Crusade (1209 - 1229).

Tens of thousands of men, women and children were murdered and their property seized — particularly in the Languedoc region of France.

It was from this time that Roman Catholics were forbidden — on pain of death — to read the Bible for ourselves lest we get the wrong idea about what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

A man who was particularly diligent in routing and killing “wrong thinkers” or “heretics” was Dominic de Guzman. He and

— VIOLENCE, page 15

Humans who take part in research studies need ethical protections

By Gordon DuVal, Ottawa
Troy Media

The disturbing announcement recently that a man died and four others were seriously harmed in France as a result of participation in a research study is a reminder of the importance of protecting those who volunteer to be subjects of research.

The drug being tested was thought to show promise in treating disorders including mood, anxiety and pain. It was the first time this drug was given to people.

In 2014, we learned of the Facebook Emotional Contagion study in which, without their knowledge or consent, 690,000 subscribers’ newsfeeds, likely including those of youth and other vulnerable persons, were manipulated. The intent was to see if the subjects’ emotions could be altered. The researchers found out they indeed could manipulate subscribers’ emotions.

These two seemingly disparate examples demonstrate that rules guiding the use of human subjects in science matter profoundly. The Facebook study had no prior ethics review, and the manipulation and lack of knowledge or consent by those involved violated ethical standards. The Rennes study had prior review by a French ethics committee, yet things still went very wrong.

The history of research, includ-

ing in Canada, shows that very serious harm may be suffered by those taking part in research. The rules are not perfect and they continue to be refined, but prior review and oversight helps make research safer for human subjects.

However, these protections don’t apply to everyone doing research on people in Canada — and they should.

In Canada and most of the rest of the developed world, a consensus emerged during the 1970s through to the ’90s that a framework of binding rules was needed to protect research subjects. This led to the development of internationally recognized principles requiring that people in research trials be treated ethically — that is safely, and with protections for privacy, informed consent and for vulnerable people such as children.

These standards also require prior review by an independent expert board — in Canada usually called a research ethics board (REB) — to ensure that these protections are adhered to.

So what’s the concern?

In Canada, key research regulations and guidelines have two sources. First, the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) prescribes rules for research conducted at universities and large hospitals funded by the federal granting councils. Second, Health Canada and U.S. regulations prescribe rules for new drug and medical device testing carried out primarily by pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

Remarkably, aside from these two categories, there is no legal requirement in Canada that any human research undergo any

scrutiny. This critical gap in research rules for human subjects must be addressed.

There is no requirement that research undertaken by federal or provincial governments undergo such review and oversight to protect human subjects. A few individual federal government agencies have acted to have their research reviewed according to the TCPS: Health Canada, the Department of National Defence and the National Research Council (I am its REB chair). These agencies do this job cheaply and with generally good results. But all other federal government departments and agencies, provincial

governments and private industry (aside from those doing new drug and device research) have no rules requiring prior review to ensure they meet ethical standards.

This means that plenty of research with human subjects takes place in Canada without having to show that it is reasonably safe, that privacy is protected or that subjects are treated fairly. Doing quality research on significant medical, scientific and social questions is of surpassing importance. But research, particularly that involving human subjects, must be done ethically.

The Trudeau government made vigorous commitments to the

twinned themes of science and integrity during last year’s election campaign. This priority has been echoed by many interests inside and outside the new federal government. As a start, the government should act promptly to ensure that all federal government research takes place with mandatory ethics oversight to protect human subjects, and urge others to follow.

Should we not provide protections to everyone who gives of themselves to promote research for the good of us all — particularly when directed and funded by our governments? Let’s learn from past tragedies and help make sure they don’t keep happening.



CNS/Wu Hong, EPA

CHINA REMOVES CROSSES — A Chinese Catholic kisses a crucifix during a pilgrimage in Baoji, China, in this May 3, 2013, file photo. Chinese authorities are continuing their campaign of removing crosses in Zhejiang province, and one of the latest was taken from a Catholic Church.

DuVal is part-time professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law and a member of its Centre for Health Law, Policy and Ethics. www.troymedia.com

Change in tone noticed in articles by Rev. Ron Rolheiser

The Editor: I have followed Rev. Ron Rolheiser for many years. As one who presided over many prayer service and non-denominational funerals in the Prince Albert area for 20 years, until I moved from Saskatchewan, I have used his thoughts and insights to bring compassion and solace to many families.

Rolheiser has helped us go deep inside the human experience to understand the sufferings that challenge us. He has helped us be less harsh toward those who encounter all sorts of difficulties at one time or another. He has also helped us understand the love and compassion of Jesus Christ toward all.

Lately, though, I have sensed a different message coming from his pen.

First, in the April 29, 2015, PM Rolheiser refers to Galatians 5:19 - 21 and lists the vices that prevents one from entering the kingdom of heaven. He notes that the punishment due these vices are not God-inflicted but person-inflicted.

Secondly, in the June 3 PM he again refers to these vices but here he refers to them as “inordinate attachments” or “obsessions.” He says, “Obsessions generally are not freely chosen, nor are they within the power of the will to control, at least inside the emotions.” Then he says: “We are responsible for our actions, but not how we feel.”

