



## Summer issues

The Prairie Messenger publishes every second week in July and takes a three-week vacation in August. The next issue will be July 13. Remaining summer issues will be: July 27, Aug. 24, and Aug. 31.



## Water songs

After holding a ceremony on the bank of the South Saskatchewan River in Saskatoon, Maria Campbell and guests shared an evening presentation at the Broadway Theatre entitled "Water Songs for a River City."

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## Gift of life

"It is extremely important for Canadians to do their best to keep their blood donation appointments," says Beth Frise, territory manager in Toronto for Canadian Blood Services. "Canadian patients are depending on your generous donation."

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## Conscience rights

Faith communities are petitioning the Saskatchewan government for protection for health care workers and institutions who want to take no part in medically assisted dying.

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## Happy Canada Day

If the United States was a project of the English Reformation, Canada was born of the Catholic Counter Reformation, led by the Franciscan Recollects and Jesuits who launched themselves deep into the continent by canoe, writes Michael Swan. The first thing those missionaries did was dedicate this new world to St. Joseph.

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## Apologies needed

Catholics and other Christians not only must apologize to the gay community, they must ask forgiveness of God for ways they have discriminated against homosexual persons or fostered hostility toward them, Pope Francis said June 26.

— page 20

# Saskatoon bishop homeless for 36 hours

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Thirty-six hours may not seem like a long time to be without a home, but for Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen and nine other participants in a recent Sanctum Survivor event, it was long enough to bring about an increased understanding and deeper empathy for those who experience homelessness as a daily reality.

In addition to Bolen, Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas, singer-songwriter Brad Johner, MLA Danielle Chartier, Central Urban Métis Federation (CUMFI) president Shirley Isbister, St. Paul's Hospital president Jean Morrison, retired police officer Ernie Louttit, Sanctum Care Group president Dr. Morris Markentin, StarPhoenix

reporter Jason Warick, and musician Jay Semko undertook to live on the streets of Saskatoon June 17 - 18.

During the 36-hour experience, participants set out in teams of two, dressed in second-hand clothing with nothing in their pockets but a cellphone (to keep in touch with event organizers and have their position tracked).

The event was launched as a dramatic way to raise funds and awareness for Sanctum Care Group, which provides hospice and transitional care to those who are homeless and struggling with HIV/AIDS. Sanctum is also raising funds for Sanctum 1.5, a planned 10-bed prenatal care home for high-risk, HIV-positive pregnant women.

As part of the event, the 10 celebrity participants gathered

sponsorships and donations beforehand, raising a total of some \$135,000.

But the challenges of Sanctum Survivor involved more than raising money. Participants were given a list of tasks to complete — challenges regularly faced by those who live on the street. The process demonstrated how even simple undertakings can become daunting for those with limited resources and no place to call home.

"The most powerful experience was the vulnerability of the situations we were in," said Bolen.

The bishop, who lives in an apartment in the city's core neighbourhood, said that the brief experience of living on the streets opened his eyes. "There are a whole lot of things in my neighbourhood that I knew were there, and I acknowledged their existence, but I got to see first-hand a lot more of the hurt and the pain in the neighbourhood, as well as the joy, and the simple relationships that exist."

These are reali-

ties that are not noticed from a car, or rushing to get somewhere, he

— PARTICIPANTS, page 16



K. Yaworski

**PANHANDLING** — One of the more daunting tasks during the Sanctum Survivor 36-hour homelessness challenge involved asking strangers for money to purchase a meal. Bishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon (left) and Chief Felix Thomas of the Saskatoon Tribal Council set their hats on the ground looking for handouts.

## Kasun shocked at being named auxiliary bishop

By Glen Argan  
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — Call Basilian Father Bob Kasun a most reluctant bishop.

"I find this appointment shocking and really hard to handle," he said in a June 17 interview.

When he started receiving mysterious phone messages from Ottawa one Friday afternoon, leaving a woman's first name and a number to call, he deleted them from his phone. Maybe it was a telephone solicitor or some sort of scam.

Besides, the policy at Edmonton's inner-city St. Alphonsus Parish is that callers leave their full name and a reason for their call. In this case, the calls became more persistent, but no more informative. Eventually, the woman from Ottawa told the parish secretary that Father Bob should call "Luigi" at the Ottawa number.

It took until the following Tuesday or Wednesday evening — Kasun can't remember for sure — that he finally got on the line with Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, the apostolic nuncio.

"Luigi" said Pope Francis had appointed him auxiliary bishop of Toronto and asked if he would accept the appointment.

"I was floored, and I didn't know what to say."

However, the nuncio "was really good" and suggested Kasun take some time to reflect and consult with whomever he needed to talk to.

So he did. A couple of days later, he called Bonazzi and explained at length why he was declining the appointment. The nuncio listened, and then asked Kasun to put his reasons in writing and send them along.

— KASUN, page 8



WCR/Glen Argan

Bishop-elect Robert Kasun

## Be known for your love: pope to Armenians

By Cindy Wooden

GYUMRI, Armenia (CNS) — Acts of love and kindness must be a Christian's "calling card," the characteristic that identifies them more than anything, Pope Francis told Catholics in northern Armenia.

Travelling June 25 to Gyumri, a city with a significant Catholic population and one still bearing the scars of an earthquake almost three decades ago, Pope Francis once again praised the steadfast faith of the Armenian people.

Thanking God for all that had been rebuilt since the 1988 earthquake, the pope also asked the region's people to consider what they are called to build today and, more importantly, how they are called to build it.

Celebrating the only public mass scheduled for his three-day visit to predominantly Orthodox Armenia, Pope Francis told thousands of people in Gyumri's

Vartanants Square that memory, faith and merciful love must be the foundations of their lives.

The joy that comes from encountering Christ, he said, "renews our life, makes us free and open to surprises, ready and available for the Lord and for others."

The exercise of charity renews and rejuvenates the church, he said.

"Concrete love is the Christian's calling card; any other way of presenting ourselves could be misleading and even unhelpful," he said, because Christians are called to be known by their love.

Pope Francis urged the Armenian people to continue on the path of dialogue and respect, especially among members of the Armenian Catholic and Armenian Apostolic churches.

During his stay in Armenia, the pope was the houseguest of Catholicos Karekin II, the patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic

Church. The catholicos was present for the pope's celebration of mass, a gesture the pope was scheduled to reciprocate the next day in Yerevan.

At the beginning of Gyumri mass, Catholicos Karekin recalled how, during the Soviet period, many churches in Armenia were closed or destroyed. The Armenian Apostolic Cathedral of the Seven Holy Wounds in Gyumri became an ecumenical place of worship with different areas of the church hosting services for the Armenian Apostolic, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communities.

After mass, Pope Francis invited the catholicos to join him in the popemobile. They toured the square, both giving the people their blessings.

The need to overcome divisions among Christians and to

— PEACE, page 5



# Christians don't exclude, they welcome, pope says

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Flanked by a group of refugees, Pope Francis appealed to Christians to care for and welcome those whom society often excludes.

"Today I'm accompanied by these young men. Many people think they would have been better off if they had stayed in their homelands, but they were suffering so much there. They are our refugees, but many people consider them excluded. Please, they are our brothers," the pope said June 22 during his weekly general audience.

The group, holding a banner that stated "Refugees for a better future together," caught the pope's attention as he was making his way to the stage in St. Peter's Square. He signalled them to come forward and instructed aides to allow them to sit in the shade on the stage.

In his main talk, the pope discussed the Gospel story of the leper who begged Jesus to heal him, saying: "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean."

The pope noted that the leper not only asked to be "purified" in both body and heart, but also

broke the law by entering the city to find Jesus in search of healing.

"Everything this man — who was considered impure — says and does is an expression of his faith!" the pope said. "This faith is the strength that allowed him to break every convention and try to meet with Jesus and, kneeling before him, call him 'Lord.'"

The leper's plea, he continued, serves as a lesson to Christians that "when we present ourselves to Jesus, long speeches aren't necessary" and that there is no place to feel safe other than with God and his infinite mercy.

Jesus' act of touching and healing the leper, an action forbidden by the law of Moses, is also an example for all Christians in helping the poor, the sick and the marginalized, the pope said.

When a poor person comes, he said, "we can be generous, we can be compassionate, but usually we do not touch him. We offer him a coin but we avoid touching his hand, we toss (the coin) there. And we forget that he is the body of Christ!"

By touching the poor and the excluded, he explained, Christians can be "purified of hypocrisy" and share concern for their condition.



CNS/Paul Haring

**POPE WALKS WITH REFUGEES** — Pope Francis and refugees walk past traditional flag twirlers as the pope arrives to lead his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 22. The pope invited more than a dozen refugees to sit near him onstage during his catechesis.

After the leper's healing, Jesus' instruction to "show yourself to the priest and offer for your

cleansing what Moses prescribed" highlights the importance of bringing those excluded back "into the community of believers and social life," he said.

"He was excluded and now he is one of us. Let us think about our own miseries, each one has their own. Let us think with sincerity. How many times we cover them with the hypocrisy of 'good manners'! It is precisely then that you need to be alone, get on your knees in front of God and pray, 'Lord, if you wish, you can make

me clean,' " Pope Francis said.

Saying he wanted to share something personal with the crowd, the pope said that each night he recites the leper's prayer as well as five 'Our Fathers,' one for every wound of Christ "because Jesus purified us with his wounds."

"This is what I do, but you can also do it in your homes. Say, 'Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean,' and think about Jesus' wounds and say an Our Father for each one. And Jesus will always listen to us," Pope Francis said.

## Tourists: report trafficking at Olympics

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Religious priests, brothers and sisters in Brazil are urging everyone attending the Olympic Games to report instances of exploitation of vulnerable people and to turn in suspected traffickers.

Their campaign, "Play for Life" invites tourists, residents and visitors "to take a stand, not to submit passively to the arrogance of those who want to manipulate and use everything, even sports and life, for power, pleasure and greed," according to a global network of religious.

Talitha Kum, an international network of consecrated men and women working against trafficking

in persons, sponsored a news conference at Vatican Radio June 21.

The group unveiled a new campaign organized by *Um Grito pela Vida*, the Brazilian network of religious against human trafficking. The campaign was being launched for the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Aug. 5 - 21.

The risk of exploitation against workers, women and children increases in the run-up to and during major events, which can be used to deceive people "with false promises of more jobs and a better life," said a Talitha Kum press release June 21.

"The city of Rio de Janeiro is one of the main Brazilian cities that attracts tourists who are inter-

ested in buying sex, even with children and adolescents," it said.

"The 2016 Olympic Games will attract a lot of tourists and with them, opportunities for criminal organizations to enter more easily to pursue their own evil agenda," it added.

With on-the-street initiatives, leafleting and meetings open to the public, campaigners hope to: raise awareness that "sexual exploitation is not tourism, but a serious violation of human rights"; advocate for measures that prevent and clamp down on trafficking; and educate those who are particularly vulnerable to being recruited by traffickers.

The campaign also urges visitors and residents to report "all forms of exploitation," especially the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, by calling the toll-free number "100" in Brazil.

"Complaints may be lodged, even anonymously. Don't remain indifferent," the Talitha Kum statement said.

The Brazilian network ran a similar campaign during and after the World Cup soccer tournament in Brazil in 2014. The network said more than 30,000 women religious, nearly 8,000 priests and 2,700 religious brothers were involved in that campaign.

The Play for Life campaign during the soccer tournament "contributed to a 42 per cent increase in the number of complaints of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and of situations of human trafficking," Talitha Kum said in its press release.

Talitha Kum is a project of the International Union of Superiors General, and is present in 81 countries. Local networks educate and warn potential victims of trafficking, work to fight the poverty that pushes people into vulnerable situations and rescue victims.

## Vatican marks *Laudato Si'* anniversary with new website

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — Marking the first anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace launched a new website dedicated to the document and efforts around the world to put its teaching into practice.

The site — [www.laudatosi.va](http://www.laudatosi.va) — "witnesses not only to the impact of the encyclical, but also the creativity and generosity of the people of God everywhere in the world," said Cardinal Peter Turkson, council president.

The council celebrated the first anniversary of the document, *Laudato Si'*, June 20 with a small conference at Rome's Basilica of St. Mary in Montesanto.

Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, in a video message, said that as scientists, governments, economists and concerned citizens were pushing for an international agreement to combat climate change, Pope Francis' encyclical provided the "moral imperative to take bold action."

Published six months before the Paris summit on climate change, she said, the pope's document raised the issue in "the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions of people who may not otherwise

have considered climate in their daily lives."

The science and economics of change to protect the environment are essential, Figueres said, but "the guidance of our moral compass" is what will make a difference.

Archimandrite Athenagoras Fasiolo, an Orthodox pastor in Treviso, presented the Italian edition of the book *Cosmic Grace, Humble Prayer: The Ecological Vision of the Green Patriarch Bartholomew I*.

Pope Francis' encyclical and the collected environmental reflections of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, he said, show that "the Holy Spirit does not cease to work without interruption in his church," inspiring leaders to teach care for "all the work of God."

Jesuit Father Michael Czerny, an official at the justice and peace council, told Catholic News Service that *Laudato Si'* does not tell people what to think, but guides them through the complexities of the issue of climate change and care for creation, and calls them to reflect on their response.

"The variety and intensity of debate" within and outside the church, he said, "is a very healthy response" because the pope wrote the encyclical to contribute to the debate and dialogue.



CNS/Paul Haring

**ECUMENICAL GESTURE** — Pope Francis and Catholicos Karekin II pour water on a tree in a model of Noah's Ark during an ecumenical meeting and prayer for peace in Republic Square in Yerevan, Armenia, June 25.



# Ceremony emphasizes the importance of water

By Andr  a Ledding

SASKATOON — After holding a daylong ceremony on the bank of the South Saskatchewan River May 24, Maria Campbell and guests shared an evening presentation at the Broadway Theatre entitled “Water Songs for a River City.”

“We have to go back to traditional ways, the ways of our old people,” noted Campbell. “They did things like the water ceremony that you were invited to today, and they told us we have to go back to those things because they are the gifts that will help us.”

Noting that she worked with many old people along the way, she introduced Don Kossick, a non-indigenous “elder for the day” who was one of six guests to share her keynote. Others included Christi Belcourt and Isaac Murdoch, who conducted the water ceremony, as well as Winona Wheeler and Glenda Abbott, and knowledge-keeper Joseph Naytowhow, who closed the evening with his song “All One People.”

“I feel hopeful,” said Campbell. “To see the young people involved in the water ceremony this afternoon was really powerful and gives us hope that your kids and my kids are going to be okay.”

“Water is sacred, water is our life. There is nothing more essential to our life and future generations than water,” noted Belcourt. “It is time to start a revolution for the waters. If we don’t have water, we don’t have a future. It’s just that simple.”

Asserting that the water, air, and the future of our children and grandchildren are threatened by a new reality that includes rapid climate change, Belcourt noted how different things had become in only one generation.

“We thought that the lakes were clean and the resources were endless, and it’s just not the case,” Belcourt said, adding that the focus must shift away from greed and individualism. “The antidote to greed is to give. Individualism is a great mistake: we allow ourselves to believe that we have a right to things, rather than a responsibility.”

“In our teachings we’re taught that our bodies are like the earth, and what happens to the earth happens to us and what happens to us happens to the earth. I think it’s important to note that colonialism trashed our lands and trashed our lives,” said Wheeler, noting that when possession was taken by settlers, damage was done to the waters and lands. “Our bodies were damaged, our minds were damaged, our spirits were damaged, and as we were beaten down our lands and waters were being beaten down, too.”

“There’s long-term damage that we’re living with here, that we’re doing our best to fix. But we can’t do it by ourselves, and there’s a big hullabaloo about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Recommendations,” said Wheeler. “Reconciliation — what does that mean? That doesn’t mean you guys say ‘Sorry’ and we say ‘OK.’ That’s not reconciliation. The only way we are going to reach reconciliation is if the damage that has been done is fixed.”

Abbott greeted everyone and their ancestors when she began her talk. “They say when we gather like this, it’s not just us who are sitting here,” she said. “With us we bring all the ancestors who have supported us to bring us to this day, but also each and every person in this audience has their ancestors they have brought with them tonight.”

She explained that every gathering like this is important because everyone has brought their own special energy, under the theme of reconciliation in this case.

“There’s too many coincidences in my life not to have my ancestors guiding my path,” noted Abbott, before talking about the water runners who are reconnecting stories, communities, and fulfilling the Eagle and Condor prophecy. “The prophecy states that after 500 years of colonization, our people would come back together, and we would come back strong through our culture and our traditions.”

The water runners collected all the major waters of every river and lake in the Western Hemi-

sphere that it crossed, explained Abbott, adding that the water has masculine and feminine energies, and is the life blood and definition of each territory as it absorbs and carries unique properties of each area. She explained that part of the ceremony was giving food and tobacco, petitioning the water for forgiveness, and acknowledging all that water gives us.

“I always say that the biggest injustice was not only to the indigenous peoples, but to the Europeans who had lost their connections to their lands and their ceremonies. When nations come together and share their teachings and stories equally, that’s a blessing. Each of your ancestors is sitting in this room along with ours.”

Naytowhow shared songs and stories, including a fast he undertook in the mountains and how the rain drop he licked off a leaf was the most delicious water he’d ever tasted. “How precious water is,” he said. “Next year at the riverbank we’ll fill that beach up for the water ceremony — maybe have several hundred or a thousand people.”



A. Ledding

**WATER SONGS** — After a daylong ceremony on the bank of the South Saskatchewan River in Saskatoon, Maria Campbell and guests presented “Water Songs for a River City” at the Broadway Theatre. From the left: Maria Campbell, Winona Wheeler, Christi Belcourt, Marjorie Beaucage and Glenda Abbott.

Campbell closed by noting that while Saskatoon didn’t feel like her city, she has always worked hard to make it better.

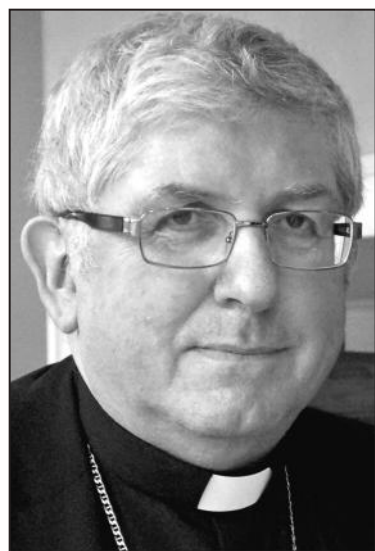
“It’s not to make anyone feel guilty, angry or defensive, but we have to be able to talk about those

things. My seventh generations have to have a place here just like yours do, and it’s up to us to make this place a good one, together, where they don’t have to be afraid of each other, and it’s up to us to make it better.”

## Despite euthanasia legislation, the battle continues

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Euthanasia and assisted suicide are legal in Canada, but opponents vow to fight on a number of fronts in hopes, ultimately, of seeing Canadian society reverse its position.



CCN/D. Gyapong

**Cardinal Thomas Collins**

In a statement released June 20, Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins said the Supreme Court of Canada and Parliament have “set our country down a path that leads not simply, and obviously, toward physical death for an increasing number of fellow citizens, but toward a grim experience for everyone in our society of the coldness of spiritual death.”

“That death is found in a loss of respect for the dignity of the human person, in a deadening pressure upon the vulnerable to be gone, and in an assault upon the sanctuary of conscience to be suffered by good individuals and institutions who seek only to heal,” the cardinal said.

