



Pass system

Until fairly recently, First Nations wanting to leave their reserves were required to be issued pass tickets by the Indian agent.
— page 3

Poverty

A group of activists and supporters feel that poverty is not getting the attention it deserves from candidates and want the public to bring their issues to the campaign in the forthcoming Saskatchewan election.
— page 6

Indigenous feminism

Three renowned scholars discussed indigenous feminism as part of a panel discussion March 16 at Station 20 West in Saskatoon.
— page 7

Politics and culture

“It’s fashionable today to be cynical about what politics can achieve and to be equally dismissive of much of contemporary culture,” writes Gerald Schmitz, but two new books “make compelling cases for a positive critical appreciation of what is possible through the practice of the political and cultural arts.”
— page 15

Catholic-Jewish relations

Anyone who knows anything about Catholics and Jews will be aware that both groups have shared a bad historical relationship, writes Rev. Damian MacPherson, SA. Thankfully Jewish-Christian dialogue today is bearing much fruit.
— page 17



Music for liturgy

This week’s Prairie Messenger features music selections for liturgy from April 10, the third Sunday of Easter, to June 26, the 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time.
— pages 9-12



Syrian war creates ‘feeling of helplessness’

By Gabby Maniscalco

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Five years after the war in Syria began, there is a “feeling of helplessness in front of an endless human tragedy,” a Vatican official told the UN Human Rights Council.

A “continuation of the conflict and its procession of refugees, disrespect of human rights and international humanitarian law” add to the despair, said Msgr. Richard Gyhra, charge d’affaires at the Vatican’s observer mission to UN agencies in Geneva.

“Crimes against humanity are frequent and unpunished; intentional attacks against the civilian population are daily,” he told the Human Rights Council March 15. The council met in Geneva and his office released the text of his speech.

The Syrian peace talks, which resumed in Geneva March 14, “should push all people of goodwill not to give up in the search to minimize this human, humanitarian and political tragedy, and, above all, to continue to work toward a peaceful and negotiated solution that takes into account the best interests of Syria and all

components of the Syrian nation,” the monsignor said.

Since the war in Syria started in March 2011, “more than one-

quarter million Syrians have been killed and nearly half of all Syrians have been forced from their homes,” the UN News cen-

tre reported March 15.

Of those who have fled their homes, more than five million are refugees now living outside Syria, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, told the Human Rights Council.

Gyhra repeated Pope Francis’ statement Feb. 28 in which he pledged the Vatican’s “support to regional and international efforts underway to consolidate the recently negotiated ceasefire accepted by the majority of parties in the conflict.”

In the peace talks, Gyhra said, the Vatican insists on the importance of looking at the long-term effects and interests of the region’s countries. “Any policy that ignores the true interest of Syria will be counterproductive,” he said, and will ultimately have “serious consequences for the region and the world.”

He also repeated the Vatican’s insistence that “it is urgent to begin immediately the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the population in need and to remove all obstacles so that humanitarian organizations can have access to all areas.”



CNS/Paul Haring

VATICAN TO RECYCLE EASTER FLOWERS — Tulips and other flowers are seen as Pope Francis celebrates Easter Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican in this 2015 file photo. As part of an ecological initiative, the Vatican announced that it will plant tulips from the 2016 Easter Sunday Mass in the Vatican Gardens and also give them to various pontifical colleges and institutions. Thousands of bushes, flowering trees, tulips and other flowering bulbs are a gift of growers in the Netherlands. The cupola of St. Peter’s Basilica and Bernini’s famed colonnade will also go dark March 19 for one hour in an effort to promote climate change awareness.

Native suicide part of heartache of First Nations ministry

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Living alongside Canada’s First Nations people is a ministry of highs and heartaches for Archbishop Murray Chatlain.

And the heartache comes to the forefront at times like now, highlighted by a suicide crisis that has struck the First Nations’ community of Cross Lake, Man.

“You suffer the highs and the lows of the family,” said Chatlain, Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas, who has ministered to First Nations for 15 years. “When there are signs of this depression, this deep pain, we try to be as present as we can and refer people to some of the resources that are sound. The level of depression and giving up, this is increasing . . . and it is disheartening.

“People get stuck in that too and then that brings more tragedy, there is a bit of that cycle going on.”

Spiking suicide statistics in Cross Lake has brought attention to the crisis Chatlain has seen first-hand for years.

Since Dec. 12 six have taken their own life on the reserve with 140 attempted suicides reported in the two weeks prior, leading to Acting Chief Shirley Robinson declaring a state of emergency in the community of about 8,000 on March 9. Robinson called on the federal government for support.

“There is so much hurt, there’s so much pain,” Robinson told the CBC. “We’re tired. We need that support, we need that assistance, everybody in our community feels it . . . this is too much for me.”

The community’s two nurses are reported to be working around the clock as they try to get a handle on the mental health of Cross Lake’s people.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett and Health Minister Jane Philpott say the federal government is determined to address the underlying causes. Bennett called the Cross Lake crisis a snapshot of a national struggle.

“Cross Lake is not alone,” said

Bennett. “This is happening coast to coast to coast and we need to stop it.”

That’s a reality Chatlain’s all too familiar with.

“Cross Lake is getting attention now, unfortunately because of the large number, but we have had an epidemic of suicides in so many of our communities,” said Chatlain. “The number of suicides that we have had . . . is more than alarming in a whole many communities.”

He said suicides have recently occurred in Pukatawagan, Man., Pelican Narrows, Sask., and Wollaston Lake, Sask.

This isn’t a new issue. Research

from the University of Manitoba, published in 1997 and looking back to 1988, shows the issue is decades old. In 1995 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People released a special report on suicide among First Nations’ people calling for the establishment of a national prevention program. More recently in 2004 the framework was laid for the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy.

But the situation hasn’t improved.

“It’s been there in all my years,” said Chatlain, who’s served in both Keewatin-Le Pas and the neigh-

— RELATIONSHIPS, page 5

Community emergency declared

By Andréa Ledding

KAMSACK, Sask. — A state of community crisis was declared March 14 by the Saulteaux Pelly Agency Chiefs Health Alliance of Keeseekoose, Cote, and Key First Nation, located a few miles north of Kamsack, Sask. At a Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) press conference, Senator Ted Quewezance explained the three First Nations have been plagued by hundreds of deaths attributed to addictions, violence, and health problems.

“We are in a crisis; we need help and we need it now,” said

Cote First Nation Chief Norman Whitehawk. “Our communities are in a state of grieving.”

Quewezance criticized both federal and provincial governments for playing jurisdictional games while people die.

“During provincial elections everyone is knocking on our door for support, but when there’s not an election we’re a federal responsibility,” observed Quewezance, noting that the candidates aren’t mentioning First Nations issues, and the province has pulled away from the table for a commitment of \$350,000 to a \$1.1-million treatment facility the

federal government has already committed to. “The health system is not only failing our people, it’s killing our people.”

He added that communities are attending three to four funerals a week, with four people dying in one day, Feb. 27, 2016, on Cote First Nation. He emphasized that this is a shared experience across Saskatchewan and Canada, and many First Nations are calling for help without receiving a response, or with promises of education rather than the primary care that the rest of the country receives.

— PAMPHLETS, page 14

Pope marks third anniversary with talk on mercy

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis celebrated the third anniversary of his election with a simple Tweet — “Pray for me” — and the usual Sunday recitation of the Angelus prayer with tens of thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

In his talk March 13, the pope did not mention the anniversary, but focused on God’s forgiveness and mercy as he did in his first Angelus address in 2013.

“God does not nail us to our sins; he does not identify us with the evil we have committed,” the pope told the crowd.

“God wants to free us,” the pope said. He wants people to use their freedom to do good and not evil. “This is possible — it’s possible — with his grace.”

Pope Francis’ Angelus address focused on the Gospel passage being read at masses around the world: St. John’s account of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery.

The scribes and Pharisees,

planning to stone the woman in accordance with the law, brought her to Jesus in an attempt to trick him. “If Jesus followed the severity of the law, approving the stoning of the woman, he would lose his fame of meekness and goodness, which so fascinated people,” the pope said. “But if he wanted to be merciful, he would go against the law, which he himself said he had come not to abolish but to fulfill.”

Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

“This response scatters the accusers, disarming all of them in the true sense of the word,” the pope said. They leave one by one,

beginning with the oldest, who is “more aware of not being without sin.”

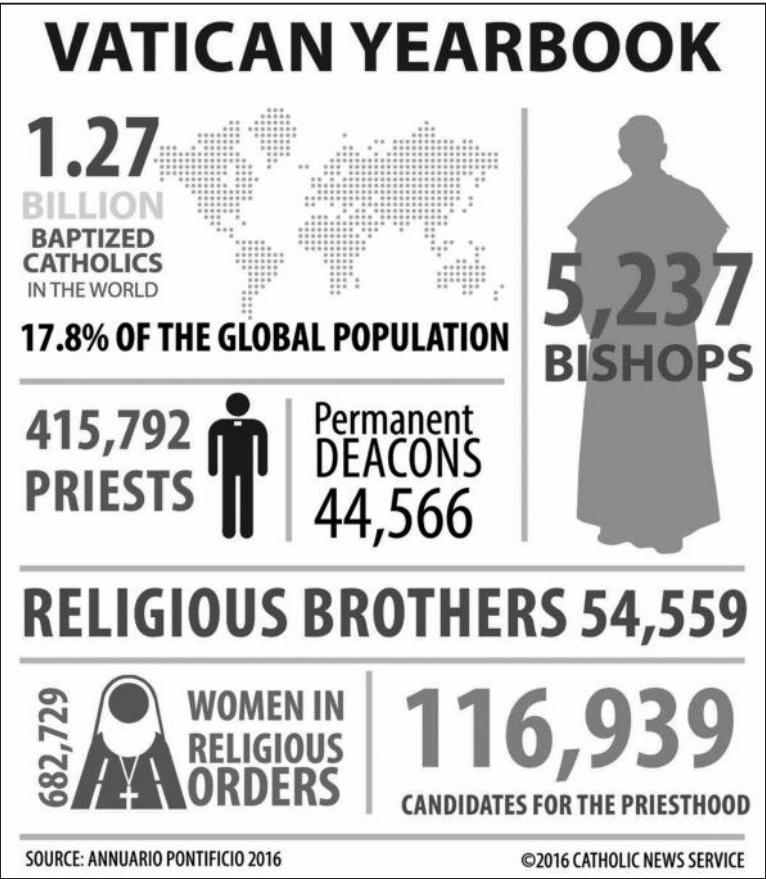
“How good it would be for us, too, to be aware that we are sinners,” Pope Francis said. “How good it would be if we had the courage to let fall to the ground the stones we have for throwing at others and rather to think about our own sins.”

Every sin is a betrayal of God, making people “adulterers before God,” the pope said. But Jesus says to all, like he said to the woman in the Gospel, “Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.”

“Her experience represents God’s will for each of us: not our condemnation, but our salvation through Jesus,” Pope Francis said.

At the end of the Angelus, retired workers from an Italian telephone company and members of a national association of retirees handed out a special gift from Pope Francis: “The Gospel of Mercy of St. Luke,” a small paperback edition of St. Luke’s Gospel.

The pope thanked the volunteers, especially those who are grandparents and share the faith with their grandchildren. Speaking from the window of the apostolic palace, he noticed that thousands of people were outside St. Peter’s Square and he asked the volunteers to “think about the people in Pius XII Square — you see they couldn’t get in — make sure they receive a copy of this Gospel, too.”



CNS graphic/The Catholic Free Press

VATICAN STATISTICS — Here are some statistics from the *Annuario Pontificio 2016*. The Vatican yearbook gives detailed figures on the church’s workforce, sacramental life, dioceses and parishes as of Dec. 31, 2014.

Closed doors, hearts cause suffering to innocent: pope

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Like the people of Israel in exile, migrants forced from their homeland due to war and persecution are often left to suffer because of closed hearts and doors, Pope Francis said.

“In these cases one may ask, ‘Where is God? How is it that so much suffering can come upon men, women and innocent children?’ ” he said at his general audience March 16.

Continuing a series of talks dedicated to the Year of Mercy, the pope focused on two chapters from the Book of Jeremiah (30 and 31), in which the prophet heralds the return of the exiled people of Israel to their homeland. The experience of exile left their faith “shaken” and seeing their country in ruins made it difficult “to believe in the Lord’s goodness,” the pope said.

“We, too, can live at times a sort of exile, when loneliness, suffering and death can make us think we have been abandoned by God,” the pope said. “How many of our brothers and sisters are living in this time a real and dramatic situation of exile far from their

homeland, with the rubble of their homes still in their eyes, with fear in their hearts and often, unfortunately, pain for the loss of loved ones.”

Newspapers and TV programs in Europe have been saturated with images of countless refugees stranded after several countries closed off the so-called Balkan route that allows migration from Turkey through Greece to northern Europe.

“Today’s migrants who suffer out in the open, without food and cannot enter — they do not feel welcomed,” the pope said. “I really like to see countries and governments who open their hearts and open their doors.”

In the face of suffering, Pope Francis said, Jeremiah’s prophecy of the Israelite’s return to their homeland is an affirmation that “God is not absent” and a reminder that good ultimately triumphs over evil.

“The Lord is faithful; he does not abandon us in desolation. God loves us with a never-ending love that even sin cannot stop. And thanks to him, the hearts of men and women are filled with joy and consolation,” he said.

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Although he lives a relatively hidden life in a villa in the Vatican Gardens, retired Pope Benedict XVI continues to study modern theological questions and, occasionally, to comment on them publicly.

The attention Pope Francis and many Christians are giving to the theme of divine mercy is a “sign of the times” that shows how, deep down, people still experience a need for God, the retired pope told Belgian Jesuit Father Jacques Servais in a written interview.

“Mercy is what moves us toward God, while justice makes us tremble in his sight,” Pope Benedict said in the interview published in mid-March.

Archbishop Georg Ganswein, the retired pope’s personal secretary, read Pope Benedict’s German text in October at a conference on the doctrine of justification and the experience of God. The retired pope approved the Italian translation of the text, which was published along with other papers presented at the conference.

The doctrine of justification —

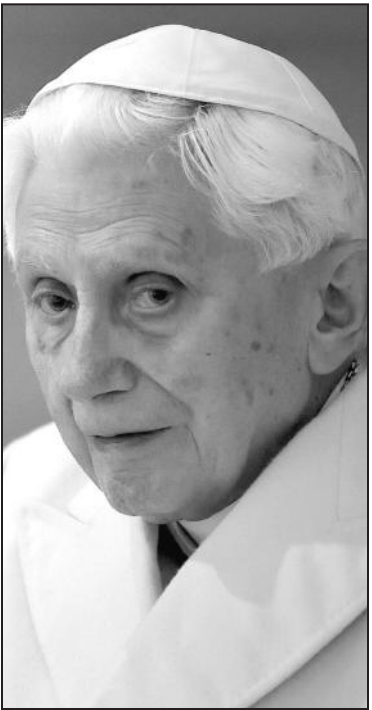
how people are made righteous in God’s eyes and saved by Jesus — was at the heart of the Protestant Reformation, which will mark its 500th anniversary in 2017.

In the interview, Pope Benedict said, “For people today, unlike at the time of (Martin) Luther and from the classical perspective of the Christian faith, things have been turned upside down in a certain sense: Man no longer thinks he needs to be justified in God’s sight, but rather he is of the opinion that it is God who must justify himself because of all the horrendous things present in the world and in the face of human misery.”

The extreme synthesis of such an impression, he said, could be formulated as: “Christ did not suffer for the sins of men, but in order to cancel the faults of God.”

“Even if today the majority of Christians would not share such a drastic overturning of our faith, you could say that it indicates a basic tendency,” the retired pope said.

Another sign of a strong change in general thinking that challenges at least medieval Christian thought, he said, is “the sensation that God cannot simply allow the perdition of the majority of humanity.”



CNS 2015 file photo/Stefano Spaziani

Retired Pope Benedict XVI

Marriage prep to address porn addiction

By Tom Tracy

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (CNS) — Licensed clinical therapist and family therapist Peter Kleponis believes it’s time for church-based marriage preparation programs to address pornography addiction and to urge assistance for addicted individuals before proceeding with marriage.

“Given the severe harm caused by pornography in marriage, pre-marriage programs have to address this issue,” said Kleponis during a talk in the Miami archdiocese. He recently spoke to Catholics gathered at St. Gregory the Great Church in Fort Lauderdale.

Typically, young couples in marriage preparation programs will hear about the dangers of drug and alcohol addictions in marriages, but little about pornography.

“We need to talk about this in marriage prep programs because a lot of guys are going into marriage

addicted to this stuff,” he said. “If a man is unwilling to address and resolve this conflict, a woman should really reconsider marrying him.”

“We wouldn’t want a woman marrying an active alcoholic or drug active, why would we want her marrying an active sex addict? We have to take this seriously,” he added.

The messages embedded in pornography include a plethora of false messages that pollute the user’s perspective of the opposite sex, according to Kleponis, who noted the absurdity of some couples thinking that viewing pornography could help spice up their romantic life.

“This is not about healthy relationships; the damage is an involvement in a fantasy world that undermines your ability to communicate and relate to women in a healthy manner, it interferes with the development of a healthy personality because it fosters selfish-

ness, and it harms your ability to understand and want to make a loving commitment in marriage,” said Kleponis, who is from the Philadelphia area.

Studies show that young adults who are regular consumers of pornography don’t want to get married, and it fosters the “hook up” culture in which porn consumers use other people for your sexual pleasure,” he said.

“Pornography does not make you a man, if anything it takes away your manhood,” Kleponis said, noting that the effect of pornography on women is equally damaging and hurtful to a woman’s self-image.

He noted alarming statistics showing that today’s young adult women increasingly admit to being regular consumers of pornographic imagery, whereas older women have favoured using online tools and social media for anonymous, often dangerous relationships

Pass system historic injustice to indigenous people

By **Andréa Ledding**

SASKATOON — Alex Williams screened his documentary, *The Pass System*, at the Broadway Theatre on March 10, followed by a panel discussion including film-maker and professor Tasha Hubbard, lawyer and activist Sylvia McAdam Sayswehum, and Little Pine Elder Jacob Pete.

“We’re all treaty people. We made treaties as equals. The Indian Act took that equality away,” said George Lafond, Treaty Commissioner, in his opening greetings.

The 50-minute documentary explored the illegally implemented and unlegislated pass system, which saw Indian Agents given complete control over when and if First Nations people could leave their reserves, under what terms, for what purpose, and for how long. The RCMP, who initially complained over the illegality of the system, eventually enforced it with threats of imprisonment. It began in 1885 and continued well into the 1950s and ’60s.

“This is the bitter history of Canada,” noted Pete. “We’ve suffered from the imposition of the system of segregation by the Crown. A lot of people don’t realize that, when we signed treaties with the Crown it was done on a nation-to-nation basis. We had our land base, we had our language, we had our territories.”

He added that the treaties were a sham: the federal government still wants the land, and despite First Nations never surrendering the land, it has been assumed by federal and provincial govern-

ments. Meanwhile, Pete has survived Indian residential schools.

“We were taken away from our grandparents; we were put in the back of a truck with straw and blankets and transported to residential school.”

He described being deloused with DDT and cold water, having his hair shaved, and being given boarding school clothes. “If you take a look at who was more civilized, we were. Our people were more willing. We were willing to share this land with new settlers coming in, we were prepared to share everything we had. And what did you do? You tried to destroy us. You tried to destroy our people, our education, our spirituality.”

He said that spirituality is part of the indigenous worldview, and the hurt is still there for his people for what has been done to them.

“What is the story about Saskatchewan, what is the story of the prairies that people know and people talk about and repeat?” asked Hubbard. “The images are of postcards advertising empty land that is here for a new start, without acknowledging indigenous title, without acknowledging indigenous presence, and without acknowledging the policies that led to widespread death and suffering.”

She added that the film effectively shows the foundation that was laid and is still ongoing of abuse of power, disparity, poverty, and racism. This can be traced to current policies by government agents, authorities, and the police.

“Sometimes I think about what this place would look like if the treaties had been honoured,”

noted Hubbard. “What would that look like if the spirit and intent of the treaties to share this territories for everybody’s wellness and everybody’s success, what would this province look like?”

McAdam talked about being put to work in the sugar beet fields at the age of five, until the age of 18 or 19.