This article appears to contradict the views of his April 29 article.

Thirdly, in the June 17 PM Rolheiser reminds us: “Each must

take responsibility for his or her faith and salvation” but he does not explain how this view coincides with his June 3 issue concerning “inordinate attachments.”

Fourthly, in the May 27 PM Rolheiser mentions a number of spiritual writers who have highly influenced Christians. One he mentions is Rev. Rick Warren described as “an American evangelist.”

This choice is interesting but not surprising.

The compassion and quest to understand our human nature is no longer present in his writings. This is being replaced by the concept that we are humans who make our own decisions, apparently freely, and that punishments such as hell are self-inflicted not God-inflicted.

— **Brian W. Clarke, Toronto**

Violence in name of religion questioned

Continued from page 14

the men who joined him in persecuting the Cathars eventually formed the Dominican Order.

De Guzman was canonized and became St. Dominic.

To you, which set of these people died for their religion?

Were the massacres really about religion or preserving privilege and status of a corrupt clergy?

More famous is the Spanish Inquisition set up in 1478 by Roman

Catholic monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile. The original rational for this was to ensure the “right thinking” or “orthodoxy” of the Jews and Muslims under Spanish rule who were forced to convert or leave.

The property and wealth of those killed or forced to flee were confiscated by these Catholic monarchs. They also sponsored Columbus setting sail in 1492 — leading to the plundering of the Americas.

The dress of the Spanish Inquisitors inspired that of America’s Ku Klux Klan.

This little romp through history is not meant as justification for the current persecution of Christians and Muslims by a tiny group of

well-financed fanatics.

Rather it is meant as a cautionary tale which raises questions.

CBC TV’s coverage of the Feb. 12 meeting of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church, including the commentary by Salt & Light’s Rev. Thomas Rosica (originally from Rochester, N.Y.), horrified me.

It was straight propaganda designed to incite support for American-led wars while dismissing the significance of this meeting.

This first-time meeting of men in these respective positions since 1054 was framed *only* as a propaganda ploy of Russia’s Putin.

What an insult to Pope Francis, Kirill and the hardworking diplomats on both sides of this “schism”!

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Pope pays homage to fidelity of Ukrainian Church

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Paying homage to the suffering and martyrdom of Ukrainian Catholics

who refused to give up their fidelity to the pope despite harsh Soviet repression, Pope Francis also paid tribute to the Eastern Catholics' efforts today to alleviate the suffer-

ing of those impacted by the war in Eastern Ukraine.

"We bow our heads in profound gratitude before those who, even at the price of tribulation and martyrdom, over the course of time testified to their faith, which was lived with dedication to their church and in unflinching union with the successor of Peter," the pope said in a message to Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, major archbishop of Kiev-Halych, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Pope Francis' message, released at the Vatican March 6, commemorated the 70th anniversary of the "pseudo-Synod of Lviv," a meeting organized by the Soviet government March 8 - 10, 1946, to dissolve the Ukrainian Catholic Church and proclaim its unity with the Russian Orthodox Church. All of the Ukrainian Catholic bishops and many of the church's priests were arrested before the gathering, which resulted in the church being forced to operate underground for almost 45 years.

The pope released the message a day after he'd spent close to an hour meeting with members of

the Ukrainian Catholic Church's permanent synod.

To mark the anniversary of the Lviv meeting, the synod members went to Rome "to reaffirm our communion with the Holy Father and to ask for his help for the suffering people of Ukraine during the Jubilee Year of Mercy," Shevchuk said in a statement March 5.

In his message, Pope Francis said, "I renew my solidarity with the pastors and the faithful for all they are doing in this difficult time, marked by the tribulation of war, to alleviate the suffering of the population and to seek paths of peace for the beloved land of Ukraine."

Ukrainian Bishop Borys Gudziak of Paris told Catholic News Service that he and the bishops on the permanent synod outlined for the pope the huge impact the Russian annexation of Crimea and the continued fighting in Eastern Ukraine have had on the country and its people.

Some 10,000 people have been killed and an estimated two million displaced, forcing them to rely on relatives, religious organi-

zations or government assistance. The war also has led to a sharp devaluation of the Ukrainian currency, Gudziak said, which has reduced the buying power of people's income by 65 per cent.

The permanent synod's meeting with Pope Francis came three weeks after Pope Francis met Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow in Cuba and signed a joint statement with him that included several passages criticized by Shevchuk. The Ukrainian Catholic leader and many of his faithful said they were concerned about references that seemed to downplay the status of their church as well as a passage that seemed to imply the war in Eastern Ukraine was a civil conflict, without reference to Russian interference.

Although the archbishop's criticisms of the document were not the focus of the meeting, they were mentioned, according to a statement from the permanent synod.

"The Holy Father emphasized that one cannot solve ecumenical problems at the expense of an entire Eastern Catholic Church," the archbishop said after the meeting.



CNS/Ken Nowakowski

POPE RECEIVES UKRAINIAN ICON — Pope Francis receives an original copy of the Ukrainian icon of the Our Lady the Door of Mercy during a private audience March 5 with members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church's permanent synod. Pictured with the pope in the Apostolic Palace are Bishop Ken Nowakowski of New Westminster, B.C., and Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, major archbishop of Kiev-Halych, Ukraine.

