

Summer issues

The Prairie Messenger publishes every second week in July and takes a three-week vacation in August. Summer issues are dated: June 29, July 13, July 27, August 24, and August 31.



Sculptor and seminarian

As Edward Gibney prepares for ordination to the priesthood, he reflects on his art and his vocation — and explains his mustache. — page 3

CWL

Nine decades of faith and service were celebrated June 4 at an anniversary event for the Catholic Women's League at St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt, Sask. — page 6

Treaty Elder

Gladys Wapas-Greyeyes of Thunderchild First Nation was the featured speaker at



St. Francis Xavier Parish after mass June 5, part of a series that has been initiated by

the Diocese of Saskatoon in conjunction with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. — page 6

Beloved spiritual writer

At age 68, Ron Rolheiser, OMI, said recently in an interview with Michael Swan, "I've never appreciated life more. I've never worked harder. I've never enjoyed life more." — page 8

Gun violence

"In the United States, where gun ownership has been elevated into a sacred constitutional principle safeguarding the citizenry's 'right to bear arms,' the toll of daily gun violence has reached pathological levels," writes Gerald Schmitz. He reviews three documentaries that shed light on the epidemic of gun violence. — page 11

Love is not some idea of perfection: pope

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Love and solidarity are what make the world a better place, not a focus on physical perfection and hiding away those who do not fit a commercial ideal, Pope Francis said.

"The world does not become better because only apparently 'perfect' — not to mention fake — people live there, but when human solidarity, mutual acceptance and respect increase," the pope said June 12 celebrating mass for the Year of Mercy jubilee of the sick and persons with disabilities.

Several altar servers with Down syndrome assisted Pope Francis at the mass in St. Peter's Square. Persons with disabilities proclaimed the first two Scripture readings, including by using braille.

The Gospel story, about the sinful woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears, was acted out while

a deacon read it in Italian, and sign language interpreters were stationed throughout the square.

"Each of us, sooner or later, is called to face — at times painfully — frailty and illness, both our own and those of others," Pope Francis said in his homily.

Limitations are part of being human, he said, yet today there is a widespread notion that "sick or disabled persons cannot be happy, since they cannot live the lifestyle held up by the culture of pleasure and entertainment."

"In an age when care for one's body has become an obsession and a big business, anything imperfect has to be hidden away, since it threatens the happiness and serenity of the privileged few and endangers the dominant model," the pope said. "In some cases, we are even told that it is better to eliminate them as soon as possible, because they become an unacceptable economic burden in time of crisis."

People with such attitudes, he said, "fail to understand the real meaning of life, which also has to do with accepting suffering and limitations."

And for Jesus, he said, the sick and the weak, those cast aside by society — like the woman in the Gospel story — are precisely the ones he loves most.

— LOVE, page 19



CNS/Paul Haring

JUBILEE MASS FOR DISABLED — People with disabilities act out the Gospel as Pope Francis celebrates a mass for the sick and disabled in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 12. The mass was an event of the Jubilee of Mercy.

Euthanasia and assisted suicide bill passes final hurdle

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Liberal government's euthanasia and assisted suicide Bill C-14 received Royal Assent and became law June 17.

Earlier in the day, after heated debate, Senators voted 44 to 28 to accept amendments to the bill approved by the House of Commons the previous day by a 190 to 108 vote (see related story, page 4).

Both in the House of Commons and the Senate, opposition to the bill included some staunchly pro-life opponents as well as those opposed because they believe eligibility for euthanasia or assisted suicide is not broad enough and therefore unconstitutional.

As well, many staunch opponents of euthanasia voted for the bill, on grounds having a bill provides better safeguards for the vulnerable than having no bill at all.

Senator Serge Joyal had put forward a Senate amendment to remove the requirement that a patient's death be "reasonably foreseeable" from the eligibility requirements of Bill C-14. He argued the bill was not in line with the Supreme Court of Canada's Carter decision because it eliminated classes of suffering people from access to "medical aid in

dying" simply because they were not near death.

When the House of Commons rejected that amendment, though accepting others, and modifying a safeguard calling for a palliative care assessment, Joyal tried and failed to get the Senate to send the bill back to the House with an amendment requiring the government to suspend the "reasonably

foreseeable" section of the bill until it could seek a decision on its constitutionality from the Supreme Court of Canada.

"I don't like the word 'ping-pong,'" said Senator Joyal "It trivializes our role." He argued the role of the Senate is to defend minorities and ensure bills are constitutional. He brought up many instances the House of Commons

had used its majority to trample minority rights, from the internment of Ukrainians during and after the First World War, the internment of the Japanese in the Second World War, and immigration policies to exclude Jews.

Those who supported his amendment argued the bill's con-

— C-14, page 4

Movie sheds light on residential schools

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Grade 7 students at St. Augustine Catholic School in Saskatoon have written and produced *The Caretaker's Story*, a movie based on what they have learned about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and residential schools in Canada.

Instead of a play, students chose to create a movie for a drama project. As part of a joint English language arts/social studies project, the students researched the history of residential schools in Canada and their impact on First Nations students and families.

The Caretaker's Story is a tale of truth and reconciliation that takes place in a modern boarding school. Two students, Kate and

Leah, who don't see eye to eye, find a journal that was written by the school's old caretaker. What Kate, Leah and their friends experience next is a journey of acceptance and understanding of an unsettling event in our country's past.

"The students did a fantastic job of capturing this difficult subject matter," said Chris Weiman, the Grade 7 teacher at St. Augustine. "The story says it all: confronting the past can make us uncomfortable, but it's necessary of we are ever to have true reconciliation in our country and in our communities."

Students worked in groups creating characters, writing, producing, and creating sets and props for the movie. They learned to use

a variety of technology available to them, such as video cameras, sound recording equipment, a green screen, lighting and video editing software.

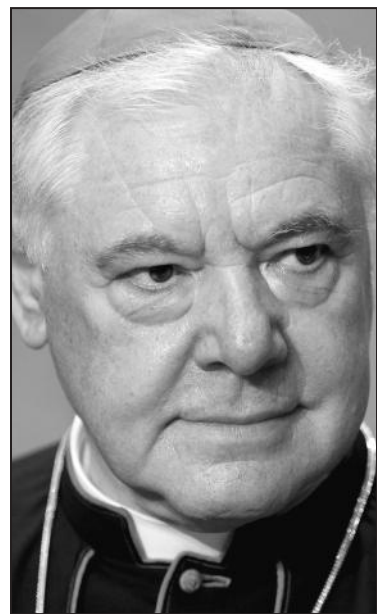
After a standing ovation at the premier of *The Caretaker's Story*, Eugene Arcand, First Nations leader and member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Indian Residential School Survivor Committee, stood to address the students, staff and parents.

"It takes a lot of courage for you to do what you have done here today," said Arcand, who was known as student Number 781 at St. Michael Indian Residential School in Duck Lake for 10 years. "On behalf of my school and my classmates, I thank you for what you have done."

Text looks at increasing harmony among church groups

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Local bishops have an obligation to welcome new movements and communities and guide them, while the groups have an obligation to obey the local bishop and avoid the appearance of setting up a parallel church, said a new Vatican document.



CNS/Paul Haring

Cardinal Gerhard Müller

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's letter to bishops around the world on "the relationship between hierarchical and charismatic gifts in the life and mission of the church" was released June 14.

The hierarchical gifts — teaching, sanctifying and governing — are those conferred with ordination. The charismatic gifts refer to those given by the Holy Spirit to groups or individuals to help them live the faith more intensely and to share the faith with others

through missionary activity and acts of charity.

At a Vatican news conference, Cardinal Gerhard Müller, doctrinal congregation prefect, and Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, presented the document, which formally is titled *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* (The Church Rejuvenates).

Faced with the reality of aging and death, men and women always have "looked for something or someone to help them remain young," Müller said. "This is the same challenge that every institution that wants to last must face: remaining young with the passing of time, that is, renewing itself while remaining what it is without changing or altering" its basic identity.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit — raising new movements to face new challenges — help the church to remain ever young, he said.

Ouellet told reporters some suspicion of new, charismatic movements on the part of the institutional church can be traced back centuries: to the second-century Montanist heresy, which claimed new revelations, and the widespread "apocalyptic doctrines" of the Middle Ages. However, he said, the Second Vatican Council insisted the Holy Spirit continues to give Christians gifts to be placed at the service of the entire church to attract believers and help them proclaim their faith.

Still, Ouellet said in response to questions, "there have been some problems" throughout church history of new groups arising and setting themselves up as a "counter power to the bishops."

Müller added that a vision of the church in which the bishops control everything "is not our vision.

Bishops are not the superiors, the commandants of the gifts of the Holy Spirit — the Holy Spirit is."

The new document insisted that both the hierarchical and charismatic gifts are given by God in order to build up the church. They always must be in harmony and complement one another.

The bishop, "he who has received the gift to lead in the church, has also the responsibility of keeping watch over the good exercise of the other charisms, in such a manner that all contribute to the good of the church and to its evangelizing mission," the document said.

The text focused on a theological explanation of the diverse gifts in the church rather than on practical challenges and steps to meet those challenges. However, one of the footnotes, summarizing the discussion of gifts of the Holy Spirit in St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, warned of "rival-

ry, disorder and confusion" when an "overabundance" of gifts are expressed in a community, the risk of an "inferiority complex" among "less gifts Christians" and the temptation of "pride and arrogance" on the part of those who receive the gifts.

At the same time, the document insists that faith in God implies welcoming the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are given to individuals and groups to deepen the way they live out their Christian vocation and witness.

The groups, the document said, are called "to a missionary openness, to the necessary obedience to pastors and to maintain ecclesial communion."

Movements and communities present in more than one diocese "must not consider themselves as completely autonomous from the particular church" or diocese, it said, "rather they should enrich and serve her precisely through

that particularity which is shared beyond the confines of a single diocese."

The bishops, it said, are called to discern the authenticity of the spiritual gifts and to recognize publicly those movements and communities that can help the faithful grow in faith, hope and charity.

The criteria for determining the authenticity of the gifts or charisms given to a movement or community, the document said, must include: emphasis on every Christian's vocation to holiness; commitment to spreading the Gospel; profession of the Catholic faith; unity with the entire church; respect and esteem for other groups in the church; accepting "moments of trial" as the bishop discerns the group's authenticity; presence of spiritual fruits such as charity, joy, peace; and commitment to justice and peace with charitable, cultural and spiritual works.

We must recognize dignity of all: bishop

By Christine Young and Teresa Peterson

ORLANDO, Fla. (CNS) — In Orlando and major cities around the nation and the world, people gathered June 13 to pay tribute to those killed and injured in the shooting rampage in Orlando the previous day.

About 700 people also gathered to pray for those attacked and for peace in the world at St. James Cathedral, less than two miles up the street from where the shootings took place at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando.

The interfaith prayer service was led by Orlando Bishop John G. Noonan, who was joined on the altar by Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg, 10 priests of the Orlando diocese and other religious leaders.

"Our presence here tonight is a symbol of hope. We come to pray," said Noonan.

He was joined by Imam Tariq Rashid, of the Islamic Center of Orlando; Bishop Greg Brewer, of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida; Deacon Michael Matheny, of St. Luke Episcopal Cathedral; Huseyin Peker, the Atlantic Institute-Central Florida; Rev. Tom McCloskey, of First United Methodist Church in Orlando; and Revs. John Harris, Downtown Baptist Church, and Rev. Robert Spooner, of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church.

"We come not as different religions but one in the Lord," said Noonan, who noted that he was familiar with violence in his home country of Ireland and stressed that people will only find peace when they recognize the dignity of all people as children of God.

The half-hour service — with readings about love and peace and songs echoing that message — was a sombre one. The prayers were focused on peace, how God alone is lasting source of peace and rest. Someone read a reflection on peace by Blessed Oscar Romero, the Salvadoran archbishop martyred while celebrating mass.

Those wishing to light a candle in the sanctuary were invited to

come forward and the glimmering light filled the church. The congregation exited quietly after singing Let There Be Peace on Earth.

When he invited the local community to attend the service, Noonan said he hoped it would provide an opportunity for all to join one another in prayer that would "bring about an outpouring of the mercy of God within the heart of our community."

He urged people to pray "for healing from this vicious assault on human life," for comfort for those suffering loss and "a sincere conversion of heart for all who perpetrate acts of terror in our world."

Natalia Gil, a 22-year-old parishioner of St. Isaac Jogues in Orlando, attended the prayer service with 10 others from her parish. "We're all one big family. We're here in the name of Jesus," she told the Florida Catholic, newspaper of the Diocese of Orlando.

"We are gathered here because maybe not all of us have someone in common that we know, but we are all one community no matter the religion, what they believed in or who they were," she added. Some in her group knew the victims either by face or by name. One young woman in the group held back tears and was unable to speak as she mourned for a cousin who was at Pulse nightclub that night.

Gil said she spoke for the group when she said faith is the source of their strength.

"It's making us want to help our community more. The strength God has given us, the faith he has given us. The spirit he

has given us to move forward to want to help others and console others. We are here to receive so we can give back," she said.

Imam Rashid, who was invited to participate in the prayer service by his friend Rev. John Giel, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Orlando, has lived in Orlando for 22 years and has three children in the schools in the city.

"I consider this my city and the city of my children. I feel the same sentiments. This is the time when the local community from different religions should come together and show terrorists that no matter how much evil they do, they cannot break our unity or break our strength," he said.



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE PETS CIRCUS TIGER — Pope Francis pets a tiger during a special audience with circus members in Paul VI hall at the Vatican June 16. The pope met with acrobats, clowns, carnival workers, street performers, musicians and magicians in the Paul VI hall. They were part of a two-day pilgrimage of circus performers in Rome for the Year of Mercy. Pope Francis thanked the artists for bringing beauty and joy to an often dark, sad world.

Hostility, indifference make us blind to those in need

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Indifference and hostility can blind Christians from recognizing Jesus in those most in need, Pope Francis said.

"This indifference and hostility can turn into aggression" toward people often marginalized by society, the pope said June 15 during his weekly general audience.

"How many times, when we see so many people on the street — people in need, the sick, those with nothing to eat — we feel bothered. How many times, when we find before us so many refugees and displaced people, we feel bothered. It is a temptation; we all have this, everyone, including myself," he said.

The pope reflected on the Gospel reading of a blind beggar in Jericho whose sight was restored after pleading with Jesus to heal him.

"The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, 'Son of David, have pity on me!'" the Gospel reading says.

Those who told the beggar to be quiet, the pope recalled, reproached him "as if he did not have a right to cry out." However,

despite his blindness, the poor man "sees with the eyes of faith" and his plea was powerful enough to attract Jesus' attention.

"Let us also think this, when we found ourselves in awful situations, even sinful situations, how it was Jesus who took our hand and took us out from the margins to the path of salvation," the pope said.

The Gospel reading, he added, teaches Christians that the good news implies placing those excluded at the centre and that Jesus' merciful presence is an opportunity for "those in need of help and consolation" to cry out to him.

"Even in our lives, Jesus passes by. When I notice Jesus passing by, it is an invitation to come close to him, to be a better person, to be a better Christian, to follow Jesus," he said.

Christians are called to follow the path of the blind man who "glorified God" and followed Jesus after being healed, the pope said.

"We are all beggars; we are always in need of salvation. And all of us, every day, need to make this step: from beggars to disciples," he said. "Let us allow ourselves to be called by Jesus, healed by Jesus, forgiven by Jesus and follow him, praising God."

Canadian voices sought on foreign aid spending

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — With the amount of money Canada spends on foreign aid in decline, Canadians have been given a rare opportunity to let the federal government know what they think about its belt tightening.

Until July 31, Canadians are invited to advise Ottawa on what it should be doing to forge a new solidarity with the developing world and help end the kind of poverty that results in one billion people being undernourished.

The government is conducting consultations on how to realign Canada's international aid policy and, as part of the process, has opened a web portal to solicit public opinion. The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, with more than 10,000 members, is expected to be heard, though its members have not been instructed to submit opinions, nor are they being given



CCN/D. Gyapong

David Leduc

a party line to highlight priorities.

"They are independent actors," said Development and Peace executive director David Leduc. "It's a membership-driven organization. They will be very vocal in and of themselves about where

and how they think this government and D&P should be moving forward."

The money Canada spends on aid has been falling since 2009-10, when it touched \$5 billion. Last year it was \$4.29 billion.

Under the Liberals, the plan is to just about reach that \$5-billion level again over the next two years, but that increase won't bring Canada anywhere near its own standard for helping poor countries.

In 1970, Canada's ambassador to the United Nations proposed that developed nations should each contribute 0.7 per cent of gross national income to bringing poor countries into the circle of developed nations. In 2015 Canada gave 0.28 per cent — not even half the amount we committed to 36 years ago. A G7 nation, Canada has the world's 10th largest economy but is ranked 14th on the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development list of donor countries.

The United Kingdom, Nether-

lands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have all met the 0.7 per cent target.

"The gap between the wealthiest and the poorest continues to grow," Leduc said. "The ecological crisis continues to get worse."

The federal government's policy review isn't going to suddenly double Canada's aid spending. But it might get the ship turned around and heading in the right direction.

"One has to look at this through a realistic lens as well," Leduc said.

Before International Development Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau can make the case for significant new funding she has to demonstrate to cabinet and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that her department has a realistic, coherent and effective plan for spending new money.

"Without this work and a good review being done, there's no chance the minister would be able to go in and ask for more money," said Canadian Foodgrains Bank executive director Jim Cornelius. Development and Peace is represented on the board of Foodgrains and works with it on a number of projects.

The policy review is the first truly open consultative process for revamping development policy in 20 years. Over the last decade the policy has been tweaked and refo-

cused as the Canadian International Development Agency folded into what is now Global Affairs Canada (formerly the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development). But independent aid organizations have often complained their opinions were not sought or, if sought, ignored.

This time groups like Development and Peace and Canadian Foodgrains Bank have already had meetings with the minister and her senior officials.

"It makes perfect sense to me that those who are most integrally connected to the issues on the ground with local partners be present at the table to discuss the obstacles that they face and suggest avenues to pursue in improving the overall approach," said Leduc.

Leduc's message to the minister is to keep the focus on poverty reduction and the ways in which poverty is perpetuated generation to generation.

"Are we appropriately or effectively tackling the root causes of the issues that for the last 30 or 40 years we've been trying to tackle on an individual scale?" he asked.

One development priority is already written in stone for this government. Among the six themes that will shape the consultations, the first is "health and rights of women and children."

— EMPHASIS, page 5

Documentary records justice efforts

By Andréa Ledding

SASKATOON — On June 10, the Mennonite Central Committee showed the documentary *Reserve 107* at Prairieland Exhibition Hall to a few hundred people, before breaking into a panel discussion. The documentary follows the story of how Lutheran and Mennonite faith communities near Laird, Sask., banded together with the dispersed and dispossessed Young Chippewyan Band to try and restore peace and harmony and deal with outstanding land claims.

"I think what has impressed me most about this situation is that peace and reconciliation can actually be achieved when you work at it slowly and steadily," noted farmer and pastor Wilmer Froese, one of four Mennonite panelists. "These things that we talk about in other parts of the world — conflict and conflict resolution. — we experienced personally. What's rewarding is that it shows you that can work at a difficult situation and achieve some form of reconciliation and understanding and friendship."

Farmer Jim Johnston, Ray Funk and Leonard Doell rounded out the Mennonite portion of the panel, while hereditary Chief George Kingfisher and elected Chief Sylvia Weenie represented the Young Chippewyan Band.

"Really what we have done is to listen, to share, to talk, to get together and to be friends," said Johnston about what he has learned through the process, adding that this not only humbles but transforms people and situations.