“When the pass system expired, they implemented something else, the sugar beet policy. They took indigenous children from across Saskatchewan and parts of Alberta and put them to work in the sugar beet fields,” said McAdam, after asking how many people had heard of the sugar beet policy and being met with little response. “There were thousands of indigenous children working in the sugar beet fields when they should have been in school. You’re not going to hear about this in your curriculum.”

They would work from eight in the morning until 10 at night, from May to August. Her mother getting up at night to bandage her siblings’ hands and feet because they were blistered and bleeding.

“This is the kind of history that your government withholds. I hope someone comes forward and gets after this government be-

cause justice needs to happen in order for healing to happen. We need to talk about it, we need to have those difficult conversations, even if you feel uncomfortable.”

McAdam noted she often hears people say it has nothing to

do with them, or they feel guilty, but she doesn’t want their guilt — she wants them to talk to their children about it and teach them what has been done, and to pressure government to take action.

— MYTH, page 5



CNS/Dale Gavlak

CHILD REFUGEES — Syrian refugee children pose in this January 2016 photo in a child-friendly space created by Mercy Corps inside the Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan, near the Syrian border. According to Peter Salama, UNICEF’s Mideast director, “No place today is safe for Syria’s children.”

Syrian children bear brunt of crisis

By **Michael Swan**
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — With seven million Syrian children forced into poverty, almost three million out of school and two million living in cities under siege,

the United Nations children’s agency UNICEF estimates 80 per cent of Syria’s children have suffered harm in the five-year-old war.

“No place today is safe for Syria’s children,” Peter Salama, UNICEF’s Mideast director, told Catholic News Service in Amman, Jordan. “A new and disturbing pattern of violations against children’s rights has emerged in the conflict. This generation is at grave risk.”

The five-year civil war has created 2.4 million child refugees and seen many children recruited to join the warring sides.

The crisis has spilled beyond Syria’s borders and into refugee camps in neighbouring states. In Lebanon, interrupted educations and widespread use of refugee child labour are causing conflict between refugees and the Lebanese in a country where 25 per cent of the population is now Syrian refugees.

“This issue (exploitation of cheap refugee labour) is, I can claim, the main conflict driver in Lebanon now — competition for work,” said Elias Sadkni, the founder and director of Beirut-based House of Peace.

“Many, many kids are forced to work to help support their families.”

Lebanese employers are laying off Lebanese workers to hire refugees at salaries that are half or even one-third of normal, he said. Often the new, cheaper labourers are school-aged children, who are not stopped at checkpoints as their fathers are, Sadkni told The Catholic Register.

But the demand for cheap labour and the scarcity of jobs are only one factor keeping children out of school. It’s also difficult for refugee children who have

been out of school for years to fit in to Lebanese schools, where the curriculum is quite different.

“It wasn’t easy to just go to Lebanese schools,” said Catherine Mora, a Syrian refugee and English teacher who arrived in Canada in January.

Twenty-eight-year-old Mora spent a year teaching English with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Byblos, just outside Beirut, before coming with her brother and parents in one of the first airlifts to Kingston, Ont.

“It was a big challenge. We weren’t looking at those kids in a special way,” said Mora. “We weren’t teaching a normal class with normal students.”

Kids who had survived sieges, battles and harrowing journeys out of Syria provided an enormous contrast with Mora’s brief pre-war teaching experience at an exclusive private school.

“We had to teach students everything, not just teaching them from books,” she said. “We had to teach them how, from the simplest things, how they knock at the door, how they sit, how they open books, how they use pencils.”

The problem of getting Syrian kids into regular, accredited schools in Lebanon is a major worry in the Syrian refugee community.

“With women especially, it’s the main issue they put on the table to discuss,” said Sadkni.

Education and child labour combine to put enormous stress on refugee families, he said.

His new organization, House of Peace, has partnered with the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace. With funding and other supports from the Canadians, House of Peace

— LONG-TERM, page 5

Justice Murray Sinclair named to Senate

By **Deborah Gyapong**

OTTAWA (CCN) — The chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Justice Murray Sinclair is among seven people Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recommended be appointed to the Senate March 18.

“I approach this appointment with hope for the future, and remain committed to reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people, something I believe in my heart is possible,” said Sinclair in a statement. “In the time following the release of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and in the wake of the TRC’s Calls to Action, it is my belief that we are entering a new era of relations with indigenous people in Canada.”

“It is my wish to work toward repairing this relationship and doing what I can to make reconciliation a reality in Canada,” he said, promising to represent as well the people of Manitoba.

Sinclair and the others represent the first senators recommended by the non-partisan advisory board the Trudeau government set up to advise on Senate appointments.

The other new senator from Manitoba is Raymonde Gagné, who was president of Université Saint-Boniface from 2003 - 2014 and served in the educational field

for more than 35 years. Like Sinclair, she will fill a Manitoba vacancy.

V. Peter Harder, a 29-year federal public servant including 16 years as Deputy Minister heading departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Solicitor

with the National Arts Centre and a range of other organizations.

Also filling a vacancy in Ontario is Frances Larkin, who served 10 years as CEO of United Way Toronto, and as an Ontario MPP and cabinet minister from 1990 - 2001.

Ratna Omidvar fills the third Ontario vacancy, bringing extensive experience in immigration, diversity and minority rights. She is the founding director and adjunct professor of Ryerson University’s Global Diversity and Migration Exchange at the Ted Rogers School of Management.

Gold medal Paralympic athlete Chantal Petticlerc, an international speaker and spokesperson championing the rights of the disabled, will fill one of two vacancies for Quebec.

Also filling a Quebec vacancy is André Pratte, who spent 14 years as editor-in-chief of *La Presse*.



CCN/D. Gyapong

SINCLAIR NAMED TO SENATE — TRC chair Justice Murray Sinclair with his granddaughter in June 2015 when the TRC released its preliminary report. Sinclair is among seven people Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has recommended be appointed to the Senate.

General, Public Security and the Treasury Board Secretariat, will fill one of two vacancies for Ontario. Harder chaired the United Church of Canada Foundation as well as the Commonwealth Games Foundation in addition to work

Catholic social teaching not clear on debt, deficit

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — When it comes to running deficits and increasing government debt, Catholic social teaching provides no straightforward answers, say experts.

“The church is quite wary about blanket statements of the ethics of deficits,” said Citizens For Public Justice executive director Joe Gunn.

While there is a long history in the church of suggesting usury is a sin, the view of charging interest has changed over time, he said. “Generally, the way to look at these issues is trying to understand the specific situations and making a moral judgment based on the specific circumstances.”

“Then you would look at two things: the quantity of the debt and the quality of the deficit spending,” Gunn said. “So if you’re looking at the quantity of the debt, you would be guided by the debt to GDP ratio, the size of the debt related to the size of the economy. For the federal government, it is lower than it’s been since 1995, when we were in a big pickle.”

Gunn pointed out the provinces have bigger issues to look at in terms of their indebtedness than the federal government does, because its debt to GDP ratio compares favourably with that of other countries. “There is room for deficit spending this time around,” he said.

“But I wouldn’t turn that into a once and for all statement that we

can always say deficits are fine going ahead,” he said. The need for deficit spending comes from the present situation related to the downturn in oil prices, the need for a transformation in the economies of Alberta and Saskatchewan, the social deficit related to Canada’s poor.

Cardus director of work and economics program Brian Dijkema said it is not always easy to “draw a straight line to a specific policy” from Christian social thought.

On debts and deficits, however, there are a few principles at play, he said. “There is an intergenerational reality. There are times when taking up debt to serve a particular general will unduly burden future generations.”

An intergenerational justice issue has to be considered, he said, so that future generations aren’t unduly mortgaged by the debts of today.

“Ideally, if the government is going to increase debt to stimulate the economy it should be doing so in ways that enhance greater productivity in the long term,” Dijkema said. If stimulus money is spent on better transportation, public goods such as bridges, on improving community infrastructures, “an argument can be made” that government is “taking advantage of low interest rates and spending” on projects that will make it “better for Canadians down the road.”

The question is “how likely is that to happen?” or “how good is the government in doing that?”

Dijkema said. “I’m not convinced either the Liberals or the Tories are good at doing that.”

What ends up happening is stimulus programs “end up dispersing a great deal of money,” but he can’t see any measurements that productivity was increased in the long term.

Economist Rev. Bill Ryan of the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice said the general Keynesian principle is “when the economy is going well, you should run down your debt.”

When the economy is not working well, when people are unemployed, then one uses fiscal means, he said. Lowering interest rates no longer works, since they are so low and there’s no proven link between helping the economy and lowering business taxes, he said.

The main concern in deficit spending is the need for long-term consideration in spending priorities, he said. “Unfortunately our elections are short term.”

Thus decisions are made on elections and not economics, he said. Canada, as most countries around the world, except China, need long-term investment to renew aging infrastructure such as roads, sewerage and bridges, he said. “Our infrastructure across Canada is falling down.”

In terms of the quality of deficit spending, one of the biggest spending envelopes in the budget is the new Canada Child Benefit (CCB) that Gunn said most ethicists would say was “a

good thing” in terms of its lowering “the incredibly high level of child poverty in Canada.”

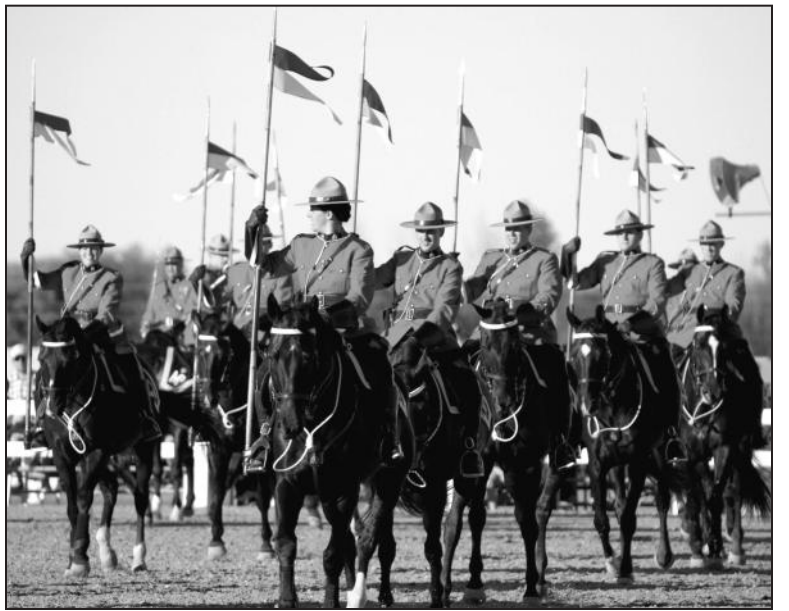
Gunn said it’s estimated the CCP, designed to give lower income families with children a large increase in benefits through the tax system, could lift 300,000 Canadian children out of poverty.

Ryan also believes Canada has to pay attention to income distribution, so that new wealth created does not only go to the top people who are rich. “The best way is to

put money in peoples’ hands, to give people jobs,” he said.

In Catholic social teaching, the main consideration is “How does it affect the poor?” Ryan said. If in avoiding a deficit or paying off the debt, the poor will suffer, that has to be kept in mind.

Yes, future generations need to be considered, he said. But the government must prevent the present generation “from being angry, revolting or going more and more into poverty. It’s a balancing act.”



Art Babyeh

PERFORMING FOR THE QUEEN — The RCMP Musical Ride will be heading to Britain this spring to perform at Queen Elizabeth II’s 90th birthday celebration at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. The birthday celebration will take ownership of the horse show’s main arena and grandstand seating during the four evenings of the celebrations from May 11 - 14.

UN event stresses maternal health care in Africa, not abortion

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Canada’s Dr. Robert Walley, founder of MaterCare International, made a passionate plea for better maternal health care for African women March 17 at UN headquarters in New York.

Walley, an obstetrician who first encountered the shocking level of maternal mortality in Nigeria in 1982, told a UN side event sponsored by the Holy See, Africa needs “a Marshall Plan” to save the lives of women who die in childbirth or shortly afterward.

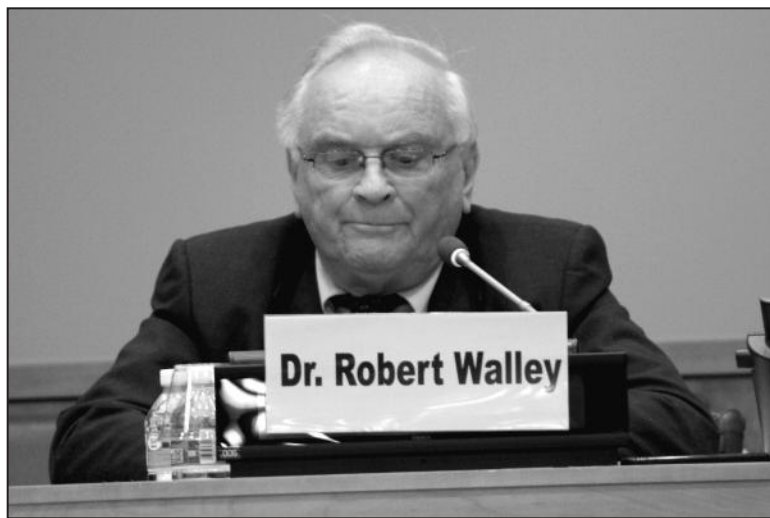
Walley stressed most maternal deaths occur late in the third trimester or during or shortly after birth. International pressure on mothers to use abortion and birth control do not address maternal health needs. “If mother wants to stay alive she has to kill her baby; that’s outrageous!” he said.

In his first trip to Nigeria, he saw four young women die on a single Saturday, all of them of complications that could have been easily handled in a western hospital.

“I couldn’t believe what I was seeing,” Walley said. He had never “had a mother die under my care” since he had began practising obstetrics in 1973 at a teaching hospital in Canada.

Walley said there are precedents for international mobilization on other health matters, such as that to combat AIDS and the recent outbreak of Ebola.

“Why can’t we do it on mater-



Dave Woods, courtesy Campaign Life Coalition

BETTER MATERNAL HEALTH NEEDED — MaterCare International Founder Dr. Robert Walley addressed a side event at UN headquarters March 17 on maternal health care in Africa.

nal mortality?” he asked, noting not one of the Millennium Development Goals or Sustainable Development Goals on fighting maternal mortality has been achieved.

“Where’s the fight from the women’s movement? Mothers are women, too,” he said.

Though the Canadian government has turned down 10 requests for funding for MaterCare, Walley said “there is hope,” noting his organization tries to help one woman at a time. “We can make a difference,” he said.

MaterCare now operates around the world, with ongoing projects in Kenya, Haiti and Ghana, helping to deliver babies safely; training traditional birth attendants to spot complications early so women can be trans-

ferred from villages to hospitals; and providing surgery to repair fistulas — tears in the bladder and rectum from obstructed child birth that leave women incontinent and makes them outcasts in their communities.

Walley was part of a panel on Best Practices for Maternal Health Care in Africa, at a side event coinciding with the UN’s 60th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women March 14 - 24 on the theme: “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development.”

The Holy See, Campaign Life Coalition, REAL Women of Canada, and the world’s oldest pro-life organization, the U.K.-based Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC), co-sponsored the panel moderated by

the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations Bishop Bernardito C. Auza. Joining Walley were the founder and president of Culture of Life Africa Obianuju Ekeocha and SPUC international director Maria Madise.

“Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance,” said Auza. The unique values of motherhood are “insufficiently acknowledged, appreciated and advanced.”

“One of most common forms of discrimination happens in exercise of maternity,” he said, especially among economically disadvantaged women.

Ekeocha said Pope Francis has described imposing abortion and contraception on African societies in the guise of preventing maternal mortality as “ideological colonization”

While Africa is a diverse continent of many differing countries, cultures, and languages, a common thread is “our understanding human life is precious,” Ekeocha said. Motherhood is seen “as a blessing rather than a burden.”

“Legalization of abortion is constantly recommended to us,” she said. “Many African countries are battling to keep the laws they have to protect unborn children.”

The pressure to legalize abortion to reduce maternal mortality “becomes highly controversial because it is diametrically opposed to our shared values,” she said. Adding to the pressure is the fact the countries promoting abortion

are significant donors.

Ekeocha warned that when this deceptive approach to maternal health unleashes abortion in Africa, coerced abortions, weakened marriages and families, sexual violence and other problems will increase. The real needs of African women are access to prenatal health care, skilled birth attendants and for care and support after birth, she said. “This is the non-controversial approach Africans expect.”

In response to a question from a member of the Danish Parliament, who said she would like to see women in Africa be free to make choices about their reproduction, Ekeocha said there is no word for abortion in her native tongue, just as there is none in other traditional African cultures.

“If you want to push abortion on Africa, you will have to tell African women that everything their parents told her and everything their grandparents taught them is wrong and that, madam, is colonization,” she said.

SPUC international director Maria Madise pointed out no international human rights treaty recognizes abortion as a “human right.”

Without the right to life for all members of the human family regardless of status, whether born or unborn, all other rights “become meaningless” she said.

The pushing of legal abortion as “necessary to save women’s lives is truly a disgrace,” she said. “Pregnancy is not a disease; abortion is not the cure.”

Most Canadians want restrictions on assisted death

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — An Angus Reid poll commissioned by the educational pro-life group Life-Canada shows most Canadians want assisted death restricted to cases where people face terminal illness.

The poll reveals most Canadians would not support the recommendations of the joint Parliamentary Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying that include: opening the way for minors to opt for euthanasia; allowing those with mental illness to receive an assisted death; and allowing for the euthanasia of elderly people with dementia if they had signed an advanced directive.

The study, conducted March 7 - 14, shows 50 per cent of Canadians believe the law should allow a doctor or nurse to use lethal means “only in grievous and irremediable circumstances, with strict limits.”

Ten per cent of Canadians say the law should not allow a doctor or nurse to use lethal means to



CCN/D. Gyapong

RALLY ON PARLIAMENT HILL — About 50 people gathered to pray against euthanasia on Parliament Hill March 19, invoking the help of St. Joseph, the patron saint of Canada. The rally was organized by layman Nicolas Carnogursky and attended by Ottawa Archbishop Terrence Prendergast.

kill a patient under any circumstances, while nine per cent say it should be allowed whenever a patient makes the request.

Thirty-one per cent of Canadians agreed the law “should allow a doctor or nurse to administer lethal means to end a patient’s life under various circumstances.”

Most Canadians would like to see euthanasia restricted to only the terminally ill (48 per cent) and chronically ill adults (31 per cent). Only 23 per cent of Canadians would support euthanasia for disabled or chronically ill minors, or teenagers.

Twenty-one per cent would support euthanasia for chronically depressed adults; while 20 per cent would support it for elderly people with dementia.

An overwhelming majority of Canadians, 66 per cent, do not believe medical professionals should be obligated to provide doctor-assisted death “if it is against their moral beliefs.”

Sixty-eight per cent also said religious institutions that provide end-of-life or palliative care should not be obligated to provide assisted death.

The poll also showed 65 per cent of Canadians believe their

MPs should represent what their constituents believe on this matter, and only 26 per cent say it should be based on the MP’s personal conviction. Only nine per cent said MPs should vote their party’s position.

In addition to releasing the poll, LifeCanada has also posted suggestions on how Canadians can write their MPs, and inform themselves on dangers doctor-assisted death pose to vulnerable Canadians.

The Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF) sent out an emergency alert to its email list, urging not only political action, but prayer and fasting. In a tool box of suggestion action items at http://www.colf.ca/images/March_2016.pdf COLF urges Catholics to take part in the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition’s postcard campaign, to write their political representatives and to support conscience rights of physicians and other medical personnel.

On March 19, the Feast of St. Joseph, a group of about 50 hastily organized by a young layman, Nicolas Carnogursky, gathered on Parliament Hill to pray the rosary and invoke the help of St. Joseph, the patron saint of Canada, in combatting euthanasia. Ottawa Archbishop Terrence Prendergast joined the rally and has brought up euthanasia in his pastoral message for Easter.

“A person contemplating assisted suicide often fears physical pain, does not want to be a burden on family or friends, recoils at the thought of being dependent on others for care and dreads the idea of dying alone,” he wrote. “These are genuine fears but as Catholic Christians we know that we have solutions for these anxieties grounded in our faith in Christ’s Passion and Resurrection, and in reason.”

“With accessible palliative care we can manage pain and the supportive presence and prayers of family and friends comforts and alleviates the fear of being alone for those facing their final days and hours of life,” he said.