Church must 'remain vigilant' to protect children

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A Pennsylvania grand jury report on clergy sexual abuse of hundreds of children over several decades and an Oscar win for Spotlight, about the Boston abuse scandal, "brought painful, but important, reminders that we must remain vigilant in our efforts to protect children from the scourge of abuse," said Bishop Edward J. Burns of Juneau, Alaska.

The bishop made the comments in a March 3 statement as chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People.

"We must never lose sight of the fact that every victim/survivor has personally experienced profound injury, suffering and betrayal," Burns said.

He referred to the report released March 1 by Attorney General Kathleen G. Kane, which says that at least 50 priests or religious leaders in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Pennsylvania, were involved in the abuse and diocesan leaders systematically concealed the abuse to protect the church's image.

The report identifies priests and other leaders by name and details incidents going back to the 1970s. Kane said that much of the evidence revealed in the report came from secret archives maintained by the diocese that was only available to the bishops who led the diocese over the decades. The report also took law enforcement to task for "perhaps looking the other way."

The report credited Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, the current

bishop of Altoona-Johnstown, who was appointed to the diocese in 2011, for reporting abuse allegations to authorities and removing accused priests from ministry.

"It is heart wrenching and shocking to hear of this grand jury report or of any incidents of abuse, and it is even more disturbing when we learn that innocent children were abused by priests within the church," Burns said in his statement. "Once again, the wounds inflicted through these heinous crimes have caused great pain and further mistrust in the church."

He said that although he could not speak to the specifics in Altoona-Johnstown "and would defer to the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference as to any statewide impact, like everyone, I read the news with great pain."

He noted that the movie Spotlight, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture, "chronicles the courage of the victims and the journalists" who told abuse victims/survivors' story. The film is about the Boston Globe in 2002 breaking the story on the abuse scandal when it began publishing articles about the sexual abuse of minors by priests and accusations of a systemic coverup by church officials.

Burns referred to remarks about the film from the current archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley, and from *L'Osservatore Romano*. Both the paper and the cardinal said Spotlight was an important film for all who have been impacted by the tragedy of abuse.

Vatican to restart dialogue with Muslims

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican's inter-religious council invited the head of a leading Muslim institution to meet with Pope Francis as part of an effort to restart dialogue.

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, president of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, invited Ahmad el-Tayeb, the grand imam of al-Azhar University, to come to the Vatican and meet with the pope.

The invitation came in a letter that was delivered by Bishop Miguel Ayuso Guixot, council secretary, and given to the imam's representative during a meeting in Cairo Feb. 16.

Talks between the Vatican and al-Azhar were suspended by the Muslim university in 2011.

A decades-old dialogue between al-Azhar and the Vatican started to fray in 2006, after now-retired Pope Benedict XVI gave a speech in Regensburg, Germany. Al-Azhar officials and millions of Muslims said the speech linked Islam to violence.

Al-Azhar halted the talks altogether in 2011 after the former pope had said Christians in the Middle East were facing persecution. Al-Azhar claimed that Pope Benedict had offended Islam and Muslims once more by focusing only on the suffering of Christians when many Muslims were suffering as well.

During the meeting Feb. 16, the delegations from the Vatican and al-Azhar talked about "the need to restart dialogue between the two institutions," according to a Vatican communique released Feb. 17.

The two sides agreed on "the importance of continuing and deepening such dialogue for the good of humanity," the communique said.

In his letter, Tauran expressed his "willingness to receive the

grand imam and officially accompany him in an audience with the Holy Father."

In a statement published Feb. 17 by Fides, the news agency of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, al-Azhar said the two sides "have agreed on the need to hold a joint meeting to exit the phase of suspension of the bilateral dialogue."

Ayuso told Fides that the Vatican was ready to receive a delegation from the theological institution in order to kick-start dialogue at the service of peace.

The Vatican delegation went to

Cairo, Ayuso told the news service, "to express the desire to resume friendly relations of co-operation, that on our behalf have never stopped, and to recall the importance of our co-operation for the common good of the entire human family."

"Religious leaders, with their collaboration, want to give an important contribution: In the moment of darkness that we are experiencing, it is important that there are converging forces, intentions and even actions in favour of the wounded humanity, which greatly needs to be healed," he said.



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HONDURAS ACTIVIST MURDERED — Berta Caceres, centre, a Honduran indigenous rights activist and environmentalist, looks toward Pope Francis during the pope's meeting with social activists at the Vatican in this Oct. 28, 2014, file photo. She was murdered at her home in La Esperanza, Honduras, at around 1 a.m. March 3. Caceres won the 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize — an award considered the Nobel for ecological actions. A Lenca indigenous leader, Caceres attracted international attention for her opposition to a hydroelectric dam on the Gualcarque River in western Honduras, where construction crews arrived unannounced almost a decade ago. A court order banned her from the area and she endured death threats, but successfully led protests that thwarted the project.

People gain so much hope when they know they are not experiencing something alone.

— Joyce Rupp