



Life skills

The grounds of St. Peter's Abbey and the facilities of St. Peter's College were ideal settings for members of James Smith Cree Nation who attended sessions of Life Skills and Leadership from the Heart May 16 - 20. — page 3

Transformational change

The Saskatchewan budget was not as tough as some expected, but Finance Minister Kevin Doherty gave strong hints in his budget speech that "transformational change" is coming in the fiscal year 2016 - 17. — page 7

Bishop's Dinner

Originally created as a fundraiser for the new cathedral, the Bishop's Dinner in more recent years has supported a range of



diocesan ministries in Saskatoon. — page 7

American democracy

To say the least, these are testing times for democracy in our great neighbour to the south, writes Gerald Schmitz. The documentaries reviewed this week present two visions of the current malaise and what can be done about it. — page 9

Ordinary goodness

We need to learn that both angels and great hamburgers play a role in our spiritual journey, writes Ron Rolheiser, OMI. — page 10



Too many drugs

Working aggressively to reduce their daily medication burden may be the single best thing we can do to improve the quality of life of our aging parents and grandparents, writes Alan Cassels. — page 14

Pope may remove 'negligent' bishops

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis will set up a panel of legal experts to help him in deciding whether to remove a religious superior or bishop from office for failing to protect minors and vulnerable adults from sex abuse.

Vatican offices will continue to investigate claims of negligence on the part of bishops, ordinaries or religious superiors under their jurisdiction. But the pope — who makes the final decision about a bishop's removal from office — will now be assisted by a papally appointed "college of jurists," according to procedures that take effect Sept. 5.

In an apostolic letter given *motu proprio* (on his own initiative), dated June 4, the pope reaffirmed that bishops of a diocese or eparchy and those responsible for other kinds of particular churches can be "legitimately removed" for negligence.

In order for it to be grounds for removal, such negligence —

either through omission or commission — will have had to cause "serious harm to others," including individuals or a community,

the letter said, and "the harm can be physical, moral, spiritual" or to property.

The letter clarified that it nor-

mally takes a "very serious" lack of due diligence for a bishop to be

— NEW, page 15

Algonquin women leaders address CPJ

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Two Algonquin women stressed the importance of forging a path of reconciliation with First Nations people in the lead at the annual general meeting of Citizens for Public Justice June 2.

Claudette Commanda, a member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation near Maniwaki, Que., and former University of Ottawa law professor, said she was taught from childhood about her future responsibility to the nation, a responsibility that includes care of the land and the water.

Now executive director of the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres, Commanda reminded people the conference was taking place on

unceded, unsundered, non-treaty lands of the Algonquin people. Part of what she was taught, she said, was to "continue to continue the responsibility of our grandparents, to always ensure the welcome of people into our territories, but also to educate people and to tell our stories."

"I welcome you with open arms," she said.

Her grandfather, Chief William Commanda, served during a time when First Nations people were "not allowed to be seen in public," but were instead "ruled by the iron hand of the Indian Agent and the missionary."

"My grandparents stood strong against that oppression," she said, though at the same time "welcoming people and educating people about our history."



CCN/D. Gyapong

Claudette Commanda

No matter how dark that history is, "we have to learn about our history to make sure that history is never repeated," she said. "Canada is on a path of reconciliation. Only together will reconciliation be a success."

"The time is now to build a better country," she said. "We must do so for our children."

Though First Nations are diverse in culture and language, they are "all connected to the land," she said. "Our laws must be included in the action of reconciliation," in a "nation to nation relationship."

Regardless of race or creed, we all share Mother Earth and we are all human beings, she said. "The Creator made us who we are in each of our cultures, races and differences." Those differences are to be respected and celebrated. "Each of you is found on our medicine wheel," she said. "Our prophecies told us about change that would come to our land."

Those prophecies spoke of hardship, "but also about the strength of our people and of a time even harder than that of our grandparents," she said.

"The time of the Indian Agent and the missionary are over," she said.

Verna McGregor, also of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, who works at the Minnawaashin Lodge — the Aboriginal Women's Support Centre in Ottawa — told how her mother fought to bring back the Algonquin language to their community.

"We need to retain our language because it is connected to the land," her mother would say, McGregor said.

She told how she had gone to Ottawa to go to school and eventu-

Reconciliation flag raised in Saskatoon

By Andréa Ledding

SASKATOON — To mark the end of a Year of Reconciliation declared by Saskatoon City Council, a ceremonial flag-raising was held June 1 in front of City Hall. The event began with a pipe ceremony and continental breakfast before the speakers shared words and the flag was raised.

"Reconciliation means the restoration of friendly relations,"

said Saskatoon Tribal Council chief Felix Thomas in his opening remarks. "And we know that the treaties, the gifts and obligations, were made in peace and friendship. These responsibilities and obligations are on all of us."

The program opened with three anthems: O Canada sung in Dakota by Shae Eagle, the Métis national anthem sung by Krystle Pederson, and the Treaty 6 Honour Song sung by the Wild

Horse Drum Group.

Mayor Don Atchison brought greetings on behalf of the city, reflecting on his own journey toward reconciliation. He recalled the relatively recent installations of Treaty 6 and Métis flags which now fly at City Hall, and how important it is to recognize the legacy of the residential schools.

Senator Ted Quewe-zance brought greetings from the FSIN, reflecting on his own experience in

the residential schools. "From the perspective of a survivor, forgiveness is one of the hardest things to do," said Quewe-zance, adding that it took him about seven years of hard work. "All the terrible things they did to us as little boys and little girls — and sometimes that little boy comes out, but as an individual, and a family, we have to move forward. The most important things in our family and our communities are our culture, our traditions, and our customs."

He spoke about the painful process of colonization, challenging every



CNS/Christian Hartmann, Reuters

FLOODING IN FRANCE — Residents who initially refused to be evacuated sit on makeshift boats June 3 during evacuation operations of the Villeneuve-Trillage flooded suburb in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, outside Paris. The swollen Seine River continues to rise, spilling into Paris streets and forcing one landmark after another to shut down as it surged to its highest levels in nearly 35 years.

TREATY, page 4

— STORIES, page 4

Good moms and dads shape future of humanity

By Beth Griffin

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — The future of humanity depends on parents' commitment to protect and nurture their children, instill values and help children mature as human beings, speakers told a United Nations event to mark the fourth annual Global Day of Parents.

Despite a global retreat from parenthood and marriage, most children are being raised in stable two-parent families that are associated with good emotional, physical, social and economic outcomes, several speakers said during the June 1 event.

"The Importance of Fatherhood and Motherhood for Integral Development" was co-sponsored by the Holy See Mission to the UN and the Universal Peace Federation.

"The importance of moms and dads, and of their joint commitment in raising the next generation, cannot be overstated," said Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Vatican's permanent observer to the UN.

"The future of humanity depends on how well moms and dads do in their mission as teachers in forming their children in values, socialization, trust, mutual



CNS/Gregory A. Shemitz

UN DISCUSSES PARENTHOOD — Brian Caulfield, editor of FathersForGood.org, speaks during a conference at the United Nations June 1 on the importance of motherhood and fatherhood for the integral development of men, women, children and society. Looking on is Thomas Walsh, president of the Universal Peace Federation. The Holy See mission to the UN and the Universal Peace Federation were co-sponsors of the event, which was held in observance of the UN's Global Day of Parents.

respect and responsibility, education, hard work, affection, compassion, forgiveness, solidarity, and ethical development," he said.

Pope Francis, in his exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love) following a two-year-long synod

process focused on families, holds motherhood and father in the highest esteem, and underscores the value of their harmonious co-operation for the good of their children, the archbishop explained. "Their combined service is greater than the sum of their individual work, and their children profit most from their complementary teamwork," he said.

Paraphrasing Pope Francis, Auza said, "Moms and dads as co-educators either instill in their children trust and loving respect

by their affection, example and trustworthiness, or by their failure to provide in this way, leave their children questioning whether their parents are sincerely concerned about them."

Thomas Walsh is president of the Universal Peace Federation, which has adopted as its motto "the family is a school of love." He said the family has underutilized potential for social development on small scales. Parenthood should be woven into a compelling narrative to give voice to social assets, he said.

Furthermore, two-parent families, compared with single parents, "often have more time, money, attention, kinship support and stability to give to their children," said Brad Wilcox, director of the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia. Likewise, family instability creates stress, disrupts social networks and leaves less time for caregiving, he said.

Presentations also focused on motherhood, children not experiencing the advantage of a father in their lives, and the security children gain by seeing a healthy, loving relationship between their parents.

Brian Caulfield, director of the Fathers for Good, an initiative of the Knights of Columbus, said there is little public discussion about the high number of U.S. children being raised without a father. "There's a general feeling that fathers are expendable," promoted by media stereotypes of "the doofus dad," he said. "Having imbibed

the brand, many men have retreated from making their mark."

Pediatrician Meg Meeker said children gain security from the relationship between their parents and strong character development comes from diverse exposure to mother, father and faith.

With children spending as much as eight hours a day on media and in front of video screens, compared to 34 minutes with their parents, Meeker said it is crucial for parents to be engaged and available so they can protect their offspring and set them on a path toward responsibility and maturity.

Deborah McNamara, a clinical counsellor at the Neufeld Institute in Vancouver, said 21st-century parents are digital immigrants who must lead their children into a new age. Longing for attachment is the greatest human hunger, she explained, and children can satisfy it through a strong caring relationship with an adult, rather than virtual connectivity to their peers.

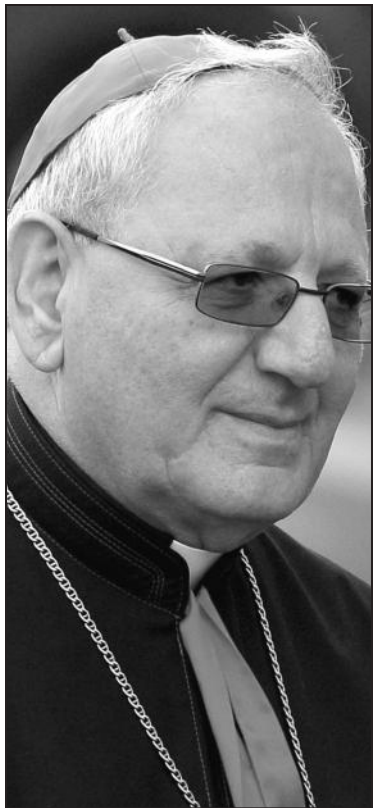
"Relationship is the most important thing the family offers. It protects our children in adversity. We need to protect the relationship at all costs," McNamara said.

"We need to believe we are what our children need. We are our children's best bet. We have to be the buffer to the world outside," she added.

"We cannot send our children into a digital age empty-handed with only their technology in tow. Parents are still the best devices," she said.

Chaldean patriarch leads interfaith prayer for peace

BAGHDAD (CNS) — Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad called for reconciliation and an end to all forms of extremism at an interfaith gathering he hosted in the Iraqi capital to pray for peace in Iraq, Syria and in the wider Middle East.



CNS/Paul Haring

Patriarch Louis Sako

Speaking to Christians, Muslims, Yazidis and Mandaeans as well as ambassadors and members of Iraq's parliament assembled May 30 at the Queen of the Rosary Church, the patriarch said the gathering represented "an opportunity to correct perceptions, relationships and choose the way that leads to peace, reconcili-

ation and building of mutual trust."

"As we are in charge of humanitarian and religious responsibilities amid these tragic conditions, we are all called, in the presence of God, to move quickly to unify efforts of spreading the culture of tolerance, love, peace and friendship and to deepen the values of belonging to this multicultural nation," the prelate told the gathering.

Sako urged people to avoid "all forms of extremism," reminding them that "the heavenly laws of all religions plea to establish justice among people" without oppression and discrimination.

"We have had enough of wars. The Iraqi people are tired of hearing about death, destruction, and displacement on a daily basis, all of which are against the divine will," he said.

The patriarch pointed to the importance of the timing of the event, during "the Jubilee Year of Mercy, proclaimed by Pope Francis, and because Ramadan is around the corner, in which our fellow Muslims fast, pray, repent, and live 'compassion and kindness' toward those who suffer."

The patriarch also noted that celebrating the (eve of) the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary "in these difficult circumstances is an invitation for every one of us to follow her example of faith, openness, love, service, pureness, patience, hope and confidence."

Sako stressed the importance of praying "in the midst of such a critical situation and the suffering of our people in Iraq, Syria and the region," expressing his hope that "miracles can happen" for a true peace.

Top YouTubers share session with pope

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Help wipe out bullying and aggression by being better listeners and offering concrete gestures of tolerance and patience, Pope Francis told a group of top YouTubers from around the world.

"The level of aggressiveness in our world needs to be dialed down. (The world) needs tenderness, meekness, (people) listening and walking together," he told them and others taking part in a world congress sponsored by *Scholas Occurrentes*.

"Pride, arrogance — eradicate them. Because pride and arrogance always have a bad ending," he said May 29 at the close of the three-day meeting at the Vatican.

The pope met privately — for an informal closed-door Q-and-A session — with a dozen young YouTubers, people who create their own videos or vlogs, or video blogs, and share them on YouTube. The YouTube "celebrities" who were invited to meet the pope have, when tallied together, about 25 million subscribers.

The pope also met privately with U.S. film stars, Richard Gere, Salma Hayek and George Clooney, who were honoured at the congress for working to help marginalized young people.

The pope sat in on the closing portion of the world congress, which was dedicated to dialogue and social integration. He heard personal testimonies, including from a young woman who was



CNS/Maria Grazia Picciarella

POPE MEETING CHILDREN — A child points to a drawing held by Pope Francis during the pope's meeting with hundreds of children from southern Italy May 28.

born in Mexico, moved to Chicago and was the victim of bullying for years.

The pope called for an end to "aggression, bullying" when answering one of two questions from the audience.

"Bullying is an aggression that conceals profound cruelty, and the world is cruel" with wars representing "the monuments of cruelty," he said.

Recalling photographs he received from a nun picturing a child massacred in a civil war unfolding in Africa, Pope Francis said bullying is the same kind of cruelty because it "massacres" the mind.

In order to build a better world, "we need to eradicate all

forms of cruelty," he said.