Failed relationships have big impact

Continued from page 1

bouring Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese over the past decade and a half. “We’ve had this pattern for many years but . . . it’s a little worse now.”

A report released by Statistics Canada in January says one in five Aboriginals involved in a 2012 study had experienced suicidal thoughts, citing addictions, poor health and divorce as contributing factors to the persistent problem.

Substance abuse and an unemployment rate of about 80 per cent, according to Robinson, are taking their toll on the First Nations of Cross Lake. But Chatlain said it is failed relationships that are having the biggest impact on youth.

“Something that is common is that often there are boyfriend-girlfriend issues,” he said. “There is a breakup and these young people are not sure what to do with all of those emotions and pain. That is often a piece of some of

this suicide issue.”

According to Statistics Canada Aboriginal youth are five to six times more likely than non-First Nations to commit suicide, the leading cause of death among Aboriginals 44 years old and younger. First Nations’ males are three times as likely to commit suicide.

In Cross Lake those statistics are seen in blood, tears and dead bodies.

Rev. Guru Mendem, pastor of Holy Cross Church in Cross Lake, said the majority of those who’ve committed or attempted suicide this year are between 14 and 32 with the majority being adopted children younger than 21.

“It is very sad to see small children committing suicide,” said Mendem, now in his third year at Holy Cross. “They don’t even know what life is and already they are committing suicide.”

Four of the six recent suicides involved teens with the youngest being a 14-year-old who was buried on March 6, the day she would have turned 15. At the local high school 170 students are currently on suicide watch, according

to principal Gordon Hum.

Mendem, who came to Holy Cross two years ago from India, said while suicide is a global problem, he never expected it to be so prevalent among the Aboriginal youth. To curb this he and the local youth director regularly hold events like prayer groups for youth.

“I’m trying to gather them together, all of the youth, for some prayer,” he said. “I’m trying to invite them here. . . .”

Still, Chatlain says the church has solutions for these suicidal people by giving them a sense of purpose.

“A connection and rootedness in trying to do God’s will brings purpose and meaning,” he said, adding the diocese recently held a youth retreat in the Cross Lake region. “The challenge is trying to get these communities to see some good, to see that there is hope and to get a sense of God having a plan for them. We’re trying to renew that sense with our young people but there is a lot of negative winds blowing and it is hard for some of our young people to stand in the face of this.”



Art Babych

Legendary Inuk folk and gospel singer Etulu Aningmiuq sings on Parliament Hill on World Suicide Prevention Day last September. Known for his folk songs and Inuktitut-language ballads, Aningmiuq died at age 69 in Iqaluit Feb. 15 after a short illness.

Long-term plans needed

Continued from page 3

tries to smooth out conflicts that arise between Syrian refugees and their Lebanese hosts.

Even as peace talks continue in Geneva, the West has to realize the danger of a generation of young Syrians shut out of education and used for cheap labour, Sadkni said.

“The western world needs to spend much more on solving these problems. It’s not a local conflict. It has become an international problem,” he said.

Most Syrian refugees want to return home as soon as they can, but the level of destruction in

Syrian cities such as Homs and Aleppo won’t allow a quick and easy resettlement.

“But that’s not going to happen for everyone” Sadkni said. “It’s not going to happen in a short time. So we need to think about what’s going to happen on the long term.”

In a March 9 letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Development and Peace executive director David Leduc asked the Canadian government to dedicate more resources toward the Syrian refugee crisis. During five years of war in Syria, Development and Peace has spent \$24.2 million on humanitarian aid and on local initiatives to promote peace.

You’ve been told a myth

Continued from page 3

“I have no choice but to function in this system which is illegally here. We never ceded or surrendered our land or our rights,” noted McAdam. “You’ve been told a myth and a lie for so long that everyone believes it.”

She noted that every time First Nations have taken the government to court to challenge notions of title and jurisdiction, they’ve won, but the government has fallen back time and again on the Doctrine of Discovery, which needs to be refuted.

“Those are the challenges that we’re still fighting today,” noted McAdam. “You have to be vigilant to inform yourself.”

An audience member asked what a path forward to justice might look like.

“In the treaties it says one square mile for a family of five. I’m supposed to have one square mile. Do you think that’s been honoured?”

asked McAdam. “I would love to have my piece of land. But this government refuses to honour that treaty promise. Imagine if the government honoured treaty promises, we could begin there.”

Pete added that being given back the language is key, as well as relationships: with each other and with the land.

“The treaties should be honoured. All of you are treaty people. Treaties were signed in the presence of the Creator, it is a holy covenant between your people and our people. Honour that relationship.”

The conclusion of the Elders, said Pete, was that spirituality and language need to be restored, and women need to be honoured as keepers of the land and water, and bearers of life. In history women especially have been stripped of even their names, but women need to be restored as keepers of knowledge, land, water, and future generations.

Poverty needs more focus in Sask. election

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A group of anti-poverty activists and supporters listed a series of questions they want the public to ask of their candidates for the April 4 Saskatchewan election. They feel poverty is not getting the attention it deserves from candidates and want the public to bring their issues to the campaign.

The Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry, Poverty Free Saskatchewan and Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger

(REACH) attended a March 16 news conference to discuss poverty issues and present 10 questions they want asked of candidates for all parties.

The 10 questions all start with the phrase, “What are your party’s plans for,” then go into specifics: legislation to ensure provincial anti-poverty strategy upholds social and economic rights; Saskatchewan’s commitment to protect under the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; increasing benefits under

the Saskatchewan Assistant Plan; the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability and ensure an adequate income for all; increase wage and other exemptions under those plans; move the minimum wage to an actual livable wage; expand quality affordable and social housing; expand subsidized childcare spaces; support a food security strategy; implement sustainable food procurement policies and ensure healthy and culturally appropriate food is served in all provincial facilities; equity of opportunity

and remuneration for women, Indigenous people, visible minorities and the disabled; and address wealth and income inequality.

The group complained that little has changed in support programs over the years, and even during the province’s boom years the poor were still suffering inadequate supports.

Spokesperson for the group, Peter Gilmore of the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry, said the province and Canada are violating the human rights section of the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Gilmore said the questions they put forward are not just social policy concerns, they are basic human rights according to the Covenant.

“You have to have a plan that has a monitoring agent, it has to have enforcement that holds government in check. The reality is that we don’t have that and I don’t believe that we can count on political goodwill. Regardless of the political climate, regardless of the public mood, we need to have protections for the most vulnerable.”

He quoted figures from the Green party platform that moving everyone in the province to above the poverty cut-off line would be less than \$700-million a year, while the poverty cost campaign says \$3.8 billion a year is spent on the costs of poverty.

“I would suggest that making sure that everybody is moved out of poverty is less costly in the long term and the more practical solution.



F. Flegel

ANTI-POVERTY PANEL — A group of anti-poverty activists feel poverty is not getting the attention it deserves from candidates in the upcoming Saskatchewan election and want the public to bring their issues to the campaign. From left: Dana Fokersen, executive director REACH; Peter Gilmore, Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry; Bonnie Morton, Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry; and Joanne Havelock, Poverty Free Saskatchewan.

Thévenot celebrates Regina Chrism mass

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The Chrism Mass is an important continuation of the church, said Prince Albert Bishop Albert Thévenot, M.Afr., in his homily at the March 15 celebration. Thévenot celebrated the mass because Regina does not yet have a new archbishop following the January death of Archbishop Daniel Bohan.

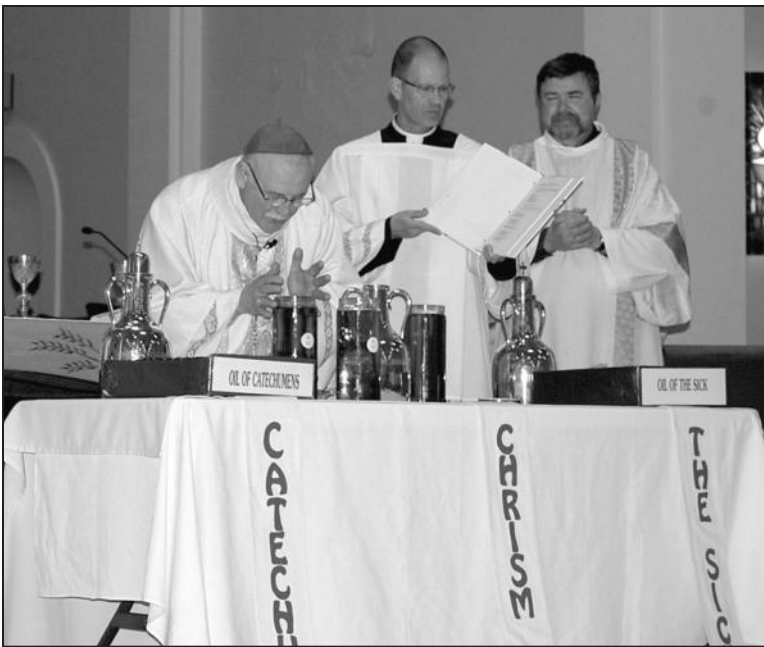
The three holy oils the church uses in many of its ceremonies and rituals are blessed at the Chrism Mass and distributed to all parishes in the archdiocese.

Thévenot in his homily told the story of the three oils, their purposes, uses and symbolism in the church. He had the congregation laughing several times, describing how the oils were used in the past and how some of that has changed.

Of the Catechumen oil used in baptism, said Thévenot, “we become a member of the church and we are anointed to become a prophet. Today we have to be stronger, standing for the Truth and the Truth is Jesus Christ.”

“The oil of the sick,” said the bishop, “used to be called Extreme Unction, the last rites. You had to be careful and were told not to administer it until the person was taking their last breath,” he said while performing a hovering posture over a body which brought laughter from the congregation. “Now it is a healing oil used to anoint those who are sick in mind or body.”

He briefly criticized the assist-



F. Flegel

CHRISM MASS — Prince Albert Bishop Albert Thévenot, M.Afr., blesses the oils at Regina’s Chrism Mass March 15. Thévenot celebrated the mass because Regina does not yet have a new archbishop following the January death of Archbishop Daniel Bohan.

ed suicide attitude coming from Ottawa. “We don’t want to leave anything in God’s hands anymore. Life is precious from conception to natural death. Suffering has lost its meaning to the world.”

Chrism oil, like the others, is pure olive oil, but it is mixed with a little balsam and used in confirmation ceremonies. Here again the bishop used humour to get his message across. “I saw one child I anointed wipe it off. I asked him, ‘Why did you wipe it off? I just anointed you.’ We are anointed because we are to bring the Word to the world.” He explained that in previous ordinations the

finger and thumb were anointed because that is where the host was held in the consecration. “Now we anoint the hands.”

“Now tomorrow when you go for coffee and they ask you what you did today, you can tell them the story of the three oils,” said Thévenot at the end of his homily.

Following the homily, the traditional renewal of priestly vows was performed in a series of questions asked by the bishop of the more than 60 priests present. The oils were then blessed, taken to another room where they were poured into smaller containers to be distributed by to parish representatives.

Lenten talks continue in Saskatoon with Wiesner

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — God manifests his power above all by showing mercy, said Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner, OMI, during a Year of Mercy series of talks in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

“It is not by creation or by the providential care of creation, but above all by pardoning and showing mercy,” that God manifests who God is, Wiesner said, quoting an opening prayer from the eucharistic celebration for the 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time.

Pope Francis has declared an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to help us reflect more deeply about God’s mercy and to remind ourselves to show mercy to our sisters and brothers, said Wiesner in his presentation Feb. 28 as part of a Year of Mercy Lenten Series organized by the diocesan Foundations: Exploring Our Faith Together office.

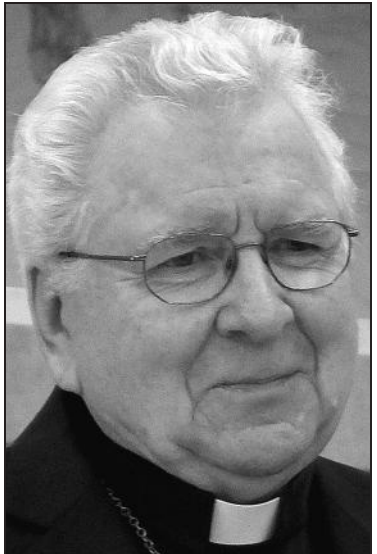
In exploring the meaning of a “gracious God, a God rich in mercy” who “consoles us so we can console one another,” it is necessary to begin with scripture and discover “God shares about God’s self and God’s relationship with us.”

Beginning with Exodus, where Moses discovers a God “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,” Wiesner explored the concept of “*hesed*,” which expresses God’s unconditional love for us — unmerited, undeserved and unearned, and surpassing human imagination.

“God is faithful. God keeps that steadfast love,” he said. “God sees our wretchedness and God still stretches out God’s hand to us.”

The mercy of the Father is lived and revealed by Jesus Christ, described Wiesner, the retired bishop of Prince George, who is now living in Saskatoon. “Pope Francis says that Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy.”

It is God’s mercy that can be seen in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, he said, citing the compassion he has for the widow whose son has died in St. Luke’s Gospel, and the parables of the Good Samaritan and the



K. Yaworski

Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner

Prodigal Son.

The story of the prodigal son is really the Parable of the Merciful Father, said Wiesner, and it tells us about the nature of God.

The Father is patiently, painfully, and eagerly waiting for his child to return. “Here we see God who doesn’t break the crushed reed or quench the wavering flame,” Wiesner said. “It is the Father who takes the initiative.”

The Father responds in joy, love and welcome, reflecting the parable of the lost sheep, seeking the one who is lost and having a celebration when the beloved returns.

“What we see here is that mercy and reconciliation affects relationships. It is not the sin that’s forgiven, it is the sinner who’s forgiven. It is not things that are affected by mercy, but persons that are affected by mercy.”

Our challenge is to share that love with others, to absorb evil rather than trying to pay it back. “Our call is to try and live out in our lives the mercy that God has shared with us,” he said. “We receive that mercy and we are called to pass it on.”

Citing the words of a child, Wiesner said that the path of discipleship is about being “samples” of Jesus in the world, manifesting God’s unending love in our acts of mercy, in our forgiveness, in our affirmation of others.

First Nations scholars discuss indigenous feminism

By **Andréa Ledding**

SASKATOON — Three renowned scholars discussed Indigenous Feminisms as part of a panel discussion March 16 at Station 20 West in Saskatoon. Kim TallBear, Audra Simpson, and Kim Anderson spoke about how colonial imposition on the Americas has been detrimental to First Nations women since first contact.

TallBear, a professor of Native Studies at the University of Alberta, examined her gradual path to feminism via science. Kim Anderson, a professor of Native Studies at Wilfred Laurier University, also confessed herself initially reluctant to identify as a feminist, while Audra Simpson, a professor of Native Studies at Columbia University, traced her path in a circle around various forms of feminism.

“We were tasked with talking about the role of indigenous women and decolonization, but I don’t often use the word decolonization,” noted TallBear. “What I think of instead of decolonization is being in good relation. That sounds vague in English. I think about being in good relation with human beings and non-human relatives. Feminism is another word that stands in for me, as being in good relation.”

It was later suggested that many indigenous women are uncomfortable with the word feminism and perhaps another word is needed, in indigenous language and translations.

“The second thing I think about is dismantling hierarchies, and how I dismantle hierarchies in science is actually what brought me to feminism,” TallBear reflected. She noted that, since early days, science has been practised on both indigenous peoples and the land, so she attempts to flip the gaze by putting the focus on the way scientists and colonizers think and practise.

“The Nazis learned eugenics and physical anthropology from the American School of Anthropology; one of the major centres of that was Harvard University. Our bodies, like our lands, were the raw materials for the development of the settler nations, practised upon our bodies as well as our lands,” said TallBear.

Feminism helped her analyze politics and science — the fundamental hierarchy she pays attention to is the notion of civilized versus savage, the fundamental divide — nature versus culture, men versus women, white people versus the rest. These all rest upon the “who is more civilized” question, a false dichotomy she tries to dismantle, noting that human exploitation by science is not civilized, whereas living peacefully with nature is not savage in terms of stewardship. She notes that engaging with science and technology is the basis for indigenous sovereignty.

“I don’t think there’s just one road to feminism,” noted TallBear, adding that women are caretakers of community as part of a caretaking society. However, she prefers to relate to women caretakers as people rather than



Audra Simpson, Kim TallBear and Kim Anderson

breaking them into gender, which reflects the white power structure and binary mindset. She urged Indigenous peoples to develop newcomer relationships so that those coming into the country aren’t fed the lies of the settler state, but instead learn relationships with First Nations.

Kim Anderson, a Métis scholar, talked about how her indigenous feminist practice gradually grew.

“The first thing about indigenous feminist is resisting the “f” word,” noted Anderson, observing that feminism is often hard for people to accept. “It’s hard to accept a wide-spread oppression . . . it’s been given a really bad rap in the media and popular discourse.”

Part of the added resistance in indigenous ideology is that it was often traditionally a strong matriarchal society; and it’s argued that sovereignty would solve problems around gender discrimination, or that it’s more of a white woman’s issue, or that it attacks traditional roles around mothering or motherhood, or that it’s about rights versus responsibilities.

Motherhood was what brought her to first considering women and women’s issues and women’s bodies, as she experienced her first pregnancy. She went on to consider how nationalist movements are built with male dominance, and oppress women through patriarchal governance. Traditionally, indigenous societies were feminist societies with equality of the sexes. Women’s abilities and governance were recognized, and they had political authority.

“We were feminist societies. We had political, economic and social equality among the sexes,” Anderson said. “We had places for women to have governance: hereditary women chiefs, advisories, women’s councils. Socially it doesn’t get much more powerful than grandmother: we were a kin-based society and women managed the kin networks.”

This authority, in balance with the men, meant women were in charge of resources, both in disbursing and storage, which was equivalent with economic authority. Spiritually they were leaders, until they were “de-feminized” by the colonial system with an extended campaign to break down families and to impose male dominance at the

most basic level.

“What happened to the men in terms of being stripped down in their authorities, the sacredness of them, their roles and responsibilities . . . and handed this dominance and authority which was all they were given by settler society,” said Anderson, noting that she has explored this issue through her latest collection, Indigenous

Men and Masculinities.

Audra Simpson observed that “decolonization” is not a part of her daily thought process.

“It is a space of aspiration, perhaps . . . but it involves a return of the land, and I don’t think that’s going to happen anytime soon,” Simpson observed. “It is the complete recalibration of the way we think, about ourselves, and about others, and it is about the re-instantiation of our governance systems.” She added that like, decolonization, feminism is not a part of her daily thought process either, but she is optimistic that feminist practice is starting to move things: not just white feminism, but indigenous feminism which recognizes the land, water, and familial authority of women.

“I see us defending our land. I see us pointing at our land and saying, ‘that’s ours.’ And I see the people doing that defending as being women. That does not surprise me one bit; that is consistent with where we come from, our philosophical standpoints, our creation stories,” said Simpson, who notes that she grew up as a

Mohawk who saw her female relatives standing up in her community, and went from white feminist friends in New York back to her reserve issues of Bill C-31, settler encroachment on land, and other critical problems. “Land is central, and the disempowerment of our women.”

“I stopped being the other kind of feminist, and started being a responsible Mohawk,” said Simpson, noting that she then got lured into indigenous feminism by persuasive arguments. “What then got me was, I liked the focus on indigenous women as a centre of analysis.”

She then identified gender dispossession with land dispossession, and began to embrace more mainstream feminism. There is still some residue, but overall she feels she can ask deeper questions about privilege of place, doing something that hasn’t been done before, and that in itself “is a restoration of power which has been taken from us, along with land, along with energy.”

Some 200 people attended the talk, which will be uploaded on YouTube.

Attitude of community is vital: Gagnon

By **James Buchok**

WINNIPEG — The Archdiocese of Winnipeg’s annual appeal, Sharing God’s Gifts, is entering its 17th year and it was deemed opportune to renew both the appeal and the archdiocesan stewardship office, which has been vacant for nearly two years.