In the 1800s reserve land in the Laird area was granted to the band, but then taken away and added instead to the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve by the government in 1897. They never received compensation or new land. Present-day Mennonite and Lutheran farmers gradually became aware of the injustice and began to discuss the situation with band members, eventually signing a document affirming the treaties and the

heritage of the land as part of the Stoney Knoll Band, hoping to see them compensated for it and some justice done.

"I've come to realize that land is not only about private ownership, land is something that we have that we can use and it's part of creation; we're just using this land for a period of our life and things are rather transient," noted Froese.

Funk recalled that he knew exactly where he was when he first read about the issue in *Briarpatch* magazine, likening it to the impact of John Kennedy's assassination.

"It made a big impact on me and on my family, and my father ended up signing the document," said Funk, adding that the Old Testament demonstrates heritage, family, ancestry, and obligations being passed down. "To me it's an obligation we carry with us. I don't want to be thought of as a hypocrite. It's easy to profess your faith and opinions in the abstract, but when it comes down to reality it's easy to find yourself missing in action."

He added it has since been a blessing in his life to reintroduce the Kingfishers to the land, along with the treaty celebration in 2006 at Stoney Knoll.

"To me, the way things are going, that's how it should be. Settle things peacefully," noted Kingfisher, who has since passed on hereditary title to his eldest son, Marshall. Before his own father passed away, he wrote a letter warning George that to take the land away from the farmers who'd been there for over 100 years would make him look worse than the government. "So I followed his wishes, and that's how we became friends."

Kingfisher, who is currently camping by invitation on Funk's farm on the traditional lands, is one of the only band members on original reserve land. He hopes the political pressure and support from the Mennonites and Lutherans works soon, in conjunction with a new federal gov-

ernment, but time would tell.

Weenie noted her late husband and former Chief, Ben, worked for many years on the tedious claims process, trying to get the federal

— VICTIMS, page 7

Creativity, patience shape sculptor

By Carol Glatz

ROME (CNS) — In the small dormitory room that smelled of modelling clay, dozens of statues of a laughing Jesus lined wooden shelves against a wall. The statuettes showed the Lord reclining on the ground against a rock, his eyes pinched tight and his hand on his chest.

"As students become deacons, I give them one," said Edward Gibney, 54, a seminarian and sculptor from Saskatchewan. He was one of nine men ordained to the diaconate in the Basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls June 15.

"It doesn't say so in the Bible, but I believe he laughed," he said, explaining his motivation for the "Laughing Jesus" motif, adding that the unguarded moment of mirth shows "the human side of Christ."

While the souvenir statuettes were ready to go, Gibney was still putting the finishing touches on a bust of Msgr. Roderick Strange, former rector of Rome's Pontifical Beda College, which is a seminary for older men run by the Catholic bishops of England and Wales.

"I keep saying it's pretty well done," he told Catholic News Service in early June. But he confessed he has a hard time knowing when to put away the tools as he shaved a bit of soft Plasticine from under the eyes and padded the upper lip with a bit more of the dark grey clay.

An old sculpting professor, he said, used to compare finishing an art piece to raising children and realizing, "OK, they're old enough and ready to go out on their own."

It's the same teacher Gibney

pays homage to with his mustache. He said he was asked to show up at the professor's retirement party 20-plus years ago pretending to be a long-lost relative of Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali. He kept the iconic look going when the professor passed away soon afterward.

So many years spent as a professional sculptor — often working in contemplative solitude and patiently shaping a fluid form from hard stone — gave him insights he believes will be valuable as a priest.

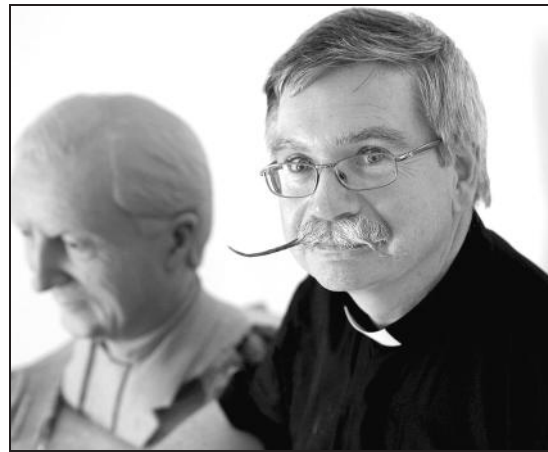
Though a person's soul is not anything like a chunk of clay or rock, caring for "people's eternal life is something that takes time, it takes an understanding of people" and patiently uncovering what they need, he said.

A pastor needs to be creative because there is no "cookie cutter" answer or response valid for everyone, and the priest needs to recognize his own limitations, "to recognize what you can do" or not.

Though he still has another year of studies in Rome before priestly ordination back in the Diocese of Saskatoon, Gibney said he hopes he will be able to practise a bit of his craft at different parishes just as he found a way to continue his artwork during his studies.

The Beda College, where he

has completed his third year of studies, has been extremely accommodating, Gibney said, letting him use an extra room furnished with a sink as his makeshift studio. He repurposed a gut-



CNS/Paul Haring

SCULPTOR SEMINARIAN — Seminarian and sculptor Edward Gibney poses near an almost-completed statue of Msgr. Roderick Strange in his studio at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome.

ted metal desk frame for his sculpting stand and mounted circles of particle board together for the banding wheel.

In Saskatoon he produced many works of religious art, including a large granite representation of the baby Jesus, Mary and her aging mother Ann for St. Ann's senior citizens' home.

Seeing how God was "working with me in my studio" and recognizing "he's working with you all the time in everything you do" was a key part of his vocational discernment, he said.

Making art is a form of evangelization, Gibney believes.

— COMMUNITY, page 14

Leaders call for national palliative care strategy

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Representatives from the Catholic, evangelical, Jewish and Muslim faith communities called for a well-funded, quality national palliative care strategy.

The interfaith leaders made the pitch June 14 as the euthanasia and assisted suicide bill, designated as Bill C-14, was headed for more debate and possible amendments in the Canadian Senate before a vote.

“The need for quality, widely accessible palliative care should be one of the most pressing concerns of our country,” Bishop Noel Simard of Valleyfield, Que., said on behalf of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. “Faith communities, along with health care workers, have for centuries stood by the bedsides of the dying to comfort and protect, to heal and console. Today, as faith leaders, we recommit ourselves to this sacred task of providing the spiritual care so essential to palliative care.”

Simard said the use of language

such as “medical aid in dying” to refer to the bill or Quebec’s euthanasia law creates confusion because it sounds like palliative care that seeks to alleviate physical suffering while accompanying the patient and attending to psychosocial and spiritual needs. Rather, he explained, palliative care views the ill person as someone who must be cared for with compassion until natural death.

Under the proposed law, a person is seen as a subject, the bishop said. The words euthanasia and assisted suicide in reference to the bill should be used because they seek to eliminate the person in order to eliminate suffering, he said.

“Palliative care alleviates the suffering of those nearing the end of life, yet, lamentably, it is not accessible to everyone,” said Julia Beazley, of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. “As faith communities and as Canadians, we must commit to making high-quality palliative care available to all.”

The statement called for five steps to improve access to quality palliative care.

— Development of a national strategy involving all levels of government, from federal to provincial and municipal.

— Ensuring palliative care and end-of-life care is available in all settings, including the home.

— A commitment to improving quality and consistency.

— More support for caregivers and their families through various means such as tax breaks.

— Ensuring the health care system respects people nearing the end of life and considers their psychological and spiritual needs and those of their families during the dying process.

“Preserving human dignity and providing comfort to the most vulnerable among us are core Canadian values that transcend faith



CCN/D. Gyapong

PALLIATIVE CARE STRATEGY NEEDED — Valleyfield Bishop Noel Simard joined representatives of the Evangelical Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths June 14 to call for a national palliative care strategy.

communities,” said Shimon Koffler Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs in Toronto. “In light of Canada’s aging population, there is a pressing need to improve access to high-quality palliative care, which can make a world of difference in the well-being of

patients — and their families — entering the final stages of life.”

Imam Sikander of the Canadian Council of Imams said it is a human duty to care for the sick and dying. “Fortunately, many Canadians take this responsibility very seriously. We must ensure though that the ill and dying are not left out of our care and compassion. Every life is worth living and saving. Let us come together to enhance and cherish life,” he said.

The Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association reports that 15 per cent to 30 per cent of Canadians have access to palliative care, despite the fact 96 per cent of them support it. In addition, families pay about 25 per cent of the costs, placing a heavy financial burden on those caring for the terminally ill.

The association said palliative care would save the health care system between \$7,000 and \$8,000 per patient at end of life and warned of the coming demographic crunch as the number of senior citizens increases.

Advocates for those living with disabilities relieved

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Among Senate amendments to its assisted suicide Bill C-14 that were rejected by the Liberal government was one that removes the requirement that death be reasonably foreseeable.

In a 190 to 108 vote June 16 the House of Commons approved a motion the justice minister send a letter to the Senate regarding which amendments it accepted or rejected. The yeas included a number of Conservative MPs, including some staunch pro-life MPs; the nays included other pro-life MPs and NPD MPs who wanted the bill broadened.

The Senate passed an amended version of Bill C-14 June 15 by a 64-12 vote, with one abstention. The upper chamber proposed seven amendments, with the most controversial being the Senator Serge Joyal amendment that replaced the reasonably foreseeable death requirement with language from the Supreme Court’s Carter decision that broadened eligibility to almost anyone who felt they suffered from an intolerable and irremediable medical condition. Joyal and a majority of senators were persuaded by the testimony of some constitutional experts that the unamended bill was unconstitutional because its criteria were not as broad as those in the Supreme Court of Canada’s Carter decision.

The government’s position was good news to representatives of a range of groups advocating for persons living with disabilities, who were holding a national forum at an Ottawa hotel June 16 to stress the importance of death being reasonably foreseeable as an important safeguard for vulnerable Canadians living with disabilities and mental illness.

“Yes, we must respect the autonomous choices of people who are dying,” said disabilities rights expert Catherine Frazee who spoke to the conference via Skype. “For persons for whom natural death is

not near, please let’s not make (suicide) easier.”

She warned “opening the doors wide” is a “form of inducement” and for some who struggle with lack of support and services, it



CCN/D. Gyapong

Senator Betty Unger

will become “an invitation to seek an unencumbered death.”

“In a culture where frailty and dependence is so greatly feared, people will die to avoid them, and die with the assistance of the state,” she said. “Frailty and dependence will become difficult to bear.”

She said those like herself who are frail and dependent can flourish, but “our ability to flourish will become extinguished.”

Present at the meeting, organized by the Canadian Association for Community Living, was Canada’s Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities Carla Qualtrough who said she had worked with the other cabinet ministers to ensure protection for disabled Canadians.

“We believe it is crucial to have ‘reasonable foreseeability’ in the bill,” she said.

“Death is not better than living with a disability,” she said.

Among the amendments the

government accepted was one requiring a palliative care assessment. It amended the language slightly to read “assistance in dying after having been informed of the means available to relieve their suffering, including palliative care.”

Wilson-Raybould and Health Minister Jane Philpott told journalists June 16 they “are confident that the original language in Bill C-14 strikes the necessary and appropriate balance in terms of medical assistance in dying, in balancing personal autonomy and eligibility for medical assistance in dying with the necessary and fundamental protections that need to be in place to protect vulnerable people.”

The third reading debate in the Senate preceding the vote saw impassioned speeches on all sides of the debate, especially from those opposed in principle to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Senator Betty Unger said she spoke for the many who “weep that Canada’s moral fabric is being destroyed” and “dearly held values are being shredded.”

Unger also took aim at the Supreme Court of Canada.

“The Supreme Court has supplanted our elected parliamentarians by foisting judge-made law on Canadians,” she said. “Although parliaments across the nation could invoke the ‘notwithstanding’ clause to ensure that this decision receives its proper deliberation, they seem unprepared to do so.”

Rookie senator and former Manitoba Justice and chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Senator Murray Sinclair warned against too expansive a view of an assisted death as a constitutional right. He and several other senators said they preferred the original wording of the bill.

Coming from the indigenous community, Sinclair stressed, “life is sacred” and allowing someone to end their life with others’ assistance should be approached “very

carefully and only incrementally.”

“We shouldn’t be too eager to rush forward and make it an expansive, all-embracing right that everybody can easily exercise,” he said.

Sinclair said he had recently come from meeting with young people in Attawapiskat, a community facing a suicide crisis. He warned of the effect on these people “if they believe that Canadian society embraces the idea of suicide as a matter of principle, even if we say that you can only do it under medical supervision, they will see it as an acceptable alternative to living.”

C-14 ‘a balanced approach’

Continued from page 1

stitutionality would be challenged and it is unfair to put the financial burden on the families or groups who would have to mount those challenges.

But other senators objected to handing over Parliament’s role to the unelected judges of the Supreme Court.

Senator Dennis Patterson said the Joyal amendment would pay too much homage to the unelected judges on the Supreme Court. “I believe in our system Parliament is supreme, not the Supreme Court.”

Senator Mike Duffy said many residents of Prince Edward Island had asked that “we respect the sanctity of life and stop medical aid in dying.”

“We can’t,” he said, noting the Supreme Court of Canada had mandated it. Duffy noted during the debates on the Canadian constitution that many MPs opposed the Charter because it would “take power out of the hands of elected representatives and put it into the hands of unelected judges.”

Prime minister at the time, Pierre Trudeau, then “agreed to accept the notwithstanding clause,” in what Duffy called a “Canadian

compromise.”

Duffy said the Parliament must obey court rulings, but courts “should show proper deference to Parliament.”

“C-14 reflects a balanced approach,” Duffy said. “It’s not everything opponents want, nor a carbon copy of Carter decision. It’s a Canadian compromise.”

Senator David Tkachuk, who said he is opposed on principle to euthanasia and assisted suicide, said the Supreme Court justices “have taken away my right to choose.”

He warned of “mission creep,” based on the experience in the Netherlands where more and more categories of people have sought and received euthanasia. At the same time, he argued for the motion to pass.

Senator Denise Batters expressed disappointment the Liberal government ignored Senate amendments that would have strengthened safeguards, such as those to protect the mentally ill.

The House of Commons did partially accept Senator Nicole Eaton’s amendment concerning a palliative care assessment. The bill will require patients to be informed of treatment options, including palliative care.

Francis builds on ecumenical progress with Armenians

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — In a country that is more than 90 per cent Orthodox, the biggest event in Armenia this year will be a three-day visit by Pope Francis.

"It's a huge deal," said Rev. Elias Kirejian, Armenian Catholic pastor of St. Gregory the Illuminator Parish in Toronto.

In the poor, isolated country wedged in between Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Roman pontiff is seen as anything but a threat to the country's ancient Christian heritage and identity.

"Armenians, they remain faithful to their faith and heritage," said Kirejian. "Especially to their Christian heritage throughout centuries of persecution."

Most media attention during the June 24 to 26 visit is expected to fall on the pope's visit to the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex and Museum in Yerevan, Armenia's capital. However, at least as significant will be the demonstration of ecumenical progress between Catholics and the Armenian Apostolic Church at the same time as almost all the patriarchs of the Orthodox world are gathered in Crete for the largest council in Orthodox history.

While most of the Eastern Christian world is working out agreements and disagreements on questions of mission, marriage, ecumenism and the autonomy of churches, Pope Francis and Armenian Patriarch and Catholicos His Holiness Karekin II will demonstrate a degree of ecumenical communion between Catholics and the Armenian Apostolic Church that is almost complete.

Twenty-thousand Armenians are expected for an outdoor papal mass in Gyumri, Armenia's second city, on June 25. They will be joined by about 3,000 Catholic pilgrims from abroad. Apostolic Armenians are not going to be excluded from the communion line.

Though the Apostolic Armenian Church has always considered itself Oriental Orthodox, unlike other Orthodox churches it never formally broke with Rome. Armenians dissented from the consensus

at the Council of Chalcedon and were considered "monophysite" — a belief that Jesus' human nature was subordinate to his divine nature — but in recent times that has been considered a misunderstanding based on language.

The Armenian Apostolic Church has always maintained its independence from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople and resisted attempts during the Soviet era to lump it in under the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow.

The first Christian kingdom in history, Armenia was declared officially Christian by St. Gregory the Illuminator and King Tiridates III in 301. Armenians believe their church was established by the apostles Bartholomew and Thaddeus.

In the post-Soviet era, relations between Rome and Armenia have grown warmer. St. John Paul II visited Armenia in 2002. Pope Francis has built upon the last 25 years of ecumenical progress by recognizing the Armenian genocide of 1915 last year and then by declaring the mystical poet St. Gregory of Narek a doctor of the universal church.

Gregory of Narek's major literary work is a collection of prayers known as the *Book of Lamentations*, but which the saint himself titled an *Encyclopedia of Prayer for All Nations*.

In Toronto the ecumenical closeness between Armenian Catholics and Armenian Apostolic Christians is well established and simply assumed, said Kirejian.

"They are in a fraternal collaboration in all aspects of mission," said the Catholic pastor.

Toronto Armenians make very little distinction between the two churches. Divine liturgy in an Armenian Catholic church is almost indistinguishable from liturgy in an Armenian Apostolic Church.

"In my church I have lots of Armenian Apostolic Church. They come. They attend the mass and with the permission of my bishop they receive communion," Kirejian said.

Kirejian would not preside at divine liturgy in an Armenian Apostolic church without specific permission and an invitation. Nor would an Apostolic priest cele-

brate mass at the Armenian Catholic church without similar permission. But Kirejian often presides at weddings and performs baptisms for Armenian Apostolic families.

"Any Armenian, be they Catholic or be they Apostolic, feels at home in any Armenian church," he said.

The Armenian community in Toronto has been drawn even closer together by the arrival of Armenian refugees from Syria.

"They don't speak English well, so the Canadian Armenians — third or fourth generation — have to speak whatever they know of Armenian. They have to communicate with them in Armenian," said Zovig Kheir Ayanian, principal of the Armenian Catholic Saturday School run out of St. Gerald Catholic Elementary School.

The school attracts 230 students on weekends from Armenian families who want to pass on their language and culture to the next generation. Recently the school has welcomed 35 new Syrian Armenian students, refugees from Syria's civil war.

"They are mostly Apostolic, but they like to come to Catholic schools," said Ayanian.

For Armenians, welcoming refugees is naturally a church-

based effort. The bond between Armenian culture and Christianity is too deep for it to be otherwise, said Karejian.

"I don't know how to describe this — this tremendous bonding between our heritage and our faith. The Christian faith and the Armenian heritage, they are inseparable. Any Armenian, regardless of his denomination feels at home in churches, in the schools, in communities," he said.



M. Weber

FIRST DAYS OF SUMMER — "In the summer, the days were long, stretching into each other. Out of school, everything was on pause and yet happening at the same time, this collection of weeks when anything was possible." — Sarah Dessen

Special emphasis placed on women, girls

Continued from page 3

"A special emphasis will be placed on women and girls and on consulting on how to apply a feminist lens throughout all of Canada's international assistance activities," said the press release announcing the consultation.

While it is not logical to equate feminism with the abortion rights agenda, that language might ring Catholic alarm bells — especially coming less than a month after Bibeau unblocked funding to abortion services within the "Maternal, Newborn and Child Health" initiatives of Canadian aid funding.

Development and Peace, however, has had a policy on gender and "full recognition of women's rights as human rights" since 1995. Women and children first has been a principle of the Catholic agency dating right back to its 1967 founding. It just doesn't think abortions solve real women's problems, which start with nutrition, income, family violence, education, access to the courts and government services and basic health.

Leduc's strategy is to ensure Development and Peace is delivering aid and solidarity within a Catholic framework.

"Development and Peace will continue to work in the areas it knows best, that it supports and that are in line with the social teaching of the Catholic Church and the values within it," he said. "That's at least been made very clear by the minister in the consultations thus far."