It is important to listen to others and ask questions — not argue right away — but inquire in order to truly understand the other person's point of view and find points in common, he said.

Dialogue isn't a soccer match or a debate because "in dialogue everyone wins, no one loses," he said. "Even if I think differently, don't argue, but rather, persuade softly."

It's also important people feel like they belong, which can even include "a virtual belonging" — being part of something meaningful online, he said. "It's urgent to offer some kind of belonging," he told his audience.

Schadenberg honoured with Exner Award

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Anti-euthanasia activist Alex Schadenberg has been honoured with the Archbishop Adam Exner Award for Catholic Excellence in Public Life by the Catholic Civil Rights League for his ongoing advocacy against euthanasia and assisted suicide.

On June 2, Schadenberg was presented with the Exner Award at the league’s annual spring dinner in Toronto. The award was created in 2004 and named after the league’s founder, known for his public advocacy during his time as archbishop of Vancouver.

Every year it is given to an outstanding Canadian Catholic who

has lived out their faith publicly. Past recipients of the award include Campaign Life Coalition president Jim Hughes (2007), Canadian Food for Children founders Andrew and Joan Simone (2008) and REAL Women of Canada vice-president Gwen Landolt (2014).

League executive director Christian Elia said Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, could have been given this award many years ago. But with Bill C-14 — a bill to legalize assisted suicide in Canada — making its way through Parliament, Elia said it was particularly important to make the statement this year.

“Choosing Alex to win this highly esteemed award for his excellent work this year is very, very

important because we, as serious Catholics, have to send out a message which might even be perceived as countercultural,” said Elia. “That’s the message of our faith.”

Elia said the passing of Bill C-14 is a tremendous loss for Catholics, but assures that the league will continue to be defiant.

“Just because we might have a law in Canada doesn’t mean that as Catholics we should obey it,” said Elia. “If it is intrinsically evil, and it is, we must disobey it in its entirety. Catholic physicians, Catholic hospitals, Catholic health care networks must not take part in any of it.”

Although the battle against Canada’s euthanasia laws has been lost, Schadenberg said there is still a fight to be had.

“There is no way they can control a law that is designed to have no teeth,” said Schadenberg. “It’s the lowest possible protection and so much so that I would say that there is no protection. This bill is a disaster.”

Schadenberg said the cam-

paign against Bill C-14 must be stronger than ever. On June 1, the coalition organized a rally in front of Parliament Hill in Ottawa to express concerns about “the illusion of safeguards and the dangerous language in Bill C-14.” (See related story on this page.)

It is also working with DunnMedia on a new documentary, *Vulnerable: The Euthanasia Deception*, to be released at the end of June. The documentary will feature 14 interviews from doctors and family members who have had direct experience with euthanasia in Belgium.

“The only down side is that it would have been nice if we had done this a couple of years ago, but we had no way to do this a few years ago,” said Schadenberg. “I wish someone would have given us huge money a few years ago, we could’ve done it then and it might have had greater impact.”

Schadenberg said the coalition will continue to build a stronger resistance campaign. This means a more robust website for Com-



WCR/T. Konguavi
Alex Schadenberg

passionate Community Care, which was launched last year as a non-profit organization comprised of health care professionals and advocates providing support services for clients and families in need of support during illness and end-of-life care.

Students and adults learn leadership at St. Peter’s

By Paul Paproski, OSB

MUENSTER, Sask. — The grounds of St. Peter’s Abbey and the facilities of St. Peter’s College were ideal settings May 16 - 20 for members of James Smith Cree Nation who attended sessions of Life Skills and Leadership from the Heart. Participants enjoyed the outdoor scenery, and the college introduced them to university life, said James Anderson, 38, motivational speaker of Minneapolis, Minn.

The Life Skills workshop was attended by 30 high school stu-

can be successful then nothing matters. You must believe you can go to college,” Anderson said in an interview. Students who want to pursue a career must know that they need to reach that goal. A number of students informed Anderson they want to attend university and some expressed the desire to become athletes, artists, lawyers and business owners. Many career choices were discussed. Courses are even offered on creating video games.

“The goal for the students is to know how to find the necessary tools for success. I can’t tell them exactly which tools those are, but I can tell them how to find positive reading material and know how to have a purpose,” Anderson said. A list was provided of books and audio programs to build a positive mindset.

High schools and universities have information on achieving degrees, but not on cultivating the positive thinking needed to persevere, Anderson commented. The Life Skills session promoted the desire to have a passion for life and pursue goals. The students, Anderson said, were attentive to the sessions and expressed how they wanted to be successful.

“Everyone was reminded that life has its ups and downs. When we are up, keep going. There will be a point when we get discouraged. Keep working at it. Life has ups and downs. Life is not a straight line. The heart monitor in a hospital displays lines going up and down when a heart is beating. A straight line is a sign of death.”

The Leadership From the Heart sessions were attended by 11 adults who were given instruction on leadership and positive thinking. Participants reflected on themes and then addressed them through public speaking in front of peers. The peers evaluated the presentations which were based on five outstanding criteria: presence, projection, enthusiasm, conviction and heart.

The evaluations had the purpose of making everyone aware of how our thinking influences perceptions of ourselves and interactions with others. Attitudes are



P. Paproski
James Anderson

dents of James Smith Reserve who experienced university life by attending sessions in college classrooms, staying in student rooms and eating in a college cafeteria, Anderson remarked. The personal setting brought them beyond what they read about in pamphlets or the Internet.

The high school students took part in a seminar called Recipe for Success that emphasized personal development and setting goals. They were encouraged to prepare for university by creating a plan; becoming aware of the right tools for meeting goals; surrounding themselves with teams and taking action. All these are important tools to bring to post-secondary education, which is a means to a brighter future.

“You must believe you can be successful. If you don’t believe you

Hundreds protest against euthanasia

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — On June 1, the day after the Liberal-dominated House of Commons sent assisted suicide Bill C-14 to the Senate, hundreds of people protested against euthanasia on Parliament Hill.

Several senators spoke briefly to the crowd, among them Betty Unger, Norman Doyle, and Tobias Enverga.

Unger told the crowd she never imagined in her four-and-a-half years in the Senate she would be dealing with an issue so “heart wrenching.”

“I am completely opposed to the idea,” she said. A former nurse, she said there can be no euthanasia without a “serious option for assisted living, not assisted dying.”

Senator Tobias Enverga issued a challenge to the far larger crowd on the Parliament Hill lawn for the weekly Yoga on the Hill taking place while the anti-euthanasia demonstration gathered near

the steps to Centre Block.

“You guys love life!” he said to the yoga practitioners, urging them to recognize “all life matters.”

He promised to do his best to make sure the bill doesn’t pass unless it “goes through the tiniest hole in the needle so all life not intended to be killed will not be killed.”

Organized by the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, the Quebec grassroots organization Living with Dignity and the Physicians’ Alliance Against Euthanasia, the rally also featured speakers from the disability rights group Not Dead Yet, the Coalition of Physicians for Social Justice and the Catholic Women’s League.

“Stop Bill C-14 and save lives,” said Dr. Paul Saba of the Coalition of Physicians.

“They do not have to follow the Carter decision,” he said. “Otherwise, get rid of Parliament and replace it with the Supreme Court.”

Physicians’ Alliance president

Dr. Catherine Ferrier said the 766 doctors she represents, who work in palliative care, psychiatry and family medicine, are “worried about our patients.”

“We have always had people who wanted to die,” she said. “We called them suicidal.”

The doctors considered it their “job to help them,” she said. “Most get over and they are glad they are alive.”

“Now they are killing suicidal patients,” she said, noting how recently some Quebec doctors were not reviving people who had attempted suicide.

Ferrier said Canadians are being told Parliament has no other choice, either pass the bill or face a legal void after the Supreme Court’s Carter decision. “Parliament could have recriminalized euthanasia and assisted dying by reinstating the Criminal Code provisions. They chose not to do that,” she said.

“We’re also told Canadians

— HISTORY, page 6



Art Babyeh

ANTI-EUTHANASIA RALLY — Opponents of the assisted suicide Bill C-14 rallied June 1 on Parliament Hill. The government’s assisted suicide legislation, which the nation’s bishops describe as “fundamentally unjust” and an “affront to human dignity,” easily passed third and final reading in the House of Commons May 31 and was sent to the Senate for final approval.

— GOAL, page 5

Ordination of priest with spina bifida is filled with joy

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — None of Rev. Trevor Plug's seminary professors is quite willing to say Plug is the first man to be ordained a priest in a wheelchair, but then none of them could find any precedents either.

Thirty-one-year-old Plug was born in St. Catharines, Ont., with spina bifida, a genetic condition that causes babies to be born with the spinal cord partially uncovered by the sheath of membranes and backbone that normally encloses around it. Plug has lived his whole life in a wheelchair.

"He's canonically, validly ordained," said St. Catharines Bishop Gerard Bergie. "He may not be physically perfect in every way, but he can function in every way to celebrate mass. The only thing is, he's not able bodied."

Canon law has a long list of things that bar a man from priesthood, including "psychic illness," a history of public apostasy, attempted marriage, etc. But there's no mention of physical disability. Bergie, a canon lawyer before he was made a bishop, saw no problem in ordaining Plug. In fact, the bishop believes his diocese has just gained an exceptional priest.

"It's true that he won't be your typical priest in that he will be in a wheelchair, but he will be as effective as anyone else," Bergie said. "What they will see in him is a man who has been able to over-



Dennis Matthews

ORDINATION — Wheelchair-bound Rev. Trevor Plug is ordained to the priesthood May 21 by St. Catharines Bishop Gerard Bergie.

come adversity . . . I think he will be able to touch many people in ways that probably I could never touch them. I think he will be a sign of hope. And I think it's very appropriate in this Year of Mercy that he's being ordained. It speaks so profoundly about God's mercy — that it is meant to be healing. We're all broken in our own ways."

Plug concurs with his bishop. He's scoured canon law and various theologies of ordination and

can find no reason a wheelchair would stop him.

Before being accepted by his bishop, Plug found immediate, warm acceptance from parishioners at St. Alfred Catholic Church in St. Catharines when he was assigned there as a theology student.

"They actually tried to make me their priest, like immediately," Plug recalled.

He had to slow them down a couple of years until he had finished his master of divinity and proceeded to his May 21 ordination. St. Alfred Church finally has its wish. Plug has been assigned there as associate pastor.

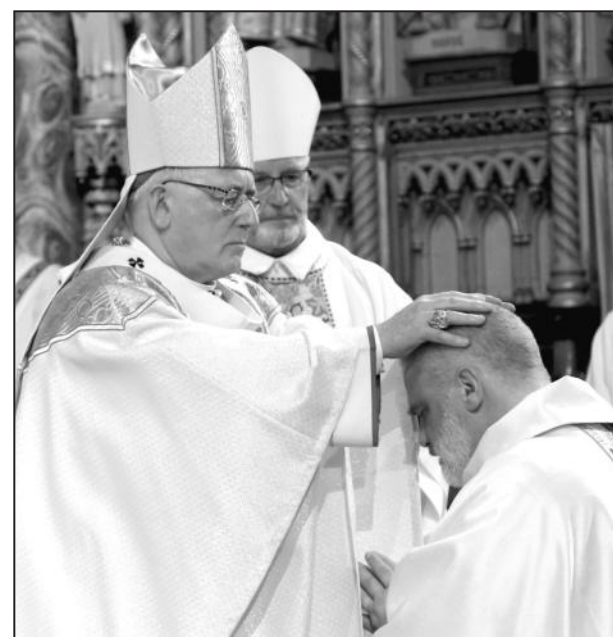
"A disability is never an inherent advantage," said Plug. "That goes with all suffering. Suffering is never inherently a good thing. You need to be able with the grace of God to embrace it."

But that doesn't mean Plug is ignoring the obvious. As he prays for the people, as he preaches, as he offers reconciliation in the confessional, Plug does so as a disabled man.

"In my disability, I have been able to understand in a particular way how Christ laid down his life

for us," he said. "Through my disability, that's just one way that I can access, can really understand that."

Before seminary, Plug did a bachelor's at the University of Ottawa in linguistics, followed by a master's at King's College, University of Western Ontario, again in linguistics. The power of words and the Word of God are an idea he has carried with him as he discerned a calling to the priesthood.



Art Babych

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION — Hundreds of people including Anglican and Roman Catholic chaplains attended the episcopal ordination of Bishop Scott McCaig May 31 as bishop ordinary of the Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate of Canada. The event was held in Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica in Ottawa. In this photo Archbishop Terrence Prendergast prays over Bishop Scott McCaig.

We are all treaty people

Continued from page 1

person to decolonize themselves despite the pain, all the way to the governmental level.

"We have to reach out — and as a survivor I'm reaching out to everyone — because reconciliation is needed: in our country, in our province, in our cities, in our communities," said Quewezance. "Without reconciliation it's not Canada. We are treaty people — and we reached out to the settlers, and today the benefits are there for all Canadians."

CUMFI president Shirley Isbister noted that the process of preparing for this day inspired her, as people came forward with their commitments and organized the events.

"The (Truth and Reconciliation Commission's) Calls to Action are individual; we each have to find how we're going to survive day by day and welcome people into that circle of ours," said Isbister. "To me, reconciliation is about diversity. Saskatoon is so rich in diversity and it's up to us to mine that commodity, and we need to all step up to the plate and be accepting."

"Reconciliation happens at many levels: it can happen at an organizational level, but most importantly it has to happen at a personal level," said Leanne Bellegarde, bringing greetings from PotashCorp, one of the sponsors.

Harry Lafond brought greetings from the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. "It can be anything

that we want it to be, so every person can join in," said Lafond. "There will be a time when our grandchildren and great-grandchildren can say, 'Our grandparents did the right thing, they recognized the value of each other,' and we can live together in harmony."

Residential school survivor Eugene Arcand recounted the journey of the past four years, noting that when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission came to Saskatoon, the city was not ready, adding that there has been much progress in only a few years. He then instructed everyone to shake hands with someone they didn't know, as part of living the TRC Calls to Action.

"You're all smiling now, that's just a small indication of how fun it can be to follow the Calls to Action, and I challenge you to take up that challenge every day," said Arcand, further challenging everyone to commit to reading, sharing, and bringing to life the 94 Calls to Action in the 20-page document put out by the TRC. "It's more than shaking hands, it's changing behaviour so that attitudes change."