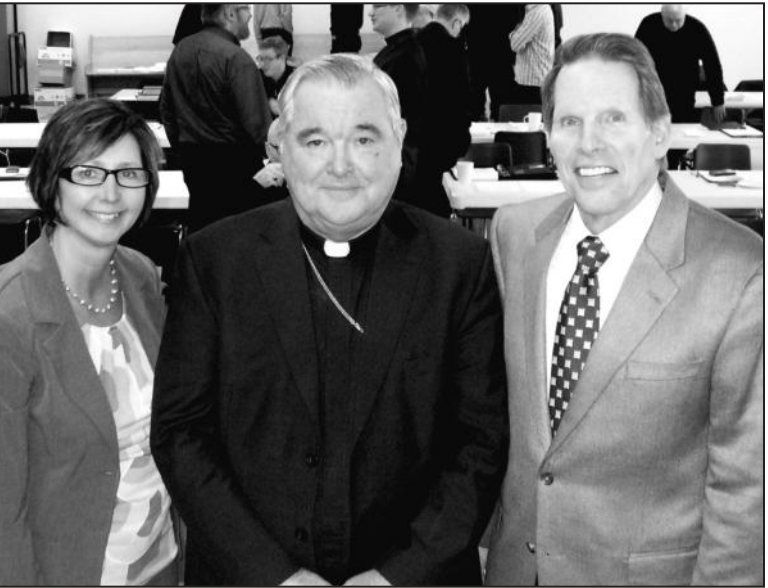
Priests in the archdiocese gathered with Archbishop Richard Gagnon March 8 for an exchange of ideas aimed at revitalizing the appeal and stewardship.

“We’re looking at an important topic,” the archbishop told the 55 priests in attendance at Good Shepherd Parish in Portage la Prairie. He asked the gathering for feedback and direction “in the way we frame our appeal in terms of stewardship.”

The process began last fall with the creation of a steering committee and the enlisting of a consultant specializing in diocesan renewal in Canada and the United States. The Reid Group of Seattle, Wash., was asked to review Sharing God’s Gifts and the stewardship office to examine ways to reconstruct the appeal while integrating the stewardship office with the Annual Appeal and engaging parishes in the process.

Consultant Tom Reid explained to the gathering that the appeal and stewardship office “are two distinct areas, although not unrelated. How do those things work together?” he asked. “The reconstruction will take work and not everybody can be pleased, but what we have to consider is the greater good of the archdiocese,” Reid said.

The consultant’s report and recommendations for change were released in February based on steering committee meetings and focus group gatherings with clergy and laity.



J. Buchok

Archdiocese of Winnipeg Financial Administrator Rhonda Chorney, Archbishop Richard Gagnon and consultant Tom Reid.

The report recommended a renewed commitment to stewardship as a way of life in the archdiocese. It also identified confusion around the annual appeal, which supports many ministries, and the annual assessment which pays for the administration costs of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. The report further concluded that there is a need for better communication to pastors and the people of the archdiocese.

The report recommends two new archdiocesan offices be created: a development office to oversee the annual appeal and a renewed stewardship office.

One pastor suggested that parishioners consider themselves a member of only their parish: “They are nourished in a particular location; people never think of being nourished by the Archdiocese of Winnipeg.” Gagnon responded by saying an attitude of community is vital for the good of the archdiocese and all parishes. “We are all the archdiocese,” he said.

Deacon Ted Wood, a member

of the steering committee, said the appeal “should be treated as an invitation to participate in the pastoral mission of the archdiocesan church. It’s a choice about how we give our money and how to build a better church. The success will depend on the ability of the archdiocese to show its good pastoral works that people can support.”

A show of hands as the morning concluded showed a positive response from the priests and pastors in support of what had been reviewed. “It has been a fruitful discussion,” Gagnon told the priests. “It is necessary and important to have your input.”

“It’s up to the local church to look beyond parish needs; it really is an act of faith,” the archbishop concluded. “The goal of Sharing God’s Gifts must appeal to people. We have to create a sense of common mission in the archdiocese.”

To read more about the ministries supported by the appeal, visit www.archwinnipeg.ca

Modernist churches becoming a thing of the past

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — There are a lot of very traditional Catholics who would have trouble explaining what a baldaccino is. Even the select few who know might have trouble identifying the hexagonal baldaccino above the altar in St. Joan of Arc on Bloor Street West.

St. Joan of Arc is among a handful of masterpieces of modernist architecture built during the post-baby-boomer years in the Archdiocese of Toronto. Its baldaccino (a canopy covering the altar which often echoes the cupola above, a feature of church architecture since Renaissance times) is hexagonal and mirrors the interior shape of the church. When St. Joan of Arc was completed and consecrated in 1967, architect William Saccoccio received an “award of merit” from the Ontario Masons Council and the Ontario Association of Architects.

“A successful church complex, the elements of which are assembled in a strong composition,” said Saccoccio’s peers in bestowing the award. “It is not a sentimental or nostalgic form, but an honest attempt to find an appropriate form to an old problem in a new context.”

The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement and parishioners at St. Joan of Arc love their nearly 50-year-old building that gathers everybody close to the altar and relies on natural light streaming in through abstract stained glass.

Not all our church architecture from the period surrounding the Second Vatican Council — about 1955 to 1977 — has been so cared for. Early this year demolition crews tore down the chapel that once graced the old Willowdale campus of Regis College. That church had been designed in 1958 by one of Canada’s most celebrated modernists, Peter Dickinson.

“If this was a modest Victorian row house in downtown Toronto, it would have been designated (as a heritage building) ages ago,” Michael McClelland, an architect and advocate of modernist architecture, told The Toronto Star.

A couple of other modern churches were closed in recent years, leaving about 10-12 examples of modernist architecture still functioning in Toronto. The archdiocese doesn’t want any of its churches designated for heritage. The designation makes them harder to sell and impossible to renovate. The archdiocese has no desire to operate museums. Its churches exist to house a community and celebrate mass.

But there’s no denying churches are part of our heritage. If they weren’t, the archdiocese would not be spending \$128 million to renovate and restore St. Michael’s Cathedral.

Dana Saccoccio, who now runs her father’s old practice at Saccoccio Wepler Architects Inc., remembers the excitement and the ideals that drove the St. Joan of Arc design process when she was a girl in the 1960s.

“I remember the priests who would come to our house. I guess they went to his office too, but they

would come to the house and there would be all kinds of discussions,” she said. “There was a very funky priest (St. Joan of Arc pastor Rev. Peter Renders) whom we all liked.”

What Renders and Saccoccio were talking about at the family kitchen table had its roots in the 19th-century liturgical movement.

“The idea behind the liturgical movement in terms of church architecture was that since the liturgy is what made the community and is important for the salvation of the community and of individuals, individual people had to participate in it,” said Catherine Osborne, a theologian and historian of church architecture.

Long, narrow churches where the priest said mass at a distant altar at one end and the people did something completely different in their pews at the other end were not the liturgical movement’s ideal. They looked back to the early history of the church and saw people gathered around the altar for the eucharistic feast.

“The Second Vatican Council more or less said the liturgical movement was right,” said Osborne, who will soon publish *American Catholics and the Church of Tomorrow*, a book about modernist church architecture in North America.

Rather than simply accepting standard, existing styles of church buildings, in the run-up to the Second Vatican Council priests like Renders started talking to architects like Saccoccio about what happens in the liturgy, asking them to design a building to accommodate the liturgy.

“Architects loved it,” said Osborne.

Rather than starting with a steeple, architects began designing from the inside out, making the altar central and gathering the people close to the action. In the post-war period, as building costs grew, there was less money and time spent on the exterior of the church.

As a young man on the building committee and a builder himself, Oreste Campeotto approved completely of the emphasis on the interior at St. Roch’s on Islington Avenue in northwest Toronto.



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MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE — The tabernacle at Toronto’s St. Joan of Arc Church is a classic example of modernist architecture that was a staple of the churches built around 1955 - 77. It’s not a style that we see in new churches anymore.

“Ideas changed since the Vatican council,” said Campeotto. “It’s not the walls that count. It’s the people. . . . We have to be adapted to modern times. I followed the instruction of the church.”

St. Roch’s was built in 1976, a time Campeotto remembers with great fondness. Its exterior is a tall, brick facade with room for a couple of bronze statues that almost blend in with the red brick. Inside, skylights make the sanctuary glow with natural light, even on a cloudy March morning.

The mostly Italian parish wanted people to be part of the liturgy. Campeotto is still happy and proud that the building committee went with a raked floor that raises the back rows higher than the front rows, like a theatre.

“You can see the altar,” Campeotto points out.

The kind of open, democratic design the modernists brought to church building for 20 years reflected the times the church was living through, said Italian theologian Massimo Fagioli, who teaches at St. Paul, Minnesota’s St. Thomas University.

“It’s impossible to disconnect the history of architecture from the history of the Catholic Church and theology,” he said.

Through the papacies of St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, the emphasis in church architecture shifted away from modernist design. As post-modernism began taking off in other areas of architecture (houses, office buildings and institutions), the new churches began to revive, meld and remix elements of older styles of church architecture.

In the 1980s and ’90s anxiety about diminishing church attendance and the muted influence of the church on secular society drove a movement for churches that looked like churches. Once again the money was spent on steeples and other impressive exterior features.

In North America, the dwindling workforce of priests made larger churches necessary, so the smaller number of priests could minister to a larger number of families.

With a new papacy, the problems of church architecture may

be open for a new look once again.

“What’s interesting about Pope Francis is that he doesn’t care, as his predecessors did, for the beauty, the esthetic side of Catholicism,” said Fagioli. “He knows exactly that the truth, in real life, can be ugly — that the truth can be messy. He celebrates (mass) like a normal parish priest. That is his way of not inviting Catholics to look nostalgically back to an era of coherence.”

Big, postmodern churches try to evoke a certain experience.

“I want to try to say this in a way that doesn’t sound too polemical,” said Osborne. “It’s trading on nostalgia, for better or for worse. It’s saying there was a time when the church was at the centre of the community and it meant a certain thing. But it doesn’t mean that anymore, for whatever reason. So, we can maybe get it back if we make these buildings that ring this bell in people.”

But what bell are the architects trying to ring? asks Fagioli. The nostalgia of the new, postmodern buildings looks back almost exclusively at European churches — whether Gothic, Romanesque, Byzantine or Baroque. The church today, whether in North America or elsewhere, is increasingly multicultural, said Fagioli.

“We don’t know what a multicultural Catholic church building looks like,” he said.

Which is no reason to go back to modernist architecture, said Osborne. That ship has sailed.

“I don’t think we’re going to suddenly start building modernist churches again under any circumstances,” she said. “What I hope for is just a little bit more respect for the ideals that got these places built in the first place.”

Dana Saccoccio remembers her dad as a very good architect who did his best work on churches.

“His favourite building type definitely was the church,” she said. “We’re kind of proud of him. I think he was a good architect. He was also a good Catholic. He understood the church. He was maybe one of the lucky ones, because he bumped into people who would allow this creativity.”



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PLAIN EXTERIOR — The modernist era had less focus on the outside, as seen in the plain red bricks on the exterior of St. Roch Church in Toronto.

Hymn choices prepared by Bernadette Gasslein, Karen Koester, Heather Reid and Christina Ronzio. Please note that these selections are not meant to be prescriptive, but to help you in your choice of music that works for your community, with its resources and repertoire. Don’t be afraid to repeat selections from week to week; consider adding just one new piece per season. Keep in mind that the days of the Easter Season “above all others are the days for the singing of the Alleluia” (General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar).

SUNDAY/ FEAST	Part of the Mass	CBW III	Breaking Bread 2016	Glory and Praise (Green, 1997)	Gather
April 10, 2016 Third Sunday of Easter	Opening hymn	396 This Is the Feast of Victory 685 Splendor and Honor <i>CIS 6.21 Join in the Dance</i>	558 Sing a New Song 421 Canticle of the Sun	421 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name 389 Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks 379 O Sons and Daughters	542 That Easter Day With Joy Was Bright 570 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
	Preparation of Gifts	683 All Power Is Yours 402 We Who Once Were Dead	162 Two Were Bound for Emmaus 172 Christ, the Lord, Is Risen Again	192 Psalm 30: I Will Praise You, Lord 193 Psalm 30: I Will Praise You, Lord	781 Lord, When You Came 584 Come to the Water
	Communion	404 O Sons and Daughters 393 Something Which Is Known	578 Worthy Is the Lamb 332 In the Breaking of the Bread	360 Behold the Lamb of God 538 Bread for the World 550 Servant Song	924 Song of the Body of Christ 929 Joyous Cup
	Closing	383 Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord <i>CIS 6.25 We Shall Go Out</i>	183 Christ Is Alive 171 Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise	396 All Shall Be Well 578 Anthem	520 This is the Feast of Victory
April 17, 2016 Fourth Sunday of Easter	Opening hymn	396 This Is the Feast of Victory 685 Splendor and Honor	539 All Creatures of Our God and King 571 Join in the Dance	535 All People That On Earth Do Dwell 536 Come and Worship the Lord	534 Now the Green Blade Rises 536 At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing
	Preparation of Gifts	402 We Who Once Were Dead	466 The King of Love My Shepherd Is 163 Christ Is Arisen	246 Psalm 100: We Are God's People 383 This Day Was Made by the Lord	910 Shepherd of Souls 402 Like a Shepherd 35 Shepherd Me, O God
	Communion	603 Gift of Finest Wheat 605 I am the Living Bread <i>CIS 6.2 Dona Nobis Pacem</i>	612 Like a Shepherd 324 Gift of Finest Wheat	499 One Bread, One Body 708 Like a Shepherd	950 Take and Eat 929 Joyous Cup
	Closing	389 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today <i>CIS 6.21 Join in the Dance</i>	164 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today 546 Sing to the Mountains	382 Now the Green Blade Rises 664 Mighty Lord	539 Sing With All the Saints in Glory 521 Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna!
April 24, 2016 Fifth Sunday of Easter	Opening hymn	595 Christians, Let Us Love One Another 397 This joyful Eastertide	558 Sing a New Song 483 Love One Another	693 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You 688 Sing a Joyful Song	870 Jerusalem My Happy Home 641 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling 529 Surrexit Christus
	Preparation of Gifts	403 Now the Green Blade Rises	146 As I Have Done For You 792 Proclaim His Marvelous Deeds	281 Psalm 145: I Will Praise Your Name 388 I Know That My Redeemer Lives 482 I Know That My Redeemer Lives	702 Faith, Hope and Love 863 O Holy City, Seen of John 699 God is Love
	Communion	602 Eat This Bread <i>CIS 6.2 Dona Nobis Pacem</i>	338 When We Eat This Bread 364 Vine and Branches	645 Love One Another 364 Ubi Caritas 522 Bread of Life	701 No Greater Love 394 May We Be One 524 Alleluia No. One
	Closing	591 God Is Alive <i>CIS 6.37 Sing, O Sing</i>	374 Go Out, Go Out 583 In Christ There Is No East or West	394 At the Lamb's High Feast	766 City of God 835 They'll Know We Are Christians 523 Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Gasslein holds a licence in sacred theology with specialization in pastoral catechetics from the Institut catholique de Paris. For the past 40 years she has been engaged in various liturgical and catechetical ministries, leading workshops around the country and is editor of Worship, a journal published by Liturgical Press. She and her husband live in Edmonton.

Koester is a member of the National Council for Liturgical Music, a group that advises the CCCB. She earned a bachelor of education with music major at the University of Alberta, and has a graduate diploma in religious education at Newman Theological College. She has been actively involved in parish music ministry for over 30 years as a singer, choir director and occasional trumpeter at her parish, St. Joseph's Basilica, and in the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

Reid is the director of music for St. Basil's Parish in Ottawa. She has an undergraduate degree in music (Western) and a masters degree in liturgy from Notre Dame. Currently she is a member of the CCCB national commission for liturgy and the sacraments (NCLS) and the vice-chair of the Ontario Liturgical Conference.

Ronzio is the director of the Liturgy Office for the Diocese of Hamilton. She holds an MA in liturgical studies from St. John's University in Collegeville, MN.

SUNDAY/ FEAST	Part of the Mass	CBW III	Breaking Bread 2016	Glory and Praise (Green, 1997)	Gather
May 1, 2016 Sixth Sunday of Easter	Opening hymn	396 This Is the Feast of Victory 685 Splendor and Honor 460 Be Joyful Mary, Heav’nly Queen	316 Gather Us Together 183 Christ Is Alive	687 Sing Alleluia 393 Join in the Dance	571 Christ is the King 598 O God Beyond All Praising 604 All the Ends of the Earth
	Preparation of Gifts	419 Veni, Sancte Spiritus 414 Send Us Your Spirit <i>CIS 6.17a Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us</i>	506 Now We Remain 337 Ubi Caritas	218 Psalm 67: O God, Let All the Nations 677 We Praise You	665 Healing River of the Spirit 821 Prayer of Peace 534 Now the Green Blade Rises
	Communion	599 No Greater Love <i>CIS 6.2 Dona Nobis Pacem</i>	483 Love One Another 144 Faith, Hope and Love	527 Jesus, the Bread of Life 649 Peace 650 Prayer of St. Francis	783 Unless a Grain of Wheat 646 Keep in Mind
	Closing	389 Jesus Christ is Ris’n Today <i>CIS 6.37 Sing, O Sing</i>	174 Be Joyful, Mary 547 All the Ends of the Earth	683 All the Ends of the Earth 381 Christ, the Lord, Is Risen Today	829 Let There Be Peace on Earth 594 We Are Marching
May 8, 2016 Ascension	Opening hymn	398 We Know that Christ is Raised 399 Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise	186 Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise 172 Christ, the Lord, is Risen Again	400 Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise 208 Psalm 47: God Mounts His Throne 419 Alleluia, Sing to Jesus	545 A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing 543 Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise
	Preparation of Gifts	410 O Holy Spirit, Come to Bless 437 Crown Him With Many Crowns 431 Christ, You Are the Fullness <i>CIS 6.17a Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us</i>	177 Resucito 497 We Remember	675 I Want to Praise Your Name 678 May We Praise You	680 We Walk By Faith 525 The Strife Is O’er 552 Send Us Your Spirit 549 Living Spirit, Holy Fire
	Communion	432 Jesus, the Lord	323 To Be Your Bread 573 Alleluia No. 1	506 To Be Your Bread 503 See Us, Lord, about Your Altar	394 May We Be One 932 One Bread, One Body
	Closing	400 Praise to God in Heav’n Above 405 Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us 426 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! <i>CIS 6.37 Sing, O Sing</i>	187 Go Make of All Disciples 560 Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	401 Lord, You Give the Great Commission 670 Sing a New Song	949 Sing to Jesus or one from the Entrance (not sung then)
May 15, 2016 Pentecost	Opening hymn	414 Send Us Your Spirit 416 Come, Holy Spirit	447 Send Us Your Spirit 183 Christ Is Alive	401 Come, Holy Ghost 406 Spirit, Come 412 Everyone Moved by the Spirit	833 Diverse in Culture 553 O Spirit All-Embracing 559 Come Holy Ghost 813 God Whose Purpose Is To Kindle
	Preparation of Gifts	614 Baptized in Water <i>CIS 6.17a Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us</i>	595 All Good Gifts 586 We Are Many Parts	410 Send Us Your Spirit 254 Psalm 104: Send Forth Your Spirit, O Lord 696 Abba, Father	552 Send Us Your Spirit 550 Veni Sancte Spiritus 549 Living Spirit, Holy Fire 557 Send Down the Fire
	Communion	419 Veni, Sancte Spiritus <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	359 One Love Released 344 Spirit and Grace	498 Bread of Life 570 One Spirit, One Church 563 We Are One Body	946 Let Us Be Bread 924 Song of the Body of Christ
	Closing	508 Go to the World! 691 Lord, You Give the Great Commission <i>CIS 6.28 Go Make of All Disciples</i>	377 The Spirit Sends Us Forth 626 Alleluia! Raise the Gospel	679 O Bless the Lord 690 Sing of the Lord’s Goodness	546 Go to the World 743 Sing a New Church 544 Lord You Give the Great Commission 604 All the Ends of the Earth