He called the deepest roots of this “malign development” spiritual and said he would be suggesting prayer and penance as a way to address them.

“Our broader society also needs to engage in the necessary

but lengthy process of reflection upon the dire implications for every aspect of our life together when we lost the fundamental ability to distinguish between dying and being killed. We all need to recognize the profound significance of that distinction.”

Catholic Organization for Life and Family director Michele Boulva said Catholics have work to do in educating the next generation and those after why euthanasia and assisted suicide are “wrong, morally and spiritually.”

“Education is No. 1, to address the confusion that is still there,” she said.

At the same time, she urged Catholics to make sure euthanasia and assisted suicide “become irrelevant because of how we care for people.”

“We have to be like the first Christians, so people will say of us, ‘See how they love each other,’” she said. “We have to do that also, so people looking at us will say, ‘Look how they love each other.’”

“If we teach people to care about others, and love them when they become vulnerable, then the elderly and the disabled won’t want to be killed,” she said.

Catholic lay people need to “be proactive” and “not wait until the next moves are made by those who want to widen access to euthanasia,” she said. “Others will be pressing for a law that is wider. We have to do the opposite.”

Both Collins and Boulva stressed the importance of fighting to protect the conscience rights of health care professionals and institutions and of promoting good palliative care.

Catholic Civil Rights League President Phil Horgan said there is already a challenge to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario before the courts concerning the college’s requirement of an effective referral in euthanasia requests. This will likely be heard before a court in 2017, he said.

On a positive front, however, the Ontario health minister has signalled a willingness to recognize that Catholic and Christian hospitals not be required to participate, Horgan said. “That’s a hopeful proposition that needs to be acknowledged across the country.”

Strengthening palliative care may prove difficult now that assisted suicide and euthanasia are legal, he said. Horgan cited a vast difference in the number of palliative care specialists and available beds in the Netherlands where euthanasia is legal, and the United Kingdom, where it is not. If Canadians are euthanized at the same rate as Belgians, there could be between 8-12,000 euthanasia deaths a year here, he warned. Making an “assisted death” part of the continuum of health care is “not a palliative care culture,” he said.

But an even bigger adverse effect will be the way the new law will have an “educative effect” on the population. In the bill, “there wasn’t enough attention paid to the ideation of suicide, which is a mental health problem.”

“Now that we’ve introduced suicide relativism, you’re going to run into the problem of suicide attraction,” he said. “If ‘it’s OK for grandma,’ we’re not actually addressing the real issue of the absence of moral reasoning in our civic discourse.”

“We’ve moved away from the supremacy of God and the rule of law when it comes to assisted suicide in favour of a grounding in autonomy even to the extent of requiring the state and or a third party medical practitioner to assist you in your choice of early death,” he said. “The notion of autonomy before long really becomes a notion of the exercise of power.”

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition legal counsel Hugh Scher anticipates there will be a constitutional challenge coming soon to the requirement in the legislation death be “reasonably foreseeable” in order for a patient to obtain

euthanasia and assisted suicide.

“We’ll see how the courts deal with that and the amount of deference the courts are willing to pay to Parliament on such a complex social policy issue,” he said.

Scher said challenges may come from vulnerable Canadians who say their Charter rights to life, security of the person and to equality are threatened by having an assisted suicide and euthanasia law.

Others could challenge the “failure to provide palliative care as a right to all Canadians,” arguing it is “depriving Canadians of the ability to lead dignified lives.”

“Denial of that right to palliative care and related support may give rise to violations of Section 7 (life and security of the person) and Section 15 (equality provision) of the Charter,” he said.

There will be those who want to broaden access to euthanasia, those who want to keep it the way it is, and “those who want it done away with altogether, for the Supreme Court decision to be overturned,” he said.

The preamble of Bill C-14 noted there would be further study on issues such as advanced directives and access for mature minors. Scher said that he expected, as in many “social policy evolutions” the changes will be “incremental.”

Collins also warned against taking any reassurance in the fact “the law could be worse.” He noted in jurisdictions where euthanasia is legal, “it has always been cloaked with ‘safeguards’ that lull the citizens into complacency.”

“Over the years those ‘safeguards’ finally drop away, and then the full hard cold force of euthanasia is felt,” the cardinal said. “Here is a chilling fact: despite the confidence of the Supreme Court justices that Canada is different from those jurisdictions, in only slightly more than a year since their decision, the ‘safeguards’ are already under vigorous attack.”



# Canadians reminded of importance of blood donation

By Jean Ko Din  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Timothy Rafanan has had more than 100 blood transfusions in his lifetime — and he'll turn just two years old in August.

Timothy was first diagnosed with alpha-thalassemia when his mother, Tracy Rafanan, was 20 weeks pregnant with him. It is a red blood cell disorder that impairs the production of hemoglobins and prevents efficient circulation of oxygen through his bloodstream to his organs. Rafanan and her husband Emil, parishioners at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Mississauga, Ont., are genetic carriers of the disease.

"I had never heard the word thalassemia before that day," said Rafanan. "It was hard for me because I could feel him moving . . . and when I learned he was sick, it just broke my heart. I can't imagine a life where you would need all these blood transfusions."

Every three weeks, even while he was still in his mother's womb, Timothy received blood transfusions to give him healthy hemoglobins that will restore oxygen flow to his bloodstream. He will need this treatment all his life.

Rafanan said it is more than worth it to have the ball of energy Timothy is in their family's life. Except for his regular hospital vis-

its, he is just like any other kid.

"I think being in Canada, we're so lucky to have these types of services," she said. "I know in different countries, you have to bring your donor with you . . . but he will always have blood for him."

Beth Frise, territory manager in Toronto for Canadian Blood Services, said it is cases like Timothy's that put the most pressure on Canada's blood supply system. When people donate blood, most assume the blood will go toward emergency operations. But most of the demand is for those who have regular treatments for chronic diseases.

"It is extremely important for Canadians to do their best to keep their blood donation appointments," said Frise. "Canadian patients are depending on your generous donation."

Frise estimates that they will need to collect 200,000 blood donations by July to support patient needs this summer.

The Archdiocese of Toronto recently signed to be a part of the Partners for Life program, promising to contribute 500 blood donations annually.

Frise said there are already several Catholic parishes and schools that contribute on a regular basis. St. Gabriel's Parish is a regular site, hosting blood clinics on the last Monday of every month.

"We have been doing this for more than 10 years, even in our

old church premises," said John Badali, office administrator at St. Gabriel's. "It's a very popular clinic and it's a part of belonging to a community."

Last year, the parish collected more than 860 units of blood. Since the average cancer patient uses five units during the course of their treatment, St. Gabriel's collected enough blood to help 172 cancer patients.

One blood donation is about 450 ml of blood and it is often used within days of being donated, the demand is that urgent.

Frise estimates Canadian Blood Services will need about 100,000 new donors this year to maintain the national blood supply and to replace the aging donor base. About one in two Canadians is eligible to give blood, yet only four per cent of eligible donors sustain the blood system.

"Every minute of every day, someone in Canada needs blood and often from more than one generous donor," said Frise.

Frise oversees three permanent blood clinics downtown and several mobile clinics throughout the city.

Rafanan does not need blood transfusions, but she cannot qualify to be a blood donor. Instead, she and her family are doing everything they can to raise awareness and encourage others.

"I just want people to know that it's so important," she said.



Tracy Rafanan

**GIFT OF LIFE — Timothy Rafanan with his sister Emily playing with an iPad as he receives his regular blood transfusion.**

"They say it's in you to give and it really is. It's something so small

that would make a difference for a whole generation of family."

## World Youth Day pilgrims receive bishop's blessing in Edmonton

By Ramon Gonzalez  
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — "Don't be afraid," Archbishop Richard Smith told young people travelling to Krakow, Poland for World Youth Day. "Go with open hearts and understand that Jesus takes nothing and gives everything."

Smith presided at the commissioning mass for World Youth Day June 12 at Holy Rosary Church, a Polish church. Dozens of young men and women wearing the red

and white T-shirt of the Canadian delegation attended the mass — their last official activity before they depart for Poland in mid-July.

About 270 young people from across the Edmonton archdiocese will travel to the land of St. John Paul II for this worldwide Catholic encounter.

The event runs July 25 to 31, but Edmonton pilgrims will depart a week in advance to participate in a variety of activities in the Diocese of Wroclaw.

WYD is typically celebrated

every three years in a different country. The previous one took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2013.

Smith has been to a number of these encounters and gave the congregation a taste of what they can expect.

"You can look forward to something extraordinary," he said. "First of all is the encounter with literally hundreds of thousands of young fellows, people your age, people who like you share the faith, love the Lord, love the church and want to follow Jesus."

The archbishop said most pilgrims discover they are not alone in their faith. "World Youth Day conveys the truth that we are not alone. There are thousands, millions of people around this globe your age who love the Lord and love the church."

The encounter with the pope is an important dimension of this pilgrimage. "People are there from all over the world. Every language on the earth is there, gathered around the Holy Father. He is our pope and we are his.

"So we recognize that in the person of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, we have a sign of the extraordinary unity that we have that transcends all linguistic (and) cultural differences."

The deepest, most important encounter at World Youth Day is our encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, the archbishop told his young congregation. Jesus is truly present at World Youth Day "and we meet him there."

Smith said many who go to WYD come away changed, never to be the same again, especially those who go there to discern God's will for them in life. As a result, many vocations to the priesthood and to religious life emerge from WYD.

Like St. John Paul II, the founder of WYD, Smith urged young people to not be afraid and to go to Krakow with open hearts. "Don't be afraid of Jesus. Don't be afraid of change," he said. "Jesus is waiting for you."

"Having a blessing from the archbishop is very empowering," said Adam Lachacz, one of 10

travelling to Krakow from St. Andrew's Parish in Edmonton. "It's really nice to know we are being supported in our spiritual journey on this pilgrimage to the homeland of St. John Paul II."

Lachacz, 18, said he has heard a lot from friends who have gone to WYD in the past and has lots of expectations. "It's going to be so exciting to be there in Poland with three million other youth from across the world."

This is the second WYD for Martine Bazira, one of 17 from Paroisse St. Thomas d'Aquin going to Poland. "I feel like I have a great mission but most of all I'm going there to meet people."

The 23-year-old said she made a ton of friends when she went to WYD in Brazil in 2013. "The feeling that we are not alone in our faith gives us more courage to carry on and to follow Jesus."

Jamie Jaca, also from St. Andrew's Parish, is going to Poland to experience what her friends described as a great faith adventure.

"They were telling me what a great experience it was encountering Christ among a million other people," the 22-year-old explained.

"It will be such a great experience to stand among all those other youth who have the same beliefs. Sometimes we feel we are so alone in our faith and yet there are so many people out there who believe in Christ the same way that we do. I believe this pilgrimage is going to change my life."



WCR/R. Gonzalez

**WORLD YOUTH DAY — Many of the 270 Catholics from across the Edmonton archdiocese heading for World Youth Day in July attended a commissioning mass June 12 at Edmonton's Holy Rosary Church.**



# Early intervention needed to help homeless youth

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Nick Beckett is an impressive young man in his third year at the University of Toronto working toward a criminology degree. As he makes his way through exams, he’s also heading up a new non-profit which aims to provide a home and transitional programs to young people who age out of the child welfare system.

At 27 he’s comfortable talking with the media. He easily marshalls statistics and anecdotes to support his arguments. He speaks convincingly about his spiritual life, his ambitions and his dreams.

Five years ago he was homeless — couch surfing, addicted, aimless, living on the margins just out of reach of anything legitimate or legal.

“Youth make bad choices. This is life. I made bad choices. My friends made bad choices,” he explains. “We’re young. We’re stupid. We think we’re invincible.”

Beckett credits Covenant House with helping him turn his life around.

“It was pivotal. It was actually necessary to the success I enjoy today,” he said. “They just have so many areas of support for youth, whether it be education, health, counselling. . . . It is kind of a one-shop deal — everything under one roof.”

Covenant House is an international agency providing support and services to homeless and at-risk youth. Covenant House Toronto is Canada’s largest homeless youth agency, helping street kids at its downtown Toronto facility in the heart of city just off of Yonge Street.

Things started going downhill for Beckett when he was 14. His parents were divorced and his mother was losing a battle with alcoholism.

“She would move from place to place, taking me along and really kind of uprooting me from any place where I sort of started to make roots,” he said.

When he was 15, Beckett’s mother decided she couldn’t really provide for her son. She called in the children’s aid society and the boy was taken under a temporary care agreement. That turned out to be less of a solution than Beckett might have guessed. A year later the agreement ended and at 16 Beckett had to find



Catholic Register/M. Swan

**YOUTH HOMELESSNESS — Homeless five years ago, Nick Beckett is now working his way to a degree in criminology at the University of Toronto.**

somewhere else to live.

At 17 the Oakville kid had his first go ’round at Covenant House.

“I was pretty intimidated by the whole ordeal — a big downtown shelter. . . . It was just so hard to grasp that I was homeless,” he said.

There are 6,500 homeless youth on the street or camped on someone’s basement couch on any given night in Ontario. Last year the Ontario government pledged to end long-term, chronic homelessness in the province in the next 10 years. The key to fulfilling that promise is going to be our capacity to intervene in the lives of homeless young people and set them on a new path.

“The earlier you intervene the more likely it is that you will be able to effect change,” said Covenant House Toronto CEO Bruce Rivers. “Intervening in situations with youth who are homeless offers you an opportunity to actually interrupt a trajectory that otherwise could lead to chronic and long-term homelessness.”

Rivers served on the province’s expert advisory panel on homelessness in 2015 — the body that convinced the government to declare its intention of reducing all homelessness to one-time, temporary and solvable problems.

“Setting a bold goal and measuring progress is an important element in making real change happen,” Ministry of Housing spokesperson Conrad Spezowka told The Catholic Register in an email.

From the perspective of his own five-plus years of homelessness, Beckett thinks any talk of a bolishing homelessness is “more rhetoric than reality.” “Homelessness can be treated. It can’t be solved, frankly,” he said. “The causes are so vast and so encompassing.”

The province’s plans come with big financial commitments, including \$4 billion committed for affordable housing

since 2003 and \$294 million budgeted in 2016 - 17 to the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. The most recent provincial budget put in \$100 million over three years for housing allowances and support services going to people in supportive housing, plus construction of up to 1,500 new supportive housing units. There’s another \$10 million dedicated to Ontario’s Local Poverty Reduction Fund in 2016 - 17.

On average, it costs close to \$6,000 (\$5,769.23 according to the Ministry of Housing) to re-house an individual or family who is homeless. Prevention is cheaper at \$1,056.34 per household, according to provincial officials.

There’s no better predictor of long-term homelessness than youth homelessness, said Stephen Gaetz, director of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

“A high percentage of adults who are homeless had their first experience of homelessness when they were teens,” he said. “We wait for young people to pull them-

selves up by the bootstraps. The problem is that when you do that, if you let any young person languish in homelessness, their health declines, they experience nutritional vulnerability, they’re more likely to be ill or injured, their mental health declines, there are higher rates of depression and suicidality, their risk of exploitation goes through the roof because there’s a lot of creepy people out there.”

At Covenant House, Rivers’ own research has shown that homeless youth are up to 40 times more likely to die young than their peers.

Youth homelessness is both different and the same as adult homelessness. It’s different in that the driving factor is family dysfunction and not simply poverty. Half of them come from middle- and upper-income households. Like adult homelessness, the results of youth homelessness are almost always best measured in terms of health. More than a third of the kids at Covenant House have mental health issues. Covenant House teams up with St. Michael’s Hospital’s inner city health department to extend basic medical care to kids who are undernourished, sick and at risk.

There are also new challenges in youth homelessness. While there have always been girls in the sex trade living at the mercy of pimps and ultimately organized crime, today the trade in human flesh has been amped up by technology.

“It used to be much more visible. Kids would be on the street, visibly prostituting,” said Rivers. “Today, that’s not necessarily the case with the evolution of the Internet and social media and all of these other avenues.”

Covenant House is trying to raise \$10 million over five years to launch an urban response model to protect the girls. It will have to come mostly from donations. Only 20 per cent of Covenant House programming is funded by government. About \$600,000 a year from the Archdiocese of Toronto has been

a stable, sure source. But welcoming 250 young people a day, running a school, a housing program, a counselling service, a clinic and more is very expensive.

“It’s the donor dollar that has made Covenant House what it is today,” Rivers said.

What Covenant House is today is far more than just a shelter. This is an institution in the heart of the city that deals with a problem no one else wants to think about. Shelters are for emergencies. More than 3,000 kids a year, every year, is more a fact of life than an emergency.

“Providing people with three hot meals and a cot — however well meaning that is — it really doesn’t address the issues,” said Gaetz. “They need housing, which is not the same as an emergency shelter bed. They need adult support and mentoring. They need a chance to recover if they’ve experienced trauma. They need safety. They need a chance to get back to school. We have to stick with them for a long time, until they’re stable.”

Turning the corner on youth homelessness begins with thinking of young homeless people as children, minors, who don’t deserve the suffering they’ve found in life.

“We demonize other people. We think of them as criminals, or delinquents, or bad kids,” Gaetz said. “We’re here to help people grow into adulthood in a healthy way, in a safe way — and give them the support they need for as long as they need it, not thinking, ‘Oh great, here’s a cot, here’s a bologna sandwich. You should be thankful.’”

Nobody should be surprised that people who went through homelessness when their peers were working on high school yearbooks and organizing the school dance aren’t quite ready for independence at 21, said Beckett.

“You need to be a little more merciful, perhaps extend a little more grace,” he said. “It’s a whole new ball game. Everything has changed.”

## We must work and pray for peace

Continued from page 1

work for peace in the world was given even greater attention by Pope Francis and Catholicos Karekin during an evening prayer service back in Yerevan.

In the capital’s Republic Square, where crowds had gathered while the sun was still hot, the pope and patriarch processed in together, walking side by side and blessing the people. They stopped to shake hands with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan.

Pope Francis told the people that he and the catholicos, like all those committed to Christian unity, “look confidently toward the day when by God’s help we shall be united around the altar of Christ’s sacrifice in the fullness of eucharistic communion.”

“Let us pursue our journey with determination,” he said. “Indeed, let us race toward our full communion!”

In working and praying for Christian unity, the pope said,

churches are not looking for “strategic advantages” or ways to promote their own interests. “Rather, it is what Jesus requires of us and what we ourselves must strive to attain with goodwill, constant effort and consistent witness” in order to fulfil “our mission of bringing the Gospel to the world.”

Following Christ’s example, the pope said, “we are called to find the courage needed to abandon rigid opinions and personal interests in the name of the love that bends low and bestows itself, in the name of the humble love that is the blessed oil of the Christian life, the precious spiritual balm that heals, strengthens and sanctifies.”

Together, he said, Christians must work and pray for peace, defending the persecuted — including Christians in the Middle East — but also promoting reconciliation.

Ending a day that began at Armenia’s genocide memorial,

Pope Francis prayed that Armenia and Turkey would embark on a new process of reconciliation and that peace would finally come to Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave in Azerbaijan. The ethnic Armenian majority of Nagorno-Karabakh voted in 1988 to unify with Armenia. Fighting ensued and continued until a ceasefire was reached in 1994, although the enclave’s status was never fully resolved. Sporadic fighting has occurred since, most recently in early April.

In his talk, Catholicos Karekin claimed Azerbaijan started the latest wave of violence with military exercises on the border.

But the patriarch cast his gaze wider, welcoming refugees from Syria and Iraq — nations that traditionally had strong Armenian Christian communities. “With hope in God, they wait for peaceful days to arrive in their native lands,” Catholicos Karekin said.

### Young and homeless

The world of youth homelessness is almost as vast as it is ignored. A few facts about the young and the homeless:

- On any given night, there are some 6,500 homeless youth on the streets in Ontario. Nationally 35,000 young people are homeless at any given time.
- Homeless youth are up to 40 times more likely to die young than their peers.
- A study of Covenant House youth found 32 per cent said they were struggling with mental health issues. Covenant House executive director Bruce Rivers believes the real number is between 35 and 40 per cent.
- The average homeless kid leaves home at 15. Half of them come from middle- or upper-income households.
- 42 per cent of Ontario girls forced into prostitution were first trafficked before the age of 18.
- In 2015 Covenant House worked with more than 3,000 youth and was able to send about 400 home to family — about 13 per cent.
- 43 per cent of homeless youth have had some contact with the child welfare system.



# Government petitioned to protect conscience rights

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — There were 11 of them — three bishops representing the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Ukrainian faith communities, several Anglican priests and rep-

resentatives from the Muslim and Jewish faith communities — and they all wanted the same thing from the provincial government: more palliative care available to people in the final stages of life, protection for health care workers

and institutions who want no part of medically assisted dying laws and should not be forced to refer a request for medically assisted dying to someone who would carry out the procedure.

“We think it was one of the most

Godly representative statements ever,” said Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen, one of the organizers of the group. It met June 21 with provincial Health Minister Dustin Duncan, Premier Brad Wall, Attorney General Gordon Wyant and the NDP Opposition caucus.

“We had a good hearing and we heard from the premier a commitment to every means possible to protect those conscience rights,” said Bolen. The meeting with NDP Leader Trent Wotherspoon and several members of his caucus focused mostly on palliative care.

“Everybody recognizes the cost involved but everybody recognizes the profound need if we really are going to give people a choice. If assisted euthanasia is not going to be forced on people, then there has to be good access to palliative care.”

Saskatchewan Ukrainian Eparchy Bishop Bryan Bayda said more members of other faith communities are expected to sign the petition. “I think that kind of appeal to what we have said in the statement is very profound and I think it will

catch the attention of the members of the legislative assembly.”

The entire group was later introduced to the legislative assembly by Wall. The premier, in his introduction, said the government would do what it can to protect the rights of those who do not want to be forced into carrying out medically assisted dying.

The issue was forced on the Canadian people through a ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada, which said it was against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Canadian Constitution to deny anyone’s request for medical assistance in taking their own life. It set out the conditions under which the procedure can be granted and gave the federal government a year to enact a law. Bill C-14, the legislation legalizing the procedure, was approved by both the House of Commons and the Senate but gives narrower parameters that must be met. Groups favouring medically assisted dying argue C-14 does not go far enough and some aspects of it are likely to be challenged in court.

## Buddha’s birthday celebrated in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — The weather cooperated as a couple of hundred Buddhists, family, friends and supporters turned out in Wascana Park June 20 to celebrate the 2,559th birthday of the Buddha. It’s called Vesak and it’s the first time it’s been celebrated in Regina, something the Buddhist community hopes will become an annual event.

The celebration began at six p.m. centred in the park’s band shell. The sun shone brightly off the new copper dome of the Legislative Building across Wascana Lake, adding to the colour of the event with monks in traditional robes and other participants dressed in a variety of clothing representing the traditions of their homelands.

O Canada was sung to get the celebration underway followed by a group of women raising their voices in the Triple Jewel Song.

Lt.-Gov. Vaughn Solomon Schofield cut a ribbon to officially open the festival and brought greetings on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, Queen of Canada. She opened with a quote from the Dalai Lama: “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.” She and most of the other speakers who brought greetings spoke about Canadian diversity and the strength it gives to this country.

Federal Public Safety Minister and MP for Regina-Wascana Ralph



F. Flegel

**BUDDHA’S BIRTHDAY** — Rev. Uttam Barua, president of the Buddhist Centre of Regina, introduces Regina Mayor Michael Fougere (right) to Dr. Sami Helewa, SJ.

Goodale represented the federal government and he was followed by Saskatchewan Parks, Culture and Sport Minister Mark Docherty and Regina Mayor Michael Fougere. Fougere prompted everyone to look around “at this beautiful park” and enjoy the moment.

Buddhist Monks came from Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge and Saskatoon to attend the event. Dr. Sami Helewa, SJ, of Campion College, University of Regina represented the Archdiocese of Regina. He

spoke about making peace in the world. Even with all the violence in the world, “it’s not too late to make peace.”

Girls in variously coloured dresses took turns presenting flowers to the Buddha located in an elevated position inside the band shell. They were followed by Sri Lankan, Vietnamese, Burmese, Bhutanese and Laotian monks chanting the five Buddhist precepts, which represent the basic Buddhist code of ethics: abstain from harming living beings, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxication. A ritual of bathing the Buddha was next in which a small amount of water was poured over the Buddha, recalling his birth. The evening celebration ended with performances by the Burmese, Japanese, Sri Lankan, Bangladesh, Bhutanese communities, Tina Hong and a First Nations drum group.

nature, and that still resonates with us, you and I, people are still feeling the effects and fallout of the experience of what they call the Indian Residential School Regime.”

Joseph described his idyllic childhood in a loving west-coast island village, until the Indian Agent took all the children away. His older brother and cousins would run into the forest when they heard the boat coming, and hide in the highest trees until nightfall. But eventually they would come back and they would be taken away.

“This happened over a period of 100 years, over 150,000 kids snatched away from our homes,” he said, before describing the indignities and abuse suffered, from basic racism to far worse. He lost his hearing because his ear was cuffed or pulled with every infraction. “After 11 years of that, by the time I had gotten to Grade 12, I was so beat-down.”

When he returned home, all his caregivers had died, and he drifted to extended family members’ couches and began drinking heav-

— ALL BELONG, page 19

## Students get Treaty Smarts

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Through a partnership with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) and funding from the Saskatchewan Arts Board’s Treaty Smarts program, students at Bishop Klein School have been learning about treaties in Saskatchewan.

“Treaty education should be integrated across the curriculum,” said Gordon Martell, superintendent of learning at Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS). “We really need more teaching tools to make the abstract concepts more accessible, especially for young students. We need to talk about treaties in a way that students can relate to from their own experiences.”

Through the partnership, culturally responsive online literacy resources were developed. Teachers now have resources to help students relate to treaties in a person-

al way. Teacher Elaine Sutherland, Métis artist and author Leah Dorian, and First Nations storyteller Lyndon Linklater worked with the students to create a mural that was revealed June 14.

“We need to improve student knowledge of our First Nations and Métis people and how important treaties are to everyone in our province,” said Treaty Commissioner George Lafond. “I’m really proud of the work done with Bishop Klein students. Now we have a resource that can be used throughout the school division, and maybe one day throughout the province.”

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner, an independent body, serves as the primary mechanism to co-ordinate and facilitate a bilateral process between the Government of Canada and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations to achieve a common understanding on Treaties No. 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10.

## Reconciliation talks held at Wanuskewin

By Andréa Ledding

SASKATOON — Reconciliation Canada held a one-day event in Saskatoon June 8, as it travelled across the country with a message of reconciliation, carried in no small part by Reconciliation Canada Ambassador and Indian Residential School survivor Chief Robert Joseph.

“Reconciliation really begins with you. The worst thing that could happen is if you all went home tonight and never thought about it again,” said Joseph, in closing the daylong reconciliation talks that took place at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Activities included a panel, various small group discussions and activities, and larger discussion circles facilitated by community leaders.

Joseph addressed the crowd on reconciliation and what it means to everyone: “I am nothing without you, we are less without each other,” he said, quoting his grandmother. “I don’t know where we lost the way in understanding something so profoundly simple as caring for each other. And in this great country of ours we now share a history that is horrific in



P. Fournier

**PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD** — May 11 - 14 St. Mary High School in Prince Albert put on the musical “Godspell” at the E. A. Rawlinson Centre. The musical tells the story of Jesus building his following and teaching his parables in a humorous, playful manner. Teacher and director Jason Van Otterloo says “Godspell” is all about community building, which he calls an important message in the modern age.



# Clergy moves announced for Regina archdiocese

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Two priests are returning from visits to their home countries this year and will resume duties in the Regina archdiocese. Rev. Andrew Pawlowicz returns from Poland and becomes administrator for the parishes of Our Lady of Victories, Esterhazy; St. Wenceslaus, Gerald; and St.

Michael at Bangor. Rev. Anthony Padayatty, HGN, returns from India to become administrator for the parishes of St. Anne's, Gull Lake; and St. Joseph, Cabri.

Rev. Valentine Amobi moves from Esterhazy to be administrator for the parishes of Sacred Heart, Raymore; Our Lady of Lourdes, Govan; St. Patrick's, Nokomis; St. Mary Hungarian, Quinton; Imm-

aculate Conception, Quinton; Mary Queen of All Hearts, Lestock; and the reserves of Day Star, Gordons, Kawacatoose and Muskowekwan-Kateri Place.

Msgr. Reymundo Asis leaves Southey to become administrator of Christ the Redeemer, Swift Current. Rev. Francis (Prince) Kurisinkal moves to Southey from Gull Lake to become administrator for the

parishes of St. James, Southey; St. Patrick, Cupar; St. John the Baptist, Dysart; St. Rita, Dysart, and St. Pius X, Piapot Reserve.

Rev. Gerry Bauche leaves St. Vincent de Paul, Weyburn, and moves up the road to Wilcox as administrator for St. Augustine and chaplain for Athol Murray College of Notre Dame, also in Wilcox. Rev. Francis Plaparampil

leaves Raymore and moves to Weyburn as administrator of St. Vincent de Paul Parish and St. Mary's, Tribune.

Rev. Ferdinand Eusebio comes from Philippines as associate priest at Regina's Resurrection Parish.

Rev. Thomas Nguyen remains as director of the Regina Marriage Tribunal and takes on additional duties in sacramental ministry at Holy Rosary Cathedral and chaplain for the RCMP Depot.

Rev. Thuy Nguyen leaves his role as associate pastor at St. John the Baptist, Estevan, to become associate priest at Holy Family in Regina.

Rev. Jose Periyilkatte takes over as administrator for Little Flower in Regina and Rev. Richard Jasiak, MSF, moves from Swift Current to become administrator at Holy Cross. Little Flower and Holy Cross each now have full-time priests. Periyilkatte was also responsible for Little Flower.

Rev. Maurice Minne comes out of retirement at Gravelbourg to provide sacramental ministry for St. Joseph, Hodgeville; and St. Charles, Coderre for one year.

Rev. Rene Mangahas remains as administrator for St. Joseph, Whitewood; Holy Name of Mary, Broadview; and St. Elizabeth, Stockholm for one year.

Rev. Thomas Mutavanattu takes on the duties of administrator of St. Paul's on the Sakimay Reserve in addition to his current appointment in Grayson.

All appointments are for six years unless otherwise noted, and are effective Aug. 1.

## Treaty plaque dedicated at Saskatoon cathedral

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — A ceremony June 13 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon marked the installation of a treaty plaque acknowledging Treaty 6 territory and proclaiming the importance of treaties to all Canadians.

The Bishop of Saskatoon and parish leaders joined First Nations and Métis elders and leaders and other community representatives in the celebration that included drums, dance and smudging, as well as words of reflection and hope.

An enlarged replica of a medal that was presented to participating First Nations chiefs at the time of the treaty signing, the plaque portrays a treaty commissioner grasping the hand of a First Nations leader. Between them is a hatchet, buried in the ground, and around the two figures are images of the sun and the land, symbolizing the promise of the treaty relationship "as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow."

The plaque is installed on the fieldstone fireplace in the church's welcoming area, which was created with stones from parishes throughout the diocese. Signed in 1876, Treaty 6 covers 121,000 square miles of what is now Saskatchewan and Alberta.

An explanation beneath the plaque reads: "Newcomers to Canada and their descendants benefited from the wealth generated from the land provided in the treaties. They built their society in a place where some were looking for political and religious freedoms. Today, there are misconceptions that only First Nations peoples are part of the treaties, but in reality, all of us are treaty people."

Holy Family pastor Rev. David Tumback described how the idea for the plaque was raised when a white priest and an Aboriginal woman were visiting over a cup of coffee. "Dianne (Anderson) asked if we would put a treaty plaque in our building and my immediate response was yes."

The plaque is a gesture of friendship and a call to solidarity, said Tumback. "In this space, may all find a listening heart."

The act of unveiling the plaque has been some 140 years in the making, said Harry Lafond, executive director of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

Lafond described how in the Cree belief system there is an impetus to go forth and "make relatives" — to build relationship and connection with those who are not biologically related.

However, 140 years ago, "we would not have been able to meet in this way with open hearts, with open minds, with open arms to



K. Yaworski

**TREATY PLAQUE — First Nations and Métis elders and leaders joined representatives of the parish and community during a celebration held to unveil a treaty plaque at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon on June 13.**

each other, with a genuine interest in becoming related," he said.

"A hundred and forty years ago, the Cree (and) the Stoneys of this area were living in a world of trauma and that in itself made it impossible for them to be totally prepared to step into this new world. The people from Europe were coming, suffering from similar types of trauma: famines, oppression. They were coming to this country experiencing similar types of emotional and psychological situations in their families. And so we needed those 140 years to be prepared for this moment, when we can open the door."

The province of Saskatchewan has also helped to open the door by allowing children to begin to know the history of Canada from different perspectives, Lafond said. "Those are perspectives that make Treaty 6 a wholesome story and allow us to open our hearts and open our minds, and to reach out to each other as we are doing this evening. It provides us with a sense of hope, a way of dealing with some of the hurts of our communities. It gives us a way to deal with issues of poverty, issues of how we share this holy ground that we agreed to share 140 years ago."

Holy Family Cathedral is leading the way in the church community by placing the plaque, said Lafond. "It's putting in a visible place a symbol that represents the connectedness of many different peoples; a diversity that continues to grow and grow."

He added: "This is a window of opportunity that we need to cherish, pray about, and continue to keep our hearts open to the work of the Holy Spirit."

Lafond invited those present to take a close look at the symbol. "Walk away from here realizing

that you have a legacy to unpack, and unpack it. What does it mean for you? Why did your ancestors come here? And how do you want it to shape your future? How do

you want your grandchildren to be shaped by the hope and the legacy of Treaty 6?"

— INDIGENOUS, page 17

## CWL does not set boundaries

By Terri Scott

ST. BONIFACE — It was the largest gathering of Catholic Women's League members at a Manitoba provincial convention in recent history. One hundred and thirty women descended on Christ the King Parish May 28 - 29 for the purpose of the annual business meeting and the passing of three resolutions: extending coverage of insulin pumps and supplies to Manitobans of all ages; Canada Food Guide; Environmentally responsible solutions for the collection and disposal of grain bags and agricultural plastic waste products.

National president Barbara Dowding brought greetings and expressed delight that she was able to attend. "Meeting committed and dedicated league members as they celebrate the year's achievements never fails to amaze me."

Dowding expressed joy on how so much can be accomplished in many cases by so few is concrete proof that the league is alive and well. Dowding also commented on how much members enjoy the company of one another where they really encounter each other.

Provincial president Faith Anderson thanked councils for supporting the Provincial Council project of collecting toiletry items for Chez Nous and Siloam Mission. "It is amazing the generosity of everyone. Together we all make a difference," said Anderson.

Anderson also noted that, "We

are not daunted and restricted in what we need to do but always rise to the challenge. We do not set boundaries on who we help, but do what needs to be done." Winnipeg Harvest will be provincial council's 2017 project.

The REDress Project, an inspiration by artist and activist Jaime Black, is to provide a focus on the issue of missing or murdered Aboriginal women across Canada, and was the impetus for a visual reminder to draw attention to the "staggering amount of missing women." Black hopes to collect 600 red dresses to display publicly across Canada.

Between 2000 and 2008 Aboriginal women and girls represented approximately 10 per cent of all female homicides in Canada, though they make up only three per cent of the female population. Only seven per cent of missing cases and 13 per cent of murder cases occurred on reserves, and most of these did not involve the sex trade.

A sacred space of a grove of trees brought onto the convention floor provided a significant idea of the scope of missing women as members had cut-outs of red dresses to hang on the tree with the suggestion of writing the name of one of the missing women or a prayer on the back of the dress.

The keynote presentation by Rita Chahal, executive director of the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council (MIIC), a recent appointee to the Winnipeg Pov-

erty Reduction Council and winner of the Nellie McClung award, described the hardships and dangerous encounters of people who have fled Syria and who were displaced by the war. Chahal said families are welcomed and helped with the process to become Canadian along the way.

MIIC is a board of 15 interfaith members and has a staff of 40 permanent members who speak an average of three languages each.

Co-worker Maysoun Darweesh, who fled Syria 10 years ago to Macau and finally arrived in Manitoba in 2013, told how they were persecuted, tortured and threatened with death. The journey was long and arduous and it was necessary to bribe officials. When the family of four landed in Winnipeg it was +25 C degrees in Macau and -43 C here, but they were overcome by emotion to have made it to freedom. "It was the best -43 of my life!" said Darweesh.

When people come under such circumstances, said Darweesh, they don't care if they come with nothing. All they care about is being safe. Ninety-nine per cent say they are doing it for their children. The first thing they do is find a place of worship. Darweesh says that she has never experienced the horrific conditions they are hearing about now and the children are exposed to watching their parents and family being tortured. "The effects on children is really sad," said Darweesh.



# St. Joseph, Canada stands in your care

By Michael Swan  
The Catholic Register

Canada Day often seems a rather tepid, bureaucratic affair celebrating the day Great Britain's Parliament managed to pass a law granting four small North American colonies the right to elect their own politicians to a single House of Commons — not a shot fired and no declaration of independence. But why limit ourselves to such a paltry notion of Canada's origins?

If the United States was a project of the English Reformation, led by Puritans landing on Plymouth Rock, Canada was born of the Catholic Counter Reformation, led by the Franciscan Recollects and Jesuits who launched themselves deep into the continent by canoe, discovering new people, learning new languages and dreaming new dreams.

The first thing those missionaries did was dedicate this new world to St. Joseph.

March 19, 1624, Franciscan Recollect friar Father Joseph Le Caron celebrated a mass and held a feast with the Huron in what is now Ontario.

"We held a great feast in honour of St. Joseph where all the inhabitants were included, several wild (Aboriginal). This feast was held as a vow we made to St. Joseph, choosing him as patron of New France," Le Caron wrote in a letter back to his French superiors.

Now if ever there was just one moment that we might call the start of nation-building in the true north strong and free, this March 19 feast might be it. The English weren't there yet, but Le Caron brought together the new European presence and the ancient Aboriginal people to celebrate.

Devotion to St. Joseph was then a young movement in the church, unknown in medieval Europe. The human father of Jesus was mostly ignored before



P. Paproski, OSB

the Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV formally established a feast day for him in 1476. But it wasn't until 1621 that Pope Gregory XV declared March 19 an obligatory feast for all Catholics.

Only three years later, Canada was entrusted to St. Joseph.

By choosing St. Joseph, Le Caron wasn't introducing just any sort of Catholicism to the Huron. This was a new brand of Catholicism.

Before Luther and Calvin, before the Wars of Religion closed out the 16th century in chaotic bloodshed, and well before the Council of Trent, there was a Catholic Reformation. It began with study of the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible, with the humanism of Erasmus of Rotterdam and with the mendicant orders of Dominicans and Franciscans.

High school history classes and educational TV mostly teach the Renaissance in terms of new styles of painting, but that's the tail wagging the dog. The Re-

naissance was mostly theological, and it was distinguished by an intense search for the true Jesus hidden under layers of medieval custom and tradition. This elite, scholarly pursuit was accompanied by a popular spirituality among illiterate peasants and newly urbanized merchants and trades people as ordinary people sought closer, more emotional ties to Jesus.

Longing for intimacy with God reached its height in the 16th-century writing of St. Teresa of Avila, who had a great devotion to St. Joseph. Devotion to the Holy Family was promoted in preaching and writing by Franciscans and Jesuits throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1399 Franciscans had been the first to celebrate a feast day for St. Joseph, long before it became a universal celebration. By the middle of the 17th century Jesuit Jean Pierre Médaille could think of no other saint for his new congregation of women in Le-Puy-en-Velay,

France — the Congregation of St. Joseph.

After the disaster of schism in the western church, and all the bloodshed that accompanied it, Europe wanted a new Catholicism — a religion that was first and foremost about Jesus and not the kings and princes who administered church properties and played politics with Rome. This was the Counter Reformation that launched at the same time as Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain were discovering and establishing New France.

If ever there was a chance to break with old Europe, to put the new Catholicism to the test, it was the extraordinary missionary challenge of New France. By the 1630s, St. Jean de Brebeuf was in Huron territory dreaming of a new Christian kingdom nestled among the Great Lakes. The Wyandot Christian kingdom would not be a colony or subject of any European power. Brebeuf's Christ could be incarnate in any culture and spoken

about in any language.

Brebeuf's mystic dream ran smack up against political reality when the Iroquois, armed by the Dutch, overran Ste. Marie near modern-day Midland, Ont. The Jesuits decided to burn their mission rather than let it fall into the hands of invading forces.

From that first dream of a new Catholic realm dedicated to St. Joseph in 1624 to the violent end of the Jesuit Mission in 1639 was just 15 years. But those years formed a vision of Canada as a peaceable kingdom with no hard lines drawn between people, where Brebeuf, a young French priest, could be given the Huron name Ekon and be known for how well he spoke their language.

This Canada was something new — a clean break with the past. And it was all in the care of St. Joseph, the quiet working man who cared for and protected his wife Mary and his adopted Son. The father who shaped the hidden life of Jesus.

## Kasun says he looks forward to returning to Toronto

Continued from page 1

Among those reasons were that he is 64, doesn't have the energy he used to have, is seriously diabetic and likely will have to retire before the mandatory age of 75.

"But that didn't seem to bother whoever he was talking to."

A week later, the nuncio phoned back and announced, "The appointment is confirmed."

So, on June 17, the world was told — Rev. Bob Kasun, teacher, pastor and friend of Edmonton's inner-city poor and immigrants — will don the bishop's silks and serve as one of four auxiliaries to Cardinal Thomas Collins. Kasun says his ordination will take place in early to mid-September, likely in Edmonton.

Pope Francis has repeatedly said the church's pastors should have "the smell of their sheep." In this case, he has just appointed a bishop who has that smell.

Still mystified by his appointment, Kasun says, "I've never in

my life done anything extraordinary. I'm just an ordinary simple pastor."

The bishop-to-be takes solace from the fact he will be responsible for the Toronto archdiocese's central zone, an area with a high percentage of immigrants and people on low incomes.

It's also an area of Toronto where Kasun lived for 12 years while doing his studies, being formed for the Basilian priesthood and later teaching high school students.

Kasun's story began in the town of Cudworth, Sask. (current pop: 770), northeast of Saskatoon, where his father served as the town postmaster and overseer of a region for Canada Post. His dad's father was a farmer and his maternal grandfather owned a hardware store. He has a sister who today lives in Saskatoon.

The local priests were Benedictines from the abbey in Muenster, but when Kasun went to university in Saskatoon he got to know the

Basilians who ran St. Thomas More College.

For young Catholics from small towns, enrolling and living at St. Thomas More was automatic. It provided social activities, a centre of Catholic life and a home away from home.

While in elementary school, Kasun gave some thought to becoming a priest. However, the call dissipated only to return in his last year of high school and his first two years of university. After earning his BA in English, he applied to join the Basilians, was accepted and sent to Toronto for further studies.

Why the Basilians? "I'm still not able to answer that question fully," he says. What he did find in the order was a strong community life and joy-filled priests. He was also attracted to the variety of work the Basilians do, including both teaching and pastoral work.

In Toronto, he racked up three more university degrees, before

being ordained a priest in 1978. He taught for a year each at schools in Indiana, Rochester, N.Y., and Sudbury, Ont.

His main teaching stint was at St. Michael's College School in Toronto before heading back west to teach at St. Francis High School in Calgary.

In Calgary, he got his first taste of parish work at St. Pius X and St. Thomas More parishes while serving on the Basilians' general council and the national executive of the Canadian Religious Conference.

After 21 years in Calgary, he came to Edmonton seven years ago when the Basilians centralized their Western Canadian ministries in the Alberta capital. They asked Archbishop Richard Smith for an inner-city parish and, after examining several, they settled on St. Al's and St. Clare.

In the interview, Kasun said he looks forward to returning to Toronto where he had "some very happy years."

However, when he spoke to the congregation at St. Alphonsus on Sunday, June 19, his reticence again came to the fore. "I don't really want the job; I don't want to go. I tried everything to get out of it. I would have much preferred to stay here."

Still, it was his preparation for his homily that day on Jesus' words — "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, and take up their cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23) — that convinced him he had to move on.

"Well, suddenly, there's a whole new meaning to that and it's hard because I'm called in colloquial language, to put my money where my mouth is," he said in the interview.

Kasun's reluctance to take up his cross is real, but he will do it in faith. And no doubt when he begins his new ministry, he will exude the same joy that he saw in those Basilians in Saskatoon so many years ago.



# Sister Anna Moran has 100 years of story to tell

By Louise Slobodian

The first impression of the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse property in midtown Kingston is trees. One tall old tree has special meaning for Sister Anna Moran. It's the only tree older than she is on the property known as Heathfield, one she has read beneath many times. When someone turns 100, as Sister Anna did on June 19, you look for points of reference . . . and in this case, it's the many trees younger than she, some of which she planted herself.



Sisters of Providence

**Sister Mary Justina (Anna Moran's religious name) in 1963.**

Sister Anna is not the oldest Sister of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. She has not yet broken the record as the longest-serving sister, though she is close. But because she entered at the tender age of 17, she has been a sister longer than anyone else alive. That is an interesting vantage point to look back, as she marks a century.

Anna grew up in Maynooth in Ontario's Hastings Highlands, southeast of Algonquin Park. She was one of nine and her family was "poor, poor," she says. Her mom was a teacher, though, and her family believed in education, so a system was worked out. An aunt in Toronto took one child at a time so they could finish high school. In Anna's case, her sister was already away at school when she came of age, so she got a job to fill in the time until it was her turn. She travelled to Trenton where another aunt had set up a housekeeping job for her. She was paid \$16/month, money she used to get her teeth repaired.

She got an afternoon and an evening off a month. In that spare time, she looked for friends her own age and found them at the Trenton Convent of the Sisters of Providence, where girls gathered. Anna Moran had planned to be a mother of many and never considered religious life for herself. However, one of the girls, who

had planned to enter in 1932, drowned. A member of their circle of friends delivered the news to Anna saying: "You have to take her place."

"Well, that put the idea in my mind," says Sister Anna. To decide, she "put a proposition to God." It all weighed on the business-like Sister Carmel Teresa who was the music and choir director in Trenton. Anna was in the choir. Sister never dallied after benediction. Anna wagered with herself: If Sister stayed, this one day, Anna would ask her about her congregation. This one day, not only did Sister Carmel Teresa stay, she responded to Anna's tentative query with an "I knew it!" and took Anna to the local Mother Superior at the convent that very afternoon. The seed was well and truly planted.

A year later, at the age of 17, Anna formally entered the Sisters of Providence on Aug. 15, 1933, at Heathfield in Kingston. It was a large property on the outskirts of town, known as a home of Sir John A. MacDonald and his sister. The old villa was intact and the new motherhouse had been erected. Anna recalls that "it was all country then, the road was all country." After the reception and profession ceremony, lunch was held on the grass

outside. Anna wasn't alone. More than two dozen young women travelled to Kingston from across the country to enter the religious congregation that fall. There were nine young ones like her, 17 years of age or under, though all the others had their Grade 10. Anna was the only one who hadn't been taught by sisters, the only country girl in the lot, she says. So it was a particular honour to be chosen, two years later, to continue her education at Maryvale Abbey, the boarding school run by the Sisters of Providence in Glen Nevis.

Two of them went. Sister Mary Alma Murphy was to be a nurse and Anna, now called Sister Mary Justina, a teacher. She got her Grade 11, 12 and 13 at Glen Nevis, and then her teacher's college in Ottawa. She was sent to her first ministry, to be a teacher at the small school in Apple Hill, Ont., near Cornwall. At that time, the congregation's future for her was revealed. Not only was Anna to remain a teacher, for which she was showing aptitude, she was going beyond the primary education course she had requested. "That is not our plan for you," she was told by Mother Victoria, the head of the congregation and herself a teacher. Sister Anna was enrolled as a part-time student at Queen's University instead. It would take her 11 years to get her degree in-between teaching, church work and looking after altar servers and classes, but she graduated in 1951.

Was it simply chance that Anna entered the Sisters of Providence,

taking the place of a drowned friend? Sister Anna doesn't think so. She believes that she herself heard, and indeed, felt, that this was the path for her: "God didn't call me," she says. "He pushed me!" Her family was inclined toward religious life, but "my people had never heard tell of the Sisters of Providence." But the little that Anna had gotten to know of the congregation that year in Trenton had all been to the good.

The Sisters of Providence did not block access to families for their members, or at least not to the extent of some religious communities. It's something that drew Sister Anna to the congregation — once you entered, you were able to visit on occasion, on top of being able to write. "It's why I came *here*," she says. "Any other community you never went home. All you had were letters and pictures. You never knew them anymore." Also, the Sisters of Providence in Trenton lived as part of the community. They walked down the street to buy groceries and went home in the summer, Sister Anna saw, and that was attractive. Finally, she didn't want to leave Canada. The Sisters of Providence had no international missions when she entered and that was another selling point.

So she joined. And she stayed. "I never questioned it once in all my 80-something years," she says. "It never entered my head to leave," she says now.

Life was simple and the sisters were a world unto themselves. It wasn't proper for the sisters to drive until the 1950s, so there was one male driver in their employ, who would bring teachers to their schools.

The sisters were urged to go about the property in pairs or groups. Kingston was a prison town even then. Because Heathfield was



Sisters of Providence

**Sister Anna Moran in 1967, or shortly thereafter.**

beyond the city limits at the time, and the penitentiary owned some of the surrounding land, inmates on the run were known to hide in the bushes now and then. One order of sisters in Kingston even reported that a habit had been taken off the clothesline so that an escapee had a new look.

Altogether, Sister Anna taught for 34 years at nine schools. In addition to Apple Hill, she taught in Gananoque, Smiths Falls, Kingston, Belleville and Brantford, Ont. She was the vice-princi-

pal of a Grade 1-12 school in Camrose, Alta., and principal at an elementary school in Trenton, Ont.

Remember her Queen's education, all finished by now? She added an education degree from the University of Alberta — and was urged to continue in academia. She later supplemented her knowledge with classes and summer courses from the education faculties at the Universities of Ottawa and Toronto, but left it at that.

In 1973, Sister Anna was asked to take on a new ministry. For five years, she worked for the Movement for a Better World, an organization founded in Rome and focused on parish renewal. It offered a series of courses on contemporary religious topics to help lay Catholics — and especially women — feel knowledgeable and confident about being involved in their parishes. Even though she was part of a team, she writes that she was very lonely, living out of a suitcase training

parishes all over her large region. She was glad to move to parish work after that — for nine years in Camrose, at St. Francis Xavier Parish; and then at St. Pius X Parish in Brantford. In-between she went on sabbatical at the University of California in Berkeley and toured Greece, Israel and Rome.

In 1994, Sister Anna returned to the motherhouse as the co-ordinator of the Marian I floor and remained as such for six years. Then she retired. She was 84. She had lately discovered a passion for poetry that carried her into three self-published volumes.

Reflecting on her early years, she says it was a challenge to go from a family life with an adored mother and dad and lots of siblings and become one of many potential sisters to be trained and toughened. Postulants and novices were schooled in all the ways a Sister of Providence was to conduct herself and feelings were not often spared in the process.

"I was told I had lots of faults!" Sister Anna puts forward. It was hard and she was lonely often, but especially at the beginning: "I had small brothers and sisters at home. I missed my mother," she says, but then adds, "It was harder on her than me. They kept me busy." She was allowed to write once a month and took every opportunity. Her first Christmas was especially sad. But she woke up to the professed sisters singing Christmas carols, like angels. "It was so positive it steadied me," she recalls. Then she laughs — "Christmas was the one day in the year we never got chastised."

The running of the congregation was different back then.

Mother General was seen only once in a while, sometimes at meals, but the regular postulants, novices and even sisters didn't speak with her much. Today, of course, the sisters call each other by their first names and the



Sisters of Providence

**Sister Anna Moran at the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Sisters of Providence in 2011. Sister Anna recognizes that turning 100 is something to celebrate and expresses gratitude to her family, the staff who work with the sisters, and the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul congregation and members.**

General Superior mixes with everyone regularly. Though represented, like many other sisters, Sister Anna was not herself part of the congregation's chapter meetings that decided on the direction of the congregation until later in life. Anna perceived her role to be: Go where you are sent, do what you are told, ask no questions.

Was it really that strict? Maybe it was because she had grown up poor, or entered so young, or felt "country," sometimes, but that's certainly how it felt to Sister Anna, and that was OK with her. "I just went with the flow," as she understood it.

In the story of her life, written in 1993, Sister Anna acknowledges that there was a rigidity that went with her "go with the flow," attitude. She writes about her love for every child in her classroom, but adds: "My only regret is that I did not show them so, that I did not shake off the harness of discipline and love them all into the fullness of life." She asks: "Can prayer for them every morning and night ever repair such negligence?" It's strange to read those words written by a woman who greets people with open arms every day.

She has made up for some gaps, certainly. When she was "out in the field," teaching, she wasn't aware of the changes going on around her. For instance, after the Vatican II meetings in the 1960s that updated many rules of the Catholic Church, "I was shocked at how free everyone was here," she says about returning to Kingston for a visit. But she joined in — changing back to her

— SISTER, page 12

*Slobodian is director of communications for the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.*



# Summer 'soulstice': spiritual books for the beach

By Kimberly Winston  
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Summer is here with its accompanying plans for long spells of reading near some body of water, be it ocean or kiddie pool.

And while many publications compile lists of recommended summer reading, RNS has put together a list of eight books — four fiction and four non-fiction — that have some sort of religious or spiritual component.

None come from standard religion publishing houses. These are books where religion or spirituality play a role, but not necessarily a starring one. Some of these books have been out for a while; others will be published in the coming weeks. All have debuted since last summer.

## Fiction

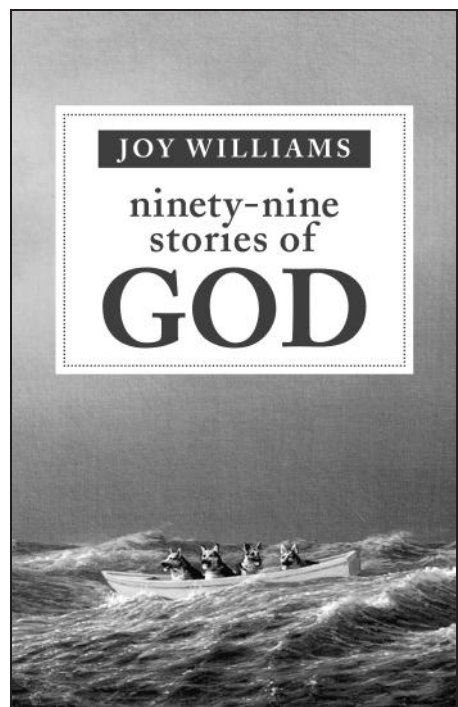
**The Girls by Emma Cline**  
(Random House)

This first novel set off a bidding war among 12 publishers in 2014 before finally being snagged by Random House for a rumoured seven-figure advance. The story, set in the 1960s, revolves around 14-year-old Evie, who is drawn to "the girls," a cultlike group that gathers around a charismatic leader. If it sounds like it is based on murderer Charles Manson and the women who loved him and killed for him, it is — so expect violence.

Faith factor: Evie tells the story from middle age and struggles with the spiritual burden of the cult's violent actions.

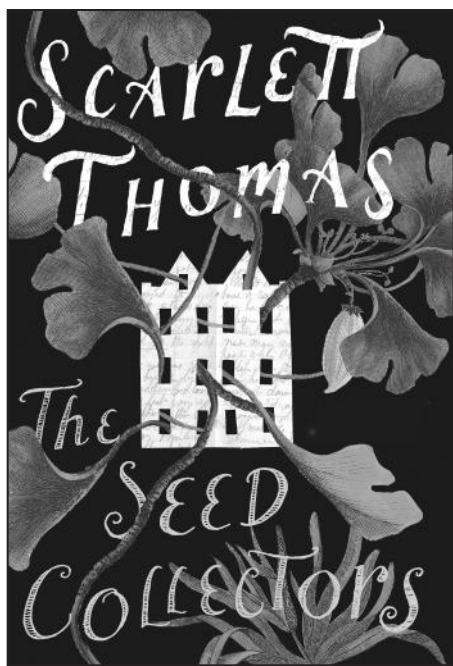
What the critics say: Sara Nelson, former editor of *Publishers Weekly*, writes, *The Girls* is "surprisingly timeless and perfectly creepy" and "worth the buzz." Dwight Garner of *The New York Times* says, "This promises to be a perceptive page-turner, a volume to haunt summer's warm nights."

**Ninety-Nine Stories of God by Joy Williams** (Tin House Books)



RNS/Tin House

A slim volume of fictional short stories (some only a sentence or two) in which God has a penchant for showing up in some weird places — a hot-dog-eating contest, a demolition derby, a shingles clinic. Williams is an acclaimed author, a past finalist



RNS/Counter Point Press

for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award.

Faith factor: This one is pretty obvious.

What the critics say: *Publishers Weekly* gave the book a starred review and described it as "funny, unsettling and mysterious," while Caitlin Youngquist of the *Paris Review* said, "the brevity of these stories belies their craft and gravity."

**The Seed Collectors by Scarlett Thomas** (Soft Skull Press/Counterpoint)

The matriarch of the Gardener family has died and left behind a yoga retreat called Namaste House. But it offers little spiritual nourishment for the surviving members of the family, who share a passion for botany and soon set off on a search for something more. The author, a Brit, has a master's degree in ethnobotany, which she puts to use here.

Faith factor: The story is more mystical than religious, centring on a search for magical seeds that offer the secret of enlightenment. One problem: eat them and you die. There's also a Bible-like "magical book" that promises something like redemption.

What the critics say: Sarah Dittum of *The Guardian* writes, "(Thomas') prose is splendidly alive, full of unexpected phrases and delicious cadences," and Naomi Novik of *The New York Times Book Review* says, "Thomas makes clear that pleasure taken in this world is misguided where it is not impossible."

**We That Are Left by Clare Clark** (Houghton Mifflin/Harcourt)

In this historical novel, a mother bereft by the loss of a son during the First World War takes up spiritualism to connect with him. Clark, another Brit, is best known for another historical work, *The Great Stink*, an acclaimed novel about, of all things, London's sewers.

Faith factor: There was a wave of interest in spiritualism — the belief that the dead inhabit a dimension close by and accessible to the living — in England after the Great War, and here it is juxta-

posed with another character's deep passion for science.

What the critics say: Writing for *The New York Times Book Review*, Michael Upchurch says, "Clark delivers a lavishly detailed historical novel that doesn't just recreate the past but alters your perception of it."

## Non-fiction

**Between Gods: A Memoir by Alison Pick** (Harper Perennial)

Pick, an award-winning Canadian novelist, discovered a family secret — one set of her grandparents escaped Hitler, came to America and hid their Judaism under a blanket of

Anglicanism. The revelation sets off a process of self-discovery that leads both to great personal grief — many of her relatives perished at Auschwitz — and spiritual discovery.

Faith factor: The author explores whether she wants to be Jewish or Christian — or both — and why.

What the critics say: Elise Cooper of the *Jewish Book Council* writes, "this memoir is a beautifully woven story of family, partnership, religion, love, and reconciliation as its author connects her present life to the past."

**The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old and New by Annie Dillard** (HarperCollins)

If you're familiar with Dillard, you have most likely read her Pulitzer Prize-winning *A Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, a book of luminous essays inspired by nature that seemed to tap into the divine in everything from a tiny (and unforgettably deadly) water bug to a thunderstorm. Here, she reworks some essays from her 40-something-year career, including the water bug-starring *Heaven and Earth in Jest* and *An Expedition to the Pole*, about both polar exploration and contemporary Catholic worship. In other words, pure Dillard.

Faith factor: While seldom explicitly religious, Dillard's work explores good and evil, the purpose and meaning of life and the nature of creation — accidental or purposeful? She has been likened to the Transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

What the critics say: Donovan Hohn writes in *The New York Times Sunday Book Review*: "Readers seeking pretty glimpses of heaven on earth will find little comfort here. Humour, yes. And a fair portion of the beautiful and the sublime."

**The Witches: Salem, 1692 by Stacy Schiff** (Little, Brown)

Schiff, a Pulitzer Prize-winner for the biography *Vera*, about Vera Nabokov, and a popular biography of Cleopatra, tells the story of the Salem witch trials, which led to the deaths of 20 men and women and the imprisonment of hundreds more. Along the way, she acts as a tour guide to the New Age mecca that contemporary Salem, Mass., has become, for better and worse.

Faith factor: The initial madness broke out in the home of a Puritan minister and has repercussions among Christians today.

What the critics say: Writing in *The Atlantic*, Adam Goodheart says, "Schiff brings to bear a sensibility as different from the Puritans' as can be imagined: gentle, ironic, broadly empathetic, with a keen eye for humour and nuance."

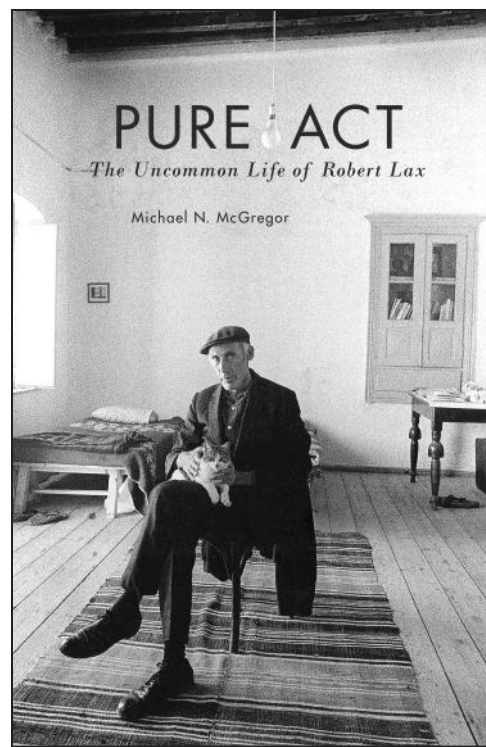
**Pure Act: The Uncommon Life of Robert Lax by Michael N. McGregor** (Fordham University Press)

This biography of one of Thomas Merton's mentors has been described as a companion piece to Merton's classic *The Seven Storey Mountain*. In it, McGregor describes how Lax, a poet, tried to adhere to "pure act," a philosophy of life he describes as "spontaneous" and "God-chosen."

Faith factor: Lax was born Jewish, converted to Catholicism and eventually found inspiration among a community of Greek Orthodox fishermen. Somewhere in there, he found time to lead Merton into

mysticism.

What the critics say: James Campbell, in *The New York Times Sunday Book Review*, says, "McGregor's book is a labour of love," and Scott Cairns in *The Christian Century* says the book



RNS/Fordham University Press

"is an homage, a love letter, an apologia for a curious poetics, and a well-considered story about an uncommon man and his very uncommon life."

## Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre

### Retreats & Workshops

#### Biblical Spirituality: Drawn into the Heart of Scripture

Gisele Bauche and Bishop Gerry Wiesner, OMI

Saturday, July 9, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Cost: \$40 (includes registration, refreshments and lunch).

#### Moral Loneliness — The Congenital Ache of a Soulmate

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI Monday, July 11, 7 - 9 p.m.

Cost: \$30 with supper; \$15 presentation only.

#### Celebrating the Year of Mercy — From Paranoia to Metanoia

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI Tuesday, July 12, 9 a.m. - Thursday, July 14 lunch.

Cost: \$200 commuter; \$260 commuter plus; \$400 live-in.

#### Iconography Retreat — Anne Mycyk and Gisele Bauche

Monday, July 18 through Friday, July 22, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Cost: \$450 commuter (includes lunch); \$760 live-in (includes accommodation & meals).

#### Triumph: Freedom Through Healing — Jerry and Donna Kristian

Friday, July 29, 6 p.m. - Sunday, August 7, 3 p.m.

Registration: Call or email Queen's House. Please check our website.

#### Conspire 2016

A Webcast featuring Richard Rohr, OFM, Christena Cleveland, James Alison and Mirabai Starr

Friday, August 12, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Optional additional Webcast, 7 - 9 p.m.

Saturday, August 13, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Cost: \$100 commuter. Add supper: \$15/evening. Add bed & breakfast: \$60/night.

#### 5-Day Silent Directed Retreat — Bishop Gerry Wiesner, OMI & Dianne Mantyka

Sunday, August 14, 4 p.m. - Thursday, August 19, 2:30 p.m.

Cost: \$715 live-in only. (Registration, meals, room & spiritual direction.)

### Ongoing Events at Queen's House

Centering Prayer: Monday evenings 7 p.m.

Holy Eucharist: Wednesdays, 3 p.m. (call to confirm time — all are welcome!)

Journey with Scripture: Fr. Paul Facht. \$25 w/lunch. First Wed. of the month.

Taizé Prayer for Christian Unity: Second Tuesday of the month, 8 p.m.

Day Away: Gisele Bauche. Second Wed. of the month. Cost: \$25 w/lunch.

24-Hour Eucharistic Adoration: Fourth Monday of the month, 12 p.m. - Tuesday, 12 p.m.

Personal Day(s) of Private Prayer: Book anytime.

For program details visit [www.queenshouse.org](http://www.queenshouse.org)

To register please call 306-242-1916

or email: [receptionist@queenshouse.org](mailto:receptionist@queenshouse.org)

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# Summer fare and a trio of father-son stories

## Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



The summer of sizzle and sequels is upon us, which too often means faster, louder, dumber. For sound and fury signifying nothing *X-Men Apocalypse* is up against a new franchise in *Warcraft*. Second helpings are on offer of *The Conjuring*, the ever-vulgar *Neighbors*, and *Now You See Me* — with scenes filmed in Macau, a nod to the growing importance of China’s burgeoning box-office in Hollywood’s big-money calculations. Fantasy *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, however, flopped down the rabbit hole. For sentimentalists there’s the weepy *Me Before You*. For kids, Disney Pixar’s *Finding Dory*. Forget the latest *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and moronic *Central Intelligence*. To come in July: *The Legend of Tarzan*; animated family comedy *The Secret Life of Pets*; horrorfests *The Shallows*, *The Purge* (third “Election Year” instalment), and *Lights Out*; another *Independence Day*, *Star Trek*, *Ice Age*, and *Jason Bourne*; a female *Ghostbusters* reboot.

Still, good alternatives exist. During a recent visit to Calgary I was pleased to see in a regular Cineplex Whit Stillman’s wonderful 18th-century comedy of manners *Love & Friendship* (adapted from Jane Austen’s first novella) and the dystopian *Into the Forest* from Canadian Patricia Rozema. Watch for other well-acted features from last year’s Toronto film festival: Canadian stories *Sleeping Giant* and *Closet Monster*; Rebecca Miller’s *Maggie’s Plan*, a witty New York dramedy of modern relationships.

Now in theatres is the stirring Civil War drama *Free State of*

*Jones* (to be reviewed in the July 13 issue). For family viewing, arriving Canada Day is Steven Spielberg’s Roald Dahl adaption *The BFG* (Big Friendly Giant), which charmed many critics at Cannes. It has Oscar winner Mark Rylance in the title role. Woody Allen fans can look forward to *Café Society*, another Cannes selection. On the dark side, *The Infiltrator* and John Le Carré adaptation *Our Kind of Traitor* look promising.

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Beyond that, three movies probing troubled father-son relationships merit attention.

Currently in limited release is writer-director Noah Buschel’s *The Phenom* about the struggles of Hopper Gibson (Johnny Simmons), a star American teenage athlete and ace pitcher who’s made it to baseball’s major leagues only to lose his confidence and control. Demoted to a farm club, the Port St. Lucie Pumas, he suffers from insomnia and anxiety. Hopper’s lack of future direction also concerns his sympathetic girlfriend Dorothy (Sophie Kennedy Clark).

The team sends Hopper to intensive sessions with an unconventional sports psychologist Dr. Mobley (Paul Giamatti), who faces his own demons having earlier lost a player patient to suicide. What soon becomes apparent is Hopper’s unresolved love-hate relationship with his overbearing dad Hopper Sr. (Ethan Hawke), a hard driving, hard-drinking macho man who has subjected his son to abusive demands and taunts from childhood on. The father has constantly pushed the son to achieve sports



G. Schmitz

**THE PHENOM PREMIERE** — At the Tribeca Film Festival premiere of *The Phenom* April 17, 2016, from left: director Noah Buschel, Johnny Simmons, Elizabeth Marvel, Ethan Hawke, Paul Giamatti.

success; indeed takes credit for it. But his violent temper and criminal convictions make him an object of fear and shame, the opposite of a masculine role model. Without giving away more, let me say that an honest heart-to-heart encounter in a prison setting proves cathartic. There’s hope that Hopper can get back in the game, not just on the mound but in larger life terms.

Johnny Simmons is impressive as Hopper. As the problematic paternal influence, Ethan Hawke, sporting a crew cut and tattoos, turns in another terrific performance demonstrating his recent range (*Born to Be Blue*, *Maggie’s Plan*, *In a Valley of Violence*). He also played the father in Linklater’s 2014 masterpiece *Boyhood*. More than a sports story, *The Phenom* shows how a male culture that prizes winning and material success can warp the most basic human relationships.

Whether the sins of the father can be forgiven is also at issue in writer-director Bart Freundlich’s *Wolves* about another athletic phenom. Anthony Keller (Taylor John

Smith) is an 18-year-old New York City high-school senior and the captain of its basketball team, the St. Anthony’s Wolves. Nicknamed “Saint,” on the surface he seems to have it all: success at an elite private school, doting parents, a steady girlfriend, the attention of college basketball scouts notably from Cornell University.

Beneath the façade is a different reality. The father, Lee Keller (Michael Shannon), an unhappy low-level college teacher, is a chronic gambler whose increasingly risky sports bets will eventually land the family in deep financial trouble. Alcohol only exacerbates Lee’s erratic highs and lows. As he takes out his aggression on Anthony, mother Jenny (Carla Gugino) tries to mediate and hold things together. Lee’s brother Charlie (Chris Bauer) also helps out. Indeed for Anthony, Uncle Charlie becomes a more trusted father figure and plays a key role in a climactic closing scene on the basketball court.

Pressures mount on Anthony as the season progresses toward a championship in which his coach (Wayne Duvall) puts everything on the line. Outside school Anthony gets knocked down a few pegs and receives advice from an older former pro. It’s made clear the scholarship he needs for Cornell is no sure thing. Girlfriend Victoria (Zazie Beetz) becomes pregnant leading to a breakup. Tensions with Lee escalate to the point of a violent confrontation in which Anthony suffers a serious injury. Going into a final crucial game, with Lee deeply in hock to a threatening gang, Anthony has to make an excruciating choice both physically and emotionally.

At the Tribeca world premiere, director Freundlich explained that he developed the intense screenplay from a short story written at age 16. Convincingly acted, it definitely feels both raw and real, on and off the playing court. Smith does a remarkable job as the son, especially for someone who had not played basketball before. Like Hawke in *The Phenom*, Shannon is brilliant as the abrasive bullying dad brought low by bad behaviour. (Shannon is also enjoying a string of promi-

nent roles: *Frank & Lola*, *Midnight Special*, *Elvis & Nixon*, among others.) Again the sports narrative is a medium through which multiple layers of human relationships are observed.

Paddy Breathnach’s *Viva*, a Cuba-Ireland co-production that was Ireland’s entry for the 2016 foreign-language Oscar (it made the shortlist of nine), tells a far less mainstream story. Jesus (Héctor Medina) is a young gay man in Havana who does hair and makeup for drag queens who perform in a nightclub owned by a caring owner and mentor known as “Mama” (Luis Alberto Garcia). Jesus, who lives hand to mouth, also does the hair of elderly ladies who usually lack the means to pay. He sometimes lets a female prostitute use his tiny dingy apartment.

Jesus inhabits a world on the margins of Cuban society. When he dreams it is of singing in the drag show, and after Mama lets him try, taking the stage name “Viva,” he makes a striking impression. That’s when he is struck by an apparently aggrieved older patron at the bar. The assailant turns out to be his long estranged father Angel (Jorge Perugorria) who, suffering incurable illness, has been released from many years in prison. The alcoholic indigent Angel was once a star in the boxing ring but has fallen far and his attempt to reconnect with that past glory is pathetically rebuffed. As much as he shows macho disgust for his son’s life — forbidding Jesus from performing in the club — he depends completely on Jesus for shelter and food (rice and beans) on the table. Their situation is so precarious that Jesus even resorts to prostitution to support them. The son who’s “been made to feel sorry for who I am” becomes the caregiver.

What redeems the relationship is how both gradually come to accept the other, a reconciliation that means both forgiving Angel’s failings as a father and letting Jesus express himself his way in returning to the stage. In such harsh circumstances — a side of Cuba we seldom see — it’s a small victory for tenderness and tolerance.



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[director@saskatoonrcdiocese.com](mailto:director@saskatoonrcdiocese.com)



# Finding enchantment: all you have to do is look

## Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



*“The cosmos is a congregation in need of a cantor” — Abraham Joshua Heschel*

I am sitting in a lawn chair on a patio, basking in the sun, halfway up an Italian hillside. After several hours of driving the twisting roads of the Italian Riviera, it is good simply to be still and quiet. In front of me is the Mediterranean Sea, its deep blue waters sparkling in the sunshine. To my left is a rolling forested valley dotted with scattered villas, their walls glowing with the deep yellow colour typical of the area. Above, soft white clouds, blown by a strong wind, are skittering across the sky. Their shadows create an ever-changing pattern across the land and water.

Below, I see traffic flowing through the streets and boats and ships navigating the waters. It is mid-day and I know the world is a’bustle with activity, work and plans; everyone has places to go and people to see. Will anyone stop and see this beauty, I wonder? How many will stop and acknowledge the glory that surrounds us? I realize, at this moment, all that is required of me is to appreciate it and to say thank you. Listening to song birds, hearing the wind in the trees and watch the interplay of light and shadow, with beauty and silence surrounding me, my heart sings a song of praise.

“The cosmos is a congregation in need of a cantor,” Abraham Joshua Heschel writes, and on that blessed day, I realize I am to be the

*Prather, BEd, MTh, is a teacher and facilitator in the areas of faith and spirituality. She was executive director at Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert, Alta., for 21 years and resides in Sherwood Park with her husband, Bob. They are blessed with four children and 10 grandchildren.*

## Sister filled with gratitude on occasion of 100th birthday

Continued from page 9

given name and moving to regular clothes. She fully embraced the beauty of co-ordinating outfits and dressing well — on a dime, of course. Sister Anna has a terrific sense of style and is always impeccably dressed. The nurses on the infirmary floor where she lives give her jewellery to match her outfits. Her ears always sparkle with earrings. But best of all are the days she wears her “dangles.” Her pleasure brings pleasure to many others. She prays for many people and keeps all her prayer requests in a jar that has become stuffed full over the years. When she forgets a specific request, she prays for all the requests in the jar, figuring she has

cantor; the congregation is creation itself. The awareness comes courteous of a small essay Heschel wrote for *Vox Humana*. In it, he points out that even as the psalmist proclaims, “The heavens declare the glory of God,” one has to ask, ‘How do they declare it? How do the heavens reveal God’s glory?’ They do not speak; they have neither voice nor words and so their glory remains inaudible. It falls to women and men to give speech to their silence, to sing the praises they cannot, to shout the hosannas to the skies, and to offer the thanks. It is for humans to utter what is in the heart of all things.

On this day, sitting in the sun, I realize anew what is required: one needs first to see, and to see requires attentiveness and to be attentive requires time. The gift for me this day is that I have both time and attentiveness. It is perhaps one of the great benefits of being older. Semi-retired, released from the inexorable and hectic demands of full-time work and raising a family, I now have more time to pay attention to what is around me and, hopefully, increasingly, the wisdom to appreciate its value.

It is a gift elders offer to an often distracted and preoccupied culture. I remember with amusement being in a cousin’s backyard on a beautiful summer day a few years ago. A group of us, all “of an age,” as they say, were enjoying a leisurely brunch. We were, if not all yet fully retired, at least well on that path. The conversation turned to gardening and the couple’s efforts to attract different birds to their yard. There were several large bird feeders on the property and we were discussing how various species prefer particular kinds of feeders. At one point, our host’s young adult daughter joined us and she sat silently listening to our conversation. After a time, obviously bored, she asked, in a rather disparaging tone of voice,

it covered that way.

Sister Anna recognizes that turning 100 is something to celebrate and expresses a lot of gratitude to her family, the staff who work with the sisters, and the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul congregation and members, of course. She regularly remarks on how good the sisters are, how proud she is of them.

“I like what’s happening now and I like the plans for the future,” she says, light catching on the metal on her ears. “I have believed in God’s Providence since early childhood,” she writes in a poem about turning 100. “And now, in old age, know that God’s Providence is looking after us, and will continue to do so in *aeternum*.”



Art Babych

**EVERYDAY ENCHANTMENT** — “At some point we recognize our sole and sacred task is to be the cantors of creation itself, giving glory and thanks to God for the beauty of this earth,” writes Sandy Prather. “May you find some time this summer to be enticed by enchantment — and maybe a bird or two.”

“Do all old people watch birds? Is that all you talk about?” We laughed, mostly because we didn’t think ourselves old, but we changed the subject in order to include her.

In hindsight, though, I wish I had responded differently. I would have told her, “Yes, it is one of the things we do. We watch the birds because you don’t. We watch, we marvel, we appreciate and we say, ‘Thank you.’ We do it because someone should.” It has been a privilege for me to spend time

with people who love birds. They have taught me to notice slight variations in birds’ colouring, the distinctive feathers, the singular shapes of head and beak, the unique bird calls and sounds. Each time, I am in awe at the creativity and diversity of these wonderful creatures and my heart sings.

“Our destiny is enchantment,” Brian Swimme writes, and it is a task I feel increasingly called to. When younger, I had neither the time nor perhaps the wisdom to

know the truth of that statement. Now it is a gift I recognize. To immerse one’s self in a forest, contemplate a mountain or an ocean, savour a sunset, delight in a butterfly, is to be invited into enchantment. At some point we recognize our sole and sacred task is to be the cantors of creation itself, giving glory and thanks to God for the beauty of this earth. May you find some time this summer to be enticed by enchantment — and maybe a bird or two.



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# Good Samaritan stories inspire us to be compassionate



## Liturgy and Life

Deacon Bob Williston

Good Samaritan stories abound in every part of history and every culture, with a number of common elements to each. First, there is a critical incident. Someone is in an accident, or a victim of a crime, or hurt in some way and there is a crying need for help. Second, there are those who turn away from the need. They don't want to be inconvenienced or get involved. Third, there is someone who responds with help. This person comes as an unsuspected responder. They belong to an unpopular group, or are in some way looked down upon. This is not how they are supposed to behave!

This is where the Good Samaritan story packs its punch! The ones you would have expected to respond do not and the one you expect would do nothing is the very one who responds to the need. This flip of roles shakes the foundations of our prejudices and lays bare one enormous human quality that shows what is lacking in some but the best in others: *compassion*.

In the Gospel today Jesus is talking with lawyers who want to enter into debate with him. They ask him which law is the greatest. Jesus answers with a question about what is written in the law as the greatest commandment.

*Williston is a retired parish life director for the Diocese of Saskatoon and a former missionary with the Redemptorists. He is also a song writer and recording artist.*

The lawyer quotes the Scriptures from Leviticus and Deuteronomy: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength, and your neighbour as yourself."

While Jesus affirms his answer, the lawyer wants to continue this debate, so he asks the question, "Who is my neighbour?" Luke tells us this question comes from the lawyer's desire to "justify himself." Presumably the law allows for a certain discretion when offering compassion to others. There must be some who are more deserving and some who are not.

This is where Jesus takes the Good Samaritan story and throws it around the lawyer like a rope! A man is beaten and robbed and seriously injured on the way to Jericho. A religious leader and a prominent member of the religious

<b>Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 10, 2016</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 30:10-14 Psalm 69 or 19 Colossians 1:15-20 Luke 10:25-37</b>
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congregation (assumed to be "good guys") walk on the other side so as not to spoil their ritual cleanliness. But a Samaritan (assumed to be a "bad guy") comes along and demonstrates tremendous compassion by binding the wounds of the person, providing a source of transportation to a local inn and promising to pay any added expenses to the innkeeper upon his return.

When asking for a judgment from the lawyer, Jesus turns the passive phrase "who is my neighbour" into an active voice: "Who was it that was neighbour to the man?" The lawyer answers: "The one who showed mercy."

Rev. James Forbes, a well-known preacher and former pastor at Riverside Church in New York, uses this Good Samaritan story to describe true compassion. In his answer to what compassion looks like, he says: "Not only was the Good Samaritan willing to put up the initial investment for the care of this wounded person, he offers to provide a system of *sustained care*. This is the first time the Bible talks

about a 'health care system.' " He goes on to describe compassion as something he learned at the family dinner table, where Momma would ask: Are all the children in?" Forbes says that at our heart's table, if it is to be a compassionate one, "Momma Eternal will ask us the same question: "Are all the children in?"

Here are two contemporary Good Samaritan stories we can ponder.

Amidst the flames and devastation of the fires in Fort McMurray, a tiny voice from an article in the Calgary Sun (May 6, 2016) told the story: "Syrian refugees in Calgary pitch in to help." Rita Khanchet saw the flames of Fort McMurray and was sorely reminded of how she had fled such destruction in her home town in Syria only five months before with her husband and young son. She said, "It's not easy to lose everything. We can understand . . . we were in the same situation." She told her five-year-old son about what was happening in Fort McMurray and immediately he brought out his toys and wanted to give them to children who had to flee without their own. Syrian refugees across Calgary stepped up to give from what little they had to help the cause. Through Facebook and the Syrian Refugee Support Group they offered to give \$5 from every Syrian refugee. They then offered furniture and clothes (most of which had been donated to them!).

The second story is about the many people who have given with generous hearts to help those who were displaced and in shock. Two separate news reports cite individuals who gave food, shelter, water and gasoline to those on the run from the flames. When asked what motivated them, they responded: "That's what we do, we're Canadian!" It sure made me proud to be a Canadian!

Both of these Good Samaritan stories should inspire us to have broader hearts of compassion and mercy. Within these stories is the answer to the age-old question, "Who is my neighbour?" The clear and unequivocal answer: the one in need of our help is my neighbour. Armed with this knowledge and awareness, we would do well to heed the command of Jesus; "Go and do likewise!"

# The powerful and the paranoid still feel threatened by the Child

## In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



The gospels tell us that after King Herod died, an angel appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, telling him: "Get up! Take the Child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those seeking the Child's life are now dead" (Mt 2, 19-20). The angel, it would seem, spoke prematurely. The Child, the infant-Christ, was still in

danger, is still in danger, is still mortally threatened, and is still being tracked down, right to this day.

God still lies vulnerable and helpless in our world and is forever under attack. All forms of violence, of aggression, of intimidation, of bullying, of ego-parading, of seeking advantage, are still try-

ing to kill the Child. And the Child is threatened too in less overt ways, namely, whenever we turn a blind eye on those who lie helpless and exposed in war, poverty, and economic injustice, we are still killing the Child. Herod may be dead, but he has many friends. The Child is forever threatened.

Many of us are familiar with the story of the Trappist monks in Algeria who were martyred by terrorists in 1996. Some months before being taken captive and executed, they had been visited by the terrorists, ironically on Christmas Eve, just as they were preparing to celebrate the Christmas Eve eucharist. The terrorists, heavily armed with guns, left after a tense standoff wherein the monks would not agree to give them the medical supplies they were demanding. But the monks, understandably, were badly shaken.

What was their response? They went immediately to their chapel and sang the Christmas mass, putting special emphasis on how Jesus entered this world radically vulnerable and helpless and was immediately under threat. Their measured, eventual response honoured this immediate reaction: living now under the threat of death, they refused to arm themselves or accept military protection, believing that there was an unbridgeable incon-

gruity between what they had vowed themselves to and the presence of guns inside their monastery.

Moreover, after that initial encounter with armed terrorists, their abbot, Christian de Cherge, introduced a special mantra into his daily prayer: *Disarm me! Lord, disarm me!* Living under the threat of arms, he prayed daily to remain unarmed, physically helpless against potential attack, to be like a newborn child, like the newborn Jesus, exposed and helpless before the threat of violence.

But that's not an easy thing to imitate, especially since most everything in our world today beckons us toward its opposite, namely, to arm ourselves, to counter every threat, gun for gun, to meet all potential threat with armed resistance. It's the times: like Christian de Cherge and his community of monks, we too live under the threat of terrorism and widespread violence. And our paranoia is heightened as, daily, our news reports give us images of terrorist shootings, bombings, beheadings, mass-shooting, street violence, and domestic violence. We live in violent times. Understandably there's an itch to arm ourselves.

So how realistic is it to refuse to arm ourselves? How realistic is it to pray to be disarmed?

Christianity has always defended both justified self-defence and just war. Beyond even this, no prudent society would ever choose to disband its police force and its military and these, necessarily, carry guns and other weapons. Indeed it might be said that those who argue for radical pacifism can do so only because they are already protected by police and soldiers with guns.

It's not too much of a stretch to say that, except for the guns and weapons that protect us, we all stand helpless before the criminals and psychopaths of this world. But that needs some nuance.

Among other things, there's still a powerful case to be made for remaining personally disarmed. The late Cardinal of Chicago, Francis George, argued it this way: We need pacifists in the same way as we need vowed religious celibates, that is, we need gospel-inspired persons to give a particular, sometimes singular witness, to what the gospels ultimately point to, namely, to a place beyond our present imagination, a heaven within which we will relate to each other in an intimacy which we cannot yet imagine and where there will be no arms or weapons. In heaven, we will be utterly defenceless before each other. There will be no guns in heaven.

This reality is already imaged in the newborn Christ, helpless and vulnerable and already so threatened.

It is also imaged in our own modern-day pacifists. From Dorothy Day to Martin Luther King, from Mother Teresa to Christian de Cherge, from Daniel Berrigan to Larry Rosebaugh, we have been gifted by the witness of gospel-inspired persons who, in the face of physical threat and violence, chose to risk their lives rather than pick up a gun. The times are forcing us too to choose: Do we arm ourselves or not?

Because those seeking the life of the Child are still around, paranoid folks like King Herod, killing indiscriminately for fear that a helpless child might soon threaten their throne and their privilege.



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**Mount Carmel Pilgrimage**

*(two miles north of Carmel, Sask.)*

**Sunday, July 17**

**Year of Mercy**

**Program:**

**9:30 An hour with Mary**  
Marian hymns, rosary, Sacrament of reconciliation

**10:45 An hour with God's family**  
Sunday eucharist  
Bishop Donald Bolen, presiding  
Blessing of fields  
Blessing of the sick

**12:00 An hour with our diocesan family**  
Lunch & quiet time with the Blessed Sacrament

**1:30 An hour with the Lord**  
Hymns  
Stations of the Cross  
Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament

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



# With current of love, we become strange attractors

## Porch Light

Stephen Berg



When I was boy, armed with wire cutters, screwdriver and soldering iron, I would happily pass evenings and weekends tearing apart — and sometimes putting back together — discarded radios or anything else I found that ran on batteries or had to be plugged in. I loved the smell of solder and gave myself headaches soldering

*Berg works for Hope Mission, a social care facility for homeless people in Edmonton's inner city. His poetry and prose have been in staged performances and have appeared in such publications as the Edmonton Journal, Orion, Geez, and Earth Shine. He blogs at growmercy.org*

together crude circuits consisting of resistors, switches, relays, capacitors and transformers.

For a while I had a fling with solenoids or electromagnets. The first one I made had snare wire wrapped tightly around a two-inch nail. I hooked the two ends to a six-volt battery and as the current fled through the wire it produced an electromagnetic field and magnetized the nail. In the effort to pick up increasingly heavier metal objects, I went on to bigger and better versions. One day I built a very fine one that required being plugged into an outlet. Although I used a step-down transformer between the power source and the electromagnet, I miscalculated and it blew up, sending bits of hot

wire flying across my bedroom and burning holes in my shirt.

Still, I was seized by the magic of creating an instant magnetic field. I marvelled that a cold dead nail could suddenly pulse with an invisible power. And I was fascinated that the immaterial field that was created around this simple object, reoriented and brought into alignment everything in its range.

I recall all of this only because one evening following a gathering with friends, my wife, Deb, told me about an impression she experienced. That evening our friend Mary had offered Deb her chair beside the fireplace so she could warm herself. Deb told me that when she sat in Mary's chair she felt a soft peace coming over her; and it came to her that this was the place where Mary prayed.

This brings me to wonder about the parallel natures of my electromagnet and the *prayer-chair* by the fireplace. I wonder about Deb being affected by an unseen field of influence where things were brought into alignment in such a way that a subtle

profusion of peace was the result. I wonder how far I can take the notion that a place of prayer, a person of prayer, a prayer itself, brings harmony and peace to its surroundings.

In an essay called *The Physics of Communion*, Barbara Taylor talks about an experience she had at a lecture given by Fred Burnham. Burnham is an Episcopal priest who holds a doctorate in the history of science. The lecture was about chaos theory and the science of complexity, and how these things might begin to inform religion. During the lecture a computer screen was left on; random lines crisscrossed the screen. By the end of the lecture the lines had produced a striking facsimile of a butterfly. Burnham called the butterfly design a "strange attractor" because the mathematical formula that created the design acted like a magnet that pulled randomness into form and order.

The experience my wife had is of course beyond scientific examination, but perhaps at some undiscovered level, the equating of the *prayer-chair* with an elec-

tromagnet does not violate science or faith. Perhaps only those of us who have yet to completely shed a mechanistic worldview find difficulty with this juxtaposition. To those who see the created world as God's world, there will be awe and wonder, but no incredulity; because at bottom, the spiritual and the material natures are not distinct categories.

If this is the way things are, should it surprise us that the chair beside the fireplace is hallowed ground? Should it surprise us that this spot has become a place where an invisible power, through the conducting rays of prayer, however prayed, however fashioned, realigns and reorders that which is in range?

Perhaps this helps us better reverence those times we remember being arrested by a power that we could only call holy. Nothing planned or invented, we were simply held entranced in space and time, held in a way that suspended our fear — held in a field of holy influence, where God, for no reason or a thousand reasons, chose to stream Divine love into the world through an old shed, a tree, a butterfly, a path, a café, a stranger, a friend. Could these be revelatory ruptures, unifying moments, meant to lead us deeper and transform our false autonomy into true attractiveness?

While deep mystery remains, we can still catch the notion that when we allow the *current* of Christ, that is, the current of *love*, to flow through us, not impeding it or attempting to store it, just letting it flow freely, we too become strange attractors, carrying within us and around us, beauty and order.

## The mace has been a part of ceremonies for 600 years



### Figure of Speech

Dr. Gerry Turcotte

*Its strongest stem became a ruler's sceptre. — Ezekiel 19:11*

The mace has been a staple of university ceremonies for over 600 years, with Oxford University first using one in the 16th century. Alternately a weapon of war and of diplomacy, the mace has been used in both parliaments and universities as the symbol to start proceedings, to ward off evil, or to call people to attention. In the university context it is also representative of the institution's authority to grant degrees, and as such, the mace-bearer always leads the procession of professors and students into the graduation hall.

One of the most exciting times for any university is convocation, when we have an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our student community. This year St. Mary's University had the pleasure of awarding a record number of degrees, but also of presenting our new mace. The Rose Family Memorial Mace was crafted by the prestigious British firm of Thomas Fattorini, by appointment to Her Majesty the Queen, manufacturer of insignias and awards. The mace was designed and donated by one of our own professors, Dr. Linda Henderson, to celebrate the university's 30th year as an educational institution.

*Turcotte is president of St. Mary's University in Calgary.*

The mace honours the achievements and spirit of the Rose family, including patriarch Harold Henry Rose, and Dr. Henderson's late sister Janet Rose, a pioneer in cartography and in the geomatics industry, whose company produced an extraordinary 3D imaging map of our entire campus. It is for this reason that the mace includes a small compass rose on its finial. As our campus minister, Nancy Quan pointed out at the dedication ceremony, a compass rose is "a directional keeper." It is a "harbinger of where we are going, and of the direction we want to take. A compass lets us know when we have gotten off track or when we have missed the mark. By orienting us it helps us to look forward with purpose,

but it wisely reminds us to keep looking over our shoulders to keep track of where we have come from. Where we come from does indeed matter. It shapes our vision."

The mace also features the St. Mary's star in several places, as well as our Coat of Arms. The design combines a hardwood staff with a hallmarked sterling silver head, a lucite stone in which floats the St. Mary's star, and it bears our university crest on two sides enamelled in four colours and finished in 24 karat gold. Needless to say the rose, as the symbol of Mary our



G. Turcotte

**THE STRONGEST STEM** — This year at convocation St. Mary's University presented their new mace: the Rose Family Memorial Mace.



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# Anti-Semitism among refugees a quandary for Germany

By Ulrich Rosenhagen  
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While many countries in Europe have sealed their borders to refugees, Germany has done the opposite. Last year, the country registered over one million asylum seekers, including 425,000 from ravaged Syria.

No other country in the European Union has accepted as many. For Syrians and others who risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea in rubber dinghies, Germany has become a beacon of hope.

Though countless volunteers have helped to ease the asylum seekers' plight in 2015, not all Germans have offered their heartfelt welcome. Amid the groping incidents in Cologne on New Year's Eve as well as the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels and Paris, a growing number of Germans are calling for tighter controls on immigrants and increased border security.

German Jews in particular are troubled by the steep rise of anti-Semitic attitudes and incidents as the sheer number of Middle Eastern Muslims in the nation increases. Sadly, they have reason to be concerned. As the Pew Global

*Rosenhagen is associate director of the Lubar Institute for the Study of the Abrahamic Religions at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

Attitudes Poll from 2011 has shown, a great many people in the Middle East grow up in a culture where Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism are widespread, and negative views of Jews and Israel are exceedingly common.

"Many Syrians and immigrants of Arab descent have grown up in an environment in which hostility toward Israel and anti-Semitism are a common practice," Josef Schuster, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, told Chancellor Angela Merkel last October. "Jews in Germany are afraid that, if unchecked, this anti-Semitism rooted in Arab culture and politics could grow rapidly."

Schuster's fears are already a reality. According to the Department for Research and Information on Anti-Semitism, there has been a 34 per cent increase in anti-Semitic incidents in 2015 in the city of Berlin alone. Though most involve neo-Nazis and right-wing activists, incidents prompted by foreign-born Muslims are on the rise.

Young Muslims attacked a rabbi in Berlin and threatened to kill his daughter in 2012. In 2014, Muslim citizens rallied against Israel and the Gaza war, shouting anti-Semitic slurs, while two Palestinian arsonists set fire to a synagogue in Wuppertal. In recent months a Jewish doctor who helped at a refugee centre in Frankfurt has been spat upon and sworn at, and on the island of Fehmarn a Jewish tourist from France was insulted



RNS/REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

**SOCIAL INTEGRATION — Migrants are reflected in a puddle as they queue in front of the Berlin Office of Health and Social Affairs for their registration process in this February 2016 photo.**

and robbed by refugees from Syria and Afghanistan.

While anti-Semitism in any place is deplorable, in Germany it is horrific. For the country of the Shoah (Holocaust), the memory of atrocities committed under Nazism form a central part of its present identity. Public discourse remains shaped by the demons of

the past. Shame and guilt over the Nazi past have also created wide acceptance among Germans of their moral obligation to forcefully reject anti-Semitism. Twenty-first-century Germany is a country of cultural pluralism and religious tolerance. Most of its citizens are thankful for and proud of its small, albeit flourishing Jewish community.

And yet, it is precisely this new Germany of pluralism and tolerance that is put at risk when its future citizens from the Middle East disregard the lessons the country has painfully learned from its past. There is indeed an urgent need, in the words of Josef Schuster, to "integrate the refugees into our community of values as soon as possible."

So is it possible to integrate refugees into Germany and overcome Muslim anti-Semitism so that postwar Germany remains a country of tolerance and pluralism?

In March of this year at the New Town Hall in Hanover, representatives of the Jewish community met with Catholic bishops and Protestant church leaders for their annual dialogue. Close ties between the Jewish community and the Christian churches are an essential element of the moral fabric of contemporary Germany. These bonds have been slowly built over the years and are a bulwark against anti-Semitism.

At this year's annual consultation, the agenda centred on responses to the refugee crisis and forging strategies against the new anti-Semitism. Rattled by the increasing anti-Semitic and xenophobic violence, the rabbis and bishops upheld both the biblical call to care for strangers and the human right to asylum. Emphasizing that every human being is created in the image of God, the religious leaders discussed immigration policies. Curiously missing from the meeting were spokespeople for the Muslim community.

Giving Muslims a seat at the


table would have been a significant public gesture in the face of the refugee crisis. And this would not have been hard to pull off. Christians and Muslims in Germany have long established a culture of dialogue in the form of mutual intercultural initiatives to overcome racism.

Christian churches have supported immigrants through a network of social agencies since people first came to Germany as *gastarbeiter*, or guest workers, decades ago. They run daycare centres to which Muslim parents send their children; they have changed their employment rules by hiring Muslim educators and social workers; they have been the strongest supporters of establishing Islamic religious education in public schools. Recently, the Protestant church collaborated with the Co-ordinating Council of Muslims on a mutual manifesto to "support the encounter between Christians and Muslims in Germany."

So in the face of the social pressures to integrate one million asylum seekers, to not invite the Co-ordinating Council to the annual consultation of Jewish and Christian officials was a missed opportunity in the fight against anti-Semitism.

Many Germans, both secular and religious, view the churches and other religious organizations as mediators between modern society and traditional religion. And they are concerned that social integration of Muslim refugees might fail if Jews, Christians and Muslims cannot start a frank conversation about their prejudices and stereotypes.

Germany needs its Jews, Christians and Muslims to create a narrative that is conscious of the country's past yet inclusive enough to embrace its most recent immigrants. Integration efforts will succeed only if the conversation about anti-Semitism and religious hatred brings all parties to the table — in other words, if the discussion is with one another rather than about one another.



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For a detailed position overview and/or to apply, please submit a cover letter and resumé to Patrick Clarke, Cathedral Administrator at [pat@holyfamilycathedral.ca](mailto:pat@holyfamilycathedral.ca) by **midnight, Monday, July 11, 2016.**

Please note that all applicants are required to complete an application form in addition to submitting a cover letter and resumé. A detailed position overview and application form will be emailed to applicants upon request. The position start date is **September 1, 2016.**



# Rising to the challenge to sing despite our losses

By Alma Barkman

I first saw them from our kitchen window, although I had heard them in the backyard for several days, where their lilting song began as early as 4:30 in the morning and lasted until dusk. And now the robins were going to honour us by building in full view of our kitchen window — but not just yet. They would wait until the leaves formed a camouflage before starting their project, a cozy nest situated up under the eave on the elbow of the downspout. Surely the crows that roamed the neighbourhood would not see it there.

Within the space of a few days the female laid her blue-green eggs, with both parents taking turns on the nest during the incubation period. When a flurry of activity around the nest indicated that the young had hatched, we watched both robins making countless trips to the garden for earthworms. Approaching the nest always initiated the same response — three little nestlings popping up like jacks-in-the-box, their marble-sized heads supported on skinny necks that wobbled like

weak springs, their beaks wide open hoping for juicy morsels. They were babies only a mother, and bird watchers, could love.

The little robin family almost become an extension of our own, with friends actually inquiring how things were doing “on the maternity ward.” The baby birds were a constant source of delight each time we ate our meals at the kitchen table, or worked in the garden, or sat on our back steps.

And then one morning I awoke to an eerie silence — no birds singing in the backyard, no rustle of wings through the carport, no mother robin on the nest. I reached up to touch it, but there was no response, just a nasty crow high in the dead branches of a nearby tree, peering down at me as if to gloat over his victory. “Haw! Haw! Haw!”

I was devastated.

The yard suddenly seemed so quiet, so empty of life. Every time I looked through the kitchen window that day, and for days to come, my eyes came to rest on the vacant nest. It seemed to epitomize the end of all that I had anticipated — future songs, the companionship of God’s creatures in our yard, a cycle of life successfully completed.

Even the adult robins had seemingly vanished, no doubt frightened off when their home was so viciously violated. All that



A. Barkman

**ROBIN FAMILY** — A mother robin sits on her nest in Alma Barkman’s backyard. “The little robin family almost become an extension of our own, with friends actually inquiring how things were doing ‘on the maternity ward.’”

remained were the taunting calls of the crow, waking me from sleep each morning, reminding me anew of the loss. The crow’s “haw, haw, haw” made me feel alone and angry and helpless.

And then one morning, at first competing with the raucous cries

of the crow, and then filtering victoriously through the early hours of the dawn, I heard it — the rich, full song of a robin, and I thought of the old patriarch Job. God had allowed Satan to rob him of everything meaningful in his life and yet he could still declare,

“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15 KJ). It was as if Job could sing even in the midst of his losses.

*Would I be able to do the same?* God was even now conveying that question through the notes of a robin’s song. I could only pray that if struck by tragedy, loneliness, or suffering, my faith would be strong enough to meet, and overcome, the challenge.

I had not long to wait.

My husband passed away.

After 58 years of marriage, there was an eerie silence in the house, an emptiness epitomized by his vacant place at the table, his easy chair, the sacred music he so enjoyed. I missed his interest in my hobbies, the trips we took together, our discussions on current events, our love and companionship. Within a few months I had to undergo two major surgeries, one of them for cancer. I thought again of Job, that despite the loss of his family and health, he clung steadfastly to God.

I chose to do the same, and although the past year was difficult, I was undergirded by the prayers and support of family and friends. Yes, there were those black moments when doubts taunted me, but only briefly, because filtering through the early hours of each new day are the promises of God, and I can sing again.

## Participants reflect on the challenges of homelessness and poverty

Continued from page 1

said. “The slowing down of pace and being present in the neighbourhood was a very revealing thing. Once you go slow, and you go vulnerably, and you are willing to take on each situation and enter into relationship, enter into dialogue — there is a lot of ‘take home’ in that.”

At a dinner held to conclude the event June 18, participants reflected on the challenge of homelessness and the struggles that poverty brings, particularly for those suffering from illness, addictions or chronic medical conditions.

Seeking medical attention, visiting the needle exchange and obtaining a prescription were among the challenges on participant task lists, as was attempting to obtain financial aid — with Sanctum Survivor participants required to call Social Services using a public phone or payphone, before contacting AIDS Saskatoon to get a ride to the income assistance office.

Without trespassing, challengers had to keep their phones charged, finding public places to “plug in” to keep their phone going for safety, check-ins and social media posts during the two-day event. Another task involved finding places to wash hands at least nine times in one day, especially attempting to do so when sourcing food or seeking shelter.

Trying to get identification was another test, as was visiting the Food Bank for a hamper. Participants came to realize that in some cases, hampers include food items that require a stove or a can opener: an obvious challenge for some-

one living on the street. Some also set out to find somewhere to do laundry in order to wash the one set of clothes they were wearing — a difficult feat if a person has nothing to change into.

Participants were instructed to seek out a public computer at a local library or other centre and initiate a search for housing listings, then to contact the landlord from a public or pay phone and try to arrange a viewing as someone without references and on social assistance. For some participants, this meant a long walk to areas that were not pedestrian friendly — only to have the meeting fall through.

During their 36-hour experience, participants were also challenged to do an act of kindness for someone who is currently living on the streets. “An act of kindness can go a long way, especially for someone who experiences poverty, homelessness or chronic illness,” noted the participants’ instruction sheet.

The daunting task of asking strangers for money was a difficult hurdle for some, who were encouraged to notice the reactions of passersby.

“One of our challenges was to buy a meal, and therefore we had to panhandle to get the money,” Bolen described. “Chief Felix and I were on 20th Street. He popped his hat down and I popped my hat down, and we were there for a little over an hour. Other than the two family members who came to greet Chief Felix, and one other person who said ‘Hi,’ nobody looked at us,” the bishop said. “It was an experience of the invisibility of the homeless or the poor and vulnerable.”

Sanctum Survivor challengers were able to obtain breakfast and lunch at Friendship Inn, which provides a free meal service on 20th Street 365 days a year. In addition, each participant was assigned a place to go for the night — such as the Salvation Army shelter, the Brief Detox Unit, or outdoors at Kinsmen Park.

“You hear stories in your office, and you have some empathy, but you really don’t know,” said Markentin, one of five participants to sleep in a park during the challenge, when the temperature dropped to six degrees Celsius.

“I’ve been fortunate in my life to never have been hungry and cold and homeless, and last night was tough,” said Markentin. “I had this lovely blanket, but the ground was cold. It wasn’t safe. Every time you opened your eyes, there was someone around.”

Johner, who also slept in the park, related how he was able to obtain two blankets earlier in the day, during a visit to the Salvation Army. “The night in the park was really eye-opening: a very busy night,” he said, expressing appreciation for Louttit’s “patrolling” presence.

As a retired police officer, Louttit said he thought he was familiar with many of the problems, services and agencies encountered during the homelessness challenge — but the firsthand experience over 36 hours brought a new, deeper level of understanding. Before this, “I didn’t see what effort it really took” to access services and programs, he said.

Louttit added that change is possible, and things are improving. “The big gain from this is

once you hear something, you can’t un-hear it. Once you have a thought in your mind it will brew. This will bring an incremental change to our community,” he said. “Every time you do something like this you are changing things.”

Thomas expressed appreciation for all those who are providing outreach and assistance to the vulnerable and at-risk in the community — those in poverty and suffering who are also “fighters and survivors.”

Morrison spent the night at the Brief Detox Unit operated by the Saskatoon Health Region. “One of the things that was gratifying was that the staff were so respectful of everyone who came, greeted them and walked them through the process,” she said. “And the clients were respectful of each other, being quiet when they came in — and I know that doesn’t happen every night.”

At the wind-up dinner, Isbister stressed the importance of having low-cost housing and sustainable meal programs in the community. “We also need some designated housing specific to people with difficulties and illnesses,” she said.

Provincial MLA Chartier added: “It is a 24/7 job to survive on the streets. Not having a place to go home to is not a nice experience at all.” Chartier lauded the work of the YWCA in helping women and children in crisis. “We need to do so much better in supporting women and children.”

As a journalist, Warick said that in the past he had “parachuted in” to situations of poverty and homelessness, but that his brief immersion experience brought

some new insights.

Participants can’t really know what it’s like to be homeless, he acknowledged. “But in a small way (this was a chance) to learn about it and get a glimpse of it, and to honour those people who struggle in our community and those people who are working every day to help them.”

Warick said the most powerful experience was talking to people who shared their stories — such as the working man who described going to Friendship Inn because he and his wife have to choose between paying the rent and buying groceries.

The wind-up dinner included acknowledgments of those who initiated the idea of Sanctum — Markentin and Katelyn Roberts — and all who have supported the project, as well as staff, volunteers and Sanctum residents.

Markentin spoke with optimism about building the next stage of the project to help HIV-positive pregnant women. “We are told there is no money, but people will make it happen,” said Markentin, pointing to a pioneering Saskatchewan spirit. “You will make it happen.”

Bolen also stressed the vital importance of partnerships — both in all the outreach that already happens in the community, and in continuing to help those who are most in need.

“One thing that we experienced was the importance of working together, the importance of partnerships, and the network of interconnections that are necessary to address both society’s biggest problems and especially to help those who are in most need,” Bolen said.



# ‘Well-meaning people’ delusional over Bill C-14

## Around the Kitchen Table

Donald Ward



I have a friend who is paralyzed from the shoulders down. He spends his days in a motorized wheelchair that he controls with the movements of his head and neck. He drinks coffee and water through straws from cups he keeps in his oversized shirt pockets. He is funny and articulate, and generally a joy to be around. A former university lecturer, he still lectures from time to time. He has always been a good teacher.

He paints with a brush he holds in his mouth, and had a one-man show at a gallery last year. His paintings reflect the normal observations of a normal life. There is nothing bitter in his conversation or his art.

He is always ready with a story. The first time I saw him after his accident he was in the rehabilitation ward at Saskatoon City Hospital. I asked him how he was, and he said he was feeling pretty good, considering the circumstances. He asked me, “If a man speaks in the woods and no one hears him, is he still wrong?” Another time he was leaving a friend’s house and they were trying to manoeuvre him out the door and into a special taxi that was waiting in the street. After several attempts to get him over the doorstep, he finally said, in mock impatience, “Come on, you guys, am I expected to do everything myself?”

He is a good man and a good friend, and it frightens me that he is now eligible for physician-assisted suicide. Some people believe he should put an end to his suffering. He considered it once, but now his response is simply, “I’m still here.” I have another friend with terminal cancer. It started in one spot and has since metastasized throughout his body. He doesn’t know how long he has left, and though he is not in great pain at the moment, things are getting more difficult with each passing week. He walks with a cane now, as he has been having trouble with his balance, and his heart has been acting up since he had open-heart surgery several months ago. He takes medical cannabis for pain and anxiety. With the passage of Bill C-14, he, too, will soon be eligible for physician-assisted suicide. Well-meaning people may urge him to put an end to his suf-

fering. I’m pretty sure how he will respond, for he is man of great learning and deep faith, but still, the option wasn’t there before. I have other friends who deal with chronic pain on a daily basis — heart conditions, arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathy. Still others are handicapped or mentally ill, grappling with Down syndrome, depression, bipolar disorder, sleep disorders, and any number of other conditions that doctors don’t understand. It’s a small step from “Would you bring a handicapped child into the world?” — one of the chief arguments in favour of abortion when that debate was intense — to “Why are you allowing them to suffer?” My sister-in-law Angela was hydrocephalic, and was severely handicapped throughout her brief life. When she fell severely ill once there was a question of whether she should be treated.

“Why don’t you stop torturing her?” one doctor asked her mother. What didn’t seem to occur to anybody was that Angela, to all outward appearances, was happy. She was a member of a loving community that cared for her and mourned for her when she passed — from natural causes, several years later. Life is not easy. Henry David Thoreau said, “Most men lead lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with the song still in them.” I would say, rather, that most people — including the suffering, the poor, and the handicapped — lead lives of quiet heroism, and go to grave in victory. The friends of whom I have written here are part of my community, and I will miss them when they are gone. Those who go to the grave by their own hand are to be forgiven, not encouraged.

## Time to learn indigenous traditions

Continued from page 7

Bishop Donald Bolen began his reflection by saying “a long overdue word of thanks” to indigenous peoples. “Thank you for welcoming us to this land. Thank you for signing a treaty with our great-grandparents, our ancestors.” Bolen also emphasized the importance of learning what was suppressed in the past. “It is time now for us to learn about indigenous spiritual traditions. It is time for us to learn about your understanding of your relationship with the Creator of this land. It is time for us to humbly listen and to hear the traditions that were developed over centuries, over millennia; to enter into conversations about them; to welcome into our parishes indigenous elders who will tell

us about the spiritual traditions which have given meaning and life to indigenous peoples.” The bishop called for dialogue and to create what Pope Francis calls a culture of encounter. “Pope Francis would also add that he wants us to learn from you something about the care for the land, something about moving into the future, living in a relationship with the land that fosters a future, which doesn’t use up all the resources as though the present moment is the only moment in time. We need to learn a way of living on this holy land, and we have to learn that quickly, because our environment is hurting deeply.” A final strand of the cord that will bind relationships is a commitment to walk together, said Bolen. “The Truth and Reconciliation

process has been a deep learning experience for the Catholic Church, and a humbling experience,” he said. “It is going to take us time to absorb the words spoken, the pain articulated, the waves of pain spoken by the thousands of witnesses who have come forward.” During the treaty plaque celebration, greetings were brought to the gathering by MLA Eric Olauson. “This service and installation of this plaque remind us that we are all treaty people,” he affirmed. Representatives of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish — which serves First Nations, Métis, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parishioners in Saskatoon — also participated in the celebration, with Elder Gayle Weenie leading a smudging ceremony, and their choir providing music ministry.

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## Campus misbehaviour

University students are reporting some unsettling experiences on dating and sexual encounters on campuses.

U.S. Vice-president Joe Biden gave an address on violence against women at the United State of Women Summit in Washington June 14. Two days later Georgetown University released results of its first comprehensive sexual assault and misconduct climate survey.

The survey found that 31 per cent of female undergrads had experienced non-consensual sexual contact. Many students said they felt uncomfortable intervening. Seventy-seven per cent of bystanders who saw a drunk person about to have a sexual encounter did nothing to stop them. A quarter of respondents said they didn't know what to do.

Georgetown University President John J. DeGioia said the data were consistent with national trends in universities. Seventy-five per cent of women at Georgetown and 85 per cent of "gender non-conforming students" reported they had been sexually harassed since enrolling.

Another sign of changing cultural mores in university culture was reported by columnist Margaret Wenthe in the June 18 Globe and Mail. She titled her

column "How hookup culture hurts young women."

She wrote: "When I headed off to university back in the Stone Age, girls were still afraid of being called sluts. By the time I graduated, there was a worse label — 'unliberated.' It applied to girls who didn't have sex. And no one wanted to be that."

She commented: "On many campuses today, hookup culture is the norm — especially for women who identify as feminists. Hookup culture decouples sex from commitment. It is thought to be practical as well as fun. It allows women to pursue their own interests and academic careers without the time-consuming burden of messy emotional entanglements."

She added: "There's just one problem. It makes them utterly miserable."

Wente quoted an essay by Leah Fessler published in Quartz. Fessler was a student at Middlebury College, an elite liberal-arts school in Vermont. She convinced herself that her desire for monogamy was "antiquated." Yet she couldn't help longing for connection. "With time, inevitably, came attachment," she writes. "And with attachment came shame, anxiety, and emptiness. My girlfriends and I were top students, scientists, artists, and leaders. We could advocate for anything — except for our own bodies. We won accolades from our professors, but the men we were sleeping with wouldn't even eat

breakfast with us the next morning."

The sex was lousy too, she said. "In retrospect, it's obvious that I was highly unlikely to have an orgasm with a guy who didn't know me or care to," she writes. Yet she blamed her sexual dissatisfaction on herself.

Wente commented that she and her friends also learned the hard way. "We learned that although women may be equal to men, we're not the same — especially in matters of mating, sex and intimacy. Like it or not, our sexual feelings and behaviour are deeply gendered."

She added: "Feminist theory denies these differences exist, except as artifacts of the patriarchy. And so our smart young daughters grow up ignorant of the emotional facts of life — as ignorant in their way as their great-great-grandmothers were on their wedding nights."

Schools today across the country are having strong debates about sex education. Many of the objections arise from the fact that sex education is too much about mechanics and safe sex. Neglected is education about friendship, healthy relationships, intimacy and spirituality.

Surveys of university behaviours as well as personal testimonies indicate this would be a far more wholesome approach. — PWN

## Euthanasia debate reveals Canadians speaking two different languages

### Building a Culture of Life

Mary Deutscher



June 6, 2016, was a momentous day for Canada. On this day the Carter decision took effect, striking down our laws against physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia and dramatically changing the

way we respond to people who express a wish to die. Over the past month or so I have kept my ear to the ground, keeping abreast of our media's attempts to understand the implications of this deci-

sion, and I think I am beginning to understand how we got to where we are today.

One program in particular served as a tipping point in my reflections: a conversation with Jean Vanier on CBC's *As It Happens*. As I listened to this interview I realized something felt a little off. Euthanasia is a gut-wrenching topic, so I generally feel uneasy when I listen to these programs. As I listened to yet another question about individual rights, I realized it felt as though the interviewer and Vanier were speaking entirely different languages. She would very clearly ask

him a question about the right to die, and he would reply by speaking about his own experiences living in a L'Arche community.

I need to pause for a moment and state that this interviewer was skilled. I felt the questions she posed were honest and that she was legitimately trying to understand the L'Arche perspective. I also believe Vanier was in no way trying to dodge her questions or muddy his replies. Vanier was very articulate, but there continued to be a disconnect between the types of questions asked and the types of replies given. This culminated when Vanier was asked about the role of individualism in our society.

"So there's 'something' in society that's going wrong when we think all the time that people have to be perfectly independent, perfectly strong, where in reality, my God, we need each other." Vanier continued, "there's a fundamental sickness in our society. And how can we, little by little, discover this? To move from the I to the we — we are all fragile, we all need help, and yet at the same time we all have strengths."

These comments turned on a light in my mind and I realized why Canadians think we need euthanasia. This decision was not made by our Parliament this June, nor did our Supreme Court make it in February. It was made long before that when we decided we valued individualism over community, autonomy over interdependence, and personal freedom over truly compassionate care. A society of isolated individuals needs eutha-

## How to make your home energy sustainable

By Coral Bliss Taylor

Most concerns about Canadian energy use focus on industrial activities such as oilsands development. But we can be more sustainable on an individual basis, starting in our homes.

A friend recently asked what could be done to make his new house more sustainable. It's a good question because there's a lot to learn about household sustainability.

Canada's most significant residential energy uses are transportation, followed by space heating, then electricity and hot water. But there are three critical ways to combat energy use: conservation, replacement with renewables and efficiency.

To increase household energy sustainability, here are your smartest moves, in order of effectiveness:

Curb vehicle use. If you can live with just one household vehicle, that's terrific. Having more efficient vehicles is important, but curbing vehicle use overall is the priority. Reducing transportation energy use also reduces other envi-

ronmental pollutants. And any alternative transportation, even transit, involves more exercise, so this also increases health. And reducing vehicle pollutants improves air quality, contributing to everyone's well-being.

Living in a walkable inner-city neighbourhood close to services is a good strategy. Many houses in these areas are infills — redevelopments — that have a smaller impact on the environment than homes in new areas. Creating new neighbourhoods causes significant disturbances to the land and environment, through stripping, grading and loss of habitat and agricultural capacity.

Try to buy local, and fewer, goods. This reduces transportation energy and pollution from shipping, as well as the environmental costs of manufacturing the things we didn't buy. It also reduces waste products. Focus your buying power on things you need rather than want, and focus your energy on great things to do rather than things to have.

Don't buy a house with space you'll never need but is costly to heat. And draft-proof your home. Ensure you have sufficient insulation. Wear a sweater and slippers. If possible, use radiant heating rather than forced-air heating. Ideally, this radiant heating would

be in-floor heating, using solar hot water panels (solar thermal panels) or geothermal. If a furnace is the only option, then higher-efficiency is definitely better.

— REFRIGERATOR, page 19

*Deutscher holds an MA in Public Ethics from St. Paul University in Ottawa. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Public Policy at the University of Saskatchewan.*

— VANIER, page 19



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

**FRIDAY CHARITY VISIT BY POPE** — Pope Francis visits with retired priests at the Casa San Gaetano home for elderly and sick priests in Rome June 17. The visit was one of the pope's Friday works of mercy, an initiative he began during the Holy Year of Mercy.

*Taylor is secretary of the Green Party of Alberta. She lives in Calgary. www.troymedia.com*



# All belong to this divine place

Continued from page 6

ily. Part of the effect of the school was loneliness, so he started his own family. But eventually his wife and children left because of his drinking. A friend took him fishing, and he realized how ashamed he was and said, “God help me” — adding that it wasn’t really a prayer, as he was angry at God.

“I was looking up and saw the entire universe, and then I heard this voice and it said to me, “In spite of what you’ve done to yourself I love you and you are part of all this” — and I came back to the boat and slept for a while,” said Joseph, saying that ever since that time he’s been on a healing journey. “We all have value, we all belong to this divine place, and if we want to we can all seek and determine and find our place.”

Sitting in a circle, he had a second vision of a whirlpool of people but this time no voice guided him in what it meant. However, when he slept, answers came to him that survivors would heal through their own tears, sharing their stories.

“I realized then that we could

heal, and we could rely on Aboriginal medicine,” said Joseph, adding that manifesting love so that nobody is hurt is key.

The first national TRC dialogue was hurtful, but gradually the tone began to change as people began to hear, listen, and shift. Apologies, acceptances, and forgiveness were followed by hugs, tears and more forgiveness. Relationships were transformed.

“I knew then that reconciliation was possible,” he said. “We’ve begun to transform our country, whether we know it or not, we’re already on the road to reconciliation.”

A recent poll said that seven out of 10 Canadians are interested in reconciling, and he sees it as evidence that we have come a long way. It has since grown to 84 per cent.

“That’s the good news, we should be celebrating. I know it’s difficult to hear the stories, but we need to hear them,” he added, citing the TRC report and the 94 calls to action as one place to start for the average Canadian. “This moment in Canadian history is unparalleled

for its optimism, and for the hope that’s gaining momentum, everywhere across this country.”

He added that nobody is immune from trauma, but facing it is what keeps us from despair. “All of us Canadians, we have some notions about who we are — fair, we’re just, we believe in equality, we believe in so many basic virtues that we yearn to live those out, so let’s find a way to live those out,” he said. “It starts with you.”

He encouraged everyone to figure out how to put reconciliation into their lives, even just saying hello casually to a stranger on the street, or some other small act.

“Reconciliation is a matter of many acts, some monumental and some miniscule, but all of it is important to create a new kind of energy and spirit that we need as Canadian people, to elevate ourselves, to hold each other up, to respect each other, to honour each other,” said Joseph. “You see those are things we can do. You can hold each other up, you can love others; we can build a society where we can all walk with dignity, integrity, and respect.



Design Pics

## Cows Come. Cows Go.

Eight cows munched their way along the coulee toward my brown brick prairie home. Escapees.

I called the nearest farmer whose home I could see across the grain fields.  
*Not my cows. Don't worry. Cows come. Cows go.*

I watched them head toward the busy highway. Not one was hit.

I remember this old man's terse wisdom when difficulties blunder into my path with a frequency I don't appreciate.

*Cows come. Cows go.*

By Jeannette Timmerman

# ‘We need each other’: Vanier

Continued from page 18

nesia because it has no concept of how to care for each other.

There was a dissonance between the interviewer and Vanier because the worldview of the “right to die” and the worldview of L’Arche are incompatible. The former is rooted in individualism while the latter is rooted in community. It is impossible for a person such as Jean Vanier, a person who feels love and connection, to even imagine himself needing the right to die. Indeed, he expressed as much in his interview

and reflected on the positive experiences he has had in journeying with others through their final days.

Vanier’s emphatic comment that “we need each other” is still lodged in my brain weeks after the interview. These words sounded less like a statement and more like a plea when he said them in the interview. As much as I wish Vanier’s words could be heard by active proponents of euthanasia, I worry that his plea is only echoing in the void of individualism. It seems our Charter of Rights and Freedoms has become less about


protecting each other and more about demanding things at the expense of each other.

Toward the end of his interview Vanier also gave a few words of encouragement to our legislators, reminding them: “It’s not just a question of legislation about death, but we should also have legislation about life: to help people to live and to live fully and to create . . . communities where people can find healing.”

Many Canadians believe that death is an appropriate response to suffering because they have never seen what a life-giving response looks like. Canada’s eager adoption of euthanasia and assisted suicide shows us that we have failed to care for each other. If people are afraid of dying, it is because we have not shown them what a good death looks like. If they are afraid of living with a disability, it is because we have not respected the dignity of those with disabilities. If they are afraid of loneliness, it is because we have failed to build a welcoming community.

The Christian way of living is radically different from what is being accepted by much of the progressive world. We need to use our legislature to proudly defend life-giving options for all Canadians, and we need to focus on creating life-giving communities where we can safely share our vulnerabilities and our strengths.

Why, you might ask? Because we need each other.



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**YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATOR**

St. Albert Parish is seeking a full time Youth Ministry Coordinator. The Youth Minister would be responsible for development, coordination, and implementation of youth programs for school aged youth in the parish. For a detailed job description see the parish website.

Review of applications will begin on **August 10** and will continue until the position is filled.

Please forward your application to: Rev. Ignacy Warias, OMI, at the above address.



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# Pope, Armenian leader highlight Christian unity

By Cindy Wooden

VAGHARSHAPAT, Armenia (CNS) — Recognizing that the church of Christ is one and that Christian divisions are a “scandal” to the world, Pope Francis and Armenian Apostolic Catholicos Karekin II offered their faithful

In his homily, Catholicos Karekin told his faithful and his guests, “During these days together with our spiritual brother, Pope Francis, with joint visits and prayers we reconfirmed that the holy church of Christ is one in the spreading of the Gospel of Christ in the world, in taking care of creation, standing against common problems, and in the vital mission of the salvation of man.”

All Christians, he said, share the mission of “the strengthening of solidarity among nations and peoples (and the) reinforcing of brotherhood and collaboration.”

The catholicos warned of modern attacks on the faith, including a selfish lack of concern for “those who long for daily bread and are in pain and suffering,” as well as other “economic, political, social, environmental” problems. Yet the Gospel and the churches that preach it, he said, know that God continues to promise his loving care and wants Christians to go out preaching salvation and helping the poor.

Invited to address the gathering — like Catholicos Karekin spoke at Pope Francis’ mass in Gyumri the day before — Pope Francis said, “We have met, we have embraced as brothers, we have prayed together and shared the gifts, hopes and concerns of the church of Christ.”

“We believe and experience that the church is one,” the pope said.

Using words from St. Gregory of Narek, a 10th-century Armenian monk declared a “doctor of the church” by Pope

Francis last year, he prayed that the Holy Spirit would dissolve the “scandal” of Christian division with the power of love.

Christian unity is not and cannot be about “the submission of one to the other or assimilation,” the pope said, but rather should be an acceptance of the different gifts God has given to different Christians at different times.

“Let us respond to the appeal of the saints, let us listen to the voices of the humble and poor, of the many victims of hatred who suffered and gave their lives for the faith,” said Pope Francis. “Let us pay heed to the younger generation, who seek a future free of past divisions.”

The Armenian Apostolic

Church is one of the six independent Oriental Orthodox churches that were divided from the rest of Christianity after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The six, which include the Syrian Orthodox Church, are in full communion with each other, but not with the Eastern Orthodox churches such as the Russian Orthodox.

For centuries the Oriental Orthodox were regarded by the rest of Christianity as adhering to a heretical teaching on the nature of

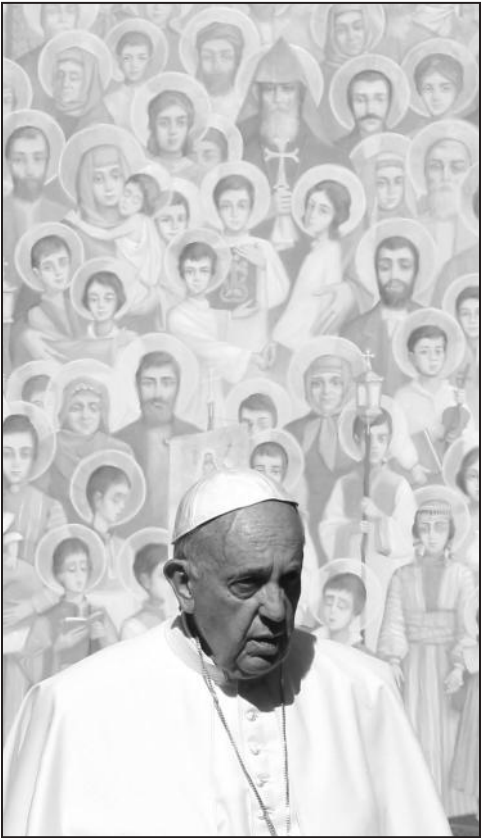
Christ, but recent scholarship has led theologians and church authorities on both sides to affirm that the Christological differences were not doctrinal; rather, both sides profess the same faith but use different formulas to express it.

Common declarations about Christ’s humanity and divinity were signed between 1971 and 1996 by the heads of each Oriental Orthodox Church and Pope Paul VI or Pope John Paul II.

Before vesting for the liturgy at

Etchmiadzin, Armenian Bishop Bagrat Galstanyan of Tavush, an Orthodox diocese that shares borders with Georgia and Azerbaijan, stood scanning the crowd. Every few seconds, someone would identify him as a bishop and approach for a blessing, which he gave with a broad smile.

The crowd at the liturgy was predominantly young. “We are an ancient people, an ancient church, with a young faith,” the 45-year-old bishop explained.



CNS/Paul Haring

**GENOCIDE VICTIMS — Pope Francis visits the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial in Yerevan, Armenia, June 25. The icon behind the pope represents the estimated 1.5 million Armenians killed by Ottoman Turks in 1915 - 18. The memorial pays tribute to those killed. A long, basalt memorial wall outside is engraved with the names of the cities of the victims. The opposite side of the wall is decorated with plaques honouring those who denounced the massacre and came to the rescue of the victims. The name of Pope Benedict XV is prominent. The pope welcomed an estimated 400 Armenian orphans, who fled to Italy and were given refuge in Castel Gandolfo, the papal summer residence. A dozen descents of those orphans were present at the memorial for Pope Francis’ visit.**

the example of praying and working together.

Approaching the end of his three-day trip to Armenia, Pope Francis attended the divine liturgy celebrated June 26 by the patriarch at Etchmiadzin, the seat of the Armenian Apostolic Church. To accommodate the crowd, the liturgy was held outdoors at a towering stone sanctuary used for major celebrations.

Under a gold-trimmed red canopy, the patriarch and pope processed to the sanctuary together before the pope bowed to the patriarch and moved to the side. He used a small booklet to follow the liturgy, which is celebrated in “grabar,” as ancient liturgical Armenian is called.

“Sadly, that tragedy — that genocide — was the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century, made possible by twisted racial, ideological or religious aims that darkened the minds of the tormentors even to the point of planning the annihilation of entire peoples.”

— Pope Francis in Yerevan, Armenia, speaking of the “Great Evil” of the First World War Armenian genocide, June 24, 2016

## Christians should apologize to gays: pope

By Cindy Wooden

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM ARMENIA (CNS) — Catholics and other Christians not only must apologize to the gay community, they must ask forgiveness of God for ways they have discriminated against homosexual persons or fostered hostility toward them, Pope Francis said.

“I think the church not only must say it is sorry to the gay person it has offended, but also to the poor, to exploited women” and anyone whom the church did not defend when it could, he told reporters June 26.

Spending close to an hour answering questions from reporters travelling with him, Pope Francis was asked to comment on remarks reportedly made a few days previously by Cardinal Reinhard Marx, president of the German bishops’ conference, that the Catholic Church must apologize to gay people for contributing to their marginalization.

At the mention of the massacre in early June at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, Pope Francis closed his eyes as if in pain and shook his head in dismay.

“The church must say it is sorry for not having behaved as it should many times, many times — when I say the ‘church,’ I mean we Christians because the church is holy; we are the sinners,” the pope said. “We Christians must say we are sorry.”

Changing what he had said in the past to the plural “we,” Pope Francis said that a gay person, “who has goodwill and is seeking God, who are we to judge him?”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is clear, he said. “They must not be discriminated against. They must be respected, pastorally accompanied.”

The pope said people have a right to complain about certain gay-pride demonstrations that purposefully offend the faith or sensitivities of others, but that is not what Cardinal Marx was talking about, he said.

Pope Francis said when he was growing up in Buenos Aires, Argentina, part of a “closed Catholic culture,” good Catholics would not even enter the house of a person who was divorced. “The culture has changed and thanks be to God!”

“We Christians have much to apologize for and not just in this area,” he said, referring again to its treatment of homosexual persons. “Ask forgiveness and not just say we’re sorry. Forgive us, Lord.”

Too often, he said, priests act as lords rather than fathers, “a priest who clubs people rather than embraces them and is good, consoles.”

Pope Francis insisted there are many good priests in the world and “many Mother Teresas,” but people often do not see them because “holiness is modest.”

Like any other community of human beings, the Catholic Church is made up of “good people and bad people,” he said. “The grain and the weeds — Jesus says the kingdom is that way. We should not be scandalized by that,” but pray that God makes the wheat grow more and the weeds less.

Pope Francis also was asked about his agreeing to a request by the women’s International Union of Superiors General to set up a commission to study the historic role of female deacons with a view toward considering the possibility of instituting such a ministry today.

Both Sister Carmen Sammut, president of the sisters’ group, and Cardinal Gerhard Müller, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, have sent him lists of names of people to serve on the commission, the pope said. But he has not yet chosen the members.

As he did at the meeting with the superiors, Pope Francis told the reporters that his understanding was that women deacons in the early church assisted bishops with the baptism and anointing of women, but did not have a role like Catholic deacons do today.

The pope also joked about a president who once said that the best way to bury someone’s request for action was to name a commission to study it.

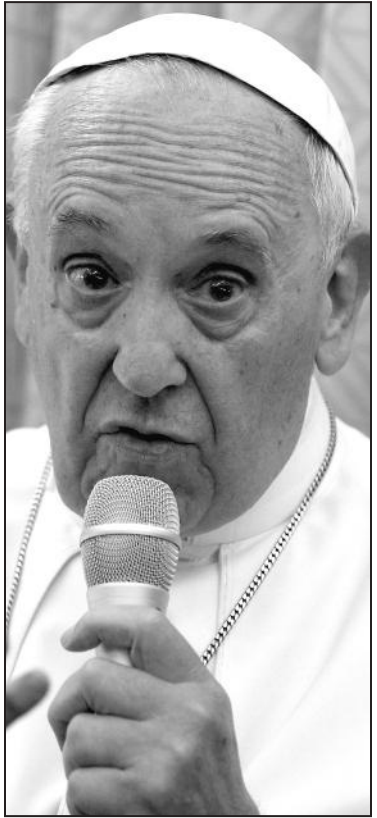
Turning serious, though, Pope Francis insisted the role of women in the Catholic Church goes well beyond any offices they hold and he said about 18 months ago he had named a commission of female theologians to discuss women’s contributions to the life of the church.

“Women think differently than we men do,” he said, “and we cannot make good, sound decisions without listening to the women.”

During the inflight news conference, Pope Francis also said:

— He believes “the intentions of Martin Luther” were not wrong in wanting to reform the church, but “maybe some of his methods were not right.” The church in the 1500s, he said, “was not exactly a model to imitate.”

— He used the word “genocide” to describe the massacre of



CNS/Paul Haring

**Pope Francis answers questions from journalists aboard his flight from Yerevan, Armenia, to Rome June 26.**

an estimated 1.5 million Armenians in 1915-18 because that was the word commonly used in his native Argentina and he had already used it publicly a year ago. Although he said he knew Turkey objects to use of the term, “it would have sounded strange” not to use it in Armenia.

— Retired Pope Benedict XVI is a “wise man,” a valued adviser and a person dedicated to praying for the entire church, but he can no longer be considered to be exercising papal ministry. “There is only one pope.”

— “Brexit,” the referendum in which the people of Great Britain voted to leave the European Union, shows just how much work remains to be done by the EU in promoting continental unity while respecting the differences of member countries.

— The Great and Holy Council of the world’s Orthodox churches was an important first step in Orthodoxy speaking with one voice, even though four of the 14 autocephalous Orthodox churches did not attend the meeting in Crete.

— When he travels to Azerbaijan in September, he will tell the nation’s leaders and people that the Armenian leaders and people want peace. The two countries have been in a situation of tension since 1988 over control of Nagorno-Karabakh, a predominantly Armenian enclave in Azerbaijan.