Arcand invited everyone to get involved with upcoming activities on reconciliation, bringing children and grandchildren out to learn. As elder Howard Walker and his brother-in-law A.J. Felix spoke, the Reconciliation flag was passed through the crowd so that each person could touch it as a sign of their commitment to reconciliation.

Hearing stories leads to understanding

Continued from page 1

ally went on to university. Upon graduation, she worked briefly at Indian and Northern Affairs. "Gee whiz, the people are so miserable," she said of her time there.

A friend invited her to sell real estate. "I come from the reserve. What do I know about real estate?" she said. On the reserve, you "go put your name forward at the band office and you pray, and you pray."

"Here you put in an offer and you get a mortgage!" she said. She sold real estate for a while, and then she met a banker. "What do I know about banking? We'd been left out of this whole financial system," she said.

There was a time when an indigenous person could not get a bank account or hire a lawyer. When a position opened up at the

Assembly of First Nations she told herself, "I know real estate; I know banking," so she took a job in economic development.

Ovide Mercredi was national chief then. "He would say 'We are all in need of big healing.'"

"I'd say, 'Let's have economic development,'" McGregor said.

She soon saw the conflict, however, with economic development, such as big mining, that could leave the land and the water poisoned. Then the testimonies started coming out about the Indian residential schools.

"I didn't know what trauma issues were; I didn't know why there were so many issues in our communities," she said. "When I heard the stories I began to understand."

When she had a child, McGregor decided she was travel-

ling too much and returned to her community to serve as an economic development officer. "I wanted to bring back our traditional industry, making maple syrup."

Though climate change is a present-day threat to maple syrup production, McGregor began to see how the residential schools had negatively impacted the traditional industry by taking children away, keeping them from the labour intensive work during the sugaring season in the early spring, and depriving them of exposure to the sacred ceremonies around it.

Commanda and McGregor replaced scheduled keynote speaker Senator Murray Sinclair, the former chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, who was unable to attend because of the assisted suicide debate in the Senate.

Soccer team reaches out to youth in Attawapiskat

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — A Catholic high school soccer team from Toronto is using its passion for the game to make a difference in the lives of youth in the troubled Attawapiskat First Nations community in northern Ontario.

When the senior boys' soccer team at Bishop Marrocco/Thomas Merton Catholic Secondary School first learned of the suicide crisis in Attawapiskat in April, its members saw a chance to help out the northern community.

The team is planning a one-week soccer camp for youth in the community that has seen dozens of youth attempt suicide in recent months.

"We saw all over the news that there was trouble there," said Anthony Maceclo, a Grade 12 student and goalkeeper for the BMTM Royals. "We sat down as a team one day before one of our games, we had a meeting and we just came up with the idea why don't we go up there and build some connections and help out a community that needs it more than us."

Even though the team was preparing for its third consecutive trip to the Ontario Federation of Student Athletics Association (OFSAA) provincial finals in Kingsville, Ont., June 2 - 4, the team has done everything it can to make the camp a reality by the end of June.

"We're giving out jerseys and our soccer equipment for donations. We're asking for donations from everyone we can ask for," said Camilo Blandon, a Grade 11 student and midfielder with the Royals.

The team is hoping to raise \$25,000 toward running the camp for the youth in Attawapiskat. The money raised will pay for the team's transportation, as well as new uniforms, shoes, nets, balls and other equipment they will need to run the camp.

In just two weeks, the team raised more than \$10,000 toward its goal. On May 20, the team launched a GoFundMe.com page



Catholic Register/ J. Ko Din

REACHING OUT — Members of the Bishop Marrocco/Thomas Merton senior boys' soccer team, in dark, will be taking their skills to Attawapiskat later this month to run a soccer camp for youth in the First Nations' community.

to try to raise money online as well. In less than two weeks, the page raised more than \$3,000.

"The community has been fantastic and we're really close to our target," said head coach

Once Pereira knew the team was on board, he and his assistant coaches, Dan Romano and

Paulo Pereira. "I mean, we have no words to describe the outpouring of generosity from the community."

When Pereira first presented the idea of the soccer camp to the team, he didn't know how the team was going to react. When he saw how excited the boys were about the idea, it was a pleasant surprise.

"They really surprised us, to be honest," he said. "They were extremely excited and that made us coaches even more excited to do the fundraising and working to make this happen."

Christopher Bonnici, began sending out emails and making phone calls to the schools in Attawapiskat. It took about a month before they received a reply as Attawapiskat schools were on a break to hunt migrating geese to provide food over the summer months.

Eventually, the coaches got in contact with gym teacher Mandy Alvez from Vezina Secondary School, the town's only high school.

"I just finalized the dates with them and they're just so excited. . . . They can't wait for us to come there," said Pereira.

"The teachers at the school said it's all they talk about."

Pereira said his team is just as excited.

"Soccer is these kids' passion and what better way to communicate than with what is close to your heart. It will be a tool to create really great relationships and doing what they know best," he said.

Euthanasia Bill C-14 passes second reading in Senate

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Euthanasia and assisted suicide Bill C-14 passed second reading in the Senate June 3, sending the legislation to the Senate's legal and constitutional affairs committee.

The committee, however, had already studied the bill and submitted a set of amendments to MPs in the House of Commons on May 18. Though these amendments were not specifically voted upon, similar ones put forward by Conservative MPs protecting conscience rights and improving safeguards were voted down by wide majorities on May 30.

When Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould appeared before the Senate June 1, Senator Denise Batters, a member of the legal and constitutional affairs committee, asked her why the government had ignored the committee's recommendations.

"Our Senate Legal Commit-

tee's pre-study heard from 66 witnesses and took 20 hours of committee study," Batters said. "We concluded with 10 recommendations for amendment of Bill C-14, five of which were even unanimously agreed to by our Senate Legal Committee, a committee which contains Conservatives, Liberals and one independent."

The justice minister said the government had considered the pre-study's recommended additional safeguards, but they have to be balanced against individual autonomy.

With the June 6 Supreme Court deadline for the Carter decision to go into effect, striking down portions of the Criminal Code outlawing assisted suicide and opening the way for outright euthanasia, the Senate is under pressure to pass the bill so that some form of consistent legal framework is available for the whole country.

Bill C-14 passed to the Senate May 31 by a 186-137 vote in the House of Commons. It is uncertain how long the Senate committee will debate it before sending it back for more debate on third reading, perhaps with amendments. If the Senate passes the bill with amendments, it will have to go back to the House of Commons again.

The justice minister warned of the country having no consistent legal framework if the bill is not passed.

"Medical assistance in dying is different from all other forms of medical care in that in the absence of an exemption, it is otherwise criminal conduct of the most serious nature," Wilson-Raybould told the Senate. "Bill C-14 creates a series of exemptions from otherwise applicable criminal offences so that physicians and other medical providers can help, without fear of criminal prosecution, suffering individuals who have chosen to have a peaceful medically assisted death."

She said the court decision recognized the competing values of a patient's autonomy and that of the sanctity or value of human life.

"The court acknowledged that

giving someone the ability to legally end human life creates risks for vulnerable individuals, risks which did not exist under the previous absolute prohibition," she said.

She also explained why the bill did not include advanced directives for those with dementia diagnoses, pointing out jurisdictions that allow them, such as the Netherlands, find doctors unwilling to carry them out. Some issues like this and others are being postponed for further study.

"We need to take the time to get this right. Getting it wrong would result in the deliberate loss of human life," she said.

The justice minister said the government would be open to "thoughtful amendments."

Health Minister Jane Philpott told the Senate June 1 the bill's language recognizes conscience rights of providers but in a federal system, federal laws can't go too far, or they are "rendered invalid."

"To suggest otherwise could simply provide false reassurance," she said, noting under the Constitution, the provinces and territories are responsible for the implementation of conscience rights of institutions and providers.

The Senate debated the bill for a day and a half before voting on second reading to send it to committee. Though there were senators opposed, the division was not recorded.

Opinions varied from those of Senator Betty Unger and others who urged the invoking of the notwithstanding clause to give more time to craft a bill. Unger, Batters and others also oppose euthanasia on principle.

"As Cardinal Thomas Collins from Toronto recently said, the fact that we have to call it medical assistance in dying shows that there's something wrong," Unger said. "Why don't we call it what it is, killing?"

"We are creating a category of legal homicide," she said. "If any of my fellow senators think this is an exaggeration, then they clearly do not understand the legislation."

Other senators, however, challenged the bill as unconstitutional because some categories of people are left ineligible. Several senators brought up advanced directives and told personal stories of dealing with dying parents and relatives.

"We must not forget that we are not elected," said Senator Murray Sinclair, a former judge and chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Sinclair was appointed April 2. "We are not accountable to the citizens of this



CCN/D. Gyapong

Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould

country for our actions in the same way as those who are elected."

He compared the Senate to the Council of the Elders in an Aboriginal community, there to give advice and help settle differences.

"In other words, the people elected to govern have exercised their right to govern in this way," he said. "We must not interfere easily with that right."

Sinclair advised senators not to see themselves as "opponents or proponents of the government in power."

"With the greatest of respect to those who think otherwise, we were not appointed to govern," he said. "We were appointed primarily to review and to advise, but with an inherent power to prevent government abuses."

Goal is to celebrate life

Continued from page 3

expressed in the way one communicates through words, body language and mannerisms. The feedback from the peers pointed out weaknesses and strengths.

"We want people to break through barriers so they can reach new heights. Your thoughts affect your actions and results. Your way of thinking can be an empowerment circle or a disempowerment circle. You will have positive habits or negative habits. We want to change the negative to positive."

The adults who took part in the Leadership From the Heart sessions have the potential to be community leaders and make a difference in their lives and the lives of others. They were informed that they will always have challenges and the challenges may increase as more goals are set. People have the choice to look on their issues as opportunities or problems.

"The sessions were very emotional, very energetic, very exciting. These people are not used to public speaking. We practiced being good speakers. These are skills we are not born with. The sessions were harsh for some, but life is harsh. The goal is to celebrate life. Plants need both sun and rain to grow. There needs to be a balance of sun and rain to bring positive energy. It is not talent that separates people. It is putting in the daily actions. The little steps create the amazing results."

Anderson, owner of James Anderson Productions and Training, and LifeSkills Business, is a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Lake Superior Band of Ojibwe in Northern Wisc. and Choctaw Nation, Okla. Anderson has led leadership training seminars for business leaders, American Indian organizations, and university students in the United States and Canada.

Town Hall meeting addresses climate change

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — In response to a federal government request for input into climate change policy, concerned citizens filled St. George’s Seniors Club in Saskatoon May 25 for a Climate Change Town Hall meeting.

The event was organized by Climate Justice Saskatoon and the Saskatoon-West riding office of MP Sheri Benson (NDP).

Small group discussions addressed four areas of interest identified by the Canadian government: ways to mitigate climate change and reduce emissions; the idea of carbon pricing to encourage the shift from fossil fuels to clean energy; suggestions about clean technology and innovation;

and how to facilitate adaption and resilience as communities deal with the impact of climate change, such as severe weather, drought, flooding and fires.

The event opened with a prayer by Nancy Greyeyes, who expressed the hope that “everything said here is said with love for the future generations.”

A short program included greetings from MP Benson. A participant from Fond du Lac then spoke about the importance of including indigenous people in climate change discussions.

Mark Bigland-Pritchard of Climate Justice Saskatoon presented information slides from the federal government, and provided a brief overview of the challenges facing Canada and the

world to reduce emissions and tackle climate change.

He described the Paris climate agreement and the importance of keeping the global temperature increase below 1.5 degrees centigrade, as anything higher will see the loss of island states and imperil coastlines around the world.

Bigland-Pritchard also presented a review of emissions in Canada and in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan emits more greenhouse gases than Sweden (population 10 million) and more than Bangladesh (population 160 million), he said. The five biggest areas of emission in the province are electricity, mining/oil production, transportation, venting from oil and gas (now being prevented by legislation in places like

Norway and North Dakota), and agriculture.

Rachel Malena-Chan of Climate Justice Saskatoon encouraged participants to brainstorm

and write down insights and suggestions. Notes taken during the meeting will be compiled and forwarded to the federal government, she said.



K. Yaworski

Marian Congress held in Saskatoon

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — In procession, with song, dance and prayer, the Vietnamese Catholic community of Saskatchewan concluded a May 20 - 22 Marian Congress held at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

Some 600 attended the provincial congress, which this year focused on encountering the mercy of God through Mary.

The weekend of spiritual enrichment included presentations, speakers, worship, social gatherings, and a communal pilgrimage through the Holy Doors of Mercy at the cathedral, followed by adoration.

A concluding mass with Bishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon began with an outdoor procession with banners and statues of Our Lady of La Vang and of Jesus. Guest speaker during the weekend was Rev. Joseph Hai Vu of the United States.

Held every two years, the gathering included participants from Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg, said Rev. Phong Pham, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Saskatoon and one of the organizers of the event.

“We try to learn, experience the mercy of God and then extend our mercy toward others, first of all at

this critical moment toward our homeland Vietnam and its 70-year-long suffering of people who are crying, praying for freedom, human rights, and respect and democracy, and who are still treated harshly by the communist government.”

Bolen reflected on mercy, Mary and the Trinity during his homily May 22, which was translated into Vietnamese by Pham.

“Mercy is that love which reaches out to us when we are broken or in great need, miserable or in misery, and which bends toward us with a caress,” said Bolen. “It is precisely the kind of love that human beings need from God, and that God loves to bestow upon us.”

Mercy is at the very heart of God, said Bolen. “At its heart, the mystery of the Trinity is nothing other than the mystery of a God who draws near to us in love,” he said, adding that Mary is deeply part of this mystery of God’s mercy.

“She was a recipient of God’s mercy, of God’s desire to come close to her. And she teaches us how to open ourselves to God’s mercy, to say yes to God,” he said. “Then she bore that mercy incarnate in Jesus, and teaches us how to be bearers of mercy. She walked with Jesus, saw his great deeds of mercy, and as his moth-

er, learned also to be a follower, and with him, she teaches us to walk in the way of mercy.”

Regina students moving in faith

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — It couldn’t have been a better day, with sunshine and little wind; the temperature remained around 20C with just a little smoke in the air from the Fort McMurray fires, but not enough to create a health hazard.

It was the seventh annual Moving in Faith Day for the Regina Catholic School Division, and this year almost 1,200 students, staff, families and friends showed up at the Canada Summer Games Park to celebrate their faith, be physically active and have fun.

“It’s a testament to the work of the committee and the way it’s being advertised by word-of-mouth. Year after year people are understanding that it’s a great event for families and staff and faith building within their communities, so it’s great to see our numbers increase,” said committee chair Graham Hayes, physical education and health consultant for the school division.

Each year, a particular charity is chosen for support and this year the Marian Centre, a downtown

soup kitchen, was selected. The centre, part of the Madonna House Apostolate of Combermere, Ont., is celebrating its 50th year in Regina. Three Marian Centre staff, set up with a table near the park entrance, were accepting donations and collected \$1,563, which will go toward food purchases.

Activities included two- and five-kilometre walk/runs starting and ending on the games park track after following routes within the Games Park and surrounding Wascana Park. Covered, air-filled trampolines and an air-filled slide entertained the younger children while Pat Roth, Riffel High School’s chaplain, showed off his skills as a balloon figure sculptor while students painted young children’s faces in an adjacent tent.

Two bands — Elevation Axis, comprised of students and staff from O’Neil High School, and Visions, an adult band — entertained the crowd prior to the liturgy that opened the afternoon’s sched-

uled events.

Deputy school board chair Donna Ziegler brought greetings on behalf of the Board of Trustees and made particular mention that it was the last such event director of education Rob Currie would be attending as director. He becomes assistant Deputy Minister of Education Aug. 1.

Twenty-eight sponsors provided a total of \$12,500 in cash or in-kind donations which provided for numerous draw prizes and helped pay for the event.

It culminated a weeklong Faith Days celebrated in the division’s high schools. Each school constructed its own week with liturgies, faith walks around the school’s neighbourhood and workshop sessions on various topics, some with outside presenters.

Moving in Faith began in 2009 as Walk in Faith with about 40 students, staff and friends engaging in a five-kilometre walk around Wascana Lake.

‘History will judge us’

Continued from page 3

want euthanasia and assisted suicide,” she said. “That’s not true.” She noted most Canadians “do not even know what the debate is about.”

She urged doctors to resist and to try to find the best alternatives possible for their patients. “Don’t ever get used to it. History will judge us. A generation will come and look with horror at what we have done as a solution to suffering.”

Catholic Women’s League president Barb Dowding said her organization, representing 83,000 women, and the largest women’s group in Canada is opposed to both euthanasia and assisted suicide. She urged policy steps to protect the most vulnerable. Her organization is pushing to “make palliative care part of the Canada health act,” she said.

Valleyfield Bishop Noel Simard said he was present to show solidarity with those present and vulnerable Canadians. He stressed quality palliative care is the answer to end-of-life suffering, not euthanasia and assisted suicide. Euthanasia and assisted suicide are a threat to our shared life, he said in French.

“We can’t abandon disabled people to the back wards where the only alternative seems to be an assisted death,” said Not Dead Yet’s Amy Hasbrouck. “Assistance to live! Not assistance to die.”

She urged the adoption of safeguards such as a vulnerability assessment, guaranteed palliative care, home access modifications and personal assistants so disabled persons can have real autonomy instead of facing life in institutions, and an arms-length prior review before an assisted death can take place.



K. Yaworski

MARIAN CONGRESS — The Vietnamese Catholic community gathered for a Marian Congress May 20 - 22 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon. Some 600 participants from across the province and beyond attended the weekend of spiritual enrichment.

Cuts seen in Saskatchewan budget for 2016 - 17

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The 2016/17 Saskatchewan budget was not as tough as expected, but Finance Minister Kevin Doherty gave strong hints in his budget speech that “transformational change” is coming in this fiscal year and it will affect all government operations, specifically but not exclusively health, education and social

services. Those three government ministries eat up almost 80 per cent of provincial spending. Health Minister Dustin Duncan said continuing increases in prescription costs and the cost of health services are not sustainable and changes have to happen. The deficit for the fiscal year is estimated at \$434.2 million but with a promise of returning to balanced budgets next year. The govern-

ment gave itself some wiggle room, guessing where the price for a barrel of oil will go. It’s been hovering around US \$50 in the past few weeks and the government based its budget on an average price of \$44. Children and senior’s prescriptions will now cost \$25, up five dollars, effective June 1, the only fee increase announced. Taxes remain unchanged but support for some family programs have been cut, notably support for low-income families enrolling their children in athletic or arts programs. Doherty said charitable organizations and families have been providing support so the government decided not to continue its support. Health, education and social services each received small increases, but some

health and education sectors spokespersons acknowledged that it will be a difficult year. One positive in the education sector is that the government provided increased funding to cover the costs associated with Syrian refugee children. Questioned about support for other refugee children during a budget briefing for school divisions, Minister Don Morgan said they would be covered in the funding based on enrolment projections for the end of September. Some school divisions have experienced Syrian enrolment increases equivalent to the size of another school but received no additional support. Saskatchewan universities received no funding increase and may have to look at cutting some programs and increasing

tuition fees this fall, according to university officials. Doherty said transformational change means the government will be looking at everything it does and nothing is off the table but it seems to focus primarily on administration costs. It will question whether efficiencies can be realized in the amalgamation of health districts and school divisions, and are all government programs being delivered in the most cost-efficient manner, and are there some services that can be combined with others to achieve efficiencies? Some of that has already started, according to the minister, as he noted that a \$7.5-million savings in the health sector will be spent on improving care in senior care homes.



GROUND-BREAKING — Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon (left), and Msgr. Enrique Samson (right), join other dignitaries for the initial ground-breaking on phase one of the St. Peter’s Church building project.

Jeprox Photography

Camps gearing up for summer

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Everyone in Saskatchewan looks forward to summer, especially young camping enthusiasts who get to spend a week or more at one of four camps within the Regina archdiocese. The archdiocese doesn’t own them, but provides support from the Annual Appeal. Each operates with a volunteer board of directors and all received support from various councils of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women’s League.

Monahan, O’Neil, Kenosee (Kom ’N See) and Lemieux are accepting registrations for youth camps to be held throughout the

summer. Each camp is about a week long, but campers can register for more than one week. Times, costs and other information can be obtained by visiting each camp’s website. All speak about summer fun with various programs of swimming, boating, archery, and canoeing, and all speak about the Catholic experience, including liturgies and a mass usually at the beginning or end of the week.

All offer core programs but each has its own character and unique offerings and each touts its picturesque location.

Camp Monahan is the oldest of the four. It began in 1945 with its roots in scouting and has since become a recreation camp for everyone. It’s located on the shores of Lake Katepwa in the Qu’Appelle Valley. It’s about an hour’s drive from Regina and is the closest camp to the city. Its staff are certified according to the Principles of Healthy Child Development as part of the nationally recognized High Five program. Monahan is named after Archbishop Monahan who served the archdiocese from 1935-1947.

Kenosee is on Kenosee Lake within Moose Mountain Provincial Park, the only camp within a provincial park. It’s about a two-hour drive southeast of Regina. It’s the only camp that offers programs throughout the year. It’s a recreational summer camp and is the home of the Mother Teresa Centre, which offers public and private retreats in winter. It offers a family camp in July followed by a girls-only camp for a week, then a co-ed two-week camp, all in July. The camp turns into a music camp in August, offering lessons in fiddle, banjo, keyboard, mandolin, voice and guitar, with tutors from across Canada.

Camp Lemieux began in 1950 from a vision by Rev. Richard Lariviere to provide a summer camp for Catholic youth in what was then the Diocese of Gravelbourg. Bishop Lemieux leased a 21-acre parcel of land on the shore of Lac Pelletier about a half-hour drive south of Swift Current where the camp continues to be located. Besides regular summer camps offered May-June and August-September, the camp is available for rent. It also offers a weekend Kidz Kamp when the

camp opens for children 6 - 8 years to get a taste of what camp life is like. Knights of Columbus councils within the diocese help maintain the camp.

Camp O’Neil is located on Round Lake, the most eastern in the chain of Qu’Appelle lakes in the Qu’Appelle Valley. It’s back in business this year after several years of flooding that damaged buildings and grounds. It became Camp O’Neil in 1957 but its roots go back to about 1920 when it was called the Valley Beach Resort and was privately owned. It remained in private hands until 1955 when a flood damaged the buildings and grounds and the owners decided to sell. The priests in the Esterhazy deanery asked then Archbishop M.C. O’Neil for a \$10,500 loan to get the place up and running and two years later the camp opened its doors. Besides regular summer youth camps, a camp is offered for youth with special needs and the facilities are available for rent.

The Regina Archdiocese Annual Appeal provides each camp with about \$3,500 in operating money, the amount depending on the amount of donations to the appeal. Grants for special projects have also been approved in the past. Each operates with a volunteer board.

Bishop’s Dinner supports justice, outreach

By Blake Sittler

SASKATOON — The 10th annual Bishop’s Dinner was held May 13 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

Originally created as a fundraiser for the new cathedral, in recent years proceeds from the Bishop’s Dinner have supported a range of diocesan ministries, including migration, justice and hospital chaplaincy.

This year’s focus was on the new one-year Justice and Outreach Year of Formation (JOY) program that will begin in September. JOY will immerse participants in the mission and ministry of groups who are most involved with the poor and those living on the margins.

“Over 320 people attended this year, which is up from the 275 last year,” said Cathy Gilje, one of the organizers of the dinner, which this year was marked by a number of changes, including a change of venue from TCU Place to the Bishop LeGatt Hall at the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

“People told us they were looking for something less formal,” Gilje said. “This was also the wish of the bishop, going along with the vision of Pope Francis to tone down and simplify.”

Another big shift was that the Knights of Columbus took over most of the hosting and co-ordination this year. “It was a bit more work,” Gilje admitted. As a result

of the change in format, ticket prices were lower, but the amount of money raised nearly doubled. Preliminary figures show that some \$35,000 was raised.

Gil Wist, Grand Knight of Dennis Mahoney Council #8215, was the MC for the event. Wist said that he was glad the Knights of Columbus were able to collaborate with the diocese on the event, because of how closely the priorities that are funded by the Bishop’s Dinner parallel the values of the Knights of Columbus.

“Charity is our first virtue, followed by fraternity, and the theme of the Bishop’s Dinner was closely aligned with these virtues,” explained Wist.

During the dinner, Bishop Donald Bolen spoke about a number of issues and priorities for the diocese, focusing on the Gospel call to justice and outreach.

The bishop began by addressing recent news coverage that has drawn attention to the less-than-hoped-for results of the national Moving Forward Together Campaign conducted by the Catholic entities that signed the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. The effort fell well short of its \$25 million goal, raising only some \$3.7 million.

“As a church we respond, not with defensiveness, but with a genuine commitment to learn to walk together with indigenous people,” said Bolen. “The world is holding us to account,” he said. “They are

looking for us to be a church that embodies Christ’s mercy.”

“There is a call to integrity from these worldly voices,” he continued. “Our message will be better understood when it is an embodied message.”

Bolen added that many in society resist or reject the voice of the church when “we stir their consciences, when we take moral positions that speak of the cost of upholding human dignity from conception to natural death and the thousands of places in-between where life is threatened.”

Bolen also spoke of the difficulty of speaking a Gospel message when we do not always live and witness the good news clearly and authentically.

Bolen provided a brief description of the JOY program that begins in fall 2016, grounded in Catholic social teaching.

He described the 10-month program as “hands on,” presenting a litany of topics to be addressed, ranging from poverty and refugees, the environment, hunger and international development, as well as health and elder care. He pointed out that many of the venues for the JOY program are partners in helping to form the Catholic community.

Bolen also spoke about a newly initiated Annual Day of Prayer for Reconciliation and Healing with Indigenous Peoples, initiated by the diocese and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools.



OSU

SISTER DIES — On May 22 Sister Pauline Reinhardt, OSU, an Ursuline of Prelate, was welcomed into eternal life after several months of illness. She spent her religious life, 1948 - 2016, in service to God, her community, the church and all she encountered in her life and ministry.

Christian rock star comes out in letter to the world

By Jonathan Merritt
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“I don’t mean to cry. It’s just been such a long time coming.”

Trey Pearson, 35, was overcome with emotion halfway into our first interview, and it is easy to understand why. For the past 15 years, he’s been the lead singer of the popular Christian rock band Everyday Sunday. But he decided to put his career on the line this week and acknowledge to his fans that he is gay.

“I finally decided to come out because I couldn’t keep trying to be something that I wasn’t,” he tells me.

Pearson’s announcement is no small story. Since 2001, Everyday Sunday has sold around a quarter of a million albums. His song “Wake Up! Wake Up!” was the most-played Christian rock song of 2007, and his 2009 album, “Best Night of Our Lives,” broke onto the coveted Billboard 200 chart. Pearson has toured in all 50 states and 20 countries, playing with top Christian musicians such as Toby Mac, Switchfoot, MercyMe, Jeremy Camp and others.

(614) Magazine, an entertainment and culture magazine in Columbus, Ohio, will tell Pearson’s story in a 12-page cover story for its June issue. His narrative will ring familiar to many who grew up in a religious community. Pearson was raised in a conservative Christian home where he was taught that sexual orientation was a matter of choice. Though he knew from an early age that he was attracted to other males, he attempted to sup-

press his feelings and “be straight.”

“I never wanted to be gay,” he tells (614). “I was scared of what God would think and what all of these people I loved would think about me; so it was never an option for me.”

Nearly eight years ago, Pearson married a woman in hopes of achieving the kind of straight dream-life his community would support. Though he and his wife had two children, his hopes never materialized and Pearson realized he “was never going to be who my wife needed me to be.”

“I was not making it an option to be gay so I could be loyal to her and my children,” he told me. “But then I realized the only way I was ever going to be my best for them was to be healthy myself.”

As Pearson started accepting his sexual orientation, he sought guidance from other Christian leaders. The first person he told was pastor Jonathan Martin, author of *How to Survive a Shipwreck*, who helped him connect with a counsellor. His mentor and friend Rob Bell, former pastor and author of *How to Be Here*, also helped him process.

While Pearson says he will no longer live a lie, he is not abandoning his faith. The rocker says he still prays regularly and reads the Bible. He even once memorized the entire epistle of James. His study of the Scriptures, he says, has led him to believe that the handful of Bible verses that directly address homosexuality do not prohibit the kind of loving, committed gay relationships known to the modern world.

“There is absolutely no conflict with accepting who I am and following Jesus,” he said. “God wants me to be healthy, authentic, whole, integrated and my truest self.”

Pearson’s shift places him in the centre of a growing movement of popular Christian musicians who are coming out as gay and are advocating for a more open and accepting posture in the church. Ray Boltz, whose songs were staples in evangelical churches throughout the 1990s, came out as gay in 2004. Grammy-nominated Anthony Williams became the first openly

gay gospel artist in 2009. Jennifer Knapp, another Grammy-nominated Christian artist, acknowledged that she was a lesbian one year later. And in 2014, popular worship music artist Vicky Beeching told *The Independent* that she too was a lesbian.

These musicians paid a hefty price. Since Christian music fans tend to be conservative and believe that homosexual acts are sinful, you won’t hear these artists’ music played in most churches or on Christian radio these days.

Pearson accepts that his announcement could mark the

end of his music career too, but he hopes it will signal a fresh start instead. He plans to continue making music and will release a new single later this year. He will perform at Wild Goose, the Christian festival in July, and hopes to become a voice within the burgeoning “gay Christian” movement.

“I definitely know how hard it was on my journey to be able to accept myself, and how other people’s voices and stories helped me. So I absolutely want to be a voice for other people,” Pearson says. “I know there are more and more Christians that realize how important this is, and I hope I can join with them in seeing this change.”

Pearson’s journey begins today with a single step and the following letter written to those who’ve supported his music over the years.

To my fans and friends:

Most of us reach at least one pivotal moment in our lives that better defines who we are.

These last several months have been the hardest — but have also ended up being the most freeing months — of my life.

— TRUE, pg. 13



Photo courtesy of Trey Pearson

CHRISTIAN MUSICIAN — Since 2001, Trey Pearson’s “Everyday Sunday” has sold around a quarter of a million albums, and his 2009 album made its way onto the coveted Billboard 200 chart. He has toured in 50 states and 20 countries, playing with top Christian musicians such as Toby Mac, Switchfoot, MercyMe, Jeremy Camp and others.

Thoughts on coffee, community, and the loss of a small gathering place

By Caitlin Ward

Last week, without much notice, the coffee shop across from work closed. The manager had told me the week previously, though I’d heard from another employee the month before that the closure was imminent. It became public knowledge two days before they shut their doors. On their last day, a Friday, the place was overrun with track & field athletes coming over from the stadium to buy complicated iced drinks in the hot

Black Coffee
Peggy Lee

weather. I had to wait 20 minutes for my coffee and didn’t get a chance to say a proper goodbye to the baristas. I left work shortly after 4, shortly after they’d closed for good, and the sign was already down.

No one was happy.

No, really. I mean, I was

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

more unhappy about it than most, I’ll admit, but the news was greeted almost universally with incredulity, irritation, and sadness. And also, a fair amount of concern for me. What was I going to do? Where was I going to go? HOW WAS I GOING TO COPE?

They were only partially kidding. My coffee consumption has been a running joke at work almost since I started, and a generally accepted fact for the people in my life. The first time my sister heard Black Coffee, a lesser-known standard from the Great American Songbook, she was convinced it was about me. Not the part with the mooning over a gentleman, mind you — the part with the coffee and cigarettes. That’s been a pastime for the women in my family for at least three generations.

Coffee, though, is relatively easy to come by, and there’s better coffee to be had than what they served at this particular shop. I wouldn’t even classify most of it as coffee, to be honest. But in the case of this shop, it’s not really about the drinks. I have spent a lot of the last few years there. Hours sitting at the counter marking papers while my favourite barista invented hot drinks to give me. Work meetings sitting cross-legged on the

wide window sill because none of the tables were free. Walking there and back with friends, colleagues, sobbing students. For years, I had the routine down: light a cigarette as soon as I get out the door, stop at the crosswalk. Press the button. As long as the light doesn’t change immediately (which it never does), I’ll have finished smoking by the time we get to the door. It was clockwork. It didn’t have to be so precisely timed after I quit smoking, but it was no less frequent. I knew most of the people who worked there by name, and they knew mine. When two former employees, who’d met and fallen in love there, got pregnant, I got to see the sonogram. The manager asked one of the baristas to take out the contraband phone she knew was in the barista’s apron to show it to me.

The thing is, as a customer, I wasn’t unique. The people who worked at that shop were friends with just about everyone who came in regularly. It was an impromptu community, cobbled together from geo-

graphic proximity and general fellow feeling. The customer base was smaller than a lot of shops of its type, I was told, but we were awfully loyal, and I was loyal to that shop specifically — it was part of a chain that I rarely frequent otherwise. In the end, the reasons for the shop closing had more to do with the rental unit’s structural problems than with the viability of a coffee shop in that location. It was certainly wanted.

I’m not sure what I mean to say by any of this. I have a lot of thoughts about coffee — how people treat their affinity for it like some sort of heroin-like addiction, as if having a low-grade dependency somehow makes us more interesting; how we sometimes build our identity around our purchasing practices rather than the core of our character. I have a lot of thoughts about community — how it grows up in strange places; how I have mixed feelings about having built one around a tiny branch of a multinational corporation.

But these thoughts are bigger than what I’m really meditating on this evening. I’m thinking about this small thing that we’ve lost — this hole in the middle of our days. Not entirely irreplaceable, of course, but I’ll miss it.

I’m feelin’ mighty lonesome, haven’t slept a wink
I walk the floor and watch the door
And in between I drink
Black coffee
Love’s a hand-me-down brew
I’ll never know a Sunday
In this weekday room

I’m talkin’ to the shadows one o’clock till four
And Lord, how slow the moments go
When all I do is pour
Black coffee
Since the blues caught my eye
I’m hangin’ out on Monday
My Sunday dreams to dry

Now man is born to go a lovin’
A woman’s born to weep and fret
To stay at home and tend her oven
And down her past regrets in coffee and cigarettes

I’m moonin’ all the mornin,’ mournin’ all the night
And in between it’s nicotine
And not much heart to fight —
Black coffee
Feelin’ low as the ground
It’s drivin’ me crazy this waiting for my baby
To maybe come around

Divided States of America: whither ‘hope and change’?

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



To say the least, these are testing times for democracy in our great neighbour to the south. The prospect of a Trump presidential candidacy has provoked civil war within the Republican party and consternation among many others. At the same time, on the anti-establishment left, an avowed “democratic socialist” calling for a “political revolution” has been challenging the presumptive Democratic party nominee Hillary Clinton.

While the spectacle on the Republican side has sometimes degenerated into a vulgar circus, the distemper of this polarized political season means that a lot of people are riled up. There can be an ugly side to this populist anger when it

Co-written and directed by Peter Hutchison, Kelly Nyks and Jared Scott, it carries the subtitle “Noam Chomsky and the Principles of Concentration of Wealth & Power.” For decades Chomsky has been a fiercely persistent critic of American foreign policy from the left. This film, however, focuses his sharp gaze on the state of America itself. Drawn from a series of extended interviews, Chomsky’s lament for a nation details his concerns about how growing inequality — manifested in extremes of super-wealth and declining socio-economic mobility — has greatly skewed the distribution of power and had a massively corrosive effect on “the professed values of democracy.”

Requiem for the American Dream

(U.S. 2015)

Where to Invade Next

(U.S. 2015)

appeals to prejudice. But there are reasons so many are fed up with the status quo. Moreover, citizens have every democratic right not to be satisfied and to demand change in how they are governed.

The American documentaries reviewed here present two visions of the current malaise and what can be done about it. One is inward-looking and most-

Chomsky elaborates the anti-democratic consequences of concentration through 10 principles:

“Influence elections and reduce democracy” — by the powerful and their paid lobbyists using their resources to ensure those elected favour their interests; by designing institutions designed to limit popular democracy and maintain elite control (citing Madison’s view of the Senate as protecting “the minority of the opulent against the majority”).

“Shape ideology” — by countering anti-establishment movements (such as those that emerged in the 1960s) and reasserting business control over the political agenda (citing the Trilateral Commission’s warning that stable government would be undermined by a “crisis” of too much democracy).

“Redesign the economy” — through deregulation and privatization, loss of manufacturing and union jobs, ascendancy of financial capitalism, trade and investment liberalization serving multinational corporate interests.

“Shift the burden” — away from taxation of wealth, corporations, and capital, toward consumers and wage earners.

“Attack solidarity” — through anti-union policies, reductions in



Dog Eat Dog Films

MOORE FILM — Filmmaker Michael Moore’s left-wing polemics on what ails America are familiar to his many followers and critics, writes Gerald Schmitz. In Moore’s latest film, *Where to Invade Next*, he embarks on a research “invasion” to mainly European democracies seeking good policies that he can appropriate to bring back and share with his fellow Americans.

the welfare state, in social security and investments in public goods.

“Run the regulators” — by lobbying legislators on behalf of business interests and pursuing “regulatory capture” of government bodies charged with making and enforcing the rules of the marketplace.

“Engineer elections” — through increasingly costly campaigns in which unlimited spending is allowed by powerful interests (citing the 2010 U.S. Supreme Court ruling giving corporations the status of “persons” entitled to use money as “free speech”).

“Keep the rabble in line” — by continuing to attack unions (even though less than 7 per cent of private-sector jobs are unionized) and social movements while enhancing police and surveillance powers.

“Manufacture consent” — through manipulation of the mass media, advertising propaganda, the application of mass marketing techniques to politics in the “selling” of candidates and policies.

“Marginalize the population” — by encouraging voter apathy and engaging in vote suppression, misdirecting popular anger toward scapegoats (welfare recipients, immigrants, etc.), promoting individualism over social solidarity.

This may come across as a depressing litany, a lecture that will be familiar to Chomsky followers.

At least the aging activist concludes by appealing for a rebuilding of democracy from the base, for a renewed popular struggle for rights to counteract the concentration of wealth and power. Indeed he hasn’t given up on America as the “freest society” and cites the late historian Howard Zinn that in bringing about progressive change “what counts are the countless small deeds of unknown people.” The film’s weakness is that these too-brief reflections appear almost as afterthought to all that is wrong with America.

Filmmaker Michael Moore’s left-wing polemics on what ails

America will also be familiar to his many followers and critics. He admits to having grown somewhat weary of the good fight too after 2009’s *Capitalism: A Love Story*. Despite its seemingly ironic title, his new film and first in six years, *Where to Invade Next* (<http://wheretoinvadenext.com/>), will be a refreshing departure for some. Those expecting another attack on America’s military interventions won’t find it. Moore dispenses with that in a fictitious tongue-in-cheek prologue in which the military establishment throws up its hands about what to do and calls on him for advice. They’ve got it all wrong. Instead of America looking for trouble and imposing itself on others, it should be a friendly visitor that looks to other countries for ideas about workable solutions to social and economic problems.

So the shamolic Moore embarks on a research “invasion” to mainly European democracies seeking good policies that he can appropriate to bring back and share with his fellow Americans. Planting an American flag is part of his rather hokey shtick during such foreign encounters.

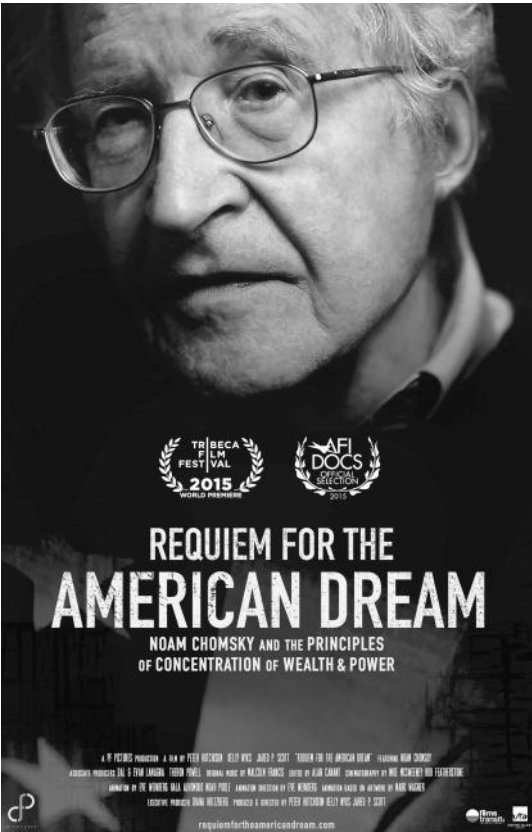
Moore quite deliberately cherry-picks his destinations and policies of choice. He goes first to Italy where he interviews a happily employed couple who enjoy long paid vacations (who wouldn’t?). No hint of the country’s huge debt burden or youth unemployment numbers. He moves to France and a school cafeteria where kids even in low-income areas enjoy wonderful free school lunches. In Finland teens in public schools are excelling in educational test scores with class time of only four hours per day and no mandatory homework. In Slovenia university is free for all including international students, some coming from America where it was unaffordable. In Germany enlightened labour-management

policies mandate that workers have equal representation on the boards of many companies. Germany has also come to terms with the historical evil of the Holocaust more than America has with the legacy of slavery and entrenched racism. Portugal has abolished criminal penalties for drugs and drug use has declined significantly. Norway’s lenient prison system focused on rehabilitation results in much lower recidivism than the enormous U.S. prison complex. Prison sentences are also much shorter in a country with a far lower murder rate. Iceland is a world leader in gender parity and in advancing the role of women in politics and government. During the country’s financial crisis a women’s bank was the one that survived. In his one foray outside Europe, Moore visits newly democratic Tunisia to admire its network of free women’s health centres.

Moore defends this highly selective grand tour on the grounds that his purpose is “to pick the flowers not the weeds.” Moreover, he maintains that much of what he finds to be working well abroad has drawn inspiration from ideas that have been proposed by American thinkers. So it shouldn’t be such a stretch to apply positive lessons from international practices to the home front.

“Mike’s happy movie” amounts to a rambling manifesto of sorts for liberal/social-democratic values. Skeptics may find its “sunny ways” to be touchingly naive and it’s unlikely to convince small-government or social conservatives. Still he has a point that every country — even the richest and most powerful — can benefit from the comparative experience of other societies and cultures.

That’s worth bearing in mind in an American political season in which the heat of fearful anger has often overshadowed the light of hopeful change.



ly negative, though not bereft of hope. The other is outward-looking and more optimistic than despairing. Both maintain a fundamental belief in popular democracy.

Requiem for the American Dream (<http://requiemfortheamericandream.com/>) premiered at last year’s Tribeca Film Festival.

Ordinary times of our lives can be pathways to God

Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



I’ve been reflecting a lot on Ordinary Time lately. So much of our lives are spent in ordinary time — washing dishes, doing laundry, waiting for the red light to turn green. There’s a whole lot of ordinary in life and the challenge for the Christian is to turn the ordinary into the holy.

There’s the story of the woman who turned the daily action of putting in her contact lenses into a prayer of gratitude for the gift of sight. In doing so, she transformed the mundane routine of her daily existence into an opportunity to connect with her God. As a child, my mother used prayer as she taught me to bake: “Mix the batter for as long as it takes to say a Hail Mary . . .” I have to admit, I

Rompré is the director of Mission and Ministry at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.

still say a few Hail Marys when I bake a cake! Making the ordinary a conduit for our ongoing spiritual growth is an essential skill for us saints-in-the-making. If we wait for our spiritual growth to happen in the extraordinary events of life, we may be waiting for a long time.

I’ve always liked the definition of a mystic as someone who sees the “ordinary in an extraordinary way.” Our green liturgical season — Ordinary Time — invites us into this way of seeing. It calls us to take daily routine activities and see in them an opportunity to connect with God. This is the discipline that made our ancestors holy as they baked their bannock and tilled their fields and raised their children on this prairie landscape.

The readings of this Ordinary Time give us a great deal of good advice for dealing with our everyday human experiences. See God as a “saving refuge” when we feel buf-

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time June 19, 2016	Zechariah 12:10-11 Psalm 63 Galatians 3:26-29 Luke 9:18-24
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feted by life. Let our souls cling to God when times are tough. Remember that God is with us when we mourn. Know that God has adopted us as children when we feel isolated. Celebrate that we have all been created equal and that there is “no longer Jew or Greek . . . male or female.”

Each human experience is a potential conduit to a closer relationship with God. Scripture invites us into making those connections.

In this week’s gospel, Jesus acts in a peculiar way. When Peter professes his faith and correctly identifies Jesus as the “Christ of God,” he is told to keep quiet about it. Why would Jesus want to keep his true identity a secret? Because he knew that the people held false expectations of the Messiah. They wanted a triumphant leader who would save them from their oppression with a brilliant show of force. They wanted bells and whistles and extraordinary acts from their Anointed One.

But Jesus knew salvation doesn’t come in this way. Salvation comes through humble service, through everyday solidarity with those who are suffering, through letting go of our lives (our false selves) to better be able to enter into full communion with our God and each other. Jesus was extraordinary not so much for his miraculous deeds but for his willingness to be God’s faithful servant whatever the consequences of that fidelity might be. As his followers, we are called to do the same.

Being faithful in the small things, letting our daily routines become prayer, using the ordinary times of our lives as pathways to God, these are the lessons of this Ordinary Time. May our ordinary seasons become ever more fertile ground for God to plant seeds of holiness within our hearts!

Both angels and great hamburgers play a role in our spiritual journey

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



The spirituality writer Tom Stella tells a story about three monks at prayer in their monastery chapel. The first monk imagines himself being carried up to heaven by the angels. The second monk imagines himself already in heaven, chanting God’s praises with the angels and saints. The third monk cannot focus on any holy thoughts but can only think about the great hamburger he had eaten just before coming to chapel. That night, when the devil was filing his report for the day, he wrote: “Today I

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

tried to tempt three monks, but I only succeeded with two of them.”

There’s more depth to this story that initially meets the eye. I wish that, years ago, I had grasped how both angels and great hamburgers play a role in our spiritual journey. You see, for too many years I identified the spiritual quest with only explicit religious thoughts, prayers, and actions. If I was in church, I was spiritual, whereas if I was enjoying a good meal with friends, I was merely human. If I was praying and could concentrate my thoughts and feelings on some holy or inspiring thing, I felt I was praying and was, for that time, spiritual and religious; whereas if I was distracted, fatigued, or too sleepy to concentrate, I felt I had prayed poorly. When I was doing explicitly religious things or making more obvious moral decisions, I felt religious. Everything else

was, to my mind, mere humanism.

While I was not particularly Manichean or negative on the things of this world, nonetheless the good things of creation (of life, of family and friendship, of the human body, of sexuality, of food and drink) were never understood as spiritual, as religious. In my mind there was a pretty sharp distinction between heaven and earth, the holy and the profane, the divine and the human, between the spiritual and the earthly. This was especially true for the more earthly aspects of life, namely, food, drink, sex, and bodily pleasures of any kind. At best, these were distractions from the spiritual; at worst, they were negative temptations tripping me up, obstacles to spirituality.

But by stumbling often enough we eventually learn: I tried to live like the first two monks, with my mind on spiritual things, but the third monk kept tripping me up, ironically not least when I was in church or at prayer. While in church or at prayer and trying to force mind and heart onto the things of the spirit, I would forever find myself assailed by things that, supposedly, had no place in church: memories and anticipations of gatherings with friends, anxieties about relationships, anxieties about unfinished tasks, thoughts about my favourite sports teams, thoughts of wonderful meals with pasta and wine, of grilled steaks and bacon burgers, and, most pagan of all, sexual fantasies that seemed the very antithesis of all that’s spiritual.

It took some years and better spiritual guidance to learn that a many of these tensions were predicated on a poor and faulty understanding of Christian spirituality and of the real dynamics of prayer.

The first faulty understanding had to do with misunderstanding God’s intent and design in creating us. God did not design our nature in one way, that is, to be sensual and to be so rooted deeply in the things of this earth, and then demand that we live as if we were not corporeal and as if the good things of this earth were only sham and obstacles to salvation, as opposed to being an integral part of salvation. Moreover, the incarnation, the mystery of God becoming corporeal, sensual, taking on human flesh, teaches unequivocally that we find salvation not by escaping the body and the things of this earth but by entering them more deeply and correctly. Jesus affirmed the resurrection of the

body, not the flight of the soul.

The second misunderstanding had to do with the dynamics of prayer. Initially, in its early stages, prayer is about focus and concentration on the sacred, on conversations with God, on trying to leave aside, for a time, the things of this world to enter into the realm of the sacred. But that’s the early stage of prayer.

Eventually, as prayer deepens and matures, in the words of John of the Cross, the important things begin to happen under the surface and sitting in chapel with God is not unlike sitting down with someone you sit down with regularly. If you visit someone on a daily basis you won’t each day have deep, intense conversations. Mostly you will talk about everyday things, family concerns, the weather, sports, politics, the latest TV programs, food, and so on — and you’ll find yourself looking at your watch occasionally. It’s the same with our relationship to God. If you pray regularly, daily, you don’t have to agonize about concentrating and keeping the conversation focused on deep, spiritual things. You only have to be there, at ease with a friend. The deep things are happening under the surface.

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What Now? Living as Christians in a suicidal culture

By Brett Salkeld

This is the fourth of a five-part series.

In the first three parts of this series I have painted a bleak picture of what the legal availability of physician-assisted suicide means for vulnerable individuals and Canadian culture generally. On the other hand, while this legal battle seems unwinnable at this stage, I am not without hope. The church has lived through bleak times before.

While history is no picnic, Christianity offers us great resources for dealing with evil. In the final two instalments of this series I want to look at those resources. Today we will look at what Christians and our allies can do to both live and give hope in our current legal situation. In our final instalment we will look at the spiritual resources Christians have for facing death and dying.

In a culture with legally available physician-assisted suicide, several practical options for action present themselves to those who are troubled by the legal status quo.

First and foremost, Christians need to work hard to make their communities safe havens. Whenever Christians have not had the political power to protect the vulnerable through the mechanisms of law, they have still always had other means available. In ancient Rome, Christians could not make infanticide by exposure illegal. But they could pick up the babies left by the wayside and raise them. And, in doing so, they saved lives and changed culture.

In our current circumstances our first priority is to make sure that those in our families and communities are shielded from the pressure to commit suicide. This also means saving our families from the pressure to kill us when the question presents itself. There are a few practical things we can do in this regard.

First of all, we must never talk about people as burdens. Instead, we must be clear that it is our Christian privilege to carry the weak, that our very salvation depends upon it, that we need the weak more than they need us, that at some point we are all weak and that we all need each other. Language and discourse are important. They shape the way we face reality. We need to take great care with how we talk about suffering, death and dying when physician-assisted suicide is available.

We also need to be clear about our own wishes. More than one member of our family needs to know that we do not wish to be killed should the situation present itself. We need to encourage con-

Salkeld is archdiocesan theologian for the Archdiocese of Regina where he is responsible for the academic formation of diaconate candidates. He serves the CCCB on the national Roman Catholic — Evangelical Dialogue. Salkeld lives in Wilcox, Sask., with his wife, Flannery, and a growing family (numbers 5 and 6 are due this summer).



Design Pics

TRUSTED INSTITUTION? — We need to work for legislation that allows Catholic institutions to refuse to participate in assisted suicides, writes Brett Salkeld. “And, on top of protecting institutional conscience rights, a hospital where a person knows they will not be killed could be a great public service to those who fear what decisions might be made in their names once they are incapacitated.”

versations among families. We also need to help people to make their wishes known through legal mechanisms like a living will. In the Netherlands, many people carry “Don’t Euthanize Me” cards in their wallets. Parishes could even sponsor workshops with lawyers to inform parishioners and the broader public about their options in this regard.

Essential to making our own communities safer for the vulnerable is work to make palliative care available to more Canadians. Palliative care can go a great distance in relieving fears about physical suffering, being abandoned and being a burden. When these fears are gone, so is the desire for suicide. Giving people the option to have themselves killed without giving them other options for relieving these fears does not present real choice, but stacks the deck in favour of suicide.

Christians and our allies have already begun talking about how to make palliative care more available. These conversations must continue. The question is particularly acute in rural areas. Could a coalition in your small town start working toward a facility to serve your population? It’s not impossible.

Beyond these measures to protect the vulnerable from the pressure to be killed, the other key area where we can work is in promoting conscience rights for health care professionals. Despite all the rhetoric of choice in our culture, governments seriously consider forcing health care professionals to either commit or refer for actions those professionals consider gravely immoral.

It should not be impossible to find practical solutions to the problems presented by the conflict between the ostensible right to be killed and one’s right not to kill. We need to work to find and promote such solutions so that no one is forced to choose between their job and their conscience.

That said, our communities need to make it clear to the health care professionals among us that we have their backs should push come to shove. In the early

church a whole range of occupations were unavailable to Christians for reasons of conscience. Christians could not even be butchers in certain contexts because the meat market was often tied up with pagan temple worship. If someone’s ability to provide for their family is threatened by their refusal to partici-

pate in killing a fellow human being, that person needs to know that the Christian community will not allow them to go destitute.

We also need to support our Catholic health institutions. First of all, we need to work for legislation that allows Catholic institutions to refuse to participate in assisted suicides. (And, on top of

We are intimately bound to the infinite other

Outlooks from the Inner Life

Cedric Speyer



“A person is a relationship of which the other is infinite . . . what will the Psychology Department make of that?” — Sebastian Moore

“Marriage is the clue to human life, but there is no marriage apart from the wheeling sun and the nodding earth, from the straying of the planets and the magnificence of the fixed stars.” — D.H. Lawrence

A friend recently shared how she had been moving beyond the fear of abandonment in her romantic life by “owning” her emotions instead of acting them out in reactive ways. It went along with being able to express her needs cleanly without trying to control the outcome. This is basic boundary work, which keeps therapists in business for those whose budding egos were engulfed or invalidated in the past (by various forms of possessiveness or rejection).

Speyer is a Benedictine Oblate as well as clinical supervisor of e-counselling for a major employee & family assistance program, and creative director, InnerView Guidance International (IGI). He also directs a documentary series titled GuideLives for the Journey: Ordinary Persons, Extraordinary Pathfinders. <http://www.guide-lives.ca/> Connect with Cedric on <https://www.facebook.com/cms94> or via cms94@hotmail.com

The result of such wounding of the relational capacity can lead to confusion about where the other leaves off and the self begins. As the psychology department would have it, my friend would be at the mercy of a partner’s mirroring, both positive and negative, until she can be “self-validating” and stand on her own two psychological feet.

Fortunately, she is also a spiritual seeker, shorthand for the shift happening within her from valuing emotional solace, sensual craving (of natural creature comforts) and ego empowerment above all; to putting faith, self-transcending love and alignment with divine will first . . . then letting those priorities guide her journey of the heart.

Personal boundaries are indeed important for negotiating the needs of security/survival, esteem/affection, and power/control embedded in the human psyche. However, it’s still a model of love based on “you scratch my back and I’ll

protecting institutional conscience rights, a hospital where a person knows they will not be killed could be a great public service to those who fear what decisions might be made in their names once they are incapacitated.) But we also need to be prepared to support our institutions in cases where that legislation is not achieved.

Catholics need to realize that the government has no interest in shutting down institutions that provide care in a context where dollars and beds are already stretched. If hospitals are legally forced to act in ways that an informed Catholic conscience simply cannot, civil disobedience is justified. Let the government decide what to do with us if we refuse to co-operate.

Christians have always cared for the sick and the dying, and we will continue to do so no matter what happens legally to our health care professionals and institutions. As we continue to provide this kind of care in a way that is consistent with our values, we will provide a witness to a different kind of approach to death. It will be a witness that the world needs all the more desperately while our culture promotes death as the solution to suffering.

Part 5 of this series will look at a specifically Christian approach to suffering, death and dying.

scratch yours,” and runs into trouble when the scratching is not enough or too much, opening the emotional wounds it originally promised to heal. It still defines a person as limited to personal self-interest no matter how truly engaged she is in genuine relating.

Yet the nature of love is to expand. It ultimately draws us beyond personal boundaries toward a transpersonal dimension of being, that which we call God, the deeper call of passion opening us to the eternal and the infinite. We are made of stardust as well as personality structures and character traits. If this sounds far-reaching, it is, and gives us a choice between contracting or expanding our very sense of identity in response.

Think of concentric circles, with “me”-centred needs capable of being extended to the interpersonal, or “he/she” recognition of the other, when love becomes a trade-off of mutual caring. Then visualize the next concentric circle identified with the mature “we” making our marriage, family, community, nation and religion the source of allegiance.

Yet we are still intimately bound to the infinite other. It is the love for the divine “thee” which is the limitless circle informing everything within it, and which opens our hearts to a passion beyond the personal, where our fullest sense of personhood is to be found. “Whoever does not love . . .” in ever-expanding circles of self-giving, “does not know God, because God is love” (1 Jn: 4).

For girls, problems with body image begin early



Everyday Theology

Louise McEwan

My two-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter has an eye for fashion. She has her favourite outfits and she is fond of accessories. She likes to wear beads like Granny, and my earrings are a source of great interest. It's all very cute and sweet, but I wonder if I should compliment her less frequently on her attire. I don't want her to grow up thinking that her value as a girl

depends on her appearance. She will get plenty of that messaging from society and the media, as a recent edition of *Discovery Girls* magazine illustrates. *Discovery Girls* is for girls between eight and 13 years of age, with a median age of 10.8 years. According to its website, it has a readership of 900,000 in the United States.

The magazine recently came

under fire for a swimsuit spread that taught little girls how to select a swimsuit. The advice on curves will make your head swim. "If you're curvy on top, coverage is key!" Side ties and cutouts will "draw the eye down." For the straight "up and down" body, "add curves with asymmetrical straps." Too curvy? Minimize your curves. Not curvy enough? Create the illusion of curves. For the chubby, "rounder in the middle" girl who fancies bikinis, "high-waisted bottoms work best," preferably in big, block patterns for a slimming look. The magazine's publisher, Catherine Lee, issued a lengthy apology on Facebook in response to the backlash. "It is hard for me to believe that an article so con-

trary to our magazine's mission could have been published on our pages. I have been at a loss for words for days. The article was supposed to be about finding cute, fun swimsuits that make girls feel confident, but instead it focused on girls' body image and had a negative impact." One would expect the publisher to have a little more oversight on the kind of material that makes it to press. How indeed could the article "so contrary" to the magazine's purpose make the cut? Could it be that the swimsuit spread reflects the magazine editors' own attitudes about body image and beauty? Could the editors have been unaware of the extent to which years of exposure to media messaging about the female body have shaped those attitudes?

From an early age we are exposed to societal attitudes about beauty that influence our idea of self and others. Today's children are bombarded with thousands of messages that idealize and sexualize the female body. They absorb these messages but lack the experience and maturity to understand them. When *Discovery Girls* insinuated to its impressionable young readers that their body is flawed and in need of concealing, it reinforced adult perceptions about the relationship between beauty, sexuality and self-worth. It stoked the flames of self-doubt.

We need to be building our

girls up, not tearing them down with unrealistic ideals of beauty. The same holds for our boys, who are increasingly exposed to images of an ideal, ripped male body. Common Sense Media reviewed research on body image in children. The results are disturbing. "Children as young as five express dissatisfaction with their bodies." More than half of girls and one-third of boys aged six to eight feel their ideal body is thinner than their current size." "Body image concerns start earlier than you think; even preschoolers learn that society judges people by how they look." Children's preoccupation with their bodies is accelerating. Twenty plus years ago when my own children were adolescents, I read Mary Pipher's book, *Finding Ophelia*. Pipher, a psychotherapist, described how society's attitudes about women made it difficult for adolescent girls to retain their sense of self. Today, five-year-olds of both sexes have similar issues. We are robbing our children of their childhood.

The experts have lots of common-sense advice to help parents (and grandparents) minimize the potential harms of these unrealistic messages. Limit media consumption. Project a healthy attitude toward your own body; "ban fat talk." Encourage healthy activities — like play, sports, dance, or music. To these I would add, recognize your child's gifts and celebrate them. Help her discover that she is wonderfully made, that her beauty radiates from within, and that there is no one like her in the entire world. This will give her more confidence than a swimsuit that hides curves, creates curves, or minimizes a pudgy middle.



CNEWA

AFFECTED BY WAR — Carl Héту, right, met with Syrian refugees in Lebanon. "As we commemorate the International Day for Protection of Children, June 1, we would do well to remember all the children whose lives have been forever changed by war," he writes.

Bring children to peace negotiations

By Carl Héту

A young Syrian girl named Miriam was recently released after being held captive by ISIS for more than a year. The news didn't make headlines here. She was among 253 people — half of them children — who were kidnapped on Feb. 23, 2015, from her village in the Hasaka region of Syria. Miriam and her group were among the lucky ones to be released thanks to the local Assyrian church that paid the high ransom. Another girl captured last year in another Syrian village was not as fortunate — ISIS has said she has been married off to a high-ranking official and will never be released. As we commemorate the International Day for Protection of Children, June 1, we would do well to remember all the children whose lives have been forever changed by war. In Syria, more than 9 million children are directly affected by war. Outside of the

Héту is the Canadian National Director of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

Middle East, the world has forgotten the more than 500,000 children forced out of Eastern Ukraine by violent pro-Russian forces and so many other regions who face the same scourge of violence and conflict. War destroys buildings but it also changes lives forever. Many children don't survive the ordeal as was the tragic case with toddler Alan Kurdi, found dead on a beach in Turkey. Others are indoctrinated and made into child soldiers. Those like Miriam survive the ordeal but are marked psychologically for the rest of their lives. As a Christian, she also carried the extra burden of knowing that ISIS could have forced her to convert to Islam or be killed. When millions of children are continually in harm's way, we need to wonder what kind of future they will have and what the long-term impact will be on both them and society. For those in Miriam's village, for example, the only alternative left is to leave the region — thus increasing the chance of Christians disappearing from their ancestral lands. Over the last few years I have met many children from Ukraine,

Iraq and Syria. Hearing their experiences has been painful. But while they know what war is, they also know peace. Peace is simple for them. As one child told me: "Let's apologize and forgive for the harm done and learn to play, laugh and work together in peace." While kids dream of peace, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that worldwide military expenditures reached a record high at \$1.7 trillion USD in 2015. According to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, only one per cent of this amount could suffice to respond to global humanitarian needs. In the meantime, organizations like the Catholic Near East Welfare Association and many others are welcoming an increasing amount of much-needed donations to provide the basics of life for children like Miriam and her family so that they can live in dignity while waiting for a peaceful solution in Syria. If only we had the courage to bring children to the peace negotiations, maybe a resolution would be found faster than we think.

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In perpetual motion, our souls need time to catch up

Soul Searching

Tom Saretsky



My first year at Holy Cross High School is nearly finished and I am shocked at how quickly the school year has passed by. When the year is complete, I will have finished 27 years of teaching! It seems like only yesterday that the school year began, and it seems like last week I began my teaching career.

Life passes by at an astonishingly quick pace. The older I get the more I realize it goes by too quickly. I've never been one to count down the days to the weekend or to the end of the school year. Looking forward to the weekend or the end of the school year is much different than saying, "I can't wait until school's out!" There have been some years when the passage of time could have gone a little more quickly due to the stresses of a particular class or the teaching assignment I was given. However, wishing away time in anticipation of another period of time simply means you can't wait for your life to pass you by.

Henri Nouwen once wrote, "98 per cent of our lives are spent waiting for something else to happen to us." There is wisdom and warning in this. Many times we wish our lives to pass us by because we can't wait to get to the next activity, experience, time in life or destination. When we get to the place we "couldn't wait for," then we "can't wait" until the next thing, and then suddenly we find ourselves longing to go back to the times that have just passed us by.

Some, especially youth, feel life is passing too slowly. Many want to be older than they are, and find it a compliment when told they look older than they are. And

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

then, how many of us consider it a compliment when someone thinks we are younger than we are? Are we ever really content with where we are in life? Or are we perpetually restless? "You created us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." Maybe St. Augustine was right.

What are the current societal issues that contribute to time and life passing by so quickly? Perhaps one of the main contributors is the "busy-ness" of life. The world loves a busy person. "I'm so busy" seems to be the catch excuse for everything. In our perpetually busy world we outrun everyone, including our own souls — they can't even catch up to our bodies. There are many demands on our time, our energy and on our own personal resources. We run from one thing to the other, from one event to another, and from one demand to another.

Unfortunately, our busy-ness can prevent us from establishing or maintaining the very thing we need to concentrate on — relationships. I am "guilty as charged" when it comes to this. In my own life the busy-ness at home, at work, and the busy-ness of our kids and their activities can actually prevent us from even getting to know each other better. And to further complicate things, we submit to the demands of our own smart phones. This distraction can further build barriers to relationships. Tired from the day and its demands, we reach for our phone in order to "lose ourselves" in the mindless smorgasbord of posts and sites and memes and pictures and games that seek to satisfy our appetites and swallow our time. But we're never satisfied. Meanwhile our kids need our attention, but I see they're just as oblivious because they're on their phones too.

When it comes to our own children, will their involvement

in many activities make them better or more stable people, or can their activities become a barrier to strengthening the supportive relationship we need to have with them? I wonder if other parents feel the same way I do. There are many positives to having kids participate in activities, but those activities can also lead to their premature burnout.

The risk in doing too many good things is that there's not much time or energy left to do the most important thing, and that is simply to *be* — to be present, to be mindful, to be *here*. Terry

Hershey in his book *The Power of Pause* would have me pause and ask myself the question, "Who or what is suffering in your life because you're so busy doing so many good things?"

We don't have to read psychological studies or read Facebook memes to know we need to slow down and retreat. The question, ultimately, is how do we do this? If we can't accomplish this from outside sources, perhaps we need to create a place inside of ourselves where we can seek a safe sanctuary. A place that is uncluttered and simple. A place that

allows life to slow down for even a few minutes, because it doesn't demand to be distracted or complicated. It might be here that our soul can catch up with our body, providing us the place that allows us the space necessary to maintain and even deepen the relationships of those we love most deeply.

May we all develop the courage necessary to pursue a simple, more focused life in which we pursue the one thing God wants for us and where God waits for us — a life of simplicity wrapped in life's complexity.



J. Weber

SAFE SANCTUARY — How do we slow down our busy lives? asks Tom Saretsky. How do we find a place that is uncluttered and simple? "A place that allows life to slow down for even a few minutes . . . where our soul can catch up with our body . . ."

We need to be true to who we are

Continued from page 8

To make an extremely long story short, I have come to be able to admit to myself, and to my family, that I am gay.

I grew up in a very conservative Christian home where I was taught that my sexual orientation was a matter of choice, and had put all my faith into that. I had never before admitted to myself that I was gay, let alone to anyone else. I never wanted to be gay. I was scared of what God would think and what all of these people I loved would think about me; so it never was an option for me. I have been suppressing these attractions and feelings since adolescence. I've tried my whole life to be straight. I married a girl, and I even have two beautiful little kids. My daughter, Liv, is six and my son, Beckham, is two.

I had always romanticized the idea of falling in love with a woman; and having a family had always been my dream. In many ways, that dream has come true. But I have also come to realize a lot of time has passed in my life pushing away, blocking out and not dealing with real feelings going on inside of me. I have tried not to be gay for more than 20 years of my life. I found so much comfort as a teen in 1 Samuel 18-20 and the intimacy of Jonathan and David. I thought and hoped that such male intimacy could fulfil that void I felt in my desire for male companionship. I always thought if I could find these intimate friendships,

then that would be enough.

Then I thought everything would come naturally on my wedding night. I honestly had never even made out with a girl before I got married. Of course, it felt anything but natural for me. Trying not to be gay has only led to a desire for intimacy in friendships which pushed friends away, and it has resulted in a marriage where I couldn't love or satisfy my wife in a way that she needed. Still, I tried to convince myself that this was what God wanted and that this would work. I thought all of those other feelings would stay away if I could just do this right.

When Lauren and I got married, I committed to loving her to the best of my ability, and I had the full intention of spending the rest of my life with her. Despite our best efforts, however, I have come to accept that there is nothing that is going to change who I am.

I have intensely mixed feelings about the changes that have resulted in my life. While I regret the way I was taught to handle this growing up, how much it has hurt me and the unintentional pain I have brought Lauren, I wouldn't have the friendship I now have with her, and we wouldn't have our two amazing, beautiful children. But if I keep trying to push this down it will end up hurting her even more.

I am never going to be able to change how I am, and no matter how healthy our relationship becomes, it's never going to change what I know deep down: that I am gay. Lauren has been the most supportive, understand-

ing, loving and gracious person I could ever ask for, as I have come to face this. And now I am trying to figure out how to co-parent while being her friend, and how to raise our children.

I have progressed so much in my faith over these last several years. I think I needed to be able to affirm other gay people before I could ever accept it for myself. Likewise, I couldn't expect others to accept me how I am until I could come to terms with it first.

I know I have a long way to go. But if this honesty with myself about who I am, and who I was made by God to be, doesn't constitute as the peace that passes all understanding, then I don't know what does. It is like this weight I have been carrying my whole life has been lifted from me, and I have never felt such freedom.

In sharing this publicly I'm taking another step into health and wholeness by accepting myself, and every part of me. It's not only an idea for me that I'm gay; it's my life. This is me being authentic and real with myself and other people. This is a part of who I am.

I hope people will hear my heart, and that I will still be loved. I'm still the same guy, with the same heart, who wants to love God and love people with everything I have. This is a part of me I have come to be able to accept, and now it is a part of me that you know as well. I trust God to help love do the rest.

— Trey

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Pope plans trip to Armenia

Pope Francis is planning a trip to Armenia, a country with a long Christian history and a troubled past.

The June 24 - 26 trip comes in response to an invitation from the patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Catholicos Karekin II, and from the government. Later, the pope will travel to neighbouring countries, Georgia and Azerbaijan, Sept. 30 - Oct. 2. In all three nations, Pope Francis will be the second pope to visit. Pope John Paul II visited Armenia in 2001, Georgia in 1999 and Azerbaijan in 2002.

Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as its official state religion, an event traditionally dated to AD 301. According to tradition, the Armenian Church was founded by two of Jesus' Twelve Apostles — Thaddaeus and Bartholomew — who preached Christianity in Armenia between AD 40 - 60. Because of these two founding apostles, the official name of the Armenian Church is Armenian Apostolic Church.

The predominant religion in Armenia is Christianity.

Of the country's three million inhabitants, the

Vatican says about 280,000 are Catholic, belonging either to the Latin rite or to the Armenian Catholic Church, an Eastern church in full communion with Rome. Over 93 per cent of Armenian Christians belong to the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Armenian Apostolic Church is in communion only with a group of churches within Oriental Orthodoxy.

In April 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed a 10th-century Armenian monk, St. Gregory of Narek, a doctor of the church during a liturgy the pope celebrated with leaders of the Armenian Catholic patriarchate.

Armenia frequently oscillated between Byzantine, Persian, Mongol, Turkish or Soviet control, as well as periods of independence. Its troubled history includes a tragic genocide from 1915-17 that took an estimated 1.5 million lives. The genocide was implemented by neighbouring Turkey in two phases: the wholesale killing of the able-bodied male population through massacre and subjection of army conscripts to forced labour, followed by the deportation of women, children, the elderly and infirm on death marches leading to the Syrian desert. Military escorts deprived the deportees of food and water and subjected them to periodic robbery, rape, and massacre. This has been

called the first genocide of the 20th century.

Turkey disputes the designation of genocide. Turkey says the dead were victims of the First World War and that ethnic Turks also suffered in the conflict. Tensions remain between the two countries, though they agreed to normalize relations in October 2009.

Tensions between the Vatican and Turkey also erupted when Pope Francis used the term "genocide" in an April 2015 talk in St. Peter's Basilica to a gathering of Armenian Christians, including Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan.

Turkey called its ambassador to the Vatican home for 10 months and only sent him back to the Vatican when the Vatican issued a communiqué that "noted and appreciated" Turkey's repeated commitment "to make its archives available to historians and researchers of interested parties . . . including the tragic events of 1915."

Turkey is the home of Mount Ararat — the reputed resting place of Noah's Ark; many groups have hunted for it there — all to no avail. Ararat is close to the Armenian border, but is not on the pope's agenda. Hopefully, peace and unity will be easier to find than the remains of the Ark. — PWN

Strong link between culture and health for indigenous populations

By Jon McGavock, Winnipeg
Troy Media

Indigenous educator, activist, journalist and politician Wab Kinew has been telling scientists and health care professionals for years that culture is medicine. It's a message that must be heard.

Epidemics of obesity, diabetes, infectious diseases and suicide that plague First Nation children across Canada are complex and multi-faceted. Yet government solutions often focus on simplistic biomedical approaches — when they address the crises at all. And they too often ignore the cultural strategies addressing indigenous relationships with language, tradition and land, proposed by indigenous leaders themselves.

Most non-indigenous people struggle with the concept that culture has healing potential but several lines of scientific evidence support it.

I am a non-indigenous scientist who works closely with indigenous communities. In the wake of the crises in Attawapiskat, it's time to examine the science that supports more culturally grounded approaches to improving health among Canada's indigenous peoples.

The federal government lays claim to an evidence-based approach to policy-making, so here's the evidence for integrating culture into these policies.

When indigenous youth are asked to identify elements of health in their community, they consistently point to aspects of their culture, including land, language and ceremony, as factors that make them healthy. A randomized trial of indigenous adults at risk for Type 2 diabetes tested this theory and found that a six-month program of cultural teachings, including language and history, was more effective than conventional diet and exercise teachings for reducing the risk factors related to the metabolic disorder.

The most poignant example of the power of culture comes from a study of the 196 First Nations bands in British Columbia, where suicide rates were 140 times higher among communities with no cultural continuity, compared

to those with the highest levels. Cultural continuity was defined as measures of self-governance over education, health, established cultural facilities and titles over land.

Policy-makers are finally start-

ing to pay attention to the connection between culture and health — and how that may offer steps forward for addressing health crises among Canada's indigenous peoples.

The Canadian Institutes of

Health Research (CIHR) has recently funded some novel approaches to expand this area of research. Culture is being tested as an intervention for the treatment of

— INTERVENTIONS, page 15

The issue of over-medication of seniors recognized

By Alan Cassels, Victoria

Working aggressively to reduce their daily medication burden may be the single best thing we can do to improve the quality of life of our aging parents and grandparents.

The issue of too much medication in Canadian seniors is finally starting to be recognized as the serious problem it has become. Seniors are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of too many prescription drugs because aging affects their ability to process medications.

The statistics behind polypharmacy in the elderly — the term describes the simultaneous use of multiple medications — are surprising. In Canada, nearly 70 per cent of all seniors take five or more drugs and almost 10 per cent take 15 or more medications.

Many hospitalizations in the elderly are caused by adverse medication reactions, according to several recent studies. And one of the biggest health hazards for seniors is falling — often a result of multiple medications, which can cause cognitive difficulties and affect balance.

The good news is awareness of the scale of the problem is growing. More and more physicians are initiating "deprescribing" discussions with their older patients. "Deprescribing" is simply the deliberate and conscientious stopping or tapering of prescriptions to help improve health outcomes.

Some long-term care facilities are now required to do periodic

medication reviews and weed out unnecessary, ineffective or hazardous pills. A recent massive Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement project has shown how to reduce the inappropriate prescribing of anti-psychotic medications to seniors with dementia.

Programs, research initiatives and physician education activities on deprescribing are being carried out in most provinces. Canada's new Deprescribing Network is developing tools and information to help make deprescribing commonplace and part of the prescribing culture.

This is all a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, there's still reluctance in some quarters to cut back on medications. Some health care providers have shown themselves to be nervous when initiating deprescribing activities, worried that they are reducing medications that specialists or other doctors have ordered.

Publicly funded medication reviews conducted by pharmacists can be flawed too, a CBC Marketplace investigation has found. Some reviews may be motivated by business reasons, resulting in more, not fewer pills for patients. The same report noted

that even when done properly, medication reviews often miss the very patients who would benefit most from a review, such as the elderly or people on a high number of medications.

More than 90 per cent of seniors say they want to reduce their medications if a doctor suggests it. And who can blame them? No one wants to be on a potentially expensive medication with possible side-effects and possible risks if they don't absolutely require it.

So what should be done?

Consumer-oriented literature

— BUSINESS, page 15



CNS/Jaclyn Lippelmann

DOMINICANS ORDAINED — Eleven men are ordained as priests in the Dominican order during a May 21 mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. This year marks the 800th jubilee for the Order of Preachers.

*Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher in Victoria. He's the author of the newly published *The Cochrane Collaboration: Medicine's Best Kept Secret*. www.troymedia.com*

McGavock is an associate professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Manitoba. www.troymedia.com

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Pope Francis offers priests ‘crash course’ on mercy

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The spiritual retreat Pope Francis offered priests and seminarians as part of the Jubilee of Priests could be seen as a “crash course” on the role of mercy in priestly ministry.

His series of three meditations in three Roman basilicas June 2 and mass June 3 were “a full immersion because Pope Francis’ heart is immersed in the heart of Jesus the Good Shepherd,” said Archbishop Jorge Patron Wong, secretary of seminaries at the Congregation for Clergy.

The pope wanted the jubilee for priests and seminarians to be a time to step back from busy schedules and “find a bit of respite, relief, solace in the heart of the Good Shepherd, in the arms of the good Lord’s mercy,” the archbishop told Vatican Radio.

Mercy recognizes that life is short and that so much good needs to be done that there is no time to waste in making amends, Pope Francis told priests.

“That is why it is so important to forgive completely” and let go of paralyzing self-pity so mercy can get “its hands dirty” and make reparation for the wrongs committed, he said in a retreat for clergy.

Mercy does not overlook the harm caused by sin, “rather it takes away evil’s power over the future. It takes away its power over life.”

To help priests and seminarians better understand the proper role mercy must play in their lives and ministry, Pope Francis led thousands of men on a spiritual retreat in Rome. The aim, he said, was for priests to be ready to receive mercy in order to show it even more.

Over the course of the day June 2, the pope led three separate meditations — each nearly an hour long — in three of Rome’s four



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE GIVES RETREAT TO PRIESTS — Pope Francis delivers a talk during a retreat for priests and members of the Rome Curia at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome June 2.

basilicas: St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major and St. Paul Outside the Walls. Live video links let clergy follow the readings and reflections from different locations.

Introducing how his Ignatian-inspired spiritual exercises would work, the Jesuit pope apologized for “the family endorsement.” He said guiding personal prayer with Ignatian spirituality allows people “to feel and savour the things of God” deep within themselves. Action and conversion are spurred, he said, by first feeling and being moved by what God is saying or showing.

Sitting behind a simple wooden desk, supplied with a small bottle of water and a glass, the pope presented his first meditation in St. John Lateran, which hosted Rome diocesan and religious priests and seminarians and those working in the Roman Curia.

Through the use of many vivid examples and personal, colourful anecdotes, Pope Francis said because God’s love and mercy are limitless, priests must ask what barren and parched places are most in need of this life-giving water. “What are the wounds that need this precious balm? What is the sense of abandonment that cries out for loving attention?”

He explained that moving from estrangement to embrace starts with a clear recognition of one’s own sins and the feeling of shame and embarrassment, which lead to a heartsick sense of “nostalgia,” which compels the straying child to return back to the house of the father.

Referring to the parable of the prodigal son, the pope said when the son returned home, the father restored the young man’s dignity, despite his sinful nature.

The contradictory feeling of shame and embarrassment can hit priests “when the people kiss our hands and we look at our own most intimate miseries and we are honoured by the People of God,” he said.

“That is how we have to see ourselves: poised between our utter shame and our sublime dignity,” sinful and selfish, yet cleansed and chosen to feed God’s sheep and multiply his graces.

“Only mercy makes this situation bearable” in keeping the two extremes in balance, he said, and it triggers the desire to make amends.

Speaking off-the-cuff, the pope said priests have to be careful with how they speak and never refer to individual people as “a case.”

“Without realizing it, we might say: ‘I have a case . . .’ I’m sorry, (but you mean) ‘I have a person . . .’ And this is very clerical,” he said, admitting “it has even happened to me often.”

Such language separates the pastor from the person so “they don’t touch me and I don’t dirty my hands. And then I do a ‘clean,’

‘elegant’ pastoral ministry where I don’t risk anything.”

At noon, the pope went to St. Mary Major, where he laid red roses and prayed before the basilica’s famous Marian icon *Salus Populi Romani* (health of the Roman people).

There, Italian priests and seminarians from outside of Rome reflected on turning to Mary for the courage to imitate her. Mary shows people “the only power capable of winning human hearts is the tenderness of God,” Pope Francis said. Mary creates a place that is “inviting, not at all like a tribunal or an office.”

“Unless we can see into people’s suffering and recognize their needs, we will have nothing to offer them,” the pope said.

The pope told the priests that “almost all the great saints were great sinners” or they had the humility to see “it was by sheer grace” that they avoided the worst of sins.

At the Basilica of St. Paul’s Outside the Walls, Pope Francis said caring for the poor and the sick is the hallmark of the church.

When it comes to the poor, the church has “always followed the prompts of the Spirit.” He said the people can forgive a priest’s sins “except that of attachment to money.”

“This does not have so much to do with money itself, but the fact that money makes us lose the treasure of mercy. Our people can sniff out which sins are truly grave for a priest, the sins that kill his ministry because they turn him into a bureaucrat or, even worse, a mercenary,” he said.

The pope emphasized that in the confessional, a priest can be an instrument that allows people to have a genuine experience of “God’s merciful love for the sinner.” He also advised them to learn from good confessors, who help penitents amend their ways and who are gentle with sinners, without acting like “a bureaucrat or a judge” who only “sees ‘cases’ to be dealt with.”

Bishop tells journalists to take the high road

By Carol Zimmermann

ST. LOUIS (CNS) — In today’s age of cyberbullying and online vitriol, be sure to take the high road and build people up rather than tear them down, Bishop Christopher J. Coyne of Burlington, Vermont, told Catholic communicators attending the Catholic Media Conference.

“What can I say to make things better? What are the words that may impart grace to those who hear?” the bishop, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Communications, asked the group to consider June 2.

He said he knew the journalists in the room were “acutely aware of the significant decline in the tenor of public discourse” during the last few years, a fact that is readily apparent in publications’ comment boxes and social media.

In such an environment, the bishop urged communicators to lift up good examples of humanity, charity and grace and if possi-

ble, “engage in some form of active ministry to others: feeding, housing, counselling, visiting or praying.”

“We have to be even more careful to be reflective rather than reactive,” he added saying there is already enough anger and coarseness out there. “Let’s just not add to it.”

Coyne also noted that the church is not immune from such negative discourse, saying: “one of the most destructive activities in the church today is the internecine fighting among people and groups who claim to be Catholic.”

Echoing this message, he quoted Basilian Father Thomas Rosica, who delivered the keynote address May 11 at the Brooklyn diocese’s observance of World Communications Day and said: “The character assassination on the Internet by those claiming to be Catholic and Christian has turned it into a graveyard of corpses strewn all around.”

Rosica, CEO of Salt and Light

Catholic Media Foundation, also described Catholic online conversations as sometimes “more a culture of death than a culture of life,” the bishop said.

Instead of responding in kind, Coyne urged the journalists and communication leaders to follow the example of St. Thérèse of Lisieux who saw every task as a chance to make the love of God more concrete.

With this in mind, he said every news story, video, blog post, tweet, email or response to an online comment can “become an opportunity to manifest God’s love.”

He also reminded the group that the world they are writing in is constantly changing and is shifting to one that is largely non-religious and secular.

“We are now missionaries,” he said, which should influence writing, podcasts, videos and blog posts because these forms of communication might be bringing people the Gospel message for the first time.

“And here is something more to consider,” he said. “One cannot give what one does not have.” In order to help others know Jesus, he said, “We must first know him ourselves.”



CNS/Yuri Gripas, Reuters

MEMORIAL DAY AT ARLINGTON — Christian Jacobs touches a photograph of his U.S. Marine father, Christopher Jacobs, while visiting his grave on U.S. Memorial Day May 30 at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

The fragrance always remains in the hand that gives the rose.

— Heda Bejar