SUNDAY/ FEAST	Part of the Mass	CBW III	Breaking Bread 2016	Glory and Praise (Green, 1997)	Gather
May 22, 2016 Trinity	Opening hymn	650 This Day God Gives Me <i>CIS 6.33 God, We Praise You</i>	426 Blest Be the Lord 717 On This Day, the First of Days	413 On This Day, the First of Days 415 All Praise and Glad Thanksgiving 416 All Hail, Adored Trinity	564 The Play of the Godhead 563 How Wonderful the Three in One
	Preparation of Gifts	632 Wondrous Is Your Name <i>CIS 6.23 Holy Is Your Name</i>	716 All Hail, Adored Trinity 640 This Day God Gives Me	699 Give Thanks to the Lord 591 Dwelling Place	561 Let There Be Light 796 I Danced in the Morning
	Communion	473 God Is Love 631 Where There Is Love <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	143 No Greater Love 586 We are Many Parts	511 At That First Eucharist 498 Bread of Life	946 Let Us Be Bread 938 We Come to Your Feast
	Closing	421 O God, Almighty Father 555 Holy God, We Praise Your Name <i>CIS 6.28 Go Make of All Disciples</i> <i>CIS 6.37 Sing, O Sing</i>	714 O God Almighty Father 421 Canticle of the Sun	679 O Bless the Lord 704 For the Beauty of the Earth 414 Holy, Holy, Holy	566 O God Almighty Father 562 Come Now, Almighty King
May 29, 2016 Body and Blood of Christ	Opening hymn	601 Gather Us Together <i>CIS 6.12 Gather Your People</i>	357 Seed Scattered and Sown 418 One Spirit, One Church	530 Table of Plenty 539 Let Us Go to the Altar	808 We Come With Joy
	Preparation of Gifts	424 I Come with Joy <i>CIS 6.4 Let Us Be Bread</i>	595 All Good Gifts 629 God of the Hungry	363 The Lord Jesus 526 Come, Taste and See	785 Now We Remain 919 I Come With Joy
	Communion	610 Taste and See or 612 Drink in the Richness of God <i>CIS 6.2 Dona Nobis Pacem</i> <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	343 I Received the Living God 331 Eat This Bread	506 To Be Your Bread 528 Bread for the World	926 Life-Giving Bread 932 One Bread, One Body 394 May We Be One
	Closing	426 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus 533 Sent Forth by God's Blessing <i>CIS 6.30 Table of the World</i>	198 Now Thank We All Our God 625 We Are Called	546 God Has Chosen Me 543 Take the Word of God with You	807 We Are Called
June 5, 2016 Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Opening hymn	560 God Is Love! The Heavens Are Telling 557 Let Heaven Rejoice <i>CIS 6.34 Let Us Go to the Altar of God</i>	603 We Are the Light of the World 602 The Light of Christ	676 Lift Up Your Hearts 673 Sing to the Mountains	609 You Are the Voice 610 Sing of the Lord's Goodness
	Preparation of Gifts	542 Canticle of the Sun	682 The Lord Is My Light 691 Be Still My Soul	192 Psalm 30: I Will Praise You, Lord 628 Come to Me, All Who Are Weary 634 There is a Balm in Gilead	960 Healer of Our Every Ill
	Communion	599 No Greater Love <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	480 God Is Love 143 No Greater Love	485 In the Shadow of Your Wings 479 Lay Your Hands 620 There is a Longing	943 Bread of Life From Heaven
	Closing	544 O Sing to God a Joyful Song <i>CIS 6.37 Sing, O Sing</i>	602 The Light of Christ 377 The Spirit Sends Us Forth	548 City of God 639 There's a Wideness in God's Mercy	686 Blest Be the Lord
June 12, 2016 Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time	Opening hymn	443 There's A Wideness in God's Mercy <i>CIS 6.34 Let Us Go to the Altar of God</i>	302 Gather Us In 604 I Am the Light of the World	599 Blest Be the Lord 607 Yahweh 615 Amazing Grace	644 There's a Wideness in God's Mercy 524 Alleluia No. One
	Preparation of Gifts	445 Earthen Vessels	671 Loving and Forgiving 464 Shepherd Me O God	593 Center of My Life 601 O God, You Search Me	724 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
	Communion	Hymn for the Holy Year of Mercy <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	399 This Alone 747 I Shall Live in the House of the Lord	513 Our Blessing Cup 524 Behold the Lamb	930 Taste and See 924 Song of the Body of Christ
	Closing	560 God Is Love ~ The Heavens Are Telling	513 Christ In Me Arise 543 O Bless the Lord	588 Sent Forth by God's Blessing 605 Though the Mountains May Fall	635 Let All Things Now Living 734 Bring Forth the Kingdom

SUNDAY/ FEAST	Part of the Mass	CBW III	Breaking Bread 2016	Glory and Praise (Green, 1997)	Gather
June 19, 2016 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Opening hymn	435 Lift High the Cross	663 Save Us, O Lord 314 Gather Your People	530 Table of Plenty 658 I Am the Light of the World	801 Take Up Your Cross (tune #765) 850 All Are Welcome
	Preparation of gifts	353 Take Up Your Cross 373 Tree of Life	596 Your Words are Spirit and Life 510 Only This I Want	213 Psalm 63: My Soul Thirsts 215 Psalm 63: I Long for You	832 In Christ There is No East or West 699 God Is Love
	Communion	Hymn for the Holy Year of Mercy <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	342 One Bread, One Body 316 Gather Us Together	485 In the Shadow of Your Wings 499 One Bread, One Body	932 One Bread, One Body
	Closing	521 Now Let Us From This Table Rise <i>CIS 6.1. Glory in the Cross – Good Friday words</i>	583 In Christ There Is No East or West 387 Sent Forth By God's Blessing	613 O God, Our Help in Ages Past	743 Sing a New Church
June 26, 2016 Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Opening hymn	561 O God Beyond All Praising <i>CIS 6.34 Let Us Go to the Altar of God</i>	555 Sing Out Earth and Skies 557 Sing of the Lord's Goodness	529 Gather Your People 671 Glory and Praise to Our God	825 O God of Every Nation (tune #797)
	Preparation of gifts	483 For You Are My God	507 Come, Follow Me 608 I Have Loved You	616 How Can I Keep from Singing 454 River of Glory	767 Called By Christ 774 You Are Called to Tell the Story
	Communion	Hymn for the Holy Year of Mercy <i>CIS 6.7 Our Blessing Cup</i>	799 The Lord Is Kind and Merciful 317 Give Us, O Lord	514 Our Blessing Cup 519 I Am the Living Bread 521 Look Beyond	946 Let Us Be Bread 932 One Bread, One Body
	Closing	562 O Bless The Lord	579 In the Day of the Lord 560 Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	622 Lord of All Hopefulness 453 One Lord	645 Amazing Grace 807 We Are Called

Hymn for the Holy Year of Mercy

Text: Eugenio Costa
Music: Paul Inwood


Capo 3: Am Cm F Ab Gsus4 Bbsus4 G Bb C Eb F Ab Dm Fm Esus4 E Am Gsus4 G Cm



Mi - se - ri - cor - des si - cut Pa - ter! Mi - se - ri - cor - des si - cut Pa - ter!

VERSES

Am Cm Am7 Cm7 Dm6/A Fm6/C Am Cm F Ab G Bb C Eb Am Cm Dm Dm/F Fm Fm/Ab Esus4 Gsus4 E G




1. Give thanks to the Father, for he is good in ae - ter - num mi-se-ri - cor-di - a e - ius.
2. Give thanks to the Son, Light of the Nations
3. Let us ask the Spirit for the seven holy gifts
4. Let us ask for peace from the God of all peace

Am Cm F/A Ab/C G Bb C Eb F Ab G Bb C Eb Am Cm Dm Dm/F Fm Fm/Ab Esus4 Gsus4 E G




1. He created the world with wisdom in ae - ter - num mi-se-ri - cor-di - a e - ius.
2. He loved us with a heart of flesh
3. Fount of all goodness and the sweetest re - lief
4. The earth waits for the Good News of the Kingdom

Am Cm Am7 Cm7 Dm6/A Fm6/C Am Cm F Ab G Bb C Eb Am Cm Dm Dm/F Fm Fm/Ab Esus4 Gsus4 E G



1. He leads his people throughout history in ae - ter - num mi-se-ri - cor-di - a e - ius.
2. As we receive from him, let us also give to him
3. Comforted by him, let us offer comfort
4. Joy and pardon in the hearts of the little ones

Am Cm F/A Ab/C G Bb C Eb F Ab G Bb C Eb Am Cm Dm Dm/F Fm Fm/Ab Esus4 Gsus4 E G



1. He pardons and welcomes his children in ae - ter - num mi-se-ri - cor-di - a e - ius.
2. Hearts open to those who hunger and thirst
3. Love hopes and bears all things
4. The heavens and the earth will be re - newed

What’s up with our refusal to commit to change?



Thomas the skeptic, Thomas the doubter, listed his conditions for belief in the gospel reading. His demands were direct: “see the mark of the nails . . . put my finger in the mark of the nails . . . my hand in his side.” Unless these could be met he stridently declared, “I will not believe.”

Jesus appeared again eight days later. Thomas, now present, heard Jesus say “Peace be with you.” How could Thomas be at peace? Jesus called him. Thomas then experienced what the others had seen earlier. Willing to believe and to be forgiven, Thomas could then find peace.

Thomas saw, believed and took a singularly dedicated path as a result. Tradition has it that this apostle carried the gospel message to far-off India during the mid-first century. Some variants of his story have him suffering a martyr’s death there. The Nasranis or Saint Thomas Christians in the Indian state of Kerala today trace their origins to his evangelistic efforts.

Immersed and enmeshed in an unjust, earth-destroying system, fearfully hiding behind our own metaphorically locked doors, why are we so desperately trying to shield ourselves from the implications of truly believing? Must we be skeptics in order to hold on to our own pitifully small share of the privilege and power the system accords us? Why do we so mightily resist any real change that would threaten our own comfortable lives?

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

Or is living out fully our belief in Jesus just too risky? Do we, like Thomas, refuse to commit to change without somehow seeing incontrovertible proof that Jesus lives and his call to us is real?

Did the shock of the crucifixion initially trigger Thomas’ doubts? What causes our obstinate refusal to budge from the comforts of the status quo? Throughout church history the lure of power and privilege have caused the Christian community to stray. Often along with our own episcopal leaders the church community has likewise been so affected as to fail to respond to calls to “see” Jesus and live accordingly.

Early Christians, it is argued, opposed warfare holding close to their hearts the gospel imperative to “Love your enemies.” The Edict of Tolerance in 311 followed two years later by the Edict of Milan gave Christianity legal status within the Roman Empire. Pragmatic leaders then linked this emerging empire-wide religious force with its political goals and by 380 with the Edict of Thessalonica Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the Empire’s sole authorized religion. By 416 only Christians could serve in the Roman army. Defence of many realms likewise obtained the religious veneer offered by this distortion of Christianity that has lasted up until our times.

Second Sunday of Easter April 3, 2016	Acts 5:12-16 Psalm 118 Rv 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19 John 20:19-31
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Over the last two millennia we can chart a course of wavering resolve punctuated by times of renewal. Religious reform movements or events like the nailing of the 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church by Martin Luther, which will be jointly commemorated by Lutherans and Catholics next year on its 500th anniversary, mark a striving toward a restored faith in the risen Lord, which continually re-emerges across history. It could be triggered by a host of social, economic, political or spiritual crises. With global pressures and challenges currently mounting, are we in need of renewal again?

Change often unfolds painfully slowly. Take the example of a human institution like slavery. The church, according to observations made by Cardinal Avery Dulles, participated in the slave-holding economies dominant up to and beyond the Renaissance. Popes held slaves. Muslim captives manned the oars of papal galleys. Even here in Canada Marguerite d’Youville, the founder of the Grey Nuns and the first Canadian-born saint, was a slave owner. She and her husband held Pawnee slaves captured by French fur traders in Missouri and African slaves brought to Quebec from Louisiana and Haiti. Jesuit plantations in Maryland were worked by slaves well into the 1830s.

As late as 1866 under Pope Pius IX the church affirmed that divine law permitted, subject to certain conditions, the purchase, sale and exchange of slaves. Another five decades would pass before Pope Benedict XV condemned outright “selling any person as a slave” in the then newly promulgated Canon Law of 1918. However, the United Nations estimates that today possibly over 30 million individuals are still caught up in the global slave trade.

Our struggle to build the New Jerusalem continues on many fronts. The foundation of our efforts lay in our fervent belief in the path Jesus of Nazareth invites us to walk with him. Many, many questions have yet to be resolved. Within our own church we hear people ask why we are stuck with medieval church governance systems? Are worn notions of patriarchy and gender roles dictated by fourth-century Mediterranean cultural mores long past their due dates? Are we a doubting people and church? Can we be a seeing and believing people?

Consistently each generation witnesses the emergence of new prophetic voices calling us back to the path, allowing us to see and believe anew. Do we have the courage to put our hand in the wound today and accept the peace that is offered?

Jesus’ climactic beatitude in the reading from John harkens to us. “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” This believing demands living in a new way that answers the call each and every one of us receives with “My Lord and my God.”

We can handle sadness and anger, but fear has no release valves



Fear is the heartbeat of the powerless. So writes Cor de Jonghe. That’s true. We can deal with most everything, except fear.

The late Belgian spiritual writer, Bieke Vandekerkehoe, in a very fine book, *The Taste of Silence*, shared very honestly about the demons that beset her as she faced a terminal illness at age 19. She singled out three particular demons that tormented her as she faced the prospect of death — sadness, anger, and fear — and she suggested that we can more easily cope with the first two, sadness and anger, than we can with the third, fear. Here’s her thought:

Sadness can be handled through tears, through grieving. Sadness fills us like a water glass, but a glass can be emptied. Tears can drain sadness of its bite. We have all, no doubt, experienced the release, the catharsis, that can come through tears. Tears can soften the heart and take away the bitterness of sadness, even while its heaviness remains. Sadness, no matter how heavy, has a release valve. So too does anger. Anger can be expressed and its very expression helps release it so that it flows out of us. No doubt too we have also experienced this. The caution, of course, is that in expressing anger and giving it release we need to be careful not to hurt others, which is the ever-present danger when dealing with anger. With anger we have many outlets: We can shout in rage, beat a drum, punch a bag, use profanity, physically exercise until we’re exhausted, smash some furniture, utter murderous threats, and rage away at countless things. This isn’t necessarily rational and some of these things aren’t necessarily moral, but they offer some release. We have means to cope with anger.

Fear, on the other hand, has no such release valves. Most often, there’s nothing we can do to lighten or release it. Fear paralyzes us,

and this paralysis is the very thing that robs us of the strength we would need to combat it. We can beat a drum, rage in profanity, or cry tears, but fear remains. Moreover, unlike anger, fear cannot be taken out on someone else, even though we sometimes try, by scapegoating. But, in the end, it doesn’t work. The object of our fear doesn’t go away simply because we wish it away. Fear can only be suffered. We have to live with it until it recedes on its own. Sometimes, as the Book of Lamentations suggests, all we can do is to put our mouth to the dust and wait. With fear, sometimes all we can do is endure.

What’s the lesson in this?

In her memoirs, the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova recounts an encounter she once had with another woman as the two of them waited outside a Russian prison. Both of their husbands had been imprisoned by Stalin and both of them were there to bring letters and packages to their husbands, as were a number of other women. But the scene was like something out of the existential literature of the absurd. The situation was bizarre. First of all, the women were unsure of whether their husbands were even still alive and were equally uncertain as to whether the letters and packages they were delivering would ever be given to their loved ones by the guards. Moreover, the guards would, without reason, make them wait for hours in the snow and cold before they would collect their letters and packages, and sometimes they wouldn’t meet the

women at all. Still, every week, despite the absurdity of it, the women would come, wait in the snow, accept this unfairness, do their vigil, and try to get letters and packages to their loved ones in prison. One morning, as they were waiting, seemingly with no end in sight, one of the women recognized Akhmatova and said to her: “Well, you’re a poet. Can you tell me what’s happening here?” Akhmatova looked at the woman and replied: “Yes, I can!” And then something like a smile passed between them.

Why the smile? Just to be able to name something, no matter how absurd or unfair, no matter our powerlessness to change it, is to be somehow free of it, above it, transcendent in some way. To name something correctly is to partly free ourselves of its dominance. That’s why totalitarian regimes fear artists, writers, religious critics, journalists, and prophets. They name things. That’s ultimately the function of prophecy. Prophets don’t foretell the future, they properly name the present. Richard Rohr is fond of saying: *Not everything can be fixed or cured, but it should be named properly.* James Hillman has his own way of casting this. He suggests that *a symptom suffers most when it doesn’t know where it belongs.*

This can be helpful in dealing with fear in our lives. Fear can render us impotent. But, naming that properly, recognizing where that symptom belongs and how powerless it leaves us, can help us to live with it, without sadness and anger.



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Burdens, brought to the cross, can be transformed

Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



It has been an unseasonably warm winter here on the Prairies and I have been taking advantage of the balmy temperatures to get outside more often, so the other day saw me walking back from the local grocery store with a few items for our dinner that night. As I walked the few blocks I could feel the weight of the grocery bag pulling on my arm. Even though it was only moderately heavy, I felt the strain in both my arm and shoulder muscles. I consciously began to switch the bag from one arm to another as I walked, trying to distribute the load. *Things get heavy when you have to carry them for a long time*, I thought.

The pull in my muscles reminded me of an article I read recently. A massage therapist was reflecting on the work she does. She pointed out that the skeletal framework of the body, the spinal column itself and across the neck and shoulders, literally forms a crux, a cruciform shape. Many of her clients come to her because of tightness in that area, especially through the neck and shoulders. They are rigid and hunched over, as if they were carrying some-

thing heavy on their backs. Our bodies, she realized, recognize more than physical loads. We “carry” the stresses and concerns of our lives in the crux, the cross of our body. If we could see our spirits, she says, they would be like pack horses, loaded down with the emotional and spiritual burdens of life, and they literally weigh us down.

Our language reflects the truth of this. When we are emotionally distressed, we say “our hearts are heavy.” We talk about being “weighed down with responsibility” and of “the emotional baggage we carry.” In the language of spirituality, they are the crosses we bear and everyone has them. Sometimes these crosses are relatively minor and we walk almost carefree, but at other times, the pain and worry can be so great that we fear we may fall under their weight and not rise again.

It is here that experience and faith intersect. Our experience tells us that our crosses are real, even if invisible; our faith tells us what God does with them. It is the essence of our faith as we hold that Good Friday, the day of the cross, gives way to Easter, the day of resurrection, and our belief and most profound hope is that what God has done in Christ, God will do with us.

It is why, each Good Friday, believers flock to the churches for the service that sees the cross lifted high. It is why we process, one by one, to touch and reverence that cross. Babies in arms, toddlers and teenagers, young and old, we all come before the cross,



P. Paproski, OSB

HOPE IN THE CROSS — “Our experience tells us that our crosses are real, even if invisible; our faith tells us what God does with them,” writes Sandy Prather. “It is the essence of our faith as we hold that Good Friday, the day of the cross, gives way to Easter, the day of resurrection, and our belief and most profound hope is that what God has done in Christ, God will do with us.”

embracing it, kneeling before it, laying gentle hands upon it. We come with our own crosses to lay them, symbolically and really, before the cross of Christ.

It is an Easter faith that brings us before the cross; it is our testimony to God’s saving action in Christ and in us. We witness to at least three things in front of that cross. First, in coming to the cross we are saying that we recognize that here is a place where God is present. Christmas gives us *Emmanuel*, God-with-us, and Easter tells us that God is with us not just in our pleasant and happy times, in the celebratory times of life, but also in our suffering and sadness, in our sorrows, anxieties and despair. Golgotha might look and feel like a God-forsaken place, but Easter eyes see through the cross to the powerful presence of Spirit and love being poured

out. The cross, our faith tells us, is never a place where God is absent; it is always a place where God’s grace is working powerfully to bring about good.

Second, we come before the cross of Christ to lay our own crosses at the foot of our Saviour’s cross. We intuitively know that on their own, crosses are death, but that taken up in Christ, they can be gateways to newness. Our Easter hope is that what God has done for Christ, God will do for us and that we too will end up not in tombs of death but in gardens of life.

Finally, we come before the cross of Christ in the belief that Christ will be with us in our carrying of them. *Take up your cross and follow me, Jesus says, while at the same time reassuring us*

that his yoke upon our shoulders is light as he helps us to bear it. The promise, *I am with you*, has never been more true than when we feel ourselves dying under the weight of our worry and suffering.

It is true: the weight in our hearts often times pulls us down more than grocery bags or physical burdens. Yet those burdens, brought to Christ, have the potential to be transformed. Rev. Andrew Greeley wrote years ago, “Those who put on the cross of Christ go carefree into the night.” Being carefree might not quite describe our reality, but to know that our darkest hilltops can be places of grace and that our heaviest crosses are held in Christ is good news indeed. Happy Easter everybody!