The Sustainable Development Goals — 169 specific commitments Canada signed onto last September at the United Nations which aim to end deep poverty around the globe by 2030 — support Leduc's broader interpretation of what it means to raise up women and children within an effective aid policy.

Whatever else the policy rethink does, it must create a plan for Bibeau's department to make meaningful contributions on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 169 targets that support them.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank also believes it has a role to play in strategies that prioritize women. The organization has just

issued a report called "Equal Harvests" pointing out women make up 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. If women farmers got equal land, training, tools and inputs as male farmers they could increase their yields 20 to 30 per cent. That adds up to higher family incomes, healthier children, more economic opportunity and fewer people trading rural poverty for life in the slums of huge metropolises.

"Eliminating gender discrimination would reduce the number of food insecure people in the world by 12-17 per cent," claims the report.

Cornelius says Canada needs to reclaim its former role as a leader in agricultural development by bringing its investment in farming and food systems back up to \$450 million a year.

"Growth in the agricultural sector gives you a huge bang for your buck, because it has such an employment creating effect," he said, reducing poverty "at a much faster rate than growth in any other sector of the economy."

Laudato Si', Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change and the environment, is the key for Development and Peace, which has never been satisfied to leave foreign aid up to the experts. Its mandate has always called for it to educate ordinary Canadians about the rest of the world and how poverty has come to dominate the lives of the global majority. In Leduc's eyes a Canadian policy for development aid has to involve Canadians and all of their most cherished beliefs, values, hopes and ideals.

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CWL marks 90th anniversary in Humboldt

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — Ninety years of faith and service were marked June 4 at an anniversary celebration for the Catholic Women’s League at St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt, Sask. The 90th anniversary tea in the parish hall included displays and a program highlighting the anniversary and the contributions of the CWL to the parish and the community.

MC Jenny Irwin welcomed special guests including Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, a former national CWL spiritual adviser; provincial CWL president Jean Reader; diocesan CWL president Marlene Van Dreser and president-elect Ingrid Eggerman; Fred Stadnyk, Grand Knight of the Humboldt Knights of Columbus council; Parish Pastoral Council representative Darwin Riendeau; and Sister Alexis Taphorn, OSU, spiritual director of St. Augustine CWL. Also in attendance were pastor Rev. Ephraim Mensah and associate pastor Rev. Cosmas Epifano, OSB.

“The CWL has always been a group that develops leaders and developed leadership skills,” said Novecosky. “Thank you for all the work you have done and for your presence in our various communities.”

“You are the pillars of your parish in many, many ways,” said provincial president Jean Reader, bringing congratulations and presenting a 90th anniversary certificate to the Humboldt council. “Remember you are the roots of the CWL, this is where it all starts and without women like you the Catholic Women’s League would not exist.”

Reader pointed to this year’s CWL theme: one heart, one voice, one mission. “Obviously this has been your theme for many years as you spread the Good News in your homes, your parishes and your communities,” she said. “Live, listen, learn and laugh: that’s how I see the CWL.”

Marlene VanDreser and Ingrid Eggerman of the diocesan council also presented a certificate of congratulations to the Humboldt coun-

cil. “Your help is needed more than ever with the challenges that our church and society are facing,” said Eggerman. “God is asking you to be the passionate women he has created you to be, dedicated to your church and your beliefs.”

“For nine hardworking decades, you generous ladies and those before you have enhanced and solidified St. Augustine Parish, helping with weddings, funerals, church ministries and numerous unglamorous jobs. The CWL has

always been there,” said Darwin Riendeau of St. Augustine parish council, describing the CWL as “unsung heroes.”

Bev Yeager read greetings from those unable to attend, including messages from national CWL president Barbara Dowling and Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen.

“Many women worked to keep this organization strong and thriving, making the league a vital part of the parish and community,” said

Humboldt CWL president Karen Fleischhacker, sharing some of the history of the local league, from its earliest days through decades that have seen many changes.

Fleischhacker described a range of projects, milestones, and undertakings in the parish and the community initiated and supported by the CWL over the years. Highlights included assisting newcomers and refugees, collecting materials and funds for missions, providing funeral honour

guards and lunches, starting a Birthright chapter, initiating children’s liturgy, and much more. “Whenever a need arose, the CWL rose to the challenge,” Fleischhacker said.

Taphorn also spoke, noting that the anniversary tea was being held on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. “Mary is our strength and always will be our strength,” she said.

The celebration concluded with a prayer led by Mensah.

Treaty Elder Series launched in Saskatoon diocese

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — A Treaty Elder Series was recently launched in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, with a presentation after Sunday mass June 5 at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Saskatoon.

Elder Gladys Wapas-Greyeyes of Thunderchild First Nation shared her testimony of faith and love of her culture, with Lyndon Linklater of the Office of Treaty Commissioner providing insights into the history and meaning of treaties.

Wapas-Greyeyes said that when she meets people and looks at their faces, “what I see is a garden of flowers. The Creator has created all of us — and I heard in church that he created us in his image.

“To this day, I live by my mother’s teachings. My mother never went to school,” Wapas-Greyeyes said. “And I learned English from my children.”

Wapas-Greyeyes described how her mother was called a pagan by missionaries. “When my mother married my father in a traditional ceremony, it was honoured,” she said, “but when the missionaries came, they were told that all their children were born in sin.”

She described living with anger for a long time: anger at being taken from her parents, anger against those who cut her hair, beat her for speaking her own language, and abused her

and the other students.

“At first I was so angry about the way we were treated, so sad because of what happened. These are memories and experiences that I will never forget. But I forgave. I don’t dwell on them. But I have scars to prove what happened.”

When she told her mother that she hated those who ran the residential school, her mother said: “Don’t say that, my child; you cannot hate a person.” Her mother taught that all people are precious to the Creator. “My mother taught me that, and she said that in the future there are going to be many ways to worship the Creator.”

Wapas-Greyeyes spoke about the value she has come to place on education for her children and grandchildren. “I always say to them, you are the future — you are the ones who are going to make sure that what our ancestors wanted in the treaties are not going to be forgotten.”

Nature is a teacher, and the legends and stories of her culture reveal truth, said Wapas-Greyeyes. “Everything teaches us a lesson.”

Jointly co-ordinated by the Diocese of Saskatoon and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, the session was introduced by Myron Rogal of the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace.

“Through the power of storytelling, we can listen, share and respond to the richness of indigenous spiritual traditions,” said Rogal. “It’s an opportunity to open our minds and our hearts, to listen and to seek to understand.”

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) was created in 1989 to bring together parties to resolve outstanding issues regarding land, and over the past 27 years it has evolved, said Linklater. Today one of the OTC offerings is a speaker’s bureau, which provides workshops, talks and information about treaties.

The OTC also has an education department that holds sessions about treaties. Some 10 years ago, Brad Wall attended one of those sessions, noted Linklater. “He heard this curious phrase ‘we are all treaty people,’” said Linklater, and he grew in understanding about the importance of treaties to all people.

“When he became premier, one of the first things he did was to make teaching treaties in the classroom compulsory. We are the only province in Canada that does that.”

Through many speaking engagements, Linklater said he has seen the fairness of Canadians, and the importance of law to Canadian people. “My favourite law is the law that says I cannot go to your garage and say, ‘I found a car.’ By that same way of thinking, you cannot go to someone else’s country and say ‘I discovered land’ if people have already been living there.”

Indigenous peoples have been living here for thousands of years, something that has been recognized in Canadian law going back to the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and through the treaties between the land’s original inhabitants and the newcomers.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report released last year gives 94 recommendations for reconciliation, Linklater noted. Since Europeans have arrived in North America, the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the newcomers has been plagued by misunderstanding and misinformation. “It continues to this day.”

He stressed that those listening



K. Yaworski

TREATY ELDER — Gladys Wapas-Greyeyes of Thunderchild First Nation was the featured speaker at St. Francis Xavier Parish after mass June 5, part of a series that has been initiated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon in conjunction with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

to his talks today are not to blame for the misunderstandings and injustices of the past. “You had nothing to do with this. However, we all live together today.”

Every Canadian is called to awareness and reconciliation. One of the best ways to deal with any problem is to become educated, to become aware of what happened, said Linklater, noting that residential schools ended when ordinary Canadian people found out about them and the suffering they were causing. “Ordinary Canadians forced the government to end residential schools,” he said.

Clarification

In the final paragraph of the article “Foster care system ‘badly broken’” (May 25, page 6), Blake Sittler wrote, “The Chotowetzes’ plan is to mobilize a group of churches who are willing to be involved and then undertake a pilot project with four foster families. . . .” The pilot project is actually starting with four “kinship families” (those who are supporting the foster families).



K. Yaworski

COMMISSIONING CELEBRATION — St. Therese School of Faith and Mission at Bruno, Sask., held a commissioning celebration May 21, with Bishop Donald Bolen sending forth 37 students. The class of 2016 included 28 one-year graduates and nine two-year graduates. The nine-month Catholic post-secondary school of faith formation engages students in an encounter with Jesus Christ, following the spiritual example of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The program includes daily prayer and sacraments, community living, and a curriculum that includes theology, church history, philosophy, and Scripture classes. Alumni are eligible to apply transfer credits toward St. Stephen’s University in New Brunswick and Redeemer Pacific College at Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C.

Bishop Bolen testifies in Theadore Court Case

By Frank Flegel

YORKTON, Sask. — Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen described Catholic schools as characterized by a rigorous pursuit of truth. The bishop was called as a witness for Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division in what has become known as the Theadore Court Case. The division is a defendant along with the government of Saskatchewan in a case brought by what was then the York School District following the closure of the Theadore Public School in 2003. A Catholic school was subsequently organized in Theadore and the students remained there rather than be bused to schools in other communities. The York School District morphed into the Good Spirit School

Division in 2006. Bolen was questioned by lawyers for Christ the Teacher Division about his background to establish him as an expert witness, then questioned about a bishop’s role in Catholic education. Bolen described his background from childhood up, including his ordination as priest and to the episcopate. He elaborated, as requested by Christ the Teacher lawyers, on his ecumenical efforts and his work with other Christian churches while in Rome. The bishop spoke about the evolution in the church since Vatican II and what it has done to increase relationships with and respect for all religions and what is expected in Catholic schools. “Catholic schools do not teach anything in contradiction to Cath-

olic teachings,” said Bolen, but Catholic schools are expected to teach about other religions and respect them. “We hold more things in common than divide us.” He related how a new curriculum in Catholic studies is being developed with the approval of Catholic bishops. Throughout his testimony Bolen emphasized that parents are a child’s first teachers and they have a right to decide which school to send their children. He described how the first

schools in the province were usually established by religious orders and were not restricted to Catholic children. “The Gospel permeates all Catholic schools, and there is some evangelizing, but Catholic schools do not proselytize,” said Bolen. “We don’t try and convert non-Catholic students to Catholicism.” The bishop was asked to explain several paragraphs in Vatican II documents and his own writings, all related to Catholic teaching, educa-

tion and the importance that all children have a right to education. The cross-examination by plaintiff lawyers focused mainly on having Bolen further explain the meaning of the documents. The Theadore case is more than 10 years old. It argues that Catholic schools do not have a constitutional right to accept non-Catholic students. The court began hearing the case in late 2015 and after several delays and adjournments is expected to wrap up this summer.

Candidates prepare for confirmation

By Denise Walley

HOLLAND, Man. — Deacon Gilles Urquhart led a confirmation retreat at Our Lady of the Prairies Monastery in Holland for 30 candidates of the Holland and Swan Lake Catholic Centres May 28. These young people were confirmed by St. Boniface Archbishop Albert LeGatt on June 5. The theme of the retreat focused on the role of priest, prophet and king granted to each of us by virtue of our baptism. As a priest, each one of us is to proclaim the Word of God through our actions. If someone strikes us, our Christian response is to turn the other cheek rather than strike back. Our prophetic charism encourages us to speak truth that is the Word of God and in order to speak

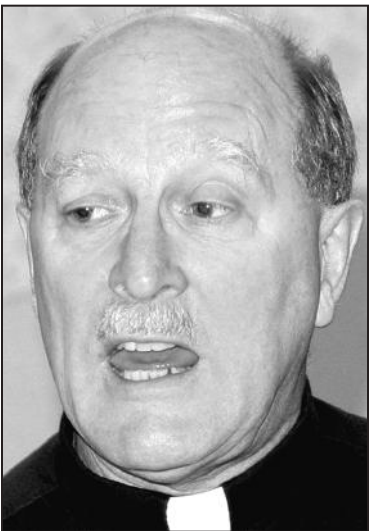
the Word of God, we must be familiar with it and know it. Each of us was challenged to read Scripture daily in order to know what it is that Jesus taught us. As king, we are to serve one another, as Jesus served. As the ultimate king looked after his people, we too are to look after one another. The children participated in small group discussions, brainstorming how they are able to live their roles as priest, prophet and king. Before lunch, candidates received the sacrament of reconciliation to be spiritually prepared and open to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit on confirmation day. After the final presentation, the children and their parents returned to St. John Berchmans Church in Holland for a rehearsal in anticipation of the celebration of the sacrament.

Redemptorist speaks on end-of-life issues

By Julien Fradette

ST. BONIFACE — Rev. Mark Miller, CSsR, is concerned about end-of-life issues, is concerned about what is happening in Canada with respect to laws that will permit physician-assisted deaths. He was in Winnipeg May 12 to speak at St. Timothy’s Parish to a capacity crowd as part of the tri-diocesan National Week for Life and the Family. Miller was the clinical bioethicist at St. Paul’s Hospital in Saskatoon for 16 years. Following his appointment as provincial for the English-speaking Redemptorists of Canada and his move to Toronto, he continues to work part-time at the Centre for Clinical Ethics at St. Joseph’s and St. Michael’s hospitals. End of life is “a sacred or a holy time,” noted Miller, but it can also be a time of pain and a feeling of being abandoned. In his practice, Miller would often hear patients say, “I want to get this over with.” The issue, then, was the control of pain. “When the pain was controlled and when they knew they would be cared for, they wanted to live. They needed to know they would not be abandoned,” Miller emphasized. End-of-life care takes place in programs of Palliative Care or in a hospice. Miller points out that this is the “most holistic form of medicine we have today.” Its primary

goal is to “help you live while you are dying.” It has “a very simple philosophy,” he said, “and it’s we don’t hasten death and we don’t prolong dying.” Yet, in Canada, only 30 per cent of Canadians have access to palliative care. Miller spoke to the often-confusing matter of what interventions that we, as Catholics, need to accept as we approach the end of life. “Whatever you are going through, you get to weigh the potential benefits against the burdens,” Miller said. “If you feel the burdens are too great for you, you can say no to the treatment. It is perfectly ethical to say, ‘I don’t want this treatment any more.’” The burdens a patient considers could be physical, financial or family concerns. It is for the patient to decide. And, if they decide against treatment, palliative care is an alternative to be considered. Miller spoke, as well, to the legislation that is before the House of Commons: Bill C-14, an Act to Permit Medical Assistance in Dying. He questioned how the medical profession could be involved in the practice and offered this caution: “There is this myth that this is a decision being made by the patient himself or herself. Maybe occasionally that does happen, but I want you to think for a moment, how often our decisions are based on what we feel, what we hear from others.” A family member might say, “You know, Mom, we see you



PM file
Rev. Mark Miller, CSsR

suffering a lot. If you want to get it over with, we’ll support you.” “What does that sound like?” questioned Miller. What would Mom feel or think she should say? Miller also addressed the matter of Advanced Health Care Directives which “only take effect if you cannot make your own decisions.” He underscored the importance for everyone to have such directives regarding their health care and to have conversations in families regarding our desires at the end of life. Examples of Advanced Health Care Directives can be seen at the St. Paul’s Hospital website, <http://www.stpaulshospital.org/patient/index.php?page=39>.

Victims work together

Continued from page 3

government to admit the wrongs they had done to the Young Chippewyan Band as well as the Mennonite people, and provide compensation along with some justice, and some land of their own. “At the beginning, nobody wanted to touch the claim, even the lawyers,” noted Weenie. “I’m really glad we’re at this point where we’re actually meeting, but we need a recognized First Nation to sponsor the claim so we can take it to court.” Her late husband pointed out that the Mennonites and Lutherans were also the victims of the situation, so they all had to work together. “The results from this you probably won’t see, it’s not for us, it’s for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren coming up,” noted Weenie, quoting her late husband. “Always remember the bigger picture.” “Part of our journey was learning about a people who had been displaced from that land and how we were beneficiaries of an injustice that allowed us to occupy the land,” noted Leonard Doell, asked four decades ago by the Mennonite Central Committee to investigate the history of Reserve 107. “We only

had a narrow picture of what actually happened, and now our story in the past 39 years has become more complete as we’ve filled it in with the Young Chippewyan people who’ve now become friends connected to us in a variety of ways.” Doell noted there were frequently misunderstandings and it took a lot of time and patience, but also perseverance because the task is to keep working at the issue. The MCC is currently collecting funds to help with the land claims process, and hopes *Reserve 107* will be used by other faith communities as a model to begin achieving grassroots justice, and peace and reconciliation over the land and the original inhabitants of the land. “As much as I’ve come to know these people, I also realize that it isn’t just about land but that they also come to fill fulfilled lives in their community — that they find their place, that they feel they are complete and belong in this land and have everything we have, that’s my hope for them,” said Froese. The Young Chippewyans are currently scattered across two countries, but the shared hope is that land will be returned to them so that justice can be done, and the Young Chippewyans can have a home base of their own.



K. Yaworski

BISHOP’S CUP — This year’s Bishop’s Cup basketball event was held June 6 at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon, and included a game between clergy/seminarians and a junior all-star team — won by the youth. Later, in the final match between older youth and Bishop Donald Bolen’s team, the youth once again captured the cup. Organized by the diocesan office of Youth and Vocations, the annual Bishop’s Cup includes a pizza supper and an evening of short matches before the final game.

Beloved spiritual writer enjoying life more than ever

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Rev. Ron Rolheiser's next book will be about death.

Five years ago the popular newspaper columnist, book author, theologian and university administrator was diagnosed with colon cancer. It was caught early. A six-month round of chemotherapy seemed to knock it out. But two years ago it came back. Now there are chemo pills every day and checkups every six months.

"Right now I'm clean," said Rolheiser on a visit to Toronto in early June.

At 68 he remembers taking his health for granted through his younger years. Now he goes to the doctor twice each year and he appreciates what cancer is teaching him — how life is precious and worthy of his gratitude.

"It's not bad to have your life dealt out in six-month segments," he said. "I've never appreciated life more. I've never worked harder. I've never enjoyed life more."

But Rolheiser didn't decide to write about death while sitting in the doctor's waiting room. He's not writing about his personal experience. That's not his style.

He wants to complete work he started with 1998's *The Holy Longing* and continued with 2014's *The Sacred Fire*. Rolheiser describes the first book as a guide to "how to get your life together." *The Sacred Fire* is another guide. This time, "how to give your life away."

His next book will complete the trilogy, teaching readers "how to give your death away."

As a prairie boy called to serve in a missionary order, Rolheiser has never been one to parade his personal experience or his private self. Through the 34 years of his "In Exile" column carried in 80-plus Catholic newspapers (including The Prairie Messenger) and 13 books on spirituality, there's not enough information about Ron Rolheiser for more than a bare sketch of the man himself.

Rolheiser grew up one of 16 children on a farm near the Saskatchewan-Alberta border. His parents came to Canada in a wave of German immigration from western Russia between the 1905 famine and the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. There wasn't much more than the farm, the school and St. Donatus Parish in Cactus Lake, Sask.

In his earliest memories the Rolheiser farm didn't have electricity. He was a young teen in Grade 8 when the family got its first television.

"West-central Saskatchewan isn't the centre of the planet, though it's a good place to grow up," said Rolheiser, in Toronto to address a conference organized by the Henri Nouwen Society.

He was 17 when he entered the Oblate novitiate. He talks about how first his upbringing and then his seven years of Oblate formation kept him cocooned and protected.

"Until I was about 23 or 24 years old, I was really in a greenhouse. Greenhouses protect young seedlings," he said. "I look at it as a great gift. It frees you up. . . . As a religious, as a priest, as a minister I'm really deeply grateful for



Catholic Register/M. Swan

BELOVED SPIRITUAL WRITER — At age 68, Rev. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, says he has never enjoyed life more.

those roots. It gives an anchor. There's a powerful freedom to it."

Humility is built into his humble origins. As a writer, Rolheiser fears how relying on personal anecdote and memory can descend into triviality.

"My day at the zoo. Who cares?" is his first caution against any temptation to recycle his life in his writing. "The other is that it's too exhibitionistic — more information than we need. We don't always have to see reality through your prism."

Rolheiser concedes there are writers who can build insight from their personal experience. He admires Rev. Henri Nouwen's ability to do just that. When Nouwen was alive, Rolheiser consulted the veteran of spiritual literature as one writer to another. But he senses he's a different sort of writer than his fellow graduate of the University of Louvain.

"It's a talent. It's a different kind of talent," Rolheiser said.

Publishers aren't demanding Rolheiser turn himself into a confessional writer. They're quite happy with his ability to turn theological and psychological insight from his academic training into kitchen-table conversation about meaning in the lives of ordinary people. It's a formula that sells, big time. *The Holy Longing* has been through 15 editions and has sold more than 250,000 copies in hardback alone.

"I can honestly say his books are always awaited with anticipation by his legions of fans," said Novalis publishing director Joe Sinasac.

Even the smallest collection of Rolheiser talks and essays bound into a book is a surefire bestseller for the Canadian Catholic publisher. Sinasac rates Rolheiser one of the top five bestselling Catholic writers

in the English-speaking world. The audience for Rolheiser's books come to him for something they don't find anywhere else.

"Most of these (readers) are longtime Catholics who care deeply about their faith, but struggle occasionally remaining in the church at a time when virtually the entire culture fights against the religious impulse," Sinasac told The Catholic Register. "To them, he is a balm for the soul."

Rolheiser only now finds himself comfortable in the role of an elder. Until cancer came along, he never thought of himself that way. He was an October baby who was always the youngest in his class growing up. He was in the seminary at 17, when many others were still in high school.

"All of a sudden you're 68. You're not young at all," he said. "So it's an adjustment. But I'm working on it. I'm no longer a promising young man."

He also knows his readers aren't young. While he wishes he could connect with a younger audience ("I'm not happy that my readers are all old") he also knows his senior audience deserves to be treated with serious and sometimes challenging writing about the life of the spirit.

"Now I want to write a book about how you give your death away. Obviously, that's not going to interest anybody under 60, but it's important spirituality. It needs to be done. Sooner or later everybody is going to be over 50 or over 60," he said.

Over the years Rolheiser has patiently answered one question about his column over and over: "Why does Father Rolheiser say he's 'In Exile?'" He's ready whenever someone asks about the column he started writing when he was in graduate school in Belgium.

The idea of exile is a "central part of everything" in Christian thought, he said.

"We're lonely until we rest in God. We're not home yet. Here we have no lasting city. We wait for a city that's to come," said Rolheiser. "Let's hope this is not as good as it gets."

As a priest and a contributing member of the Oblate order, Rolheiser has never been a full-time writer. Today he's the president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. In the past he has taught theology at Newman Theological College in Edmonton and served as provincial superior for the Oblates in Western Canada.

He likes working. He's had sabbaticals, which have helped him produce two of his weightier books. But he's always ready to get back to work.

In Texas since 2005, Rolheiser has found himself on the edges of America's brutal culture wars, trying to embed a capacity for calm and moderation, even an instinct for wisdom, in seminarians and theology students.

"I'm distressed about the polarization in our culture," he said. "It's not nearly as bad in Canada as in the United States, where it's vicious. Since the Civil War it's never been this bad. People can't talk to each other."

The tragedy is that Catholics have imported the bruising rhetoric of contemporary political debate into the church, he said.

"We're supposed to be healers. We're supposed to be deflating this rhetoric," he said. "The liberal-conservative divide and viciousness and demonization in society has spilled over perfectly into the church."

From the point of view of an elder, Rolheiser hopes people can remember their opinions are subordinate to big and eternal questions about the value of truth, the hope we find in meaning and reasons we have for eucharist — that is, thanksgiving.

"I don't know how many years I've got left, but I've had a good life," he said. "I want to make it to 70, because they say 70 is the sum of a man's years. Even if it comes back now, I still have enough cruise control to make it to 70. I have no regrets. I've had a very, very charmed life . . . I've had 44 years of ministry already. The world owes me nothing."

Redemptorist Deacon Graham Hill, C.Ss.R.
Ordained, November 2015, Grande Prairie, Alberta



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A Sask. parish celebration: fireworks in 1917

Next year cities and towns across Canada will come together to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation and to mark their achievements. In the Village of Tramping Lake, Sask., folks will gather to celebrate the community's centennial and conjure images of another significant celebration from its past.

In the summer of 1917, St. Michael's Parish, which serves Tramping Lake and area, held its first church picnic. This was no ordinary church picnic. It was a celebration to honour the achievements of a community that had grown from a spattering of settlers only 13 years prior to a going concern with stores, a lumberyard, a grain elevator and more.

The parish priest, Rev. Joseph Guth, was determined to make the celebration an unforgettable event. As an early adopter of new technologies — an avid photographer and the first person in the village to install an electric plant in his house — Father Guth knew just what was needed. They would have food, games, even a fireworks show, but the truly unforgettable moment would come when he showed the crowd the first moving picture show to be seen in the community and, likely, in the surrounding St. Joseph's Colony.

The following excerpt from the short story "Fireworks Over Kaidenberg" is inspired by Father Guth and the events of that day.

By Jason Helt

Father Selz was beloved by his parishioners. Not only was he young with boyish good looks, he was also conversant and knowledgeable in the ways of his farm brethren, especially if the topic centred on the new technologies that were reshaping farm life — but his true passion was photography. He was an enthusiast with several cameras both large and small. He was fascinated both by the mechanics and the chemical miracles of the craft — for him the camera seemed to be an apparatus of divine intelligence. Yet, he knew not all in his flock were keen on the new inventions that were changing their everyday lives.

This impression became quite distinct when he first arrived to the community in the autumn of 1915. After his first mass, he was approached by a handful of the grey-haired congregation led by Mrs. Stolz. They were adamant that the mechanical binders used by their grown children to cut and bind sheaves of grain were possessed by the devil. How else could this magic be performed so quickly before their eyes?

"Father, we pray that you warn our sons against using the devil's

tools to harvest their grain," said Mrs. Stolz. "No good can come of it."

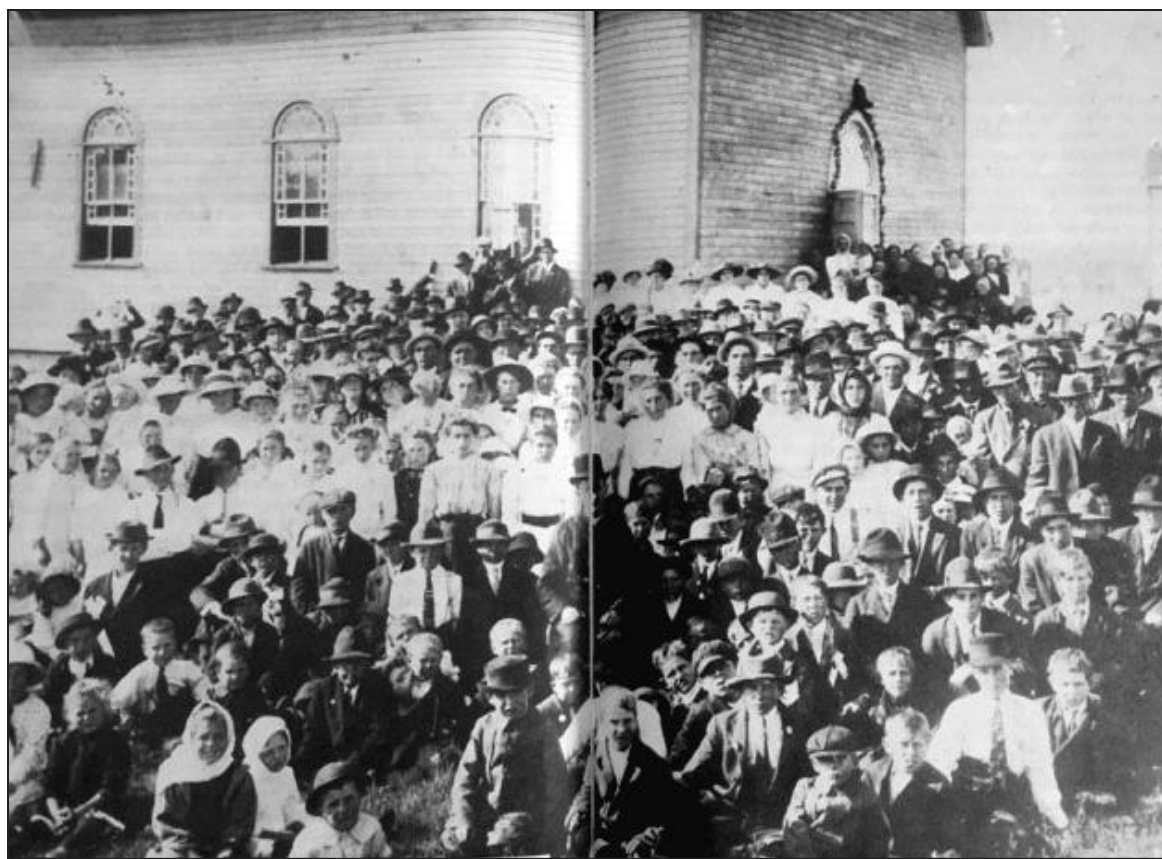
"Those demonic contraptions will surely bind their eternal souls to Lucifer's dark heart," interrupted Mrs. Zerr.

"Please, Father, they won't listen to us," continued Mrs. Stolz. "They are blinded by the devil's magic. He feeds their sloth . . ."

"And promises them riches."

Father Selz smiled with child-like innocence. "Good mothers," he replied, "I pray you believe me when I tell you these are not the devil's tools. They are made by good Christian men, and used to the benefit of the Lord's earthly kingdom. There is no need to fear for your children's eternal souls, especially, as it concerns the use of the binder or any similar device."

Of course, the old church mothers had received his message with the courtesy owed to his position, but he knew that there was no changing the hearts and minds of these folk. Their beliefs were born of ignorance and superstition and thereby immune from logic and even his own authority. However, Father Selz, being both a man of the cloth and a repudiator of ignorance, gradually extended his pastoral mission to include challenging technological superstitions of this sort. It's true he caused a sensation when he became the first in the community to purchase an electric plant to light his parish house, but it was the events and spectacle of the parish picnic of 1917 that his congregation would never forget, and for differ-



PARISH MEMORIES — This image is taken from the book *Memories of the Black Sea Germans* by Joseph S. Height. The original photo was likely taken by Father Guth.

ent reasons nor would he.

Father Selz wanted to bring the young community together to celebrate its many achievements. In little over 10 years, it had grown from a grid of survey markers in the prairie to a growing concern with a railroad, a new church, a scattering of prairie schoolhouses, two grain elevators, three general stores, a butcher, and two lumberyards. Still, over all these years, the towns' people and the farm folk had not come together to mark their successes. Father Selz knew the answer was found in the character of the people. Although they loved to sing and dance, they had become accustomed to poverty and this had made them modest. If he could show them a truly unforgettable event, perhaps, he could help them enjoy richer spiritual and communal lives. To do this, he knew he'd have to dream big and employ all of the tools at his disposal. There would be games, of course, and contests — the men loved to compete — but he wanted more. He wanted fireworks. Yes, he thought, that would be good. He'd be surprised if any of them had seen such a thing, though perhaps some had while in America. Many had passed through — some had even settled in the Dakotas — before coming to Canada.

He had his own memories of America. He had landed in Boston along with Father Trimbach. He remembered the heat of the city in the summer. The air thick and heavy and still the people bustled here and there, always working. What a relief it had been to find the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and commune with the Heavenly Father behind those stone walls. Then, in the evening, he took a walk down Washington Street. He followed a group of young men toward Franklin Square. He turned on a side street. From the doorway of a three-storey brick building he could hear the sound of men singing, and above him

the cries of a small child. On the street, a group of young boys raced by him chasing a friend down the sidewalk, while a young woman of distinguished appearance walked alongside an older man, likely her father, as he reckoned he saw some familial resemblance; then, to his right swarms of young people piled into a little shop. He stuck his head in the door. The folks took their seats on long wood benches after depositing their pennies in a jar. A camera-like apparatus stood behind them. His curiosity overtook him. He dropped three pennies in the jar and took a seat next to a pale-faced red haired man. Once the room filled and the windows were shuttered, a young man with greasy skin started up the apparatus as a piano player struck up a pattering tune. An image of a title appeared in English, then two men in hats and armed with revolvers entered a train office and tied up the clerk. Outside, a gang of men boarded a steam train and attacked the crew with their guns. They killed a man. Father Selz leaned forward. He was sweaty, nervous, his heart pounded with excitement. The gang hijacked the train and robbed the passengers before fleeing into the woods. It was unlike anything he had ever seen before. He didn't know whether he wanted the gang to run free or receive some sort of divine justice. The tempo of the music accelerated as the gang fled into the woods. A fiddle player had joined the pianist, but Father Selz couldn't say at which point in the film this had happened. Next, a posse was formed, the outlaws were tracked and hunted down — a final gunfight and the outlaws were slain. The crowd applauded. Father Selz applauded too. He put his hand to his heart. Never before had he been transported in this way. It was like a dream cast into being — he felt his spirit rise. He left the nickelodeon and walked the streets deciphering the scene he had seen before him. This was something new. Something that would change the world and that thought terrified him a little.

It was the remembrance of that feeling — it ran like a current of electricity from his head down to the base of his spine — which swayed him.

Yes! That's it. That's what he needed for the picnic. If he could bring that feeling to the people of Kaidenberg, if he could jolt their lives in that way, maybe they'd see something bigger in these stories and understand something of God's nature in those moving pictures. He had said as much himself to Father Trimbach.

"It has led me to a better understanding of the Holy Trinity," he told his compatriot the next day.

"What do you mean?"

"The image. The film holds our spirit not unlike God holds or extends one or more parts of his three-fold nature unto this world."

"But God did not make this film. Men made it. And there is nothing to stop them from using these tools to blaspheme against the Lord," countered Father Trimbach.

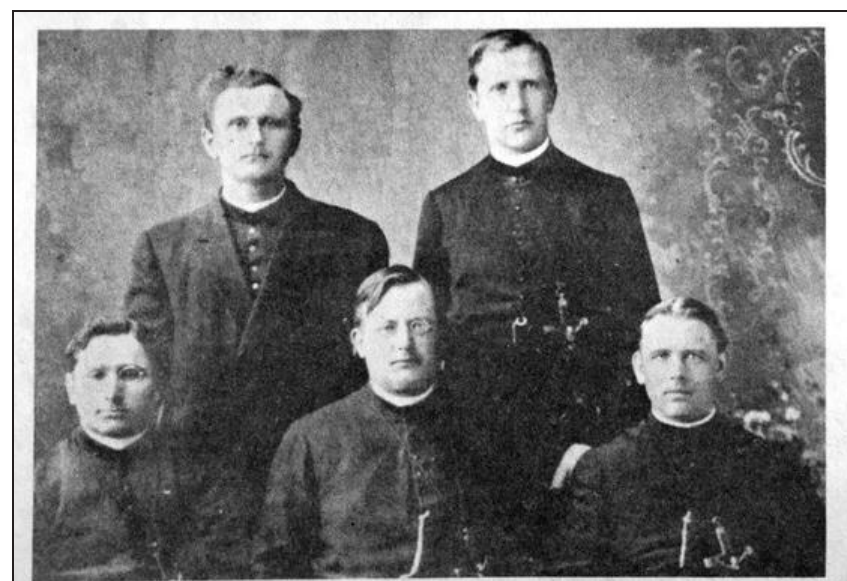
"Man can blaspheme in stone, if he so desires. What I see in this new machine, is more of a revelation than proof . . ."

"And what is your revelation?"

"That each man and woman imparts something of their soul or essence onto this world. We see this clearly in picture and moving pictures, and if man can impart something of himself through his words and actions that extends beyond his place and time in the world . . . well, I think this idea can only strengthen the faith of the believer and shake the mind of the atheist."

His explanation had quieted Father Trimbach's objections.

In the weeks and years that followed, he had relished the opportunity to discover more moving picture shows during his parish stay in Berlin, Ont., before moving west for his next assignment in Humboldt, Sask. He especially enjoyed the films of Charles Chaplin. Chaplin's simple, well-meaning characters were amusing and generally creating havoc in the lives of miserly aristocrats,



Oblate Pioneers in St. Joseph's Colony
Sitting: P. Palm, P. Krist, P. Schweers
Standing: P. Schwebius, P. Guth

OBLATE PIONEERS — Rev. Joseph Guth is seen in this photo at top right.

— CELEBRATION, page 10

Tragedy draws focus, and small cuts go unnoticed

By Caitlin Ward

At one point, Barack Obama told the world he didn't want to have to give another statement to the press about a mass shooting before his presidency was over, but experience bore out that he couldn't be sure of that. Was it after Sandy Hook or San Bernardino, or another mass shooting entirely? I can't remember. I tried to look it up but he talks about gun control a lot

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

so it was taking longer than I had patience for. I don't suppose the particulars matter in this case,

Crown of Age
The Ettes

because either way he was sadly proven right this past week when 49 people were murdered with an automatic weapon in a gay bar in Orlando. That number again were hospitalized.

I'm sure you have read more than enough on the subject of that shooting: the 24-hour news cycles with the prurient details of the killer's life; conversations with more and less nuance about hate crimes and homophobia, radical

Islam and Islamophobia; most of the world looking on without comprehension while huge swaths of a nation somehow manage to convince themselves once again that adequate gun laws are not a reasonable sacrifice to make for the sake of their safety. Someone will bring up Mr. Rogers, either literally or in spirit, talking about the people who helped and the kind or heroic actions people took. Depending upon your disposition, you'll be glad there were more good people than bad in that situation, or you'll think it's sentimental and it doesn't matter, because either way, people died.

So perhaps we don't need to get into the particulars of all of those things, because I'm sure you've seen and read and heard enough

about all of it. To be completely honest, I'm not sure I want to write about another mass shooting, but trying to write a nuanced article about how I think the provincial government has failed us with this ideologically driven budget seems inappropriate in light of the fact that another man with a gun wrought havoc on people who had done nothing to provoke or deserve it.

I suppose that's the trouble, though, isn't it? Mass shootings draw focus. When I say that, I don't mean they shouldn't draw focus, or that we shouldn't care. Obviously, when someone does something as horrific as open fire on a crowded night club, a university, or a school, attention will be paid to it, and victims mourned. As they should be.

But the devil is in the details. The last time I wrote about a recent mass shooting (sigh . . .), I talked about how the reasons that things happen are rarely singular, or simple, and when we try to make them such we're not doing ourselves any favours. The trouble seems to be, though, that the multifaceted, complex, and nuanced reasons behind a disturbing act of violence don't make good copy when there hasn't recently been a disturbing act of violence. It's barely good copy when there *has* been a recent disturbing act of violence. Nobody's a big fan of nuance. Nuance is complicated, and it's boring. It's easier for that orange monster of a man running for the presidency of the United States to blame Muslims and Mexicans for everything bad that's ever happened than it is to have an honest conversation about the poor policy choices and geopolitics that have led the U.S. into murky waters.

I have more sympathy for Bernie Sanders than the wretched orange man with the fluffy hair, of course, but his politics get a little simplistic as well — to him, just about everything boils down to income inequality. It's a more fair bogeyman than old orangey-face fluffer head's "people who moved to our country recently" catch-all, but it's still leaving a lot of things out.

I'm thinking about this particu-

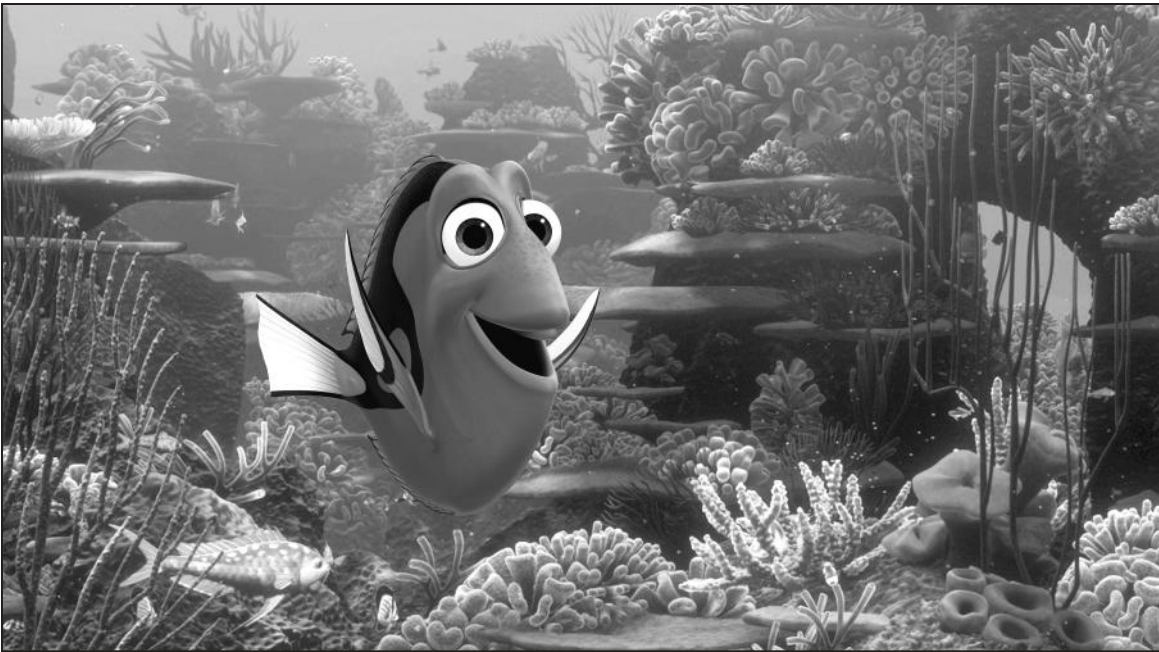
It's harder than they say
To try to settle down
You see it in a line
You hook it up and down
You see it end to end
You read it like a book
And then for what it is
You take a look

And when it rains, when it rains
Oh the sun it comes out again
Crown of age, crown of age
Just like it's always been
And you know, and you know
Oh, what you gotta do
Crown of age, crown of age
It's all up to you

It's harder than you know
To get where you belong
Somehow you're always there
Somehow it's always wrong
As far as I can see
That much'll never change
It's what you always know
Just like your name

larly, I suppose, because I *didn't* think it made much sense to talk about the provincial budget, and how the government made cuts that effectively ended the province's 42-year-long relationship with the Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation. It's not a huge chunk of money, and I'm guessing nobody died as a direct result of those cuts, but it means that the SCIC will not be able to fund projects that address poverty, education, and sustainable development in the Global South. You know — that quiet, unassuming work that facilitates a world where people are less desperate, more hopeful, and better fed.

That world became just a little bit less possible because of the provincial government's cuts to the SCIC, and a thousand other cuts they quietly made in a budget that came out after the election instead of before. That world where fluffy-headed orange goats aren't vying for the position of Leader of the Free World. That world without compelling headlines because nothing has gone so painfully wrong today.



CNS/Disney

FINDING DORY — *Finding Dory* (Disney), the dandy animated sequel to 2003's *Finding Nemo*, sets that film's trio of main characters on another epic journey, this one undertaken to reunite the absent-minded blue tang of the title (voice of Ellen DeGeneres) with her long-lost parents (voices of Diane Keaton and Eugene Levy). Her eventful quest, on which she's accompanied by the father (voice of Albert Brooks) and son (voice of Hayden Rolence) duo of clownfish she befriended in the first outing, takes her to a fictional California aquarium. There she gains the help of three more pals: a curmudgeonly octopus (voice of Ed O'Neill), a beluga whale with defective sonar skills (voice of Ty Burrell) and a nearsighted whale shark (voice of Kaitlin Olson). Working with co-director Angus MacLane, writer-director Andrew Stanton conveys life lessons about family loyalty, teamwork and the proper balance between courage and caution via a script full of gentle humour and appealing personalities. But his most impressive achievement is the use to which he puts the various disabilities on display, using them to send an implicit anti-bullying and pro-life message to youthful viewers. While objectionable elements are virtually absent, the dangers lurking in the deep may be too much for small fry, writes John Mulderig of Catholic News Service.

Special care was taken with the organization of the celebration

Continued from page 9

arrogant strongmen, and anyone else who might try to dominate the little guy. And, for Father Selz, this was just fine. He was sure his parishioners would love it too, and if it contested the views of dear old Mrs. Stolz and Mrs. Zerr and their lot, so much the better.

He took special care in his selection of organizers. He charged Sebastian Feist with organizing the men's baseball game, as Sebastian owned several baseballs and was known to make many good wooden bats. He asked Fredrich Gerein to organize the family contests: the tug-o-war and the three-legged races. "And, add something for the young men too . . ." said Father Selz, with a telling grin. Fredrich, an avid card player and helpless gambler, smiled: "I have some ideas," he said. Joseph Eberle jumped at the opportunity to orchestrate and set off the dozen fireworks that had been purchased as the evening's finale. And, as it was Joseph's way to embellish

his duties, soon the whole town was a buzz with rumours of cannon fire and explosives and hot air balloons raining confetti and ribbons from the sky. Andreas Stolz, a man who loved the attention of a crowd and always had a joke that hadn't been heard before, was assigned the role of talent show organizer. Soon, the local shopkeepers were adding to the fun — Mr. Ball promised Coca-Cola and Orange Crush to the winners of the contests, and Mr. Fetsch promised a piece of chewing gum for every child, while Mr. Zahn donated a single shot .22-calibre rifle with a thumb trigger for the raffle prize. And, since his plans for the day would stretch beyond the afternoon and late into the evening, Father Selz commissioned the parish women to prepare not one, but two meals to sustain the merriment of the day's festivities. For this, he consulted with Mrs. Gutenberg and Mrs. Feist, whom he knew to be capable and earnest task managers. However, when it came to his most exciting plans — showing the

first moving picture show to his flock of German-speaking immigrants — Father Selz made the arrangements himself.

The church overflowed. The pews were packed and in the aisles it was standing room only. The windows and doors swung wide carrying the sounds of the prairie birds, crickets, and the crackling rustle of sun dried grasses through the room, as a light breeze teased the sweaty collars and foreheads of the gathered faithful. There were nearly 300 of them. Word had travelled far and wide and people from as far as 10 miles away had dressed their families in their Sunday best and hitched their wagons to make the morning mass. Father Selz was thrilled by the turnout. The room buzzed with excitement. The normally reserved and reverent folks passed each other frequent and jolly looks. There was a tipsy sense of impending disorder that revealed itself in more than a

few suppressed laughs, a handful of elbows to the ribs, and more than several dozen winks. Father Selz was not immune to the giddy and impatient current of the day and somehow managed to dispense with nearly 15 minutes of the Latin mass. The church emptied in a rush, the littlest ones were hoisted from the ground by their siblings and parents saving them from the trampling path of the herd.

Outside, Mrs. Gutenberg and Mrs. Feist took charge of things. Their husbands dutifully set up the long wooden tables and shifts of women loaded breads, meats, cheeses, sauerkraut and pickles onto the tables. Father Selz blessed the meal, and the men, women, and children ate the picnic meals among their kin and neighbours — some in the shade of the church and others sitting in big circles in the summer grass.

After lunch was served, Father Selz, set up his camera to take the first parish photograph. It was nearly an hour in the making. The chil-

dren running helter-skelter were eventually corralled toward the church steps and lawn. The young women called out for their husbands, making sure that they had not slipped away at the last minute. Then, there was the orchestrating. The men's choir took their place on the stairs of the church, and the rest of the congregation sprawled out below — the single men stood to the back, in front of them were pockets of married men and women, some of the elders, and spreading out and onto the grass the children took their places in descending order, some wearing a newly hand-made suit or summer dress sat or kneeled in the grass as the sun shone down on them. The breeze blew fresh enough to keep the men and boys in their Sunday jackets. Father Selz's beamed with pride. This was no small feat. He took one last mental image of his flourishing happy congregation before hunkering down behind the camera. He focused the image.

"Ein, zwei, drei!" Flash!

What can be done about America's gun obsession?

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



I love classic westerns, which feature guns and shootouts galore, and can enjoy a well-made crime drama with both the cops and the bad guys packing plenty of firepower. Guns are part of “wild west” frontier mythology and a staple of modern warfare. Guns and violent circumstances go together. But what happens when the resort to firearms pervades society as a whole, when guns are as common as butter? In the United States, where gun ownership has been elevated into a sacred constitutional principle safeguarding the citizenry’s “right to bear arms,” the toll of daily gun violence has reached pathological levels.

The latest outrage in Orlando, the deadliest in U.S. history, appears to have had a terroristic aspect (it is certainly a horrific hate crime). But in most years more Americans die from shooting accidents involving toddlers than for any political reason. Small children have been among the targets of mass shootings using semi-automatic assault weapons legally obtained. Yet even the most modest attempts at gun control have faced fierce political opposition. A lot of ordinary people obviously love their guns and distrust government restrictions.

It’s hard to ignore America’s omnipresent gun culture. The country leads the world in per capita gun ownership. In a previous column on Sundance Film Festival highlights I noted that for the first time there were security searches at all entrances and signs everywhere — including at the

press tent — indicating firearms were not permitted. At some venues there were police and police dogs stationed. Perhaps organizers were spooked given the gun-related subjects of some films. Indeed writer-director Tim Sutton’s drama *Dark Night* presented a chilling tale of violence invading a suburban movie theatre, evoking parallels to the 2012 mass shooting inside an Aurora, Colorado, multiplex during a screening of *The Dark Knight*.

Is this atmosphere of generalized heightened threat the new normal? One hopes not. The American documentaries below that premiered at the Sundance, South By Southwest, and Tribeca film festivals shed light on the epidemic of gun violence in America and on several of the worst incidents of mass shootings and their aftermath, raising troubling questions for society at large.

Under the Gun (<http://underthegunmovie.com/>)

Directed by Stephanie Soechtig, with narration by journalist and executive producer Katie Couric, this is a comprehensive and extremely sobering examination of the extent of the gun problem. It begins with a startling statistic: “Before this film is over (110 minutes), 22 Americans will be shot . . . six of them will die.” The average annual gun death toll over the last five years is 33,000. In the wealth of data presented are some truly striking findings: since 1968 more

Americans have died from domestic gunfire than from all U.S. wars combined; since 2001 for every American killed by terrorism anywhere in the world 1,000 have died from guns inside the U.S.; from 2004 - 2014 over 2,000 suspects on the terror watch list legally purchased guns in the U.S.; there are more gun stores in the U.S. than McDonalds and Starbucks locations combined. With the National Rifle Association (NRA) taking more radical positions from the 1970s onward, the gun lobby has been remarkably successful in loos-



G. Schmitz

WORLD PREMIERE — Director Keith Maitland, cast and crew, are seen at the world premiere of *Tower* March 13, 2016.

ening restrictions and preventing the passage of legislative reforms. (The NRA has strongly endorsed Trump for president.)

Soechtig doesn’t just overwhelm with facts and expert views. She also delves into the stories of those most affected by mass shootings. For example, there is the Barden family of Connecticut whose seven-year-old son Daniel was killed in the 2012 Sandy Hook massacre, and former Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords who survived a deadly 2011 attack. Many are involved in local, state and national efforts to curb violence. The Bardens have established the What Would Daniel Do Foundation. Giffords and her astronaut husband Capt. Mark Kelly have launched the organization “American for Responsible Solutions.” Ironically, however, the reaction to mass shootings has tended to increase gun sales and Soechtig acknowledges how hard it will be to reverse this trend. On the pro-gun side she includes interviews with spokespersons for Open Carry Texas and the Virginia Citizens Defence League, which wants to make gun-free zones illegal.

Clearly gun-control activists face major challenges. Among those profiled is Rev. Michael Pfleger, an outspoken Catholic priest who has worked for many years in crime-ridden areas on Chicago’s south side. He has led protests against “bad apple” gun shops responsible for many of the guns used in Chicago crimes. (Nationwide about 90 per cent of crime-related guns can be traced back to five per cent of gun dealers.) Pfleger has been targeted by the NRA and received death threats. Others have had to overcome personal tragedies in the ongoing struggle to achieve safer saner outcomes that will actually reduce the shocking numbers of gun fatalities.

Tower (<http://www.tower-documentary.com/>)

This summer will mark the 50th anniversary of the first mass school shooting in the U.S. on August 1, 1966, when a deeply disturbed 25-year-old ex-Marine and engineering student Charles

Whitman went on a killing spree. Mounting the 28-storey observation tower of the University of Texas at Austin he began firing at random, shooting 49 and killing 16 before being gunned down after 90 minutes of horror and panic. Appropriately the film, by Austin director Keith Maitland, premiered at the South By Southwest Festival a short distance from where the tragedy took place. In introducing it, festival co-founder Louis Black remarked how those events “sliced into our community in ways we have still not healed from.”

Maitland’s recounting is an extraordinary work of recreation, recollection, and reflection on the part of survivors, many of whom were present for the Austin screening. The sequence of terror is captured through archival footage shot by a local reporter on the scene combined with life-like animation, using digital rotoscoping techniques, to remarkably powerful effect. On this blistering hot day among the first to be shot were Claire Wilson, eight months pregnant, and her fiancé Thomas Eckman, who was killed. Lying on the burning hot concrete she survived, though lost the baby. Another female student risked her life in coming to her aid. In the midst of the shock and confusion other wrenching personal stories are told, including the heroic actions of a store manager and police officer who finally ascended the tower to confront the shooter.

Another strength of the film is its examination of the social context which was recognized at the time as linked to a “culture of violence.” Indeed in a clip from CBS anchor Walter Cronkite’s coverage he suggests, “It seems likely that this crime was society’s crime.” Rather than being embittered, Claire Wilson became a civil rights activist and adopted an Ethiopian orphan boy. In the film she says of Whitman: “I can’t hate him. I forgive him. How can I not forgive? I’ve been forgiven so much.” Wilson, who spoke during the Austin post-screening discussion, is outspoken on the subject of guns, having testified against “open carry” laws in Texas. “It’s already a volatile world. We don’t

need to toss matches into it.” Ironically, this August 1, on the same day a memorial is to be unveiled to the Texas tower victims, a “campus carry” law will go into effect.

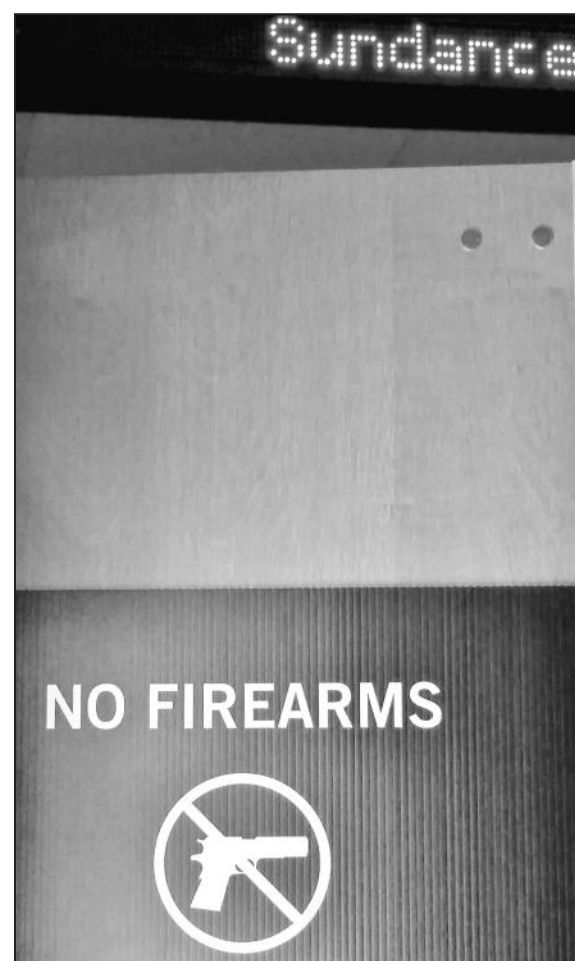
Tower, which received three major awards at South By Southwest, is scheduled for television broadcast on the PBS “Independent Lens” series.

Newtown (<http://newtownfilm.com/>) and Midsummer in Newtown (<https://www.facebook.com/midsummerinnewtown/>)

Kim Snyder’s *Newtown*, which premiered at Sundance and was also at South By Southwest, explores with great sensitivity the events and consequences of the Dec. 14, 2012, massacre of 20 first-graders and six adult staff at the Sandy Hook elementary school in normally quiet Newtown, Connecticut. We hear some of the panicked 911 recordings and voice messages from that terrible day. But Snyder doesn’t show any images that faced first responders in the school (it’s enough to imagine the impact of exploding assault-weapon bullets — 154 were fired — on little bodies) and she never mentions the name or shows the face of the shooter, a young man who had first killed his mother with one of her arsenal of legal guns.

The focus is on the affected families, their efforts and those of the community to heal and to work toward the prevention of such tragedies, to turn their trauma into a constructive movement for change. Among those profiled are the Bardens, also featured in *Under the Gun*, the Wheeler and Hockley families, who share intimate home videos and have been leaders in campaigns for stricter gun-control measures, unfortunately with little success to date. Nevertheless their efforts are ensuring that the memory of their murdered children isn’t forgotten. *Newtown* is also scheduled for broadcast on the PBS “Independent Lens” series.

While *Newtown* is accompanied by a haunting musical score from a



G. Schmitz

SIGN OF THE TIMES — At Sundance 2016, a sign of the times at Redstone cinema entrance indicates firearms are not permitted.

Power of a parish is its power to be community



Questioning Faith

Mary Marrocco

It can be easy to feel lost and lonely in church — and that's twice as lost and lonely as anywhere else.

My first job in a parish was exciting, fulfilling, lonely and bewildering. There was so much life. Joys, sorrows, pains and questions came in with the people who flocked through those doors. We may think parish attendance is down — statistically, it is — but from the shepherd's point of view, there are more than enough sheep to care for. That parish offered work to be done and life to be lived a-plenty. It was difficult to have friendships within the parish as an employee, tough to meet people outside parish life since my work hours were other people's leisure time, and hard to find peers since fellow lay pastoral workers were rare. Yet this loneliness helped me understand others' needs, and the purpose of parish life.

I'd learned that the parish is the heart of church life. But that parish taught me how the parish can and should be, simply, a centre of life.

On June 21 we celebrated the parish feast day with a strawberry social — a whole day's events, featuring work (berry-picking outings, baking, food preparation, cleaning and decorating), a festive meal, music, outdoor activities, a gathering of all ages at the church, and liturgy. It was life, shared. It showed that the purpose, and the real power, of a parish is to be a community.

Marrocco is a marriage and family therapist, teacher of theology, and writer, and co-ordinates St. Mary of Egypt Refuge. She can be reached at marrocco7@sympatico.ca

The meaning of "community" has been lost, referring now to a random collection of individuals who happen to share a common characteristic. But this is not the Christian meaning. The community is those made one in the love of Christ, gathered around the eucharist, becoming participants in divine life.

As such, it's a place of resistance. It's resistance to that which doesn't give life; to all that would drive us back into isolation and loneliness; to the death-affirming spirit that abounds today. Parish allows people to experience real communion with others, not because they all agree on everything or share interests, but because they meet in the truth of who they are, which is, children of God. "Don't be conformed to this world," Paul urges, "but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rm 12:2). That renewal is the meeting place the parish opens up for us, antidote to the illusions fostered by Internet, media, and social divisions.

We're a community in worship, and in all that life's about. My uncle, when consecrated bishop, became pastor of an urban parish. He quickly made a practice of working in his garden, which fronted a major intersection. The intended effect happened: people stopped and talked with him. He saw the parish as a centre not only of spiritual life, but of life.

This is the life we're promised as Christians, available to all. Yet we can experience parish life as isolating, lonely, even hurtful. How could this be? Why are we "dead" in church — why are we satisfied with that?

How harsh it is, how lonely we become, when our eucharistic



Design Pics

BEING COMMUNITY — A parish strawberry social — a whole day's events, featuring work (berry-picking outings, baking, food preparation, cleaning and decorating), a festive meal, music, outdoor activities, a gathering of all ages at the church, and liturgy — was life, shared, writes Mary Marrocco. "It showed that the purpose, and the real power, of a parish is to be a community."

communities are given over to something else — money-making, looking good, maintaining certain behaviours or ideals, self-preservation. We need to reclaim the practical, concrete place any eucharistic community has, and rediscover our spring of living water.

When we don't feel our thirst for each other, when our parishes forget who they are, society creates structures to address the needs our churches have forgotten. Society would like to push the parish into the personal, private, spiritual realm ("religion is fine if it's a personal choice that doesn't affect anybody"). So we risk becoming irrelevant to our own people.

The early church community, gathered for eucharist, had fights about how to eat together. That's because they were sharing life, physical as well as spiritual (see 1 Corinthians 11). Christ and the early church never envisioned sending people away for their basic needs. "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves" (Mt 14:16).

St. Aloysius Gonzaga (feast day June 21) gave his spirit to the parish dedicated to him. He went a different way from family expectations, rejecting his father's splendour, wealth and constraints. He chose theological education, prayer, and practical service through the Society of Jesus. At only 23, he

died of the plague (Rome, 1591) because he'd served those suffering from it. He's patron saint of youth, an unusual figure for our era that looks to things for solace and community, and to the wealthy for heroes. He understood that the church is community gathered by eucharist, to be fed body and soul, and to receive and give the real oneness that society can't provide but its people deeply thirst for.

When we experience a parish as life-giving, as at the June strawberry social, it awakens a longing, a thirst, even a pain. We want more; we long for deeper connection. This is not bad, for it moves us — toward each other, and toward abundant life.

Making guns more available is no answer to troubles

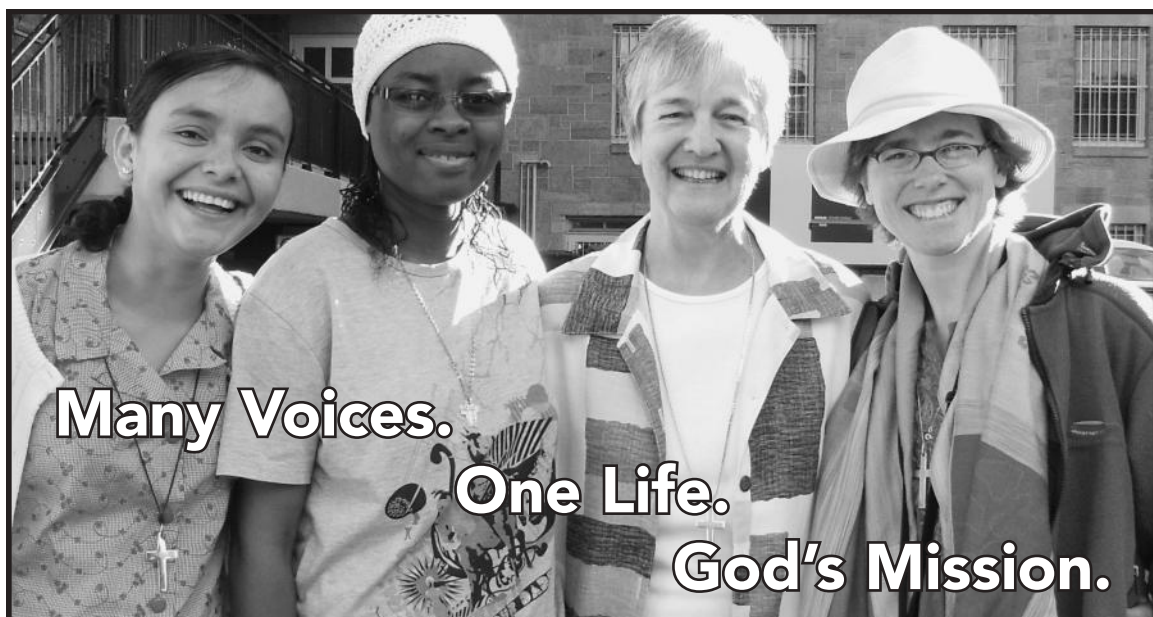
Continued from page 11

multitude of composers, director Lloyd Kramer's *Midsummer in Newtown*, which premiered at Tribeca, is about the power of music and art in the process of recovering from the tragedy. The project to stage a musical version of a Shakespeare play featuring local students and professionals was the brainchild of producer Tom Yellin and theatre director Michael Unger. "A Rockin' Midsummer Night's Dream" was the result, the exuberant performances of which lifted the spirits of affected families and the community as a whole. Among the child players profiled are Tain Gregory and Sammy Vertucci, both survivors of the Sandy Hook shootings.

The film also follows the family of Jimmy Greene, a Grammy-nominated jazz saxophonist, and Nelba

Marquez-Greene, who had moved to Newtown from Canada. Since their daughter Ana Grace was killed, they have spoken out against gun violence and sought ways to honour her memory through positive action. Says Nelba who founded "The Ana Grace Project": "I think about (the shooter) all the time. I think about his lack of connection with people, the community and I think what else could have been there for him?" Jimmy turned to music, recording an album, *Beautiful Life*, dedicated to Ana. As he puts it: "While I'm here on earth, I'm just committed to living every day to honour how my little girls lived — lovingly, joyfully, faithfully."

The NRA to the contrary, making more guns available, is surely no answer to what these and so many other Americans have endured.



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Isaiah’s joy-filled message provides comfort



Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

Spring came early to the Yukon this year. Returning swans flew over me at the end of March. The first flush of green followed the crocuses a whole month early on the hill, the remains of old glacial esker, across from where I work. Our May tree actually bloomed in its namesake month, a true rarity. Looking high, though, at surrounding mountaintops lingering patches of snow still can be seen.

“You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your bodies shall flourish like the grass; and it shall be known that the hand of the Lord is with his servants.” The prophet Isaiah captures that sense of joy that sweeps over all of us at times such as when a long winter comes to an end and life returns to our once frozen land.

The real background for Isaiah’s poetic writing goes something like this. In 587/6 BC a national tragedy scarred the collective psyche of the Jewish people. Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the first Temple initiated by King Solomon nearly 400 years earlier. The city walls of Jerusalem came down and many of the city’s elites were forced into exile. The end of the Babylonian captivity following Cyrus the Great’s conquest of his rival empire two generations later set the stage, some scholars argue for the prophet’s jubilation, inspiring his writings. The bounty of God’s blessings and mercy would again touch a wounded people.

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

Isaiah’s joy-filled message provides comfort to anyone seeking renewal or hoping for a new start. Our global community longs for such a hope-filled vision. We desperately need a chance to reflect deeply on our circumstances and begin again. Alternatives must be found to the divisive and destructive global processes set in train by the Age of Discovery and the Industrial Revolution.

Obviously other humanity scale revolutions over the last half-millennia, such as those in basic human rights, science, literacy and democracy, have drawn us toward the still vague outlines of a just, sustainable future. Voices like that poet and Emeritus Bishop of São Félix do Araguaia, Dom Pedro Casaldàliga from Mato Grosso, Brazil, prophetically help to us articulate that future. He challenges us to act. “It’s time to wake up because it’s urgent to

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| Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 3, 2016 | Isaiah 66:10-14 Psalm 6 Galatians 6:14-18 Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 |
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change the rules.” Writing in the Latin American Agenda 2016, which he published along with José María Vigil, a Claretian priest and theologian living in Panama, Bishop Pedro points out that we have come to accept governments under the hegemonic control of corporate elites.

“Although we are in a historical time of social resurgence, those who are more awake are seeing that it’s time to react, to open eyes and raise awareness; to develop a new hegemony — the hegemony of human humanity; to criticize the fundamentalism of the market; the hegemony of recovering sequestered democracy. It is time to plot a new course: the past three decades has already proven to be unsustainable and is leading us into social explosion and planetary crisis.”

Ever faith-filled, for Dom Pedro a renewed world is inevitable. The Booker Prize-winning Indian author Suzanna Arundhati Roy, arguably said it best. “Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.”

Strong counter currents, protective of privilege and power, seek to hold back the tide of change. There are those who practise the politics of fear and division. Those who seek to put up walls of intolerance rather than build bridges of understanding sway millions. Rant and rhetoric try to drown out dialogue and reason.

Tens of thousands of people from around the globe gathering in Montreal in August, though, will strive to counter this climate of hatred and fear. A delegation from Development and Peace plus Rev. José María Vigil will be among the participants in the first World Social Forum held in the “Global North.” Begun in 2001 this is the world’s largest civil society gathering. Its stated mission is “to build together in a movement of international solidarity a better world founded on social and environmental justice, a social and solidarity economy, a participative democracy and the acknowledgment of equal dignity for all.”

Hundreds of workshops, forums and speakers on alternatives and solutions to today’s problems, will be hosted from Aug. 9 to 15 in Montreal. “Building concrete alternatives to the neoliberal economic model and to politics based on the exploitation of human beings and nature” will be the goal of participants. The World Social Forum has been planned around 13 themes such as “Struggles against Racism, Xenophobia, Patriarchy and Fundamentalism,” “Rights of Nature and Environmental Justice,” “Culture of Peace and Struggle for Justice and Demilitarization” and “Democratization of Knowledge and Right to Communication.” Paul’s affirmation that in belonging to Christ “a new creation is everything!” would fit right in.

Luke’s Gospel lays out marching orders for us, a way to take our message of peace, hope and salvation into the world. Two by two Jesus sent the 70 out. “Go on your way. See. I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves.” He knew then as now that the needed changes of hearts and institutions will not be easy to attain. There is a deep joy, however, that comes from an awareness that this work heralds the coming kingdom. This joy will sustain all who take to this long, arduous, multi-generational road. We shall overcome.

Mostly we are decent people, but we all struggle to love our neighbour

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



“The most damaging idolatry is not the golden calf but enmity against the other.” The renowned anthropologist Rene Girard wrote that and its truth is not easily admitted. Most of us like to believe that we are mature and big-hearted and that we do love our neighbours and are free of enmity toward others. But is this so?

In our more honest or, more accurately perhaps, in our more humble moments, I think all of us admit that we don’t really love others in the way Jesus asked. We don’t turn the other cheek. We don’t really love our enemies. We don’t wish good to those who

wish us harm. We don’t bless those who curse us. And we don’t genuinely forgive those who murder our loved ones. We are decent, good-hearted persons, but persons whose heaven is still too predicated on needing an emotional vindication in the face of anyone or anything that opposes us. We can be fair, we can be just, but we don’t yet love the way Jesus asked us to, that is, so that our love goes out to both those who love us and to those who hate us. We still struggle, mightily, mostly unsuccessfully, to wish our enemies well.

But for most of us who like to believe ourselves mature, that battle remains hidden, mostly from ourselves. We tend to feel that we are loving and forgiving because, essentially, we are well-intentioned, sincere, and able to believe and say all the right things. But there’s another part of us that isn’t nearly so noble. The Irish Jesuit Michael Paul Gallagher (who died recently and will be dearly missed) puts this well when he writes (*In Extra Time*): “You probably don’t hate anyone, but you can be paralyzed by daily negatives. Mini-prejudices and knee-jerk judgments can produce a mood of undeclared war. Across barbed wire fences, invisible bul-

lets fly.” Loving the other as oneself, he submits, is for most of us an impossible uphill climb.

So where does that leave us? Serving out a life sentence of mediocrity and hypocrisy? Professing to loving our enemies but not doing it? How can we profess to be Christians when, if we are honest, we have to admit that we are not measuring up to the litmus-test of Christian discipleship, namely, loving and forgiving our enemies?

Perhaps we are not as bad as we think we are. If we are still struggling, we are still healthy. In making us, it seems, God factored in human complexity, human weakness, and how growing into deeper love is a lifelong journey. What can look like hypocrisy from the outside can in fact be a pilgrimage, a Camino walk, when seen within a fuller light of patience and understanding.

Thomas Aquinas, in speaking about union and intimacy, makes this important distinction. He distinguishes between being in union with something or somebody *in actuality* and being in union with that someone or something *through desire*. This has many applications but, applied in this case, it means that sometimes the heart can only go somewhere through desire rather than in actuality. We can believe in the right things and want the right things and still not be able to bring our hearts inside.

One example of this is what the old catechisms (in their unique wisdom) used to call “imperfect contrition,” that is, the notion that if you have done something wrong that you know is wrong

and you know you should feel sorry for, but you can’t in fact feel sorry for, then *if you can wish that you could feel sorry*, that’s contrition enough, not perfect, but enough. It’s the best you can do and it puts you at the right place at the level of desire, not a perfect place, but one better than its alternative.

And that “imperfect” place does more for us than simply providing the minimal standard of contrition needed for forgiveness. More importantly it accords rightful dignity to whom and to what we have hurt.

Reflecting on our inability to genuinely love our neighbour, Marilynne Robinson submits that, even in our failure to live up to what Jesus asks of us, if we are struggling honestly, there is some virtue. She argues this way: Freud said that we cannot love our neighbour as ourselves, and no doubt this is true. But since we accept the reality that lies behind the commandment, that our neighbour is as worthy of love as ourselves, then in our very attempt to act on Jesus’ demand we are acknowledging that our neighbour is worthy of love even if, at that point in our lives, we are too weak to provide it.

And that’s the crucial point: in continuing to struggle, despite our failures, to live up to the Jesus’ great commandment of love, we acknowledge the dignity inherent in our enemies, acknowledge that they are worthy of love, and acknowledge our own shortcoming. That’s “imperfect,” of course, but, I suspect, Thomas Aquinas would say it’s a start!

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Vulnerable youth need more than unfeeling authority

By David Gushee
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Multiple reports are surfacing that Pulse nightclub shooter Omar Mateen's profile was found on gay dating apps, that he had tried to pick up men and that on prior occasions he had patronized the Orlando club in which he massacred so many on June 12.

If this is true, it matters a very great deal.

It might move the motivation for Mateen's horrific act to a very different and psychologically more complex place in which one man's inability to reconcile himself with his sexuality cost 49 other people their lives — and then cost him his own life.

It might end up making the motivation of the horrifying Orlando massacre look more like: I want you. God says I can't want you. So I must kill you.

And it opens up the broader issue of the severe mental health challenges facing young people who discover, against the stern teachings of their religious traditions, that they are attracted to members of the same sex.

This intersection of religious authority and forbidden sexuality is a very dangerous one, and it must be navigated by all who are raised in religions that reject same-sex attraction and relationships. It is a problem in multiple religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and leaders in all religious traditions face

the urgent responsibility to address it.

As a privileged married heterosexual and an evangelical Christian ethicist, I finally came to terms a few years ago with how terrible this problem is for LGBT Christians and embarked on a reconsideration process. It led me to a posture of solidarity and moved me to open up my traditionalist lifetime-covenantal-marital sexual ethic to include gay and lesbian unions. This was seen as a grave error by some of my fellow believers. But many LGBT people and their families were desperately grateful. It offered at least one way out of the impasse between traditional religion and sexuality.

Look at it this way. When a young person from a strict religious upbringing discovers the powerful force of his own sexuality, it is scary enough. But if that sexual interest flows toward people of the approved sex, religious authorities have at least a marginally comforting answer: You and your sexuality are normal, but you need to wait till you are married to have sex. It's difficult, but it can be done. Pat on the back, and out you go.

But for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people, the answer is very different: You are not normal. Your sexuality is uniquely sinful, a rejection of God himself. You must repent and change. You can never act on these sexual attractions. How long must you wait to have a sexual or romantic relationship with someone you actually desire? Forever. You can never, ever, do it, or you will incur God's wrath.

These answers come from all recognized and trusted authorities



CNS/Andrea Navarro, Florida Catholic

VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE — Rev. Jorge Torres, director of vocations for the Diocese of Orlando, Fla., prays with young people who participated in the "Vigil for Dry Tears" June 13 at St. James Cathedral in Orlando. Torres is among the Orlando diocesan priests lending a hand in counselling families and friends of victims of the June 12 massacre at Pulse nightclub in Orlando.

in the young person's world — first parents, then also religious teachers and leaders, and finally most friends from church, synagogue or mosque. Quite often the answers are accompanied by the sternest, sometimes the cruelest, verbal, emotional and even physical violence. Even the very tentative declaration that a young person may be feeling some same-sex attractions can send religious parents and pastors through the roof. At best, relationships sur-

vive, but the person's sexuality is rejected by those whose approval matters most.

So when the irresistible force of a forbidden sexual orientation runs into the immovable object of an ancient religious tradition, what is the affected person supposed to do?

A large number of young adults ultimately abandon their religious traditions as hazardous to their health. Some are in gay nightclubs early Sunday morning because

they are welcome there — and would not be welcome in church eight hours later.

Others spend years attempting to conform their desires and behaviours to the religiously prescribed options, such as celibate singleness or heterosexual marriage, remaining in their religion at the cost of cauterizing their sexual identity.

Some ping-pong back and forth between these options, both of which they find agonizing and neither of which they can sustain.

Others eventually find peace in creating, or discovering, a version of their faith that can accommodate the sexuality they have, rather than the sexuality that the tradition demands they have. They find a place where they no longer have to choose. This is usually a very long and difficult process.

And it may be that one particularly troubled young man "solved" his problem over that weekend through mass murder.

So, to orthodox religious leaders, I again ask:

Is the consistent, acute, totally predictable psychological distress caused to these young adults by your understanding of God's moral rules a relevant consideration for your teaching and pastoring?

In light of this suffering and what is now known about human sexuality, do you still believe that this is what the God you are trying to serve really requires?

Might it be that some aspects of your understanding of sexual ethics are revisable rather than the eternal will of God?

Which of you will take some risks to get a serious conversation going about these issues in your faith community, on behalf of your own most vulnerable young people?

Paradox is found in life and legacy of Muhammad Ali

Outlooks from the Inner Life

Cedric Speyer



"I don't have to be what you want me to be. I'm free to be who I am."
— Muhammad Ali

"Stepping into our largeness is not narcissism — it ultimately proves our greatest contribution to others. All it requires is the resolve to stand humbly but responsibly before our own largeness, and then step into it."
— James Hollis, PhD, *What Matters Most*

What a paradox we find in the life and legacy of Muhammad Ali! The contradictions go very deep if the praise is praise-worthy, when

you consider that his claim to fame was beating other men up. Yet as witnessed in eulogies from all faiths at his funeral, Ali was universally acclaimed as a man of peace and compassion who inspired the downtrodden and gave us the courage to live out the best version of ourselves. It was a constant theme at the funeral.

What happened to the humble being exalted when it came to a cultural icon who couldn't stop bragging about himself? Who ever heard of a prophet saying, "I must be the greatest" when proclaiming what was being fulfilled in him? How is this not narcissistic inflation?

There is no hero like the humble hero, for winning our hearts along with the battle. Isn't there something in the Bible about those who feel the need to boast, that they should only boast about what Christ has done? How about the spiritual fact that I must decrease and God increase in equal measure, to make any progress on the journey of faith whatsoever? Or that the first shall be last and the last first, when it comes to pecking orders in the kingdom of heaven?

Ali's response: "It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am." With fame seemingly going to his head like that, it's equally hard to fathom the impact he had on so many: socially, culturally, politically, and yes, spiritually. As Ali's contemporary, Bob Dylan, who also created a larger than life persona, sang caustically during the same era: "There's something happening here and you don't know what it is, do you, Mr. Jones?"

Mr. Jones is who we are when we don't know who we are apart from socially conditioned roles, in short, when we don't know what the soul wants, let alone being ready to live it out. The constructed self, otherwise known as the false self, is the do-gooder propped up by external validation and caught up in the trappings that

support it, on the authority of what makes one acceptable in the eyes of others. It's the counterfeit version of personhood and by far not the best version, being basically fear-based. The last thing it would risk is inner authority, because its claims to significance and belonging can be deconstructed like a house of cards.

True identity, the rock of salvation, so to speak, saves us from the anxiety maintenance system of the provisional "small" self, to the extent that it points beyond itself. It is part of a bigger story witnessing to values, principles, ideals, and eternal truths. It is summoned to a much larger life of the Self than self-seeking could ever hope to achieve.

Ali was all about interior freedom from oppression on any level: inherited, conditioned, culturally imposed, or self-induced. What makes his "greatness" so different than puffed up jingoistic political arrogance? Ali played with and played up an exaggerated pride with a twinkle in his eye, making the outsized persona a mouthpiece for the spiritual vision and soul strength behind it. As one of his entourage said, "This is only a stop, look and listen sign he's doing, fighting. I think Muhammad is a prophet. This is God's act, we just actors in it."

Priest part of community

Continued from page 3

When he was finishing the piece for St. Ann's, for example, the sounds of carving and sanding drew people from the community to come out and watch him work. Questions and conversation followed, he said. "I became the entertainment for about three months. It was lovely."

When he's a priest, he said, he would imagine taking whatever free bit of time he finds to throw on his work jeans and "pound on a piece of granite."

"That does get people's attention."

People then get a better idea of what a priest is, he said. "A priest isn't just that guy who wears the collar and you see him once a week on Sunday. He is part of the community and he is trying to contribute to the good of the community," Gibney said.

"That's opening the church," he said, showing that the priest is there to serve everyone in the community. "Catholic or not, they are part of the flock," and Christ, through the priest, is out there with them.

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 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

A Christian approach to death and dying

By Brett Salkeld

This is the last of a five-part series.

While it is not necessary to appeal to Scripture or the authority of the church to demonstrate that assisted suicide is bad for people and for society (you'll notice I made no such appeals in the first four parts of this series), that does not mean Christian faith is of no help for our present situation.

It should be possible to demonstrate from rational principles accessible to people of all faiths (or none) that assisted suicide is an evil. And Catholics are generally happy to approach the public square with arguments that do not require faith in order to be accepted. On the other hand, the fear of death and suffering that underlies the contemporary push for and wide social acceptance of assisted suicide cannot be answered by a simple appeal to rational principles. It is here, I suggest, that we most need the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All the rational argumentation in the world won't make much difference when people are afraid of death, of suffering, of losing control. In a culture that offers no hope in the face of these realities, suicide becomes the logical answer.

As we have noted, advocates of assisted suicide see it as a matter of choice and therefore as part of the freedom a democratic society strives to provide for its citizens. We have already seen in part three that choice and freedom are not so simply related as this construct imagines and that some choices actually destroy freedom. At this point, we can begin to look at the radical difference between the freedom promised by democratic societies and that promised by God in Christ.

For the Gospel promises a freedom that is much deeper than a freedom from suffering or a free-

dom from external constraint. It promises a freedom that transcends any suffering and external constraint.

When the New Testament teaches that Jesus went to his death freely, that doesn't mean he was actually pulling the strings, controlling the actions of Judas and Caiaphas and Peter and Pilate and Herod, somehow theatrically arranging his own death. (That would be a form of docetism, a heresy that taught that God did not really become a man, but was rather disguised as one.) What the New Testament means is that Jesus was free *despite* all of the external constraints that led him to his death.

For the Christian, salvation is not found in the control of reality, but the acceptance of it. And so death, like the rest of life, is a matter of accommodating oneself to reality, not the other way around. To commit suicide, from the Christian point of view, is to die kicking against the goad. It is to make the final summary act of one's life one of assertion rather than of offering.

To glorify such assertion in death will certainly lead to glorifying it in life. Or, perhaps, our glorification of self-assertion in life makes suicide the more and more obvious way to end life. Everything is to be had on our own terms.

But this is not the way to true freedom. The false conception of freedom that underlies this worldview does not lead to fulfilment, because there will always be things we cannot conquer. We will strive and strive and never reach fulfilment by our own efforts. True freedom does not come from having finally imposed my will on the cosmos, but from attuning my will to reality, or, as a Christian would style it, the will of God.

In this there is freedom and fulfilment. There is peace that passes understanding, peace the world cannot give. This does not mean Christians won't suffer. They will — at least as much as everyone else, if they're following their Lord. They will not experience freedom from suffering, but freedom in suffering. Their suffering will not finally determine them. No suffering will thwart their life's project. Nor can it.

As Jesus tells us in the Gospel of John, "In this world you will have trouble. But be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

And how did he overcome the

world? By avoiding suffering?

No.

Jesus overcame the world by transforming suffering into self-offering.

This is the good news: not that suffering is abolished or avoidable, not that we can finally control everything about life, death and the cosmos, but that suffering, which is unavoidable, is not meaningless and does not render our lives meaningless.

Suffering can make us more compassionate. Suffering can be

accepted in the name of a good cause. And even in the absence of any tangible immediate good that suffering can offer to the sufferer or their cause, suffering can be joined to that of Christ.

In this way, the sufferer, who may seem disconnected from the real world, suffering silently in a hospital or palliative care bed, is actually at the centre of the drama of salvation history. For in joining our suffering to Christ's passion, we make it available for God to use as God sees fit and in ways we may

not ever fully know in this life.

So, while suffering should never be sought for its own sake, indeed should be avoided as far as possible, it must also be accepted when it is unavoidable, as it will be for us all at some point. And in our gracious acceptance of suffering, we can transform it, offer it to God, and thereby participate in the salvation of the world.

That is good news for a culture as imprisoned by fear and hopelessness, and therefore as suicidal, as our own.



CCN/D. Gyaopong

OBLIVIOUS OF THE IMPLICATIONS — An anti-euthanasia demonstration takes place in Ottawa June 1 while hundreds more participated in the weekly Yoga on the Hill that takes place during the summer months. "The fact is the world at large is becoming less and less respectful of human life," writes Phyllis Zagano of the assisted dying debate.

The life you save may be your own

By Phyllis Zagano

They are calling it "assisted dying" in Canada. Perhaps euthanasia is too hard to pronounce, and assisted suicide sounds too, well, too exact.

Complexities of Canadian law aside, suffice it to say the Canadian Supreme Court approved "assisted dying" in February 2015, and directed the legislature to amend the law by June 6 this year. But, after three "reads" in the House and one in the Senate, Bill C-14 landed back in the House for revision, missing the deadline. Technically, you are still breaking the law if you help someone commit suicide in Canada.

The complexities of the argument seem to reduce to who gets to kill whom and why. Does one need to be terminally ill? How old must you be to decide for yourself? What does "competent" mean?

The details are, well, the details. It's not just Canada. The fact is the world at large is becoming less and less respectful of human life.

In the Netherlands, you can get help killing yourself if you are over the age of 12 (they call it "voluntary euthanasia") but children

under 12 must have their own parents decide to kill them. It's called the Groningen protocol. It is not really a law, but the Dutch Society for Pediatrics made it mandatory. Think babies born with spinal bifida (open spine) and hydrocephalus ("water on the brain").

As the Western Hemisphere braces for more and more babies affected by the Zika virus, more and more people are arguing for abortion, or worse. It is a terrifying situation.

Which brings me to a four-year-old article in the *British Journal of Medical Ethics*, entitled "After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?"

Your read that right.

The article's authors, Francesca Minerva of the University of Melbourne, Australia, and Alberto Giubilini of the University of Oxford, in England, issued a clarification during the media storm following their 2012 argument that both pre-born and post-born, a fetus is a fetus, not a person; if it is defective it is OK to get rid of it.

Minerva and Giubilini give lots of reasons for abortion: "the fetus is affected by a severe abnormality that will make the quality of its life extremely poor; the pregnancy puts at risk a woman's health, or even her life; the fetus is the result of sexual abuse; the woman is incapable (for various reasons) of taking care of a child at that particular moment in her life; there

are extreme economic difficulties or social conditions which are hardly compatible with having children, and so on."

Do reasons for abortion justify killing the newborn, the professors ask? They decry the large numbers of Down syndrome children born in Europe. Obviously, they write, if the parents knew they would have aborted these children.

Here's why: "1) The moral status of an infant is equivalent to that of a fetus, that is, neither can be considered a 'person' in a morally relevant sense; 2) It is not possible to damage a newborn by preventing her from developing the potentiality to become a person in the morally relevant sense."

Aside from leaky logic, the thrust of the argument centres on a definition of person that comes startlingly close to the conditions of people now in hospice care around the world. If individuals ceases to "be" persons in "the morally relevant sense," must they be kept alive? What is their status? What are their rights?

The defining thought in these discussions — at either end of the life spectrum — reduces to the usefulness of the human being involved. Whether eight months or eight years or 80 years, the concept of an "inconvenient" individual melds with the inconvenience of palliative care for the terminally ill.

There's no doubt about it. The life you save may be your own.

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Faith mentorship: building a culture of encounter

Catholic Connections

Rick Lucas

Do you remember a time when a child asked, “Why do we do this at mass? What does it mean?” Have you ever struggled explaining your faith to a non-Catholic colleague or neighbour? Have you ever thought about the “tangible intangibles” surrounding the difference between Catholic and public education? You might have heard the age-old advice to “never swim alone.” The Lloydminster Catholic School Division (LCSD) uses their Faith Mentorship program to gather peo-

Lucas is faith leadership specialist and high school Christian ethics teacher, Lloydminster Catholic School Division. Lucas is directly part of faith leadership and service in his school and school division.

ple to “swim in the depth of our Catholic faith” in our everyday life. The LCSD Faith Mentorship program gathers staff from their first day of work in a supported Faith Mentorship program.

With thanks to the religious coordinators of Saskatchewan and the faith mentorship framework, Lloydminster Catholic School Division has built a program of support, collegiality and faith friendship that invites new teachers into the LCSD faith community. This annual program brings together newly employed teachers within the division for a concentrated year of catechesis, faith, fellowship, food and fun. Faith mentorship fosters the culture of encountering as it allows professionals to ask and receive answers to essential questions surrounding the faith basics for teachers new to a

Catholic school system. We meet seven times a year in large-group formative sessions and engage teachers of all generations in exploring topics such as the sacraments, the liturgies of the church (mass, prayer services and the liturgical seasons of the year), studying about our Lord Jesus and his gift of the sacraments to the church, and the role of Mary in our faith. We examine Christian morality and the role and formation of consciences in making moral choices at home, school, and our community.

Marylle Svendsen, a faith mentorship teacher, reaffirms the importance of the large-group sessions: “There are two aspects of the large-group faith mentorship gatherings that I really appreciate: the historical background that Rick is able to provide for biblical events and attitudes; and Rick’s easily understood explanations of Catholic faith and practices for individuals who are not familiar with these. It’s wonderful to hear ‘how’ to explain to others.”

Each school has a faith mentor (an experienced practising Catholic teacher) that gathers their

“newbies” in a school faith community, meeting once every four to six weeks to discuss faith topics, offering support to each other in living a Catholic Christian lifestyle and becoming the “face of Jesus” to the students we teach and their families.

Kaitlin Basler, a first year teacher to LCSD states: “As a new community member and employee of LCSD I found the Faith Mentorship program to be exactly what I needed. Going to each session was like a breath of fresh air. Having a mentor so committed to the role and being in a small group of co-workers, helped foster relationships, provided a comfortable atmosphere as well as a source of encouragement and accountability. The delicious snacks provided each time were merely the cherry on top! I am very grateful!”

Each large-group session begins and ends with prayer and snacks. Presentations guide the larger group through an exploration of the topic of the day. These non-evaluative sessions are designed to help teachers under-

stand the mass, learn about and celebrate within the church liturgical year, participate with their students in meaningful dialogue about faith questions, and foster collegial time with colleagues for meaningful discussions about personal and public faith.

Mark Noble, a first-year teacher at Lloydminster Catholic School Division, described the personal impact of these sessions: “You feel like you are part of something that the leader has strong beliefs in and is approachable to discuss those things with the group. With that in mind, we are still encouraged to look into ourselves and examine our own beliefs. We are being led by example of how to guide and nurture children in their faith.”

Our school division also offers an “in-house” RCIA program, which allows teachers and support staff release time during their work day to attend RCIA sessions. After having experienced the mentorship program, several “graduates” have chosen to enrol

— FAITH, page 17



P. Paproski, OSB

SWEET SUMMER — “Summertime is always the best of what might be” (Charles Bowden). This is the Humboldt Museum in Humboldt Sask., one of countless museums across the prairies and throughout Canada. Take some time this summer to visit one near you and discover the treasures within.



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Ordinary life and mystery in a mother's diary

Around the Kitchen Table

Lloyd Ratzlaff



A metal trunk full of memorabilia from my mother Elsie's long life had been stored in my garage for several years. She was a remarkably strong woman until the age of 85, when a meningitis attack left her severely handicapped. After my sisters and I arranged a nursing home placement, we sorted through her possessions, divided up things we

wanted and gave the rest to charity, and eventually sold her empty house — empty but for the beloved piano that still stood in one corner of the basement. Years before, a room had been built around it in which she practised the music she played for countless church and community events. It was too costly now to have the instrument removed.

Our mother had been an avid diarist since at least the 1930s, and though she lived on in her nursing home for another eight years, the trunk remained in my garage until one day after her death I took it into my house and opened it. Of the hundreds — if not thousands — of handwritten diary pages, many held a passing interest for me, but they consisted mainly of entries that quickly became tedious. "I baked raisin bread and cloverleaf buns." "Lydia Lazenby was here." "We dug potatoes. A very poor crop. From 3 rows we got 2 bags." "I sewed on Eileen's dresses."

But some entries stood out from the rest, like this one about my father written a few years after his death. "I miss Albert — but between God and me, we can handle it. I am a happy person." She had been widowed for only a short time when certain men began bidding for her favours — five of them in all, each one noted and dismissed with scorn. "I went to the shoe maker, and that old, fat ugly guy asked me to marry him" — the last two

words written in red pen rather than the blue of surrounding lines.

Then, on July 1, 2003, just a few months before the disease put her in a nursing home, her final notebook contained the longest entry of any she'd written in nearly 70 years of diarizing, and it was recorded entirely in red ink. With only a few minor punctuation changes, this is what she wrote.

I had a very strange experience a week or so ago. I was heavily into music, at the home for the aged, nursing home, community picnic, about a good dozen songs for the baptismal candidates etc. I was just beat, so on Sun. after I came from church, I hit the bed and was out. Slept like a log.

All at once I woke up and it was light, it was 7:30 so I got up, I thought — "How could I have slept all thru the night without waking?" I thought it was 7:30 a.m. so I went outside and started transplanting plants which I had bought at Marvin's Gardens on Sat. and gradually it got darker & darker, & I was wondering "How come."

Finally I could hardly see anymore and I thought of Revelation where it says about the sun & moon & darkness and was wondering if the rapture was going to take place, and finally I had to go inside because I couldn't see anything & when I got in, I realized it was 7:30 p.m. But when I thought about the rapture I asked myself "So have you asked many people whether they would be ready for the rapture?" I knew I was ready. So I had not slept as long as I thought I had.

But then a short while after this I dreamt Jesus had come & as I went up, I looked to see whether I could see all my loved ones go up with me. Quite an experience.

Exhausted or disoriented as my mother may have felt at the time, this incident was plainly one of the most powerful of her entire life. As far as I know, she never mentioned it to anyone, but wrote it privately, and devoted more time and space to it than to anything else in the dozens of jour-



Ratzlaff

Lloyd Ratzlaff with his mother, Elsie.

nals and scribbles that filled her blue trunk.

Now I'm left to make of it what I will. The whole event, culminating in her dream and the "quite an experience" awakening, still holds a somewhat disconsolate feeling. She doesn't say, for instance, that her loved ones were in the company of the saved. Nor does she vow to ask more people whether they're ready for the rapture, though clearly she thinks she should. Above all, though Jesus has returned, still he fails to appear in the sky through which he comes, and through which she and unnamed others are rising.

I think these anxieties must have been assuaged by the time my

mother died. For although the brain damage caused her great difficulties in speaking, often her mind was clear and she was able to get many of her meanings through to others. Sometimes, for example, she wanted to discuss her estate matters, yet never of her own accord did she mention religion, though she liked to hum along with old familiar hymns on her cassette tapes while she pointed at the birds coming to feed outside her window.

Ah, mother, it all feels so much like life now, and how I suppose dying may feel — still travelling, looking around, still waiting for eternal joy.

Still writing down words, and who'll say why?

Faith mentorship supports

Continued from page 16

in our RCIA program to further explore the depth and richness of the Catholic faith and have entered into full communion with our Catholic community with baptism, eucharist and confirmation.

Rev. Stefano Penna, a friend and mentor, once told me, the word companion is made up of two words: *com* and *panis*. These old Greek words mean to "break bread with." So it is in our mentorship program that we companion together and study the words of

Scripture, while exploring tradition in the Catholic faith. The Faith Mentorship program mirrors the model of Catholic schools, by fostering an environment, which invites and engages, rather than telling answers to questions one might never ask. As Josephine Lombardi, one of Canada's premier Catholic theologians, says, "with hearts transformed by Christ, we can change the hearts of others, and transform the world." The LCSO faith mentorship is one way to support, share and lead in sharing God's message.



Ratzlaff

Elsie and Albert Ratzlaff on their wedding day.

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Jesus’ tomb under repair

When I visited the Holy Land, one of the prime destinations was the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. According to tradition going back to at least the fourth century, the church contains the two holiest sites in Christendom: the site where Jesus was crucified and Jesus’ empty tomb.

Constantine built a church on this site in 326. Helena, his mother, discovered the True Cross here at the time.

Unfortunately, the church reflects the division among Christians. Above the church entrance, for instance, stands a ladder which has not been moved for more than 160 years. The Christian denominations who control the church can’t agree on moving it. This includes the Greek Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic and Roman Catholic churches who were given rights over different parts of the church in the Status Quo agreement put in place by the Ottoman rulers in 1852. To a lesser degree, the Egyptian Copts, Syrians and Ethiopians also have some responsibility over the church.

However, there are signs of hope. For the first time in 200 years, experts have begun a restoration of the Edicule of the Tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The project began in early June and is expected to take a year to complete; it will include sorely needed damage repair and reinforcement of the structure.

The project came together when the three principal churches overseeing the tomb under the 19th-century Status Quo agreement overcame their differences which gave them rights to protect their portion of the church.

The Edicule of the Tomb was built by the Greek Orthodox community in 1810. It has been encased in metal scaffolding since the British Mandate period in the mid-20th century because of concern for its stability. Repair of the Edicule has been under dis-

cussion since 2000 and it is a sign of hope and changing attitudes that a new era of co-operation is beginning.

It is, after all, the place where Jesus prayed that all believers be one. And it’s time for the ladder to be taken down. — PWN

Orthodox disunity evident

In the West, ecumenical talks generally focus on relations between Protestants and Catholics. They are trying to heal a division that goes back five centuries, to the time of Martin Luther.

More recently, Catholics have become more aware of another sore division — that with the Orthodox churches of the east. This goes back a thousand years, to 1054. The initial step was taken in 1965 by Pope Paul VI who met Athenagoras I, the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople; they declared invalid the anathemas of 1054. St. John Paul II initiated steps to bring about reconciliation with the Orthodox churches — so that the church could breathe “with both lungs.”

An historic Pan-Orthodox Holy and Great Council is taking place in Crete June 16 - 27. Leaders of 14 independent Orthodox churches are meeting to promote unity among the world’s 300 million Orthodox Christians. Orthodox church leaders haven’t held such a meeting since the year 787, when the last of the seven councils recognized by both Orthodox and Catholics was held.

However, this push for unity has revealed deep divisions among the Orthodox. Four of the 14 churches decided to withdraw from the meeting at the last minute. This included the Orthodox churches of Antioch, Bulgaria, Georgia and Russia. The 10 Orthodox leaders attending are: Archbishop Sawa of Warsaw and all of Poland; Archbishop Chrysostomos of Nova Justiniana and all of Cyprus; Patriarch Irinej of Serbia; Patriarch Theodore II of Alexandria;

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople; Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem; Patriarch Daniel of Romania; Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and all of Greece; Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durres, and all of Albania; and Archbishop Rastislav of Presov, metropolitan of the Czech lands and Slovakia.

These 14 independent Orthodox churches belong to the so-called Eastern Orthodox family.

There is a second grouping called the Oriental Orthodox family. It includes the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Indian Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. Together, they represent some 84 million faithful and are among the oldest Christian bodies in the world.

Because of the Christological disputes that arose in the fifth century at the Council of Chalcedon, there is no eucharistic communion between these two Orthodox families. The Oriental Orthodox churches are only attending the Eastern Orthodox council as observers — the same as other Christian observers, including Roman Catholics.

Ukrainian Catholics share the same faith, liturgy and spirituality as their Orthodox cousins. Some Orthodox churches use the pejorative term “uniate” to describe Ukrainian Catholics — because they broke with the Eastern Orthodox Church family at the Union of Brest in 1596 and entered into communion with Rome. This remains a sore point with Orthodox believers to this day.

Any family has its difficulties and misunderstandings. The better we get to know one another and the more open we are to one another in our Christian families, the greater opportunity the Spirit has to heal old wounds and create new visions. May the Spirit be abundantly present at the Holy and Great Council. — PWN

Jesus’ tomb at Church of the Holy Sepulcher getting needed restoration

By Judith Sudilovsky

JERUSALEM (CNS) — For the first time in 200 years, experts have begun a restoration of the Edicule of the Tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was laid to rest after his crucifixion.

The project, which began in early June, is expected to take up to one year to complete and will include sorely needed damage repair and reinforcement of the structure.

The work is being carried out by experts from the National Technical University of Athens.

The project came together when the three principal churches overseeing the tomb under the 19th-century Status Quo agreement overcame enduring differences in a place where rights over every section of the church has been jealously guarded for centuries.

The Status Quo agreement was put in place by the Ottoman rulers in 1852 and preserved the division of ownership and responsibilities of the various Christian holy sites. At the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, it governs the responsibilities of the principal churches — Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian Apostolic — as well as the Ethiopian, Syriac and Coptic churches.

“There wasn’t any friction on this issue,” said Franciscan Father Athanasius Macora, who is responsible for supervising the agreement on the part of the Franciscan

Custody of the Holy Land. “There was good chemistry between the three heads of the churches and they agreed to it right away.”

However, the term “right away” is relative as the heads of the principal churches first brought up the issue of a very conservative “consolidation” of the edicule in 2000.

The current Edicule of the Tomb was built by the Greek Orthodox community in 1810, two years after a devastating fire. It has been encased in metal scaffolding since the British Mandate period in the mid-20th century because of concern for its stability.

Though many church-connected professionals have expressed concern over the structure since 2000, it took the shutting down of the tomb for four hours by the Israeli Police in February 2015 because of safety concerns — a blatant violation of the Status Quo agreement — to get the churches to act on their earlier discussions. An agreement to carry out the work on the tomb was signed in March.

“The idea is to strengthen the structure and try to get it back to its pristine state,” Macora said. “It is important that the work goes well. If all goes well, it will enhance the relationship (among the churches). If it doesn’t go well, it will not help their relationship.”

The tomb today is surrounded by a white perimeter wall, but the work on its exterior walls is taking place in the evening so pilgrims can continue to visit the interior of the tomb, he said.

All three churches are contributing to pay the \$3.4 million price tag for the project. Jordanian King Abdullah also made a personal contribution for the restoration. Until 1967, the Old City of Jerusalem, where the Church of

the Holy Sepulcher is located, was under Jordanian control and the king continues to play a role in the safeguarding of Christian and Muslim holy sites.

“The tomb is the heart of the shrine. It is the most important

reason why people are coming to visit the church and . . . everyone knew the (the restoration) needed to be done,” Macora said. “There is no reason it could not be done.

— RELATIONS, page 19



CNS/Sean Hawkey

ORTHODOX COUNCIL MEETS — Orthodox patriarchs and primates walk at the Orthodox Academy of Crete as they meet to consider a draft message of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church in Chania on the Greek island of Crete June 17. The heads of Orthodox churches were preparing to attend the June 19 - 26 Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church in Chania. The council is the first meeting of all the Orthodox churches in more than a millennium. However, in the week leading up to the meeting, the Orthodox churches of Antioch, Bulgaria, Georgia and Russia announced they’re not coming and called for the meeting to be postponed. The Russian Orthodox Church represents roughly two-thirds of the estimated 250 to 300 million Orthodox Christians in the world.

Parishes should charge for services like funerals: reader

The Editor: This is in reply to Gerald Regnitter’s letter of June 1, “Parishes exploit funerals as commercial opportunity.” He asks, “What is my relationship to the Catholic Church community?” I would ask Gerald the same question. What is Gerald’s relationship to the church in that he is so critical in this matter?

In our present-day church community, who should pay for extra costs for funerals, weddings, baptisms, etc.? If there are costs involved, and there are, such extra janitorial services and utilities, the parishioner who needs the services should pay. In our society there are people who are Catholic in name

only, and they do not participate in the Sunday eucharist or contribute financially. Yet when they die, the church should not charge for their funeral? How do we manage this with limited resources? Many parishes are in a deficit position financially. Who is going to pay for the extra costs involved in funerals, weddings, etc.?

Gerald should really rethink his position. It is only fair that all of us Catholics should pay for the legitimate costs involved in funerals, etc. As a participating Catholic, both for Sunday eucharist and financially, I do not want to pay for funeral expenses of people who are Catholic in name only or

for Catholics who can afford these expenses. I feel that it is pretty crass to suggest that churches use funerals to exploit us commercially or financially. Our parishes need all of us to share in the expenses and costs of the church.

The \$200 that our diocese charges for funerals is hardly commercial exploitation of parishioners. All pastors also have the bishop’s authorization to waive or reduce church fees if they are deemed to be a hardship. Nobody is deprived of church use because they are not able to pay church fees, such as the funeral fee. — **George Meyer, Prince Albert, Sask.**

Relations have improved since the 1960s

Continued from page 18

It is important that the work be done in a way which respects the rights of other communities.”

He noted that despite the oft-cited disputes among the churches, relations have improved since the 1960s and though they have reached a plateau since then, fewer conflicts emerge today.

“There have been sporadic outbreaks and there will be outbreaks in the future, but they are significantly less than in the past,” Macora said.

Cleaning work has also been undertaken on some of the mosaics in the church and work remains to be done on the floor around the tomb, which cannot begin until the restoration of the tomb is complete, he said.

This is not the first time the three denominations came together for a

restoration project. In 1997, they co-operated to restore and decorate the great dome above the tomb with the financial support of the late Catholic philanthropists George and Marie Doty, seemingly ushering in a new era of co-operation.

Three years ago in Bethlehem,

restoration and renovation work also began at the Church of the Nativity with the Palestinian Authority given the role of intermediary between the churches. The wooden roof of the church has been repaired and work is underway on wall mosaics.

Love is the only path to happiness, says Pope Francis

Continued from page 1

The only path to happiness is love, Pope Francis said. “How many disabled and suffering persons open their hearts to life again as soon as they realize they are loved! How much love can well up in a heart simply with a smile!”

The day before the mass, the pope held a special audience for participants in a conference sponsored by the Italian bishops’ office for catechesis for disabled persons.

Saying that he knows speeches can be boring — and people sneak a look at their watches thinking, “when will he stop talking?” — the pope opened the meeting to questions.

Participants asked Pope Francis how parishes can overcome fear of people who are different, how they can fight discrimination of those



Gamache

Graduation

Six years old,
my grandson stands
in cap and gown.
How time passes
when I’m far away.

By Donna Gamache

with disabilities and how to help a parish that thinks it cannot welcome the disabled and prepare those with developmental difficulties for the sacraments.

Encountering and welcoming someone who is different can cause fear at first, the pope said. But “we are all different. There is no one exactly like another.”

“Differences are a richness because I have something and you have something else and by putting the two together we have something more beautiful, something greater,” the pope said. Diversity is not something to fear, but is “the path to improvement, to be more beautiful and richer.”

Discrimination, especially in a parish, “is something very ugly,” Pope Francis said.

“It is true that if you want to receive communion, you must have had preparation. And if you do not understand the language (of the catechesis), for example if you are deaf, you must have the possibility of a preparation with sign language,” the pope said.

A pastor who says his parish cannot provide special religious education classes “must convert,” the pope said to applause.

“Think of a priest who does not

welcome everyone. What advice would the pope give him?” Pope Francis asked before responding, “Close the doors of the church! Either everyone or no one” should enter.

The priest might try to defend himself by saying that while everyone is welcome in his parish, the developmentally disabled cannot receive communion because they would not understand what they are doing. Pope Francis said his response to that would be, “You are the one who does not understand!”

“We all have the same possibility of growing, moving forward, loving the Lord, doing good things,” he said.

Pope Francis told those at the audience that when St. Pius X ruled in 1910 that children as young as seven years old could receive communion, similar objections were raised: “But that child won’t understand,” he said the critics complained.

But St. Pius went ahead, knowing “that children understand in a different way,” he said. “Each one of us has a different way of understanding things. One understands one way and another in a different manner, but we can all know God.”

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Laudato Si' at one year: acting on climate change

By Dennis Sadowski

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Thinking green is not easy. Nor is it always cheap.

But for St. Michael Parish in Poway, California, north of San Diego, parishioners are already

seeing the benefits — spiritual, financial and environmental — of a \$1.3-million investment in a solar panel system.

In the year since the panels were installed on several buildings across the 26-acre church property, the parish has seen its electrici-

ty costs fall by more than 75 per cent to about \$5,000 a month from \$20,000 to \$22,000 monthly, said Rev. John Dolan, pastor. At the current rate, the system will pay for itself within six years, he said.

What's better, Dolan told Catholic News Service, is that parishioners know that their church is part of a planet-wide movement in response to Pope Francis' year-old encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, on Care for Our Common Home, that calls upon everyone to better care for God's creation and one another.

"People are buying into this," Dolan said, explaining how topics on the environment and sustainability come up in parish conversations, even during coffee-and-doughnut gatherings after Sunday mass. "We have to think on a global level. This is no longer just a regional thing. We have to reach into this call to stewardship. We have dominion over the world and not domination."

The publication of the encyclical last June 18 helped boost the Diocese of San Diego's recommendation that all parishes install solar power systems. With 98 parishes and 89 schools, the effort is more than symbolic. The diocese reported that more than 50 entities are seeking bids on solar projects or solar power purchase agreements.

San Diego is not alone in embracing the pope's call to dialogue and action cited in the encyclical. Catholic organizations around the world have formed study groups, planted gardens, written broad action plans to reduce energy and water consumption, developed curricula and produced webinars to bring the principles Pope Francis expresses in *Laudato Si'* to life.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta has adopted a wide-ranging action plan that touches every aspect of church life. It identifies steps such as ridding the chancery of plastic foam cups and bowls, teaching catechists about the document, retreats on sustainability, workshops on developing a parish garden and

helping people that their buying habits matter, said Kat Doyle, archdiocesan director of justice and peace ministries.

"The reason we came up with an action plan is because nothing is going to change if we don't take action," Doyle explained.

The Atlanta plan has caught the eye of Jacqui Remond, national director of Catholic Earthcare Australia. She has submitted it to the country's bishops and archbishops, encouraging them to adopt a similar plan for the country's 28 dioceses and archdioceses.

Such a plan can be the basis for formation of people in how they see their role on the planet, Remond told CNS.



CNS/Tony Gentile, Reuters

POPE OPENS PASTORAL CONFERENCE — Pope Francis blesses a woman as he meets the disabled during the opening of the Diocese of Rome's annual pastoral conference at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome June 16.

Concept of marriage for life not understood

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Because most people today do not understand that sacramental marriage really is a bond that binds them to each other for life, many marriages today can be considered invalid, Pope Francis said.

Raising a point he has raised before, and one also raised by now-retired Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis insisted June 16 that the validity of a marriage implies that a couple understands that sacramental marriage is a bond that truly binds them to another for their entire lives.

"We are living in a culture of the provisional," he told participants in the Diocese of Rome's annual pastoral conference.

Answering questions after giving a prepared talk, Pope Francis told the story of a bishop who said a university graduate came to him saying he wanted to be a priest, but only for 10 years.

The idea of commitments being temporary "occurs everywhere, even in priestly and religious life. The provisional. And for this reason a large majority of sacramental marriages are null. They say 'yes, for my whole life,' but they do not know what they are saying because they have a different culture," he said.

The Vatican press office, publishing a transcript the next day, adjusted the pope's words to read, "A part of our sacramental marriages are null because they (the spouses) say, 'Yes, for my whole life,' but they do not know what they are saying because they have a different culture."

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesperson, said transcripts of the pope's off-the-cuff remarks always are reviewed for precision and clarity prior to publication.

When dealing with particularly important topics, the revised text always is given to the pope himself. That happened in this case, therefore the published text was approved expressly by the pope.

Attitudes toward marriage are influenced strongly by social expectations, the pope said, telling the story of a young man who told the pope he and his fiancée had not celebrated their wedding yet because they were looking for a church with decor that would go well with her dress. "These are people's concerns," the pope said. "How can we change this? I don't know."

Pope Francis told participants that when he was archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, he banned "shotgun weddings" from Catholic parishes because the strong social pressure to marry placed on a couple expecting a baby could mean they were not fully free to pledge themselves to each other for life through the sacrament.

It was important, he said, that the couples were not abandoned, but were assisted by the church. Many of them, he said, "after two or three years would marry. I would watch them enter the church — dad, mom and the child holding their hands. They knew well what they were doing."

"The crisis of marriage is because people do not know what the sacrament is, the beauty of the sacrament; they do not know that it is indissoluble, that it is for one's entire life," he said. "It's difficult."

Meeting in July 2005 with priests in northern Italy, Pope Benedict also raised the question of the validity of marriages that, while performed in church, bound together two baptized Catholics who had little understanding of the faith, the meaning of the sacraments and the indissolubility of marriage.

Asked about communion for a divorced and civilly remarried person, Pope Benedict had responded, "I would say that a particularly painful situation is that of those who were married in the church, but were not really believers and did so just for tradition, and then finding themselves in a new, non-valid marriage, convert, find the faith and feel excluded from the sacrament."

Pope Benedict said that when he was prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith he asked several bishops' conferences and experts to study the problem, which in effect was "a sacrament celebrated without faith."

He said he had thought that the church marriage could be considered invalid because the faith of the couple celebrating the sacrament was lacking. "But from the discussions we had, I understood that the problem was very difficult" and that further study was necessary.

According to the Code of Canon Law, "For matrimonial consent to exist, the contracting parties must be at least not ignorant that marriage is a permanent partnership between a man and a woman ordered to the procreation of offspring by means of some sexual co-operation."

In a formal speech in 2015 to the Roman Rota, a marriage tribunal, Pope Francis said: "The judge, in pondering the validity of the consent expressed, must take into account the context of values and of faith — their presence or absence — in which the intent to marry was formed. In fact, ignorance of the contents of the faith could lead to what the code (of canon law) calls an error conditioning the will. This eventuality is not to be considered rare as in the past, precisely because worldly thinking often prevails over the magisterium of the church."

Families are 'holy ground'

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Like Moses before the burning bush, those talking about the real-life situations of families must take off their sandals because they are standing on holy ground, Pope Francis said.

The pastoral care of families requires "a climate of respect capable of helping us listen to what God is saying," the pope said June 16, opening the Diocese of Rome's annual pastoral conference.

The families, catechists, priests and bishops participating in the two-day meeting were focusing this year on outreach to families in Rome in light of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love).

Pope Francis made a formal presentation, with several impromptu additions, and then answered questions at the end, speaking mainly from his pastoral experience in Argentina, but also as pope.

In the question-and-answer session, he assured participants that his exhortation was thoroughly reviewed by Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna, a respected theologian.

The document, he said, fully conforms to Catholic doctrine, but some people "want doctrine that is mathematically precise. That does not exist!"

"Truth is found in neither strictness nor laxity," the pope said. "The Gospel teaches something different: welcome, accompany, discern, integrate."

A priest must listen to each family, ask questions that help the person reflect and grow, but "not sticking his nose into every detail" of the couple's life, the pope said.

"Morality is always an act of love, love for God and for one's neighbour, he said. "And it also is an act that leaves room for the conversion of the other."

An attitude of superiority, he said, can even lead to "pastoral cruelty," for example when a priest refuses to baptize the baby of an unwed mother.

In his formal presentation, Pope Francis said that as the diocesan

gathering reflects on the family, participants must keep three things in mind: "the life of each person, the life of every family, must be treated with great respect and great care, especially when reflecting on these things; we must guard against setting up a pastoral plan of ghettos and for ghettos; we must give space to the elderly so they would begin to dream again."

The biblical image of the burning bush, Pope Francis said, should be a reminder that "family" is not a theme or a theory, but a reality lived by real people with real joys and sorrows.

"How helpful it is to give faces to the theme," he said. "That frees us from rushing to obtain well-formulated conclusions that can be lifeless; it frees us from speaking in the abstract so that we can draw near to and make commitments to concrete persons. It frees us from turning faith into an ideology with well-designed systems, but ignoring grace."

"To reflect on the life of our families as they are and where they are requires us to remove our shoes in order to discover God's presence," he said.

Faith prohibits the church from abandoning or giving up on anyone "because he doesn't live up to what we are asking," the pope said. The church must proclaim the Gospel and its values and help people to strive to live holy lives.

However, he said, Catholics must "avoid falling into judgments and attitudes that do not take into account the complexities of life."

"Evangelical realism," the pope said, is the biblical way of looking at life and it "gets its hands dirty because it knows that 'grain and weeds' grow together, and the best grain in this life always will be mixed with a few weeds."

Pope Francis quoted from *Amoris Laetitia*, saying: "I understand those who prefer a more rigorous pastoral care which leaves no room for confusion. But I sincerely believe that Jesus wants a church attentive to the goodness which the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness."

The Bible tells us to love our neighbours, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally they are the same people.

— G.K. Chesterton