



Pastoral letter

The five bishops of Saskatchewan have issued a pastoral letter about the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.
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Beyond the horror

Speaking of religious violence, Dr. Volker Greifenhagen says that if you don't try to listen beyond the horror then the terrorists have won.
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NAIN

The North American Interfaith Network represents most of the world's major faiths, and they were in Regina for the first time this summer.
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Fall synod

Pope Francis is asking for prayers and hoping for miracles ahead of this October's synod on the family, writes Michael Swan. It will be the second of two synods dedicated to how the church preaches, teaches and cares for families.
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Books and baseball

Brent Loehr's new book reveals a zeal for life which overflows into his love for, among other things, people, baseball, education and writing.
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Holy grail

The archaeological exhibit Indiana Jones and the Adventure of Archaeology, at the National Geographic Museum in Washington, features film props and real archeological finds. "What is it about Indiana Jones and, more broadly, the quest for religious relics that captures people's imaginations?"
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Physician of integrity invaluable to patients

By Mary Deutscher

SASKATOON — A public consultation regarding the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS)'s draft policy on conscientious objection has received feedback from both local and national groups. The consultation closed Aug. 7 and will likely be addressed at the CPSS's upcoming Sept. 18 council meeting.

Concerns regarding the policy have centred on two main areas. First, the requirement that physicians "make arrangements" for their patients to access treatments that the physician finds morally objectionable. Second, the requirement that physicians provide treatment when it "must be provided within a limited time to be effective." This could potentially include, for example, the chemical

abortion pill RU-486, which was approved for use by Health Canada earlier this summer.

Suggested revisions to overcome these concerns were jointly presented by the Christian Medical and Dental Society (CMDs) Canada, the Canadian Federation of Catholic Physicians' Societies (CFCPS) and Canadian Physicians for Life (CPL).

Regarding the requirement that

physicians "make arrangements," the physicians' groups suggested that the language should be clarified to state that doctors are to provide patients "with information to allow the patient to arrange timely access" to full and balanced health information and/or to medical services. "This rephrasing clarifies the obligations of both physician and patient," wrote the physicians' groups, and "ensures the patient has access to the required information, and allows the physician the freedom to find creative solutions in the exercise of her conscience."

The CMDs, CFCPS and CPL also proposed the removal of the requirement that physicians provide treatment that must be provided within a limited time. The physicians groups asserted that a "physician's obligation to provide care to prevent imminent harm is indisputable," and stated that this obligation, which is already present in the policy, should guide physicians through emergency situations.

In their submissions to the CPSS, both the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS) and Bishop Donald Bolen of Saskatoon encouraged the CPSS to adopt the language proposed by the CMDs, CFCPS and CPL. Bolen also stressed the value of conscientious physicians.

"A physician of integrity is invaluable to his or her patients," wrote Bolen. "Such physicians are able to bring all of their faculties to the care they provide, including their technical skills, knowledge, compassion, and sound judgment. It is impossible to ask physicians to leave their conscience behind when engaging patients because it is precisely this faculty that enables physicians to respectfully make decisions concerning appropriate care in their exercise of the art of medicine."

In their submission, the Catholic Civil Rights League (CCRL) stressed that "the suggestion that one's conscientious beliefs can be compartmentalized from good health care is a distinction that the [CPSS] cannot reasonably main-



Photo courtesy Brother Jaazeal Jakosalem

SPREADING THE WORD — Brother Jaazeal Jakosalem works in youth ministry in Cebu City and Negros Island in the Philippines, educating Filipino youth about church teaching on the environment. Youth in Jakosalem's program paint murals to spread the word about climate change and environmental degradation.

Fight is on for environmental justice

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Whether motivated by Canadian garbage, Canadian mines or devastating typhoons linked to global warming, Pope Francis' environmental encyclical has emboldened the fight in the Philippines for environmental justice, said an adviser to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

Climate Reality Corps leader Brother Jaazeal Jakosalem, a member of the Augustinian Recollects who counsels the bishops on climate and environmental issues, said the effects of climate change on the Philippines is undeniable.

"In our conversations here, for us the message of the pope is very affirmative on our side," said Jakosalem. "For us here, people are the victims."

"We have seen it very powerfully in our experiences of typhoons. Our livelihood is affected. Our communities are affected, I mean really affected, by changes

in the climate. We cannot deny it."

The Filipino bishops met July 6 - 13, less than a month after Pope Francis released *Laudato Si'*, and vowed to present a position paper in Paris at this December's United Nations negotiations on climate change.

Manila's Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle led his fellow bishops in being the first to sign the Global Catholic Climate Movement petition addressed to world leaders

gathering in Paris.

For Jakosalem the case for environmental protection is bigger than just the climate change issue. Trained by the Al Gore-founded Climate Reality Corps in Beijing in 2012, the religious brother has been involved in campaigns against Canadian-operated mines in the Philippines and the ongoing saga of 50 containers of Canadian

— CAUSE, page 3

Sept. 1 is Day of Prayer for Creation

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Like their Orthodox brothers and sisters, Catholics formally will mark Sept. 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Francis has decided.

The day of prayer, the pope said, will give individuals and communities an opportunity to implore God's help in protecting creation and an opportunity to ask

God's forgiveness "for sins committed against the world in which we live."

Pope Francis announced his decision to add the annual prayer day to the Catholic calendar in a letter to Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and to Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The text of the letter, dated Aug.

6, was released by the Vatican Aug. 10.

Pope Francis said he was instituting the prayer day for Catholics because he shares the concern of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, who initiated a similar prayer day for the Orthodox Church in 1989.

Metropolitan John of Pergamon, who represented the patri-

— ECOLOGICAL, page 19

Knights pledge aid to Christians in Middle East

By Lou Baldwin

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) — Christianity may be thriving around the world, but it is under severe attack and threatened with extinction in the Middle East, the region of its birth.

This was a major theme at the 133rd Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus in Philadelphia Aug. 4 - 6.

It was stressed at an Aug. 4 news conference with Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson and two Catholic archbishops of Eastern Catholic Churches with direct experience of the situation. They were Melkite Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, Syria, and Chaldean Archbishop Bashir Matti Warda of Erbil, Iraq. The two archbishops also spoke at a general meeting of the convention.

Anderson quoted figures that said 80 per cent of the religious persecution in the world is directed at Christians and a terrible microcosm of this is the persecutions in Syria and Iraq.

“In Iraq, an estimated 125,000 Christians have been driven from Mosul and its surrounding area,” he said. “In Syria, an estimated 700,000 Christians have been displaced.”

Because in many cases it is internal displacement within the country the people have not been designated as refugees and little has been done to help them.

Anderson called to mind another Knights of Columbus convention in 1926, also in Philadelphia, when then-Supreme Knight James Flaherty announced that the Knights would take up the cause of Catholics in Mexico who were being persecuted during the presidency of Plutarco Calles.

Of the 25 Mexican martyrs of that era who have since been officially canonized saints for their defence of the faith, six were members of the Knights of Columbus.

“Today we are compelled to speak up for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East,” Anderson said. “Pope Francis has called the conditions under which Christian refugees live there intolerable. He has said the situation calls for our prayers and concrete actions to help.”

The Middle East situation also was on the mind of Pope Francis as was evident in a message of good wishes and prayer sent to Anderson as the convention opened. It was written on behalf of the pope by the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

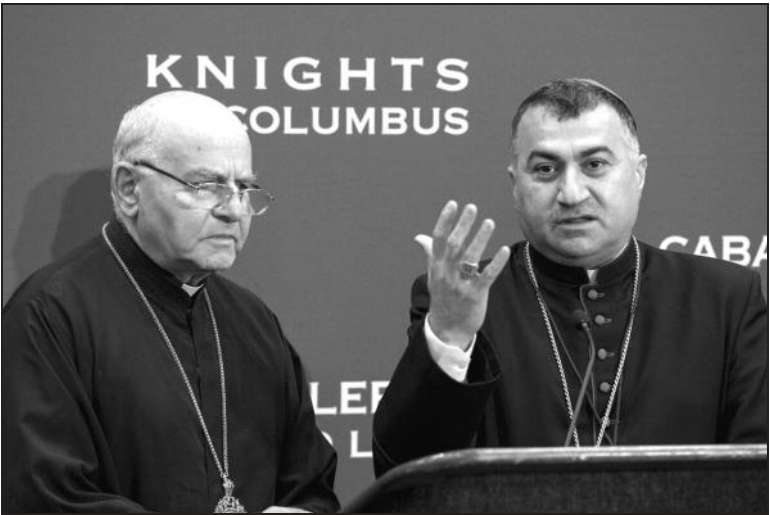
“His Holiness is profoundly grateful for the efforts of the Knights to raise public attention to this grave humanitarian tragedy,” the message said. “He is likewise grateful for the practical solidarity shown to suffering individuals and families through the Christian Refugee Relief Fund.

“He appeals once more to your order for constant prayer, in families, parishes and local Councils for these, our beleaguered brothers and sisters, who strive only to be faithful to Christ.”

To date, Anderson said, the Knights have given \$3 million toward humanitarian assistance for Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East and invites individual Knights and others to support the relief fund the pope cited.

The fraternal organization pledged an initial \$1 million to the fund. All costs for its operation will be covered by the Knights of Columbus with 100 per cent of donations applied to relief. To assist those who wish to donate, the website www.christiansatrisk.com has been developed.

In his remarks, Jeanbart placed the blame for the current persecution squarely on the wars in the region.



CNS/Matthew Barrick

MIDDLE EAST PRELATES VISIT KCS — Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, Iraq, gestures alongside Melkite Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, Syria, during an Aug. 4 news conference at the Knights of Columbus 133rd Supreme Convention in Philadelphia.

“There was no persecution before the war,” he said. He suggested the backing of revolutionary regimes “is giving money and weapons to the people who are slaughtering us and raping our women.”

For the Knights, he said, “Your concern has made a big difference for me,” and urged them to “do

what you can to help us communicate the reality.”

Warda, speaking of the situation in Iraq, where many Christians have fled, said, “You have given us help to stay there, to help the people living in tents, in schools and hospitals and churches. Today, thank God we are able to help these families.”

Divorced, remarried not excommunicated policies will close schools

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholics who have divorced and are civilly remarried “are not, in fact, excommunicated — they are not excommunicated — and they absolutely must not be treated as if they were,” Pope Francis said.



CNS/Giampiero Sposito, Reuters

POPE GREET'S COUPLE — Pope Francis greets newly married couples during his weekly audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Aug. 5.

Resuming his Wednesday general audiences Aug. 5 after a month’s break, Pope Francis returned to the series of talks he has been giving on the family. It was the 100th general audience

of his papacy.

At his last audience, June 24, he talked about the damage caused especially to children when couples fight and hurt each other. “Today,” he said, “I want to draw our attention to another reality: how to care for those who, after the irreversible failure of the matrimonial bond, have undertaken a new union.”

Without an annulment of the sacramental marriage, “such a situation contradicts the Christian sacrament,” which is meant to be an indissoluble bond, the pope said.

According to church teaching, in most cases such couples are not permitted to receive communion. But bishops at the extraordinary synod of bishops on the family last October and preparing for the general synod Oct. 4 - 25 have been studying and debating possibilities for allowing some couples in some situations to return to the sacraments.

The church, Pope Francis said at the audience, must have “the heart of a mother, a heart that, animated by the Holy Spirit, always seeks the good and the salvation of persons.”

The children of such couples suffer most and deserve particular care, the pope said.

“How can we tell these parents

to do everything possible to raise their children in the Christian life, giving them the example of a convinced and lived faith, if we keep them at a distance from the life of the community as if they were excommunicated?” the pope asked.

Particularly over the past few decades, he said, “the church has not been insensitive or lazy” when it comes to providing pastoral care to the divorced and civilly remarried.

In his apostolic exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, St. John Paul II saw an “obligation, ‘for love of the truth,’ to exercise a ‘careful discernment of situations,’ ” noting for example “the difference between one who has endured a separation and one who provoked it,” Pope Francis said.

Retired Pope Benedict XVI also studied the question, he said, “calling for an attentive discernment and wise pastoral accompaniment, knowing that no ‘simple recipes’ exist.”

As the studies and discernment continue, Pope Francis said, it is essential that Catholic pastors “openly and coherently demonstrate the willingness of the community to welcome and encourage” divorced and remarried couples and their families to participate in church life.

Prayer, listening to the Word of God, attending mass, educating their children in the faith, serving the poor and working for justice and peace should be part of their lives, he said.

Quoting his apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis told those gathered for the audience, “The church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. . . . Everyone can share in some way in the life of the church; everyone can be part of the community.”

By Dale Gavlak

AMMAN, Jordan (CNS) — Dozens of Christian schools in Israel could be shutting their doors this school year, but a Catholic priest is hoping a meeting with government officials can avoid that.

Christian educators warn that funding discrimination by the Israel’s Ministry of Education may force the closure of about 48 Christian schools, affecting some 33,000 pupils — roughly half Christian, half Muslim — who attend the institutions.

Many of the educational institutions existed before Israel’s founding in 1948 and have excellent academic records countrywide.

Educators on the Christian schools committee said they have withstood prodding by the Education Ministry for the schools to become part of Israel’s officially recognized school system. Such a move would mean losing the schools’ Christian identity, ethos and the ability to teach Christian values.

“The Education Ministry is financially strangling the Christian schools that have existed for hundreds of years,” said Franciscan Father Abdel Masih Fahim, president of the committee of Catholic schools.

But Fahim told Catholic News Service he is expecting something positive to result from a meeting with Israeli Education Ministry officials Aug. 23.

“We are waiting for a solution. All children in Israel should have their rights from the government,” he said via telephone from Ramla, Israel.

While Christian schools and those of the Jewish ultra-Orthodox are recognized by the state, they are not part of Israel’s official educational system. This allows them

to create their own curriculum according to their religious beliefs and values, appoint their own principals and teachers and have authority over their own buildings.

But that’s where the similarities end. Israel’s Education Ministry provides 100 per cent funding for 200,000 ultra-Orthodox students in religious, non-public schools, but has whittled its finance of Christian schools over the past decade down to about 34 per cent, Fahim said, quoting a study by Israel’s parliament.

“We want 100 per cent funding for all children,” the priest said. He said that Christian schools also do not receive the new technology available elsewhere.

Israeli Christians believe this is unfair treatment because Israeli national law prohibits discrimination in education.

Despite the challenges, Christians have reportedly earned the highest rate of success in Israel’s matriculation exams, known as Bagrut, which largely determines who is admitted to a state university.

“The Christians schools are following the curriculum of the Ministry of Education, but that is not the case with some of the other schools,” Fahim added.

Meanwhile, a 1993 agreement between Israel and the Vatican also sets down a promise by Israel not to change the status quo of the church’s institutions in the Jewish state.

Another member on the committee of Christian schools, the Director General of the Nazareth Baptist School, Boutros Mansour, said that as the Education Ministry has been cutting back year by year on funds that should be allotted to Christian schools, the schools have been forced to raise tuition by some \$6,350 per student per year. However, many families find it difficult to afford the price hike.

Pastoral letter on assisted suicide circulated

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — A pastoral letter about the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia was released this summer by the five Catholic bishops serving in Saskatchewan.

The Supreme Court of Canada overturned existing laws against assisted suicide in a Feb. 6, 2015, ruling, giving Parliament one year to write a new law.

“At this critical moment in our nation’s history, our faith in Jesus Christ impels us — as the Catholic bishops exercising ministry in Saskatchewan — to reach out to Catholics and invite all to focus attention on the vital issue of legalizing assisted suicide and euthanasia,” begins the letter signed by Archbishop Daniel Bohan of Regina, Bishop Albert Thévenot of Prince Albert, Bishop Donald Bolen of Saskatoon, Archbishop Murray Chatlain of Keewatin-Le Pas, and Bishop Bryan Bayda, Eparch of Saskatchewan.

“This is of grave concern to all of us. In particular, we must consider how this decision will impact the most vulnerable among us — including our elderly, those who are dying, and our sisters and brothers who live with disabilities or mental illness,” wrote the bishops in the July 13 letter circulated to parishes across the province.

“We also face threats to freedom of conscience and religion, particularly for medical professionals who may be pressured to act against their calling as healers,” continued the pastoral letter, which urges individual Catholics to take action on the issue.

“We encourage the Catholic faithful and all Canadians to respond courageously to the challenges posed by the Supreme Court’s ruling, by raising their voices in defence of the life and the human dignity of all persons, especially the most vulnerable. As

St. John Paul II exhorted us, ‘Be not afraid!’”

The bishops’ suggestions included: urging the federal government to carry out a thorough consultation to ensure that new legislation on assisted suicide is as restrictive as possible; asking governments and professional associations to ensure that freedom of conscience will be respected for all health care professionals who do not accept killing as a solution to pain and suffering; supporting Catholic physicians, nurses, health professionals and administrators as they stand up for their faith in the face of changing circumstances and new demands; and pressing for improved access to palliative care, including proper pain and symptom management.

“Instead of hastening death for Canadians who are ill or dying, we must support them with high quality palliative care, which offers a holistic healing experience for them and for their families,” wrote the bishops.

The pastoral letter also encouraged Catholics to participate in the second round of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS) consultation on their revised conscientious objection policy before an Aug. 7 deadline (see related article, page 1).

That deadline — and the strong need to keep the issue of assisted suicide in the forefront at this moment in history — prompted the bishops to circulate the letter in summertime, explained Bolen. He said that after consultation with groups and individuals working on addressing the issue, the bishops decided to release the pastoral letter sooner rather than later, even though many parishioners might have been away when it was circulated in mid-July.

“We felt that it was vital to keep up the momentum on this important issue,” he said. “Hopefully in the weeks ahead, parish

leaders will continue to draw attention to the pastoral letter and to the implications of legalizing assisted suicide and euthanasia, encouraging ongoing awareness and advocacy.”

On July 17, Canada’s Minister of Justice Peter MacKay and Minister of Health Rona Ambrose announced the establishment of a panel of experts who will conduct a national consultation on options for dealing with the Supreme

Court of Canada ruling, which lifts the prohibition against physician-assisted suicide.

Followers of Christ are called to serve the vulnerable and the voiceless, affirmed the Saskatchewan bishops. “Exercising our responsibility as Christians to act on our concerns about these vitally important matters will encourage the development of health and social policies that are consistent with social justice teachings,” states their letter.

“We affirm with deep gratitude and encourage with genuine care all who work to uphold the value of human life and dignity from conception to natural death,” write the bishops. “All human life deserves respect and protection. We share a common responsibility to serve the sick and the aged, not only by attending to physical illnesses, but also by caring for the well-being of the whole person, in imitation of Christ the Healer.”



Art Babyeh

CATHOLIC PARISH PARADE PARTICIPANTS — Members of the LGBT and Straight Alliance of St. Joseph’s Catholic Parish walk past St. Patrick’s Basilica in Ottawa as participants in the 30th annual Capital Pride parade in Ottawa Aug. 23. “By marching, we show that LGBT people have the right to spirituality and spiritual communities that accept them as they are,” the group wrote in an invitation in the parish’s weekend bulletin Aug. 16 for others to take part in the march. “Both spirituality and sexuality are wonderful gifts from God.”

Iraqi Christians still need massive help

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Aug. 6 marked the first anniversary of the Islamic State’s (IS or ISIS) invasion of Iraq that forced more than 120,000 Iraqi Christians to flee ancient homelands with little except their clothes.

Some left traditional Christian towns in the Nineveh Plain for the Kurdish region of Iraq; others fled to refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Despite the efforts an international coalition has made to force IS back, there is no sign the fighting will end soon.

“We need national, regional and international solidarity to put an end to this illogical conflict, to these killings and to this exodus and to put everything in order within the context of a peaceful dialogue,” said the patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church Louis Raphael Sako, in a news release from Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). “We need action, and the taking of a clear and firm position in order to condemn what is happening.”

ACN reports 8.2 million Iraqis are in need of assistance and 3.2 million are internally displaced.

People have moved from a “chaotic emergency a year ago to an ongoing level of poverty, despair and need for commodities on a daily basis,” said Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) Canada national director Carl Héту in an interview.

People have little privacy, no

running water or individual bathrooms, he said. Some live in containers like portable school classrooms that may have one window, and are extremely hot in summer heat that can reach 50 C or cold in winter, he said.

ACN marked the anniversary with a renewed fundraising campaign. ACN through its donors has contributed 58 per cent of the \$12,106,205 directed to the Iraqi Christian Aid Committee. CNEWA has contributed \$7 million to aid Christians in the Middle East, including those from Iraq and Syria. Héту said about one million comes from Canadian donors.

On Aug. 4, the Knights of Columbus announced a major fundraising and awareness campaign at its 133rd international convention in Philadelphia. Knights CEO Carl Anderson said the new campaign aimed to “expose the crimes against humanity that are being committed.”

“It is time for a season of truth about what is happening to Christians and other minorities,” Anderson said, joined by Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, Syria, and Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda, CSsR, of Erbil, Iraq.

In an interview from Philadelphia Aug. 6, Warda said that in his diocese alone there are “12,700 families who were forcibly displaced from their homes and towns last year.” Erbil is in

the Kurdish region of Iraq.

Among them are Chaldeans, Catholics, Syrian Catholics and Orthodox, who have arrived with their bishops, said Warda, adding they all await news of liberation concerning their towns and villages. “They are not being shown any sign,” he said. “This is a big worry.”

Héту said those who have been able to return to liberated areas have found their homes, churches and businesses demolished. Some returned to find their home booby-trapped and got killed, he said. “ISIS has basically destroyed all traces of Christianity in those villages.”

“People still live in fear, live with the unknown, and that creates a sense of despair,” Héту said.

Warda said priorities are shelter, education and health care.

If families have a decent place to live it increases the likelihood they will remain in the area and not seek to leave, he said. “We should be able to do something to preserve the presence of the Christians.”

But the hosting bishops are very concerned about the peoples’ spiritual needs, he said. Each refugee community has priests and religious sisters “to accompany them.”

“We started reflecting about the providence of God in this crisis,” Warda said. “It’s immense. The help and the love we have seen and experienced have

— FUNDS, page 4

Cause is always people over profits

Continued from page 1

household trash sitting in the docks in Manila since 2013.

Twenty-nine of the 50 containers of Canadian garbage have been dumped at a landfill near Manila, but Jakosalem and the network of church and non-governmental organizations he works with are still pressing for Canada to reclaim the garbage.

Whitby-based recycling company Chronic Inc., claims the shipment was supposed to be mixed plastics from recycling bins in Vancouver. Philippine authorities claim they found a range of household waste in the containers from food scraps to adult diapers.

Filipino campaigners claim Canada has broken the Basel Convention which prohibits shipping hazardous waste internationally.

Canadian mining ventures in the Philippines have run into trouble with Filipino resistance on the grounds that local communities were never adequately consulted before deals were signed between companies and

Filipino provincial governments. The Sagitarium Mines Inc. project at the southern tip of Mindanao Island, controlled by Canadian miner Glencore Inc., has drawn the attention of Filipino NGOs and the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace.

Goldcore’s proposed open pit mine on a site covering approximately 10,000 hectares would be one of the largest copper mines in the world.

“Our cause is always people over profits, communities over profits, not money over people. The paradigm of the encyclical is always people over profits,” Jakosalem said.

Filipino Catholic bishops’ conference president Archbishop Socrates Villegas told Catholic News Service the pope’s message on caring for the environment is “nothing new” to Filipino Catholics. But the encyclical brings the issues into the foreground because he “opens very interesting perspectives in the care for creation . . . for example, linking the cry of the Earth with the cry of the poor.”

Advocacy groups publish federal election guides

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — With the federal election underway, advocacy groups have published election guides to help voters decide who should get their vote on Oct. 19.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) issued a guide urging members to consider international development, the impact of Canadian policies on the Global South, and climate change when they assess candidates. The document places an emphasis on international Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and on the growing worldwide push — aided by Pope Francis' environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'* — to address "the climate change crisis."

"Working simultaneously on objectives related to poverty and the environment from a universal

perspective is necessary in our current context, where issues of poverty, pandemics and climate change transcend borders," the documents says, urging members to let political leaders know these issues matter. CCODP says it places a priority on two issues in the upcoming campaign: "ecological justice and international aid."

The Canadian bishops' overseas development agency urges Canada to act on greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs); to support an international agreement on curbing GHGs; and to address the international consequences of climate change. CCODP advocates a move away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy. "Such a retreat from the use of fossil fuels requires a profound review of how we produce and consume energy, as well as a shift from our current economic model which is focused

solely on growth," it says.

CCODP also includes a section on "agriculture and food security," noting "small farmers feed 70 per cent of the world's population."

"We must focus on the nurturing and environmental dimensions of agriculture and not only on its commercial aspects if we want to mitigate climate change." The guide can be downloaded at devp.org.

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) has issued a 12-page booklet that examines a range of issues from improving democracy, a national anti-poverty program, and "climate justice." It suggests a series of questions voters can ask candidates on these issues and others such as a national housing program or affordable child care.

"Poverty impacts every part of a person's life," CPJ's guide says.

"It makes it difficult for people to live in dignity and to respond to God's calling in their lives."

"Today roughly 4.78 million Canadians struggle with poverty," the CPJ says. "This takes a heavy toll on society through negative health impacts and high economic costs."

The CPJ document places a major stress on the need for federal action in the area of climate change, describing "creation" as "under threat."

CPJ warns of species extinction, the disproportionate impact on Canada's Aboriginal peoples, and "more frequent natural disasters," as a consequence.

The guide can be ordered or downloaded at cpj.ca.

While CCODP's and CPJ's election guides may veer more closely toward elements found in the New Democratic Party or Liberal party platforms, guides

from two pro-life groups point more toward the Conservative party.

REAL Women of Canada's 2015 Federal Election pamphlet provides a nutshell comparison of the three major political parties' positions on abortion, physician-assisted suicide, child care, family taxation, marijuana, safety — law and order, and unions.

"These issues can either assist or destroy our family life because they deeply affect us on a daily basis, and especially affect the security of our families and the destiny of a nation," REAL Women says.

"The most basic of our rights is the right to life, the right from which all other rights flow," REAL Women says, urging voters to choose a pro-life candidate or to use the chart analyzing party policies to pick the candidate or party which is "least hostile to the right to life and to the family and to the common good of society."

The pamphlet can be accessed at realwomenofcanada.ca

For those interested in identifying specific pro-life candidates, Campaign Life Coalition (CLC) has published a list of more than 100 candidates CLC considers electable on its website campaignlifecoalition.com.

"Supportability is based on voting records and information gathered from CLC candidate questionnaires and CLC riding contacts," says the guide published on the website.

Funds go to the people

Continued from page 3

strengthened the faith of the victims." He pointed out the generous communities that have visited have also been transformed, contributing to love, faith and hope. "We are in the long Good Friday, but we are heading toward Easter," he said.

"We have opened a trauma centre to help those in need, hope we also will get some experienced people to work and to help us in this service," he said.

All the funds raised by the churches or agencies like the Knights, CNEWA and ACN go directly to the people in need, he said. The groups generally work through the bishops.

"We do not centralize the aid that comes, but we ask always to be informed so as not to duplicate funds to one community or camp or group of refugees and neglect the others," he said. "We have teams of people who have been trained to give aid directly to the concerned people."

ACN Canada head of information Robert Lalonde said three new projects have been approved. One is to support priests of the Syria Catholic Archdiocese of Mosul who fled to Erbil after IS occupied Mosul and Nineveh. They lost their churches, homes and personal belongings. Another project is earmarked for Syria where the civil war continues and a third for Iraqi refugees in Lebanon.

Program helps train Aboriginal pastoral leaders

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Indigenous Pastoral Ministry Leadership Program offered certificates to 24 graduates Aug. 20, after preparing them for Catholic pastoral ministry among Aboriginal peoples.

The program, in its fourth year, is a collaboration between Kateri Native Ministries, an Ottawa-based outreach to Aboriginal people, and Saint Paul University (SPU).

Most of the graduates were Aboriginal people desiring to learn how the Catholic faith and Native traditional ceremonies can be integrated as well as how to properly celebrate a liturgy of the Word when a priest or deacon is not present. Several graduates were priests or sisters who minister among First Nations peoples.

Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) Lacombe Province provincial Rev. Ken Forester congratulated those who completed the Aug. 17 - 21 program, which was designed to answer the question: "How can we celebrate our culture and our customs in the context of the Catholic faith?" He said faith whether from First Nations or from the Christian tradition leads to "an understanding of the Creator who gives us life and calls us into oneness."

Rev. Daryold Winkler, pastor of St. Elizabeth Parish in Ottawa, spoke on behalf of John Corston, who with his wife, Virginia, founded Kateri Native Ministries 30 years ago. Corston has been seriously ill.

Winkler had been approached by Corston to do pastoral work with Kateri Ministries because of his Aboriginal background. He said working with Corston made clear the "need for some kind of program helpful to Native communities" for sharing the Gospel and "helping people heal."

"The purpose of Kateri Native Ministries has been healing and reconciliation," Winkler said. It has also been concerned with forming Native people to help them "continue to spread the



CCN/Gyapong

CEREMONY FOR GRADUATES — A ceremony for the graduates of the Indigenous Pastoral Ministry Leadership Program included a circle dance at Holy Canadian Martyrs Parish, an Oblate parish near Saint Paul University in Ottawa.

Gospel," and "the living of the Gospel in their lives."

Representing SPU, associate professor Lorraine Ste-Marie of the School of Transformational Leadership and Spirituality, said transformational leadership is not only about change in one's communities. "First it has to happen in us," she said. "The more we know about ourselves and our communities, traditions, culture and faith, the more whole we are going to feel. That is the real priority for Saint Paul University and for me to be part of this program."

SPU Dean of Human Sciences Manal Guirguis-Younger described the University's alliance with Kateri Ministries "to create leaders, transformational leaders" as "one of our most important ministries." Because it creates leaders who will "bring the gospel to a world that really needs it."

Tom Dearhouse, one of the graduates, said in an interview he took the program because St. Kateri's Shrine is located at the Kahnawake Mohawk Reserve where he lives. Since St. Kateri

was canonized, the shrine has been getting increased visitors, he said. A lifelong Catholic, Dearhouse said he has been helping out in pastoral ministry at St. Francis Xavier Mission. His priest suggested he take the program. He said he hopes to contribute to the program in future years on "cultural training" and the integration of Catholic and Mohawk and Ojibwa traditions, to "help bring people together."

Jesuit scholastic Paul Robson, originally from Winnipeg, said he enrolled because he is interested in serving First Nations' communities when he becomes a priest. He also said there is a "Jesuit connection" because Jesuits have been working with Aboriginal communities "for centuries."

Robson said his interest was kindled by his experience as a novice at the Wikwemikong First Nation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. "The Jesuits as a whole are interested in continuing that kind of ministry," he said.

Rosella Kinoshameg, a lifelong Catholic from the Wikwemikong

First Nation, said she had first heard about the course more than four years ago, and every time she saw a notice about it in her missalette, she wished she could go.

A residential school survivor, Kinoshameg had educational credits she could apply, so she decided to use them. Soon to retire from 47 years of nursing in the area of maternal and child health, she thought, "At my age, what else is there for me to take? I have everything that I always wanted."

Already a member of the Diocese of Sault-Ste-Marie's Diocesan Order of Service (DOS), Kinoshameg said she is grateful for the training she received in how to celebrate a liturgy of the Word, with or without the distribution of holy communion.

"It was good to connect with people and hear the different things they shared and find some tips," she said. She was also able to share the many good things that are happening in her community.

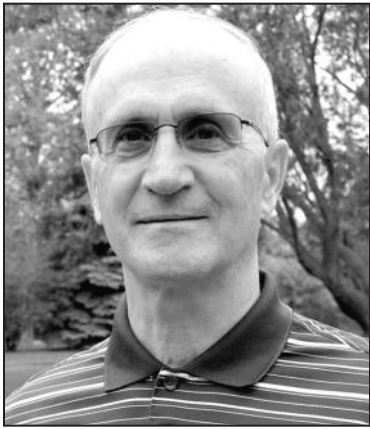
"I'm glad I came, it really strengthened my spirituality," she said.

Healthy aging means living life as a celebration

By **Thandiwe Konguavi**
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — Paulist Father Thomas Ryan was turning 50, when he decided he didn't want just another birthday cake, scoop of ice cream and happy birthday song.

Directing an ecumenical centre for spirituality in Montreal at the time, Ryan wanted something more out of this birthday.



WCR/Konguavi

Rev. Tom Ryan, CSP

He wanted to look seriously at the second half of his life and its potential.

Instead of a birthday party he called for a 50th birthday weekend retreat, inviting family and friends, and named it something like "Savouring life, by facing our mortality," he recalls.

In this age of obsession with youth, advertisements and nightly news programs often convey a sense that if you eat right, exercise regularly and take the right vitamins and medicines, you'll live indefinitely, notes Ryan.

His birthday retreat program, he said, was refreshingly countercultural, engaging in topics such as retirement, health limitations and even some "wonderful sharings" about the kind of funeral you would like.

It was a hit.

Ryan hadn't found the proverbial fountain of youth, but there was no need of it. Participants opened their eyes to a world of creative aging, ongoing growth, embracing the second half of life and beginning to live with a focus on the present.

Nearly 20 years later, Ryan, now 69, continues to lead the retreats all over North America.

The Washington-based author and director of the Paulist Centre for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations led the weeklong Remember to Live! retreat at Providence Renewal Centre in Edmonton July 31 to Aug. 7.

Thirty-three participants, including both lay and religious from across Western Canada, took part in the week of presentations, reflection, discussion, journalling and guided meditations.

Ryan said never before have so many North Americans reached retirement age with such advanced education, social consciousness and good health.

"So what will we do with it?" he asks. "We have an unprecedented opportunity to keep growing, to learn and to offer our many gifts to our neighbourhood, our city or school."

Passive aging sees the last season of life as "a slow slide toward death and the natural changes of the body are accompanied by a creeping paralysis of the soul," Ryan says.

"But I'm talking about active aging, and active aging works with the effects of aging by adjusting the rhythm and the pace."

For Ryan, healthy aging means living life as a celebration. The person who ages actively "moves to simply a gentler form of exercise but stays active." Or, perhaps they compensate for their hearing loss by getting a good pair of headphones to listen to programs or CDs.

Aging is not a burden or problem to be solved, he says.

Today, the aging process can extend for 30 or more years and several delicate passages need to be negotiated, he says. For example, it can mean the loss of one's professional identity. When you are no longer head of your corporation or your office, or principal of the