Pamphlets don’t heal our people

Continued from page 1

“National harm reductions don’t help,” noted Quewezance. “Pamphlets don’t heal our people.”

In a report by Health Canada consultant Dr. John Elias, it was noted many of the addictions problems escalated with the establishment of the Kamsack methadone clinic. Quewezance agrees, along with the leadership of the three nations, attributing many of the deaths and addictions issues in the Saulteaux Pelly Agency area to the methadone program. They have requested reviews of all those involved.

“The federal and provincial government have become the pushers of drugs as they fund narcotics and opioids under the government drug plans,” said Quewezance. “They track prescription drug use and abuse, but do nothing to stop the problem.”

Vice-Chief Kimberley Jonathan emphasized the systemic barriers in place: these include medical transportation and access to basic

medical needs and mental health services, as evidenced by the recent tragedy at La Loche.

“It’s systemic racism — people are literally dying,” noted Jonathan. “These are human beings and ought to be respected and given the positive support other people enjoy.”

FSIN, the chiefs, and Quewezance have requested in a letter to leadership that the governments sit down at the table until a solution is reached for providing essential primary care services on-reserve, requesting equal care, equal quality, and equal health-outcomes comparable to mainstream Canadian health care in a measurable, timely, and reasonable way.

Quewezance cited racism, bias, and a lack of understanding of First Nations people within the health regions, sharing the example of his own son who died in November. Diagnosed with swelling of the brain in his second hospital stay after being transferred from Kamsack to

Yorkton, he was then moved to two more urban hospitals where he was treated for liver issues before dying of meningitis.

Another example was given of a 14-year-old girl who has had difficulty entering a treatment program because no beds are available, and is on four medications, three of them heavy opiates.

“It’s time for equality,” said Quewezance. “We want the attention of the federal government, the provincial government, and the health care system. We meet with them regularly, but solutions cost money.”

Jonathan noted the ultimate goal is capacity building to end the crisis, and for the governments and leadership to help shoulder the heavy burden being paid by innocent victims. She also called for urban municipalities, cities, and the medical industries and partners to step up and end the crisis mortality rates.

“The greatest priority ought to be those who are vulnerable.”



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Finding sources of inspiration at Eastertime

Readings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



I’ve been thinking a lot about my parents these days. My dad Bernard died 14 years ago on March 26. This is the first year of not having my mom with us to celebrate her birthday. She would have turned 103 on the 19th. Without their support and inspiration I would never have become

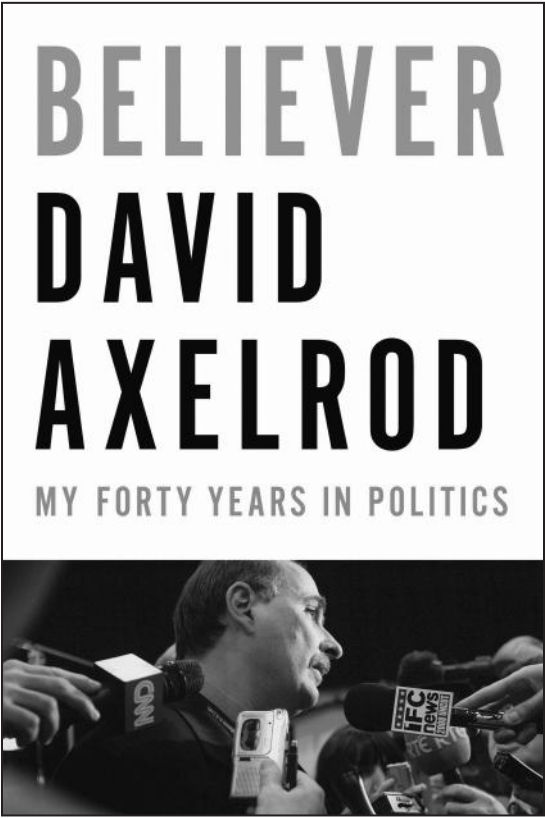
tive critical appreciation of what is possible through the practice of the political and cultural arts. David Axelrod, author of **Believer**, knows what it’s like in both the trenches and at the summit of politics. For several years from 2009 - 2011 he was steps from the oval office as a senior

David Axelrod, *Believer: My Forty Years in Politics*
New York: Penguin Books 2015, 509 pages

A.O. Scott, *Better Living Through Criticism: How to think about art, pleasure, beauty, and truth*
New York: Penguin Press 2016, 277 pages

the person writing these columns. Eastertime brings feelings of loss as well as gratitude and hope. The promise of eternal life in which my parents believed deeply begins with living a good life.

adviser to President Barack Obama. Having observed the worst as well as the best of the American political process, he remains a believer in a positive politics of public purpose.



POLITICS — David Axelrod, author of *Believer*, knows what it’s like in both the trenches and at the summit of politics. For several years from 2009 - 2011 he was steps from the oval office as a senior adviser to President Barack Obama. Having observed the worst as well as the best of the American political process, he remains a believer in a positive politics of public purpose, writes Gerald Schmitz.

That means having motivational and aspirational ideals — cultivating an ethic of conviction that doesn’t rest on contented certainties but exercises one’s critical and creative faculties. It’s fashionable today to be cynical about what politics can achieve and to be equally dismissive of much of contemporary culture. Unless you are a political scientist or film reviewer — I plead guilty on both counts — isn’t it naive to believe in the “political class” or to take seriously a popular art form like the movies? But bear with me as I delve into two new books that make compelling cases for a posi-

Emanuel, the current Chicago mayor who was Obama’s first chief of staff as president. After deciding to start his own political consulting firm, Axelrod became directly involved in campaigns. He became communications director for Paul Simon (the veteran liberal Democrat senator, not the folksinger), who in 1987 would make a quixotic presidential nomination bid under the slogan “Isn’t it time to believe again?” Axelrod was certainly no ingénue. He was fully versed in all the tactics of a fiercely competitive system and thrived on the intensity of its contests from primaries to general elections.

Sometimes fire may have to be met with fire. But the goal was always greater than just gaining power, and required a “politics of conviction, not just calculation.” Axelrod declined to become involved in national politics during the Clinton era of the 1990s, partly for family reasons (his wife was recovering from breast cancer). He first met Obama in 1992 when the latter was a Chicago community organizer. While Obama’s first forays into politics failed, he had ambition and natural talent that became evident when he was elected to the Illinois state senate. When Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry chose him to give the keynote address at the party’s 2004 convention, Obama soared to national attention. Two years later he took the Illinois senate seat at a time when there were no African Americans in the U.S. Senate, and barely a year after that would launch an unlikely presidential bid that would ultimately triumph. Axelrod explains what attracted him to joining this audacious quest: “Barack personified the kind of politician I believed in. He seemed motivated by a fundamental conviction, born of his own experience that, in America, everyone who’s willing to work for it should get a fair chance to succeed. He was principled enough to stand alone when necessary but pragmatic enough to make deals and get things done. . . . Also, at a time when our politics has grown so divisive, he was the rare politician who genuinely could transcend race and class divides with a remarkable ability to appeal to our common values, hopes, and dreams.” In hindsight, given the obdurate hostility of the Republican-controlled Congress and surveying the angry ugly mood of the current polarizing presidential primary season, this “yes we can” promise of “hope and change” may seem delusional if not cruelly ironic. But as Axelrod recalls, in 2007 - 2008, with America beset by unpopular foreign wars and an impending financial crisis, Obama was very much the brash outsider with the populist touch. He was the one demanding that “the ways of Washington must change.” He was the one reaching out “to make America whole.” As he said in a speech in Berlin, “the greatest danger of all is to allow new walls to divide us from one another.” His campaign was an enormous insurgent movement aimed at mobilizing the grassroots, young people and minorities. Then as now, Hillary was the “establishment” candidate. In urging Obama to go for the highest office in the land, Axelrod told him “this is a splendid time to be an outsider.” Recognizing the ego trips that propel many contenders, he also cautioned that, “you may be too normal to run for president.” That will surely never be said of Donald Trump! (A white male New York billionaire can be a novice interloper, but an “outsider”?) Notwithstanding controversial accomplishments like “Obamacare,” often in the face of furious opposition and obstruction, Axelrod is frank about the stum-

bles, disappointments and low points of the Obama presidency. He worries about the racist undertone of some attacks — “a deep-seated resentment of the idea of a black man with the Muslim name in the White House.” He acknowledges that Obama sometimes failed to connect, appearing professorial and aloof. He admits to becoming exhausted by setbacks and negative polls. Yet he describes the man as “a thoroughly admirable person,” vigorously defending his legacy, and holding fast to the belief in a democratic politics driven by higher ideals however much the currency may be debased or corrupted.

* * *

If everyone is a critic in politics, movies, like the rest of popular culture, can spark endless disagreements. So how do we, indeed can we, discriminate between anyone’s and everyone’s likes and dislikes? For a number of years A.O. Scott has occupied the prestigious perch of chief film critic for The New York Times. In **Better Living Through Criticism** he tackles the question of why we need such critics. What makes their views special? In the digital era maybe we should just rely on crowd-sourced aggregators like imdb.com or rottentomatoes.com. Scott sets up his inquiry as a series of sometimes skeptical Socratic dialogues with himself. Socrates is famous for his affirmation that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” In seeking a justification for artistic criticism Scott argues that, while all criticism necessarily involves a subjective personal element, the criticism that is needed involves a process of deeper thinking about artistic creation, of deeper understanding of our own aesthetic experience and that of others. Yes a lot of movies are products of commercial show business. But that does not make them either beneath or beyond criticism. Moreover, the cinema as a collaborative art form can only benefit from critical discernment, from thoughtful interpretation and explorations of meaning. Following the philosopher Kant in valuing

judgment beyond what is merely pleasing, Scott writes that: “In its highest incarnation, the aesthetic is ennobling in a way that makes it hard to distinguish from moral virtue or spiritual grace. . . .” At the same time, Scott acknowledges that critics often have little influence on popular tastes. Critically acclaimed movies may fail to draw an audience while big productions getting thumbs down score at the box office. The re-



A.O. Scott is chief film critic for the New York Times and author of *Better Living Through Criticism*.

viewer’s critical freedom “exists in a world dominated by advertising and marketing, by the imperative to buy and sell rather than to stop and think.” Remaining true to the art of criticism means avoiding temptations to go with the crowd or make a point of standing against it — to become a fan or a contrarian disdainful of whatever is popular. It’s not about being “right” or “wrong.” It’s about offering an honest appreciation that makes a contribution to a better understanding of life through art. These are challenging times for critics, especially in the diminishing world of the traditional print media up against the flood of digital content. But I share Scott’s hope that there will always be a place for critical viewing, writing and reading.

Love of neighbour depends on love of God

Continued from page 6

“Jesus brought two commandments together, love of God and love of neighbour,” he said. “There is no love of God without love of neighbour.” But the radical love of neighbour that Jesus demands is not possible without the radical love of God, Wiesner added. “We are ambassadors of reconciliation, ambassadors of mercy,” said Wiesner. “We are loved by God so that we can reach out and love one another.” He pointed out that the Lord’s Prayer is a series of petitions, with only one petition having a condition attached: “Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors . . . our call to be merciful to others.”

St. Augustine says “that the highest form of almsgiving is to pardon those who have wronged us: this is the gift of the perfect children of God.” Jesus says to us “be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is merciful,” concluded Wiesner, pointing again to the Parable of the Merciful Father, who is always there waiting, always there to welcome us with open arms. “This causes us to make great effort. At the same time we keep in mind the words of Pope Francis, when he says that God’s mercy is infinite. God will never tire of being merciful to everyone, if only we do not tire of asking for mercy.” The Lenten series for the Year of Mercy also included talks by Bishop Donald Bolen Feb. 21 and by Leah Perrault March 6.

Photographer exposes horrors of human trafficking

By Sam Lucero

DE PERE, Wis. (CNS) — Lisa Kristine was 11 when her aunt and uncle gave her an Olympus 35 mm camera. From a converted darkroom in her home in California, she developed black-and-white film and printed images of family and friends.

“They weren’t the typical ‘everybody say cheese’ images,” said Kristine. Even then, her photos had depth and emotion. “They were definitely more about solitude and looking for the infinity in somebody.”

It is this creative, photographic eye and a deep fascination with people that has taken Kristine around the world photographing Indigenous people in remote locations. It is also those two traits that have launched a new mission in her work: humanitarian photographer who captures images of modern slavery.

Kristine’s work to expose global human trafficking led to her invitation at a ceremony Dec. 2, 2014, at the Vatican. Held on the UN Day for the Abolition of Slavery, Kristine witnessed 12 religious leaders, including Pope Francis, sign a pledge to help end modern slavery in the world by 2020.

On March 1, Kristine was guest lecturer at St. Norbert College in De Pere. Her address, The Faces of Modern-Day Slavery, was part of the Norman and Louis Miller Lecture in Public Understanding series. A free photography exhibition, Enslaved: A Visual Story of Modern-Day Slavery also was unveiled at the Baer Gallery, located at the college’s Bush Art Center.

In an interview with The Compass, newspaper of the Diocese of Green Bay, Kristine said her fascination with different cultures launched a career in humanitarian photography. She has travelled to more than 100

Lucero is the news and information manager at The Compass, newspaper of the Diocese of Green Bay.



CNS/Sam Lucero

HUMAN TRAFFICKING DOCUMENTED — Photographer Lisa Kristine gives a presentation at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wis., March 1, about her work photographing human trafficking around the world.

countries in six continents capturing images of people from indigenous cultures.

“Initially it was to go out and learn from these people, who I felt had such a rich history, to see what it was that brought them meaning,” she said. “That’s always been a huge curiosity to me.”

Through her work, Kristine was invited to exhibit photographs at the Vancouver Peace Summit in 2009. “It was there that I learned about human slavery,” she said.

“I knew . . . there was some trafficking, but then when I learned there are 30-plus million people, I was so taken aback,” said Kristine. She began a relationship with Free the Slaves, a non-governmental organization based in Washington. It led her to places such as India, Ghana and Nepal where she has photographed children, women and families who are modern-day slaves working as fishermen, gold miners, quarry labourers and prostitutes.

“That entire body of work is specifically intended to raise awareness about (human slavery), to raise funding and to help groups eradicate it,” said Kristine. “People often ask me, ‘How can I help? I really want to go out there and volunteer in the field.’ But it’s really not a simple thing to liberate people. I’m in it constantly and I don’t have the where-with-all to do it. There are experts who know how to do it and I’m just about really supporting them to do their work.”

During her presentation to some 500 people at the Walter Theatre, Kristine shared many of her images, projected onto a large

screen, of people living as slaves.

“Every day I think of these people,” she told the audience. “People who I’ve had the tremendous honour of meeting. I want to shine a light on slavery and I want all of you to find it in yourselves to make a difference.”

She also stated that human slavery is not limited to developing countries. One of her projects was photographing young women caught in sex trafficking in Washington. Working with Courtney’s House, an agency that searches and rescues children caught in domestic sex trafficking, she learned that young girls under 18 “have endured such

grave tragedies of being raped over and over again.”

Kristine told The Compass that she has not worked directly with religious communities in the fight against human slavery, but she encouraged them, especially local women religious in the Green Bay diocese, to continue their awareness campaign.

“The fascinating and frightening thing to me about slavery is that, all of this time, it’s been existing right in front of us without us knowing,” she said. “It’s sort of hidden in plain sight because the idea is that it doesn’t exist. . . . There are signs and I think that the more we become aware of them, the greater the propensity we have to change the situation.”

Kristine said being part of the Vatican gathering in 2014 was an honour.

“If you could imagine, when I started this in 2009, not only was I not significantly aware, but nobody was aware. Organizations couldn’t get funding because people didn’t believe it existed,” she said. “To see now, faith leaders (seeking to eradicate human slavery by 2020), it’s unbelievable.”

The “coolest thing” about the Vatican meeting, she added, was seeing people from all different faiths “that sometimes have conflict but were together in total unison and motivation to end slavery.”

“I just sat there the whole time and wept,” she added. “It was just so moving.”



Kristine said she had been invited to a followup meeting at the Vatican March 18.

To view images from Kristine’s collection on human trafficking, or to listen to her TED Talk presentation on human slavery, visit www.lisa-kristine.com

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Jewish-Catholic relations: then and now

By Rev. Damian MacPherson, SA

Anyone who knows anything about Catholics and Jews will be aware that both groups have shared a bad historical relationship. Leading up to the 1965 publication of the Vatican II Decree *Nostra Aetate*, history verifies that the Roman Catholic Church was for centuries anti-Semitic in its dealings with the Jews. Evidence of such is plentiful, even overwhelming. Nothing could be more convincing of the anti-Semitic attitude of the church than the language contained in the Good Friday prayers, which the church had been praying in the Tridentine liturgy dating back to 1570. In 1960 that text sounded like this:

Let us pray also for the faithless Jews that almighty God may remove the veil from their hearts, so that they too may acknowledge Jesus Christ our Lord. Almighty and eternal God, who does not exclude from thy mercy even Jewish faithlessness, hear our prayers, which we offer for the blindness of that people; that acknowledging the light of thy truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness, (etc.).

Since 1970 that prayer sounds like this:

Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God, that they may continue to grow in the love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant. Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and his posterity. Listen to your church as we pray that the people you first made your own may arrive at the fullness of redemption, (etc.).

With the decree *Nostra Aetate* (1965) and the subsequent documents that followed, clear and decisive stepping-stones were set in place on the part of the Catholic Church leading to renewed and substantially improved relationship between Jews and Catholics. These documents include the 1974 publication Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*. Also there is the text Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible published by the Pontifical Commission in May 2001.

As alluded to, for the most part Jews have long felt that the mission of the Roman Catholic Church was to convert them. It is not difficult to understand why such a belief would be of such great sensitivity to them since its logical conclusion would bring extinction to the Jews. Suspicion was one of the major stumbling blocks that had to be overcome in order to establish Catholic-Jewish dialogue, which flourishes today. Despite the good work being carried on, a rabbi, one of great distinction, recently reminded me that Jewish suspicion continues to linger in the minds

of some Jews on this question of conversion. More precisely, he stated: *Let me reveal a secret: to this day some people remain suspicious. Let me reveal another secret: sometimes they are right.*

In December 2015 the church published one of its most important documents relating to its understanding of the Jews. The document is titled The Gifts and the Calling of God are Irrevocable (Romans 11:29): A reflection on theological questions pertaining to Catholic-Jewish relations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* (No. 4). When we compare the long-term thinking of the Roman Catholic Church and the Jews, this document introduces a seismic shift in the thinking of the church. Of the seven chapters contained in the revered document, chapters 5 and 6 best serve our purpose here.

It is hoped that as a result of this most recent document, any and all mistrust can finally be laid to rest. This is possible because in this recent document one hears the Catholic Church say for the first time in its history that *the Catholic Church neither conducts nor supports any specific institutional mission work directed toward Jews* (par. 40). Compared to the state of affairs in times past, this truly introduces a seismic shift in the thinking of the Catholic Church.

The seed for such thinking is born of Paul's testimony in Romans 11:29 affirming that the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Such an affirmation



VATICAN II — Pope St. John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council, which began in 1962, but he did not live to see its completion. "With the decree *Nostra Aetate* (1965) and the subsequent documents that followed, clear and decisive stepping-stones were set in place on the part of the Catholic Church leading to renewed and substantially improved relationship between Jews and Catholics," writes Rev. Damian MacPherson, SA.

on the part of the church firmly retains that the church must witness to Christ as the redeemer to all, while stating that it does not in any way follow that Jews are excluded from God's salvation because they do not believe in Jesus Christ as the messiah of Israel and the Son of God. Confronted with what would appear to be two irreconcilable

propositions, the document concludes that unquestionably the Jews are participants in God's salvation, but precisely how that can be possible without confessing Christ explicitly, is and remains an unfathomable mystery (Par. 36). For the vast majority, such an admission on the part of the church is nothing less than breathtaking. It is hoped that this

teaching on the part of the church will help to overcome present anti-gentile sentiments, which without doubt were part of our shared history and regrettably remain part of today's climate between Jews and Christians at large.

It needs to be noted that preaching, teaching and catechesis within the Catholic Church is now challenged to pass on, without compromise, what this added dimension to the practice of our faith entails. Indeed, the pulpit and the pew must become more and more communicative of what is now the latest state of affairs between Christians and Jews. I would dare say, a similar challenge must be undertaken within seminaries to critically examine the good news concerning the evolving state of affairs between Jews and Catholics. In paragraph 46 of this latest ground-breaking document, clear reference is made of this state of affairs. Accordingly, the document notes: *Therefore, it is important that Catholic educational institutions, particularly in the training of priests, integrate into their curricula both Nostra Aetate and the subsequent documents of the Holy See regarding the implementation of the Conciliar declaration.*

Today we are bearing the fruits of Christian Jewish dialogue. We should not naively think, however, that the dialogue is now complete. With the good news coming from this most recent document, we could certainly say we have common grounds for a new beginning.

Global slavery carries on in the 21st century



Making A Difference

Tony Magliano

Slavery ended in the 19th century, right? Wrong.

It's an easy enough mistake to make. After all, the end of America's civil war and the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution — both in 1865 — brought an end to slavery in the U.S. And the British Slavery Abolition Act in 1834 ended slavery in the West Indies, Mauritius, and South Africa.

But many countries didn't outlaw slavery until the 20th century. In fact, it wasn't until 1981 that Mauritania finally abolished slavery — becoming the last country on earth to end this dehumanizing practice.

Tragically, slavery did not

Magliano is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings about Catholic social teaching. He can be reached at tmag@zoominternet.net.

completely end in 1981. It continues to this very day under a new name: human trafficking.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Throughout the world, and in many of our own communities, there are victims of human trafficking, trapped in domestic servitude, agriculture work, fishing, manufacturing, hotel services, construction, hair and nail salons and prostitution.

And of all the sad forms of human trafficking, the worst of the worst are those that enslave children.

According to the International Labour Organization, the worst forms of child labour/trafficking that must be eliminated without

delay include: the sale of children, debt bondage and serfdom, forced labour, forced recruitment for armed conflict, child pornography, child prostitution, and the drug trade.

To help end slave labour in the fishing industry, the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking has developed two lenten postcards addressed to StarKist and Costco, asking these companies to ensure that their supply chains are free from all forms of forced and abusive labour practices.

To download the two postcards for yourself and to obtain printed versions of the postcards for your congregation go to <http://bit.ly/1Efqp7d>. The postcards will still have a positive effect even if sent after Lent.

The modern slavery of human trafficking is not only occurring in far-off corners of the world, it is happening in our cities, towns and often in our own neighbourhoods.

In her well-researched comprehensive book, *How You Can Fight Human Trafficking*, Susan Patterson expertly helps the reader to understand the full scope of trafficking — from how to spot it, to the pornography connection, to fair trade, to what anyone can do to help end modern-day slavery. I strongly rec-

ommend getting this book.

Another excellent resource is the Polaris Project (<http://polarisproject.org>).

To report suspected human trafficking activities in Canada use Crime Stoppers National Tipline at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477). Or call your local police department.

To help someone in the U.S. who may be the victim of modern-day slavery call, or urge them to call, the National Human Trafficking Resource Centre (1-888-373-7888). This hotline has multi-language capabilities.

For help outside Canada and the U.S. go to the Global Modern Slavery Directory website (<http://www.globalmodernslavery.org/>).

The dedication page of Patterson's book has a photo of a product barcode embedded on the back shoulder of a trafficked young woman — tragically indicating that she is for sale.

We have a lot of tools here to help us end the scourge of modern-day slavery. Let's get involved. Let's refuse to be indifferent to human trafficking.

For as Pope Francis said, "It is not possible to remain indifferent before the knowledge that human beings are bought and sold like goods."

Damian MacPherson, SA, is director for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto.



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Reconciliation is about indigenous liberation

Journey to Justice

Joe Gunn



Canadian society, and Canada’s historical Christian churches in particular, have been rocked by the legacy of Indian residential schools. While much of the hard work of reconciliation is left to be done, a deadline for Catholic action is looming this month.

Released last June, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Call to Action #48 asked faith groups “to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms and standards of the UN’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a framework for reconciliation.” Beyond this, churches were challenged to issue a statement no later than March 31, 2016, “as to how they will implement the UNDRIP.” As well, religious denominations were also challenged (along with the federal government) to “repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over indigenous lands and peoples, such as the

Gunn is the Ottawa-based executive director of Citizens for Public Justice, www.cpj.ca, a member-driven, faith-based public policy organization in Ottawa focused on ecological justice, refugee rights and poverty elimination.

Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.”

To respond, the Canadian bishops called some religious orders to join them in a March 14 meeting in an Ottawa hotel, where two statements, one on the church’s support for the UNDRIP, and the other dealing with the Doctrine of Discovery, were agreed upon. The issues are thorny, especially should the church appear more defensive of the past than willing to change in the present.

The current president of the bishops’ conference, Hamilton’s Doug Crosby, has experienced these dilemmas personally, as leader of the Canadian Oblates when they apologized for their role in residential schools in 1991. Also, in Rome in 2009, Archbishop James Weisgerber and Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine heard Benedict XVI express his “sorrow at the anguish caused by the deplorable conduct of some members of the church.” And in July 2015 in Bolivia, Pope Francis referred to the largest known genocide in human history, where 60 million indigenous people perished in the Americas after their “discovery.” Francis admitted, “with regret; many grave sins were created against the native peoples of America in the name

of God . . . I humbly ask forgiveness, not only for the offences of the church herself, but also for crimes committed against the native peoples during the so-called conquest of America.”

The Doctrine of Discovery emanated from three papal bulls in the 15th century. It permitted Christians to confiscate all land and possessions of the inhabitants of “barbarous nations” they discovered. The doctrine became a legal concept in the U.S. by the 1820s.

Since 2013, over a dozen congregations of Catholic religious, organized by the Loretto Sisters, have been calling for the doctrine to be revoked by the Holy See. For its part, a Vatican representative to the UN stated in 2010 that it had already been “abrogated” and was “without any legal or doctrinal value.” It seems the TRC commissioners didn’t get the memo.

Several other churches have moved to clearly renounce the Doctrine of Discovery — the Anglican, United, Presbyterian, Evangelical Lutheran churches of Canada, and the Christian Reformed Church of North America, for example. If there is a broad difference between the Roman Catholic statement this month, and those previous statements and work of other churches, the press can be expected to pillory the Catholic side.

Reconciliation is hard, ongoing work. Erica Lee, a young indigenous woman from Saskatchewan, has written that, “The real task of reconciliation, however, is not Canada waiting around to be forgiven for colonialism so business can carry on

as usual; it is for Canadians to end the ongoing colonial violence that still suffocates indigenous lives . . . reconciliation is about indigenous liberation.”

Catholic clergy are familiar with the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, which presents three requirements of forgiveness: to regret the harm done, to make amends, and to have the firm intention to not do it again.

The most important commitment our leaders could make this month would be to adopt the TRC’s #59. That calls upon the

church to “develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church’s role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.” Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians reminds us that all believers have been given the “ministry of reconciliation.” Catholics need to get reconciling at the level of where our people are — our parishes.



Design Pics

ISOLATION — “Studies now show that a great risk factor for serious health issues and an early death is social isolation,” writes Archbishop Terrence Prendergast. “Being alone and feeling disconnected from the community, unnoticed and unloved is a greater predictor of an early death than diabetes or heart disease.”

Sacrament of the sick, euthanasia and assisted suicide: a controversy

By Archbishop Terrence Prendergast

There is a controversy brewing over whether it is pastorally appropriate to celebrate the sacrament of the sick with someone who has chosen to ask for assisted suicide or who is going to be euthanized.

For many years the celebration of this sacrament was known as the “the last rites” and it was the final step in the transition from this life to the next. This sacrament has brought comfort, forgiveness of sins, grace and healing — both spiritual and sometimes physical — to terminally ill persons in their last days and hours.

Over time, the way in which we celebrate this sacrament has changed. It is not called the last rites any longer. Today it is celebrated as the sacrament of the sick or holy anointing of the sick. The rite is for those who are gravely ill or struggling under the burden of years and whose health is failing with age and infirmity, or for those who are dying.

The sacrament of the sick has several ways that it can be celebrated and options for prayers

and blessings recognizing the different circumstances of serious illness, old age, prolonged suffering and imminent death.

All forms of the sacrament, though, have certain things in common: the prayers of the rite ask God in various ways for forgiveness of sins, strength to bear the cross of suffering and healing in mind and body. The sacrament assumes that the person being anointed wishes to be restored to health or is preparing for their final journey, entrusting their last moments to God’s love and mercy.

Priests who have been in ministry several years recount stories of anointing people who have recovered from their illness against expectations, who have experienced relief from their suffering and who have been strengthened and encouraged by the sacrament to face their suffering and approaching death with peace. Priests have witnessed healings that science cannot account for by modern medical intervention alone.

Pastoral care for persons who are suffering takes various forms. Often it takes the form of visits to the suffering person to spend time listening to their life story, sharing memories good and troubling, talking about things that she or he wishes to get off their chest,

prayers with and for the suffering person and often for family members who are present. This first line of ministry, a ministry of presence, is not an empty gesture.

Studies now show that a great risk factor for serious health issues and an early death is social isolation. Being alone and feeling disconnected from the community, unnoticed and unloved is a greater predictor of an early death than diabetes or heart disease. Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta remarked: “The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love.”

Being physically present at the bedside for someone is a great blessing to give a suffering family member or friend.

A person contemplating assisted suicide fears physical pain, does not want to be a burden on family or friends, recoils at the thought of being dependent on others for care and dreads the idea of dying alone. All of these are genuine fears, but as a society we have solutions for these anxieties. With palliative care we can manage pain and other symptoms of suffering; and the supportive presence of family and friends

brings genuine comfort and alleviates the fear of being unloved or alone facing our final days and hours of life. The spiritual care of the church and its members, ordained and lay faithful, are important parts of this ministry of accompaniment in life’s final stages.

The celebration of the sacrament of the sick is a Catholic Christian’s affirmation of trust in God’s mercy and healing love. It is a statement of faith on the part of the suffering person that God is the Lord of our life and our death and that he can bring comfort, forgiveness of sins and healing either spiritual or physical (or sometimes both) into our lives.

Requesting to be anointed before asking for assisted suicide is a direct contradiction of both the purpose of the sacrament of the sick and a counterwitness about trust in God’s mercy. The church cannot celebrate a sacrament for the forgiveness of sins when the person asking for this grace is about to do something that is gravely morally wrong.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church unambiguously gives the Catholic teaching on euthanasia and assisted suicide: “intentional euthanasia, whatever its forms or motives, is murder. It is gravely contrary to the dignity of the

human person and to the respect due to the living God, his Creator. Suicide is seriously contrary to justice, hope, and charity. It is forbidden by the fifth commandment” (CCC, nn. 2324-25).

Asking for the sacrament of the sick is making a statement about the value and truth of the church’s teaching and her agency as God’s instrument of mercy here on earth. Asking for the sacrament in advance of rejecting the church’s clear teaching on the value of human life is a counterwitness. Requesting that the pastor be present for this decision to end one’s life is asking for the church to sanction or bless a decision that she stands in firm opposition to as morally wrong.

Priests and lay faithful will accompany the ill, the suffering and the dying on their journey and will prove by their presence and prayers that all human life is valued, loved and has dignity. The church and her ministers, however, cannot in good conscience condone the decision to be euthanized or to ask for assisted suicide by celebrating the sacrament of the sick with those in this situation who request it. It is a difficult position to take but one that is true to our Catholic faith, the tradition of our church and the teaching and witness of Jesus Christ.

Prendergast is the Archbishop of Ottawa.

Can Catholic religious education be critical?

Big Picture, Small Steps

Ryan LeBlanc



“Can I burn this quiz instead of handing it in?”

I have heard many kinds of reactions to schoolwork from students, but this was a new one.

My student was halfway through a quiz in which key words from the Apostles’ Creed needed to be filled in the blanks — basic stuff, really. Many students would not have objected to burning it instead of writing it, and when I returned it to them graded, I would be unsurprised to find it later in the recycling or cremation bins.

But this student wanted to burn completed, ungraded work, before I had a chance to lay eyes on it. Why?

“It feels like I’m writing a contract for something I don’t want to accept.”

I had to take a moment before answering the question, because the insight was profound. Eventually I responded, quite reasonably I thought, that once I saw the evidence of recalling the Creed, whatever happened to the actual paper was fine by me — respecting fire regulations, of course.

But there was much more to say, namely, that the profession of faith on the lips of a Christian is exactly a contract, an agreement to live in a certain mode. Would that every one of my students, every one of my brothers and sisters in faith — no, would that I, myself, remembered the binding commitment I make when I express these beliefs! I also wanted to assure my student that demonstrating knowledge of a religious text is not the same thing as investing one’s faith in it. That is, while faith requires at least some kind of understanding, understanding itself does not require the adherence of faith. I can understand disproved scientific theory, the Communist Manifesto, and the Harry Potter series without believing in their veracity.

This student of mine, this brilliant young person, was doing what I hold to be central to religious education: when faced with the explicit expression of a worldview, the students should each ask themselves, “Do I believe this?” In this example, the definitive “No!” certainly can cause some cognitive dissonance.

Some might ask, if you do not accept it, why do you attend a Catholic school? That is, when the school is founded in a religious understanding of the world, the rejection of that religious understanding would seem to disqualify that person from participation in that learning community.

Some might ask, if this student does not accept it, why require a quiz on it? That is, in a society committed to religious freedom, it appears inappropriate to “force” a student to learn something they disagree with.

Both of these questions, although they come from a valid discomfort with conflict, evade the true meaning of religious education — and pluralistic secularism. Notice also that neither of these questions arise when a student passively completes an admittedly rudimentary task. The

LeBlanc is the author of *Clarifying the Confusion of Purposes: Religious Educational Objectives and the New Taxonomy of Learning*. He can be found at BigPictureSmallSteps.com



Design Pics

THE FREEDOM TO CONSIDER CRITICALLY — One of Ryan LeBlanc’s questioning students “was doing what I hold to be central to religious education: when faced with the explicit expression of a worldview, the students should each ask themselves, ‘Do I believe this?’ In this example, the definitive ‘No!’ certainly can cause some cognitive dissonance.”

rest of the class filled in the blanks, handed it in, and (maybe) considered the grade awarded — no conflict. When religious education in the Catholic tradition does what it ought, there is room for conflict and a preferential option for clear, critical decision-making. The Christ of Scripture cannot be more plain — every person believes or does not believe in the Son of God. On the other hand, I’ve observed that secularism has not made religious questions go away (even if the religious vocabulary to ask those questions has been suppressed), nor the importance of discussing the many different religious answers different people hold.

All of this is to say that a critical understanding of faith is the purpose of religious education, whether or not it is presented from a particular religious perspective.

By “critical” I do not mean the negative obsessions of cynics, finding problems with everything presented to them. Critical in this sense means making reasoned judgments according to some kind of criteria. Many critical questions can be applied in religious education, such as: Is this social teaching of the church good for the people of the world? Does this article of faith conflict with reason? Does this celebration of a sacrament include and empower those who experience it? What impact has the church had on humanity?

But, in the missionary nature of the church which our schools are part of, in Christ’s mandate to make disciples, there is only one critical question that lies at the heart of all education, all questions, all life: Will I follow him?

It is a question that is difficult to approach in a classroom, where

the authority of the teacher can either lift up or interfere with the freedom of the student’s heart. We must say there is no “forcing” of true faith; hearts are not converted through coercion or domination, only wounded. But I believe that a religious educator, no different from any Christian who has deep respect and love for students and a clear understanding of church teaching, can open up the freedom to consider religious matters critically and, if the Gospel is as attractive and affirming as I believe it to be, the student who hears the Spirit’s call to discipleship can respond, not just to questions on a quiz, but to the call to a new way of living.

So where does the necessity for critical freedom leave the classroom religious educator or parish catechist? Find out in my next column.

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Patches of memories and light in March reflections

Around the Kitchen Table

Lloyd Ratzlaff



Here’s how a “Scratch & Win” saga went over the past few days. I purchased a Blackjack for a loonie, and it was a \$2 winner. With the money I bought two more Blackjacks, one a dud, the other a double winner — \$5 and \$2. The \$7 netted me a Quick Pick Plus and an additional five Blackjacks — in all, three duds and three winners @ \$5, \$10, and \$2. The \$17 procured three new winners @ \$2 each, with which I bought another six

Blackjacks — five duds and a \$2 winner, and with this toonie had just enough to buy two final duds. An entire gambling life in three days!

I’ve never understood the fascination (let alone addiction) of gambling, though God knows I contend with my own versions of The Great American Axiom: “If some is good, more is better, and too much is just right.”

On not buying impulsively: At the Bay I saw a \$40 shirt which I thought I wanted, and nearly bought it but finally resisted. I already had a similar shirt at home, and in the store window display saw a method of giving the old one a new look by wearing a black T-shirt under it. I’d have had to earn \$70 before taxes to pay for the new shirt, but luckily avoided the pointless work and instead went home to play with words — which is what writers do, though often enough we get a good working-over from them too.

Beside a country road near the racetrack a pine hedgerow recedes into the distance. Next to it stands a knotted power pole, which once was a tree itself but now is frozen in time to serve our human ends. Ironically, it may last longer as a post than it would have as a tree.

Yet what glories that wood must remember! Sucking sap,

sprouting, branching, bird-nesting, reseeding itself. Now it merely holds up wires, and it will be a long time before it turns green again.

Last night I had a moment of intense nostalgia (or was it love?) listening to Gerry Rafferty’s 1978 City to City album, a wave of blessing washing over the whole past exactly as it was, failures and triumphs together, everything worthwhile and precious.

Yet such treasuring of personal details can turn imperceptibly into a clinging that has no chance of success. Even that overwhelming preciousness passed like an ocean swell and left me here, as ever, where I am.

To include the cosmos within oneself and disperse oneself into the cosmos, these are both the adventure and the riches we seek. If the search never culminates, it has no point; yet found treasure must be spent again, since hoarding it has no point either.

On the other hand, treasures should not be on constant display, shouldn’t turn into common coinage. Aren’t the best ones those that remain sunk in the sea, or buried under a tree trunk on some unknown island?

Who’s that a-writin’? / John the Revelator / Wrote the book of the seven seals.

I love how black gospel music juxtaposes images from all over the Bible without heed for logic or

common sense. John a-writin’ his book somehow calls to mind Adam’s nakedness and shame, which suggests a further stanza (*looky here!*) about the raised-up Christ meetin’ his disciples in Galilee, and the whole song finds its way into a revival tent in a Blues Brothers movie where white renegade musicians start feelin’ the holy ghost fire, and then everybody better watch out for what’ll happen next.

Half of a molar cracked off last night as I was eating a piece of garlic toast. (Garlic toast!) The tooth had first given me trouble 25 years ago, when a Winnipeg dentist already wanted to pull it, and only with reluctance after my pleading agreed to fill it once more.

Four years later I was living in Saskatoon and the molar flared up again. A new dentist immediately refilled it, far more optimistic than the man in Winnipeg had been. Several years later another dentist gave it a root canal, and still the enamel held.

Today my dentist says the old tooth really is shot. But consider this: it’s had a quarter-century of use since being judged useless.

I think for the first time I saw the worm of childhood — the one my daughters saw when they were small and tried to show me. This fat green cigar with uncircum-sized head (and tail!) crawled over the pavement one section at a time, feeling its way toward a dis-

tant curb, spelling esses and jays and dashes as it went. Sometimes a gust of wind rolled it over and it curled tight and waited, then righted itself and crawled on.

I picked up a popsicle stick from the ground and with it raised the creature to eyeball level. It wriggled a bit, but quickly divined that there was nowhere else to go, and sat quite still. I wished it the best of luck, set it down again and watched it resume its struggle toward the curb. The wind rose and rolled it over, it curled and reopened once more, seemed to sniff upwind, then turned and eventually made it to the curb.

But where it will be at nightfall, who can say?

I award honorary doctorates as I see fit. This one is given posthumously to a friend whose prescription for every ailment was: “Take two placebos and get lots of rest.”

Rest easy, Dr. Jim Weseen.

A busker on Broadway Avenue was playing leisurely sax solos beside the statue at the Bulk Cheese Warehouse. Suddenly he stopped, faced south, and looked up at the sun. He kept his head tilted back for so long that I began wondering what had frozen him into another statue beside the first one.

Then he sneezed. And leaned back against the sunny side of the sculpture and blew more notes to the passing traffic, notes as warm as the March sun on Broadway’s face.

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MARCH LIFE — March teases us with warm sunshine and then plagues of blinding snow. With each blast of wind our longing for spring intensifies.



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CCCB Easter message

Last week’s issue of the Prairie Messenger was our Easter issue, containing many Easter stories. However, Easter is more than a day; it is a lifestyle. We are happy this week to print the Easter message of Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. The theme of his message is: “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” — PWN

As Syrian refugees begin to settle into their new reality of life in Canada, stories of their journeys to this new land all have similar themes. Feeling under siege and faced with an uncertain future in the midst of war, many people were compelled to flee their land, their homes, their work, their education and all that seemed familiar in order to find new life.

We have been shocked by stories of thousands of families walking miles and miles to the borders of other countries to escape the destruction of war. We have heard of their existence in crowded refugee camps awaiting news about whether they would be accepted into other countries. We have been horrified by the suffering of young children separated from

one or both of their parents because of brutality and even death.

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.” This was the question asked of the women at the tomb that first Easter morning and it is something we must ask ourselves. It is a question that is perplexing because the answer seems obvious. Just as the story of Jesus’ death did not end at the tomb when the women found it empty, so too the story of the Syrian refugees does not end at the borders and in refugee camps. In fact, the story begins anew with the hope of the Resurrection.

The Apostles were skeptical of the news about what the women had discovered at the tomb. We too might question how well the refugee families are doing in their new land. Undoubtedly, they are grieving, having been stripped of the freedom to live in their own homeland and yet we see many signs that they are rebounding and making the best of their new reality.

This Easter many refugee families are celebrating new life in their new homes. They are cared for and guided by the generosity, love and mercy of the many communities that have marshalled their resources to provide food, shelter and warm clothing for the men, women and children who have finally

found a safe place to live, among us. The signs of this new life are evident in the children who are playing in nearby parks and being welcomed by friends in their new schools. They are evident in the lives of the adults as they seek to learn a new language and to find meaningful employment. They are evident in the community suppers and special events that have been organized to welcome and support refugee families.

Easter calls us to look for life among the living with grateful and joyful hearts. Easter calls us to move beyond the tomb and share the good news of the Resurrection with one another. Easter calls us to courageously follow Jesus Christ, the risen one, and to boldly proclaim that out of darkness and suffering come new life.

In feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, and all the other ways by which we protect human dignity and reverence the sacredness of one another’s lives from conception to natural death, we proclaim the death and resurrection of Jesus and participate in his saving redemption. We affirm our profound trust in the Father’s promise of new life. We join in the proclamation of the Good News of the Resurrection, “He is not here, but has risen.”

We need to have end-of-life conversations, following Ottawa report

Building a Culture of Life

Mary Deutscher



What would you do if someone you love told you they were considering suicide? This is a very broad question, but the way we answer it tells us a lot about the value we place on human life.

The Christian response to suicidal thoughts is to try to find out why the request is being made and to help the person find hope and meaning in their life. Until recently, I would have said that this was “the Canadian response” as well, but following the release of the report of our parliament’s Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying, it would seem that Canada has decided to take a considerably different approach.

In one of many far-reaching statements, the parliamentary committee recommends “that individuals not be excluded from eli-

gibility for medical assistance in dying based on the fact that they have a psychiatric condition.” The wording of this recommendation gets right to the heart of how proponents of euthanasia and assisted suicide view these practices.

This recommendation is not talking about suicide as something to be avoided, or about hastening death as a rare, unwelcome, but necessary event that we begrudgingly accept. Rather, the parliamentary committee is upholding suicide as a good and hiding behind the phrase “medical assistance in dying” so it can pretend that euthanasia and assisted suicide are a way to help people.

In reality these practices are only a way to abandon people when they are most in need of affirmation.

Supporters of euthanasia and

physician-assisted suicide are typically keen to point out that there is a difference between impulsively choosing suicide in a moment of despair and rationally choosing it after considering your options. However, even if we assume there is a difference between irrational suicide and rational suicide in theory, are we really able to distinguish between the two in practice?

It may be helpful to consider an example. Imagine a teenager, your son or daughter perhaps, has

come to you to say they have been thinking about suicide. How would you respond?

I’m sure that most of us would be shocked, appalled even, but I would hope that we would reign in our emotions and bring our focus back to the person in front of us. Anyone who has received suicide prevention training would know that now is the time to fully acknowledge what the person has said. We don’t want to minimize their experience by telling them

they are wrong or pretending they didn’t say anything noteworthy. We would likely want to dig a little deeper, to hear why these feelings are surfacing, and to try to find ways to bring meaning back to this young person’s life.

I do not believe there would ever come a moment where we would decide that they really had thought the situation through, and that we should give into their re-

— DESPAIR, page 23

Some businesses also have ‘evil’ effects

Soul Mending

Yvonne A. Zarowny



“What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?”

Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:37; Luke 9:25

Have you noticed an increase in the use of the term “evil”? I have.

Of course, the atrocities committed by ISIS and posted on YouTube are labelled “evil.”

What got me thinking about our selective use of this word was when I heard the term “evil enterprises” used in the dominant media to label ISIS business dealings.

If their business dealings are “evil” because the income generated supports murderous regimes spewing hatred and intolerance while generating wars and refugees, what about some of “ours”?

Granted, ours are not cutting off people’s heads and posting it on YouTube.

Actually their behaviour is quite the opposite . . . the YouTube part.

In spewing intolerance, killing, maiming and generating refugees, the practices of some corporations registered and active in

Canada as well as the millionaires/billionaires who benefit from them far surpass that of ISIS — as nasty as ISIS is.

Yet I have never heard them labelled “evil.”

Where they are different to ISIS is they do not post their activities on YouTube. Rather, they do everything in their power to conceal, confuse or misrepresent what they are doing and how that negatively impacts local families and communities while damaging the common good of God’s creation.

This inhibits our exercising the “free will” given to us by our Divine Beloved — with instructions to use it to be “soul-menders” both for ourselves as well as our battered world.

Did you know that if we constructively engage to ensure all God’s creation has life with dignity, we could not only have higher quality, happier, more purposeful lives while delighting and glorifying our Divine Beloved?

Sounds like a win/win to me. So why are we not doing it? And why are we not labelling those who intentionally prevent us from doing it “evil”?

Thanks to anthropological, sociological and psychological research, we know it is not due to our “human nature” as we were told for generations.

Turns out it is because of how we understand our Divine, ourselves, our power and how to effectively use it to contribute to the co-creation of “right relationships” in our worlds.

— TEMPTATIONS, page 23



CNS/Soe Zeya Tun, Reuters

WATER UNSAFE TO DRINK — A girl collects drinking water at the Dala River outside Yangon, Myanmar, March 3. The United Nations reports that, worldwide, 900 children, age five or younger, die each year because of dirty water.

Visits to other churches fruitful

By Randy Fleming, Moose Jaw

My penchant for trying to be an ecumenist 52 weeks of the year instead of the one week devoted annually to promoting Christian unity in PLURAM churches has earned me the moniker of being a “roaming Catholic.”

The many and frequent encounters and sharing which it was/is my privilege to experience with fellow Christians of other spiritual unions or denominations leaves me rooted with a conviction that there resides in many of my fellow believers a genuine yearning to enter into dialog with one another.

Many ask like-minded people who form part of that mystical body of or union with Jesus Christ, why? Simple, I am searching for those who like me share a common quest to regain the word of God, but also the *work* of God.

The need to have what existed in the early Christian church, that is, continuing to share the legacy of Jesus Christ, is vital to the continued growth of Christianity. And the continued success of its development rests heavily on those who elect to follow his invitation to share the word and work of God.

Evangelization’s success or momentum was to a large extent the product of baptized Christians who followed in the steps of Christ and his followers. By spreading the word of God through its own converted via small informal groups or collectives of believers not only allowed people to foster Christ’s message by sharing the word of God, but more importantly to accomplish or do the work of God. Over several millennia of Christianity, the importance and need for the “Spirit of Christ” to emanate from and through the “instrumentality of its faithful,” has not diminished.

Fast forward to the beginning of this millennium, where many Christian churches, are acutely aware of how a lack of oneness or fellowship within their respective faith communities has had a deleterious effect on both individual and collective growth in faith. Instead of a culture of fellowship and intimacy, there has developed a culture of anonymity.

The unexpected but consoling result of celebrating our shared Christian theology, a common inheritance as baptized Christians, is to realize our differences may not be so fundamental as to render the possibility of closer communion or dialogue difficult, if not impossible. It is only by continuing our dialogue at a criti-

cal level, amongst laity, that assures us that we are moving in a positive and productive direction, one that may result in bringing our communities closer to realization of pan-Christian unanimity.

A recent service conducted at a United Church (UCC) in Moose Jaw, demonstrated that not only do some Christian churches share some important dates that are common to each one’s liturgical calendars, but they also observe such dates with similar services of worship. It begs the question: why do more Christians of different denominations who share these common dates of observance not unite to share a common rite or service of worship for their members to assist at, together as one?

Ash Wednesday was being observed to mark the commencement of Lent in this particular UCC faith community. It underscores that there are other Christian faiths apart from Catholic that have as a constituent strand or part of its remembrance of the centrality of community being Jesus himself, notably Christ’s Passion.

This UCC lenten service was my first introduction to Ash Wednesday observance outside of the Roman Catholic tradition. I wanted to discover how another faith might observe the occasion. My other motivation was to share the start of the lenten season with my fellow Christians in UCC.

This Ash Wednesday rite used symbols not unfamiliar to our Catholic lenten tradition — fire, water and ashes, as well as three Scripture readings.

A penitential rite was included in the service with three Prayers

of Confession recited by the worship leader and replied to responsively by the congregation with “Lord have mercy, Holy One deliver us, *Agnus Dei*.”

During the third prayer of confession, each person was invited by the minister to write on a single piece of paper his/her own prayer of confession which could then be placed in the container which was used to burn the ashes.

Music selections drawn from Voices United hymnal appropriate for lenten service was prominently featured at different points in the service. A reflection paid special emphasis on confession as a precursor to forgiveness and renewal highlighting the real significance for observing Ash Wednesday as part of church’s lenten calendar.

The UCC has a similar practice of distributing palm ashes, accompanied by the words “Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return.”

Something that I found to be very meaningful was the sharing of a sung blessing by participants with one another at the conclusion. I think that it reinforced the fact that regardless of our faith, the baptismal vow we make sanctifies us to minister to one another. What also resonated was the fact that has incorporated into its emblem the Latin words *ut unum sint*, translated “that all may be one.”

This blessing underlined for me a self-evident truth that is at the heart of the Christian reality, we are bonded in the love of Christ. I came away confident each one in attendance experienced that same grace and consolation on this Ash Wednesday.

All temptations of Jesus were ‘power over’

Continued from page 22

Whoever has the power to shape or influence that understanding has great “power over” us.

This Lent, I attended the Anglican parish down the road from mine for a set of presentations called St. Francis and Pope Francis.

In his introduction, the Anglican pastor reminded us that in the Gospel for the first Sunday of Lent (Luke 4:1-13), all the temptations of Jesus involved “power over” relationships that led to self-enrichment.

He contrasted this with what Pope Francis is calling us to in *Laudato Si’* and by example. That is, to have “power with” relationships for the common good.

I reflected on the contrast . . . and thought of the Koch brothers. Charles and David Koch are the fifth and sixth richest people in the world.

I have mentioned them in previous columns with respect to their ownership of Alberta’s tar

sands and our previous ruling party gutting our environmental protection legislation.

I also mentioned them with respect to their manipulation of our understanding of “pro-life” as being only about “anti-choice” legislation, then using that to drive wedges between groups who would otherwise work together to enable real cultures of life where all have dignity.

In Dark Money (2016) American investigative journalist Jane Meyer once again shines light on the Koch networks.

In a well-documented exposé, she outlines how these two men and friends socially engineered a transformation of not only our understanding of God, ourselves, our power and how to effectively use it — but of our global social structures.

It is from these social structures that accelerating inequality and environmental devastation flow, with climate chaos but one symptom already killing millions



Anne Wicks

Dawn’s Light

The stone itself refused
To hold the Word of Life.
Our hope unsealed,
The end,
Become Beginning.

By Hal Studholme

Feelings of despair need response of compassion

Continued from page 22

quests for help in killing themselves.

Now let’s extend this example. How would you respond if instead of being a teenager, the person coming to you for guidance were middle aged? What if they had a disability? What if they have received a cancer diagnosis? What if they had lived their whole life under the burden of a mental illness?

Our Christian faith tells us that each of these people is equally

valuable and that they each deserve the same response from us. They each deserve our empathy and our support as they struggle to overcome their feelings of despair.

A number of psychiatrists told the parliamentary committee that psychiatric illnesses are often very complicated; they discouraged allowing physician-assisted dying for people who could easily be coerced into choosing to end their lives. Unlike the parliamentary committee, these psychiatrists seemed to be aware that it is impossible to judge when “the moment is right” for suicide.

How can we decide when to stop trying to help someone? What is the magical moment when we can say that it is OK to give in to despair? Is there ever a good time to say, “Yes, I understand; I wouldn’t want to live if I were you either”? Perhaps most importantly, if suicide is a right, why would we try to talk people out of exercising their right?

Canada is setting down a dangerous path, and the most frustrating part is that we don’t even have the intellectual honesty to try to answer these questions. Instead, we are throwing the burden onto our health care providers, demanding that they sort out the mess that we cannot figure out ourselves.

There is, however, comfort in knowing that our Christian mission has remained unchanged: we must continue to strive to find meaning in suffering and to bring hope to persons who are burdened by despair. We must continue to shine as a light in the darkness, and to remind people that suicide is a problem, not a solution.



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<pm.editor@stpeterspress.ca>
Associate editors: Maureen Weber <pm.canadian@stpeterspress.ca>,
Don Ward <pm.local@stpeterspress.ca>
Layout artist: Lucille Stewart
Advertising: Gail Kleefeld 306-682-1772 <pm.ads@stpeterspress.ca>
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U.S. gives \$500 million to Green Climate Fund

By Dennis Sadowski

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Faith-based organizations welcomed the recent announcement that the United States made its first \$500-million contribution under a four-year, \$3-billion pledge to support the Green Climate Fund that is helping developing countries respond to climate change.

“It’s important that the U.S. really come through with their commitment to the Green Climate Fund and demonstrate leadership on climate change. It’s also important for the realities of climate change for the most vulnerable around the world,” said Chloe Schwabe, director of the faith-economy-ecology program for

the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

“We already see the impacts of climate change whether it’s through loss of shorelines or floods or drought. In Philippines, Bangladesh, El Salvador and Tanzania and in all the countries where we serve, our missionaries are already witnessing the impacts of climate change,” Schwabe told Catholic News Service March 14.

Eric Garduno, senior policy and legislative specialist for Catholic Relief Services, said the agency was pleased that the first U.S. contribution was made. CRS is the U.S. bishops’ overseas relief and development agency.

“We thought it was pretty important actually with the Paris cli-

mate talks concluding in December,” Garduno said. “These funds for the Green Climate Fund were a key component of the overall agreement.”

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change established the fund in 2010. It particularly funds countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, especially least developed nations, small island developing states and African nations.

The fund gained wide support during the climate meeting in December in Paris. While the most advanced countries have committed to provide \$100 billion annually for mitigation and adaptation programs within a decade, countries thus far have contributed a bit more than \$10 billion to the fund.

of work for some time now and we see the need for additional investments for this type of work,” he added.

CRS, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities USA called upon members of Congress to support U.S. funding of the Green Climate Fund in an Oct. 28 letter. Citing the words of Pope Francis and St. John Paul II, the influential Catholic organizations said the U.S. has a moral commitment to support the fund and further work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which scientists have identified as the primary cause of climate change.

Republican members of Congress immediately questioned the \$500-million allocation, saying that it had not been specifically approved. In earlier budget proposals, members of the House of Representatives had included language to prohibit the U.S. from contributing to the UN-sponsored fund.

However, at the White House’s insistence, language prohibiting the expenditure was stripped from the bill in December as congressional leaders and the administration finalized a budget deal for fiscal year 2016 to prevent a contentious government shutdown.



CNS/Francisca Meza, EPA

ACAPULCO BISHOP APPEALS TO CRIMINAL GANGS — Authorities recover dead bodies found at a mass grave in Acapulco, Mexico, in this Sept. 17, 2015, file photo. The archbishop of Acapulco called on organized crime to cease violence during Holy Week, when thousands of Mexicans descend on the seaside city for the Easter holidays.

No place is safe for Syria’s children

By Dale Gavlak

AMMAN, Jordan (CNS) — As peace talks get underway in Geneva trying to end the five-year-old war in Syria, the UN children’s agency warned that more than 80 per cent of Syria’s children have been harmed by the destructive conflict.

“No place today is safe for Syria’s children,” Peter Salama, UNICEF’s Mideast director, told reporters in the Jordanian capital at the launch of the organization’s latest report on the Syrian crisis.

“A new and disturbing pattern of violations against children’s rights has emerged in the conflict,” Salama said, as youngsters have been killed and maimed, boys under age 15 have been forced into active combat, while still others have been exposed to siege and starvation.

Nearly seven million children in Syria live in poverty and are potential targets for recruitment by armed groups, Salama warned. UNICEF has called for the unconditional and sustained access to children in Syria,

including two million in besieged areas.

“This generation is at grave risk. Almost three million of these children are out of school,” Salama said. “If we don’t have them educated, we won’t have the next generation of people to rebuild Syria.”

A 12-year-old Syrian named Saja told UNICEF that she is trying to educate herself by reading, but she does not always understand everything in her books. She lost one of her legs in a bombing that killed several of her friends.

“It’s a struggle, but what can I do,” she said. Despite her handicap, Saja hopes to train as a gymnastics coach and plays soccer using crutches.

Meanwhile, Catholic Relief Services reports that it has supported more than one million people affected by the Syrian conflict, mainly sheltering in neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon.

“The scale of the suffering is devastating,” said Kevin Hartigan, CRS regional director for Europe and the Middle East,

who has overseen the response. “But as Pope Francis reminds us, there are human faces behind the staggering statistics. Each of the millions of displaced Syrians is an individual uprooted from a full life, a family member, a loved one.”

CRS, the U.S. bishops’ international relief and development agency and a member of the international Caritas aid federation, has made education a priority for Syrian refugee children who have fled the conflict.

CRS and Caritas have set up education facilities for refugee children and have introduced a certification process that will allow them to return to their education system in Syria when the war is over. These Catholic aid agencies also have provided psycho-social support and trauma healing to children exposed to the horrors of seeing loved ones killed and their homes destroyed. In addition to this support, food, clothing and medical care have been supplied to refugee children and their families.

The Catholic agencies and the UN have called for an end to attacks on civilian infrastructure in Syria so that schools, hospitals and water supplies are kept safe. They also urge the immediate lifting of all sieges by all parties to the conflict.

Humble service, now ‘that’s amore,’ pope says

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Serving others, helping them without making a show of it, “that’s amore,” Pope Francis said.

“Amore,” or love, “is the concrete service we render to one another,” the pope said March 12 during a special general audience for the Year of Mercy.

“Love isn’t words, but works and service, a humble service performed in silence” without seeking acclaim, the pope told tens of thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

The audience began with the reading of St. John’s account of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet, which Pope Francis said was “an unexpected and moving gesture, so much so that Peter did not want to accept it.”

Jesus told the disciples that if he, their lord, washed their feet, they must do the same for others. “In this way Jesus indicates service as the path to follow if they want to live their faith in him and

give witness to his love,” the pope said.

“Washing the apostles’ feet,” he said, “Jesus wanted to reveal the way God acts toward us and give an example of his new commandment of loving one another as he loved us, that is, by giving his life for us.”

Loving service also involves placing the gifts God has given one at the service of the community so it can grow, he said, but it also is expressed “in the sharing of material goods so that no one is in need.”

Members of other religions, he said, also see “this sharing and dedication to those in need” as a command of God and a path of true humanity.

“When you forget yourself and think of others, that’s love,” Pope Francis said. “And with the washing of feet, the Lord teaches us to be servants.”

To be “merciful like the Father,” which is the theme of the Year of Mercy, means “to follow Jesus on the path of service,” the pope said.



CNS/Debbie Hill

MOUNT OLIVES ON PALM SUNDAY — Christians wave palm and olive branches during the annual Palm Sunday procession on the Mount of Olives overlooking the Old City of Jerusalem March 20.

Whoever gives thanks for all circumstances receives new eyes and discovers things never seen before.

— Otto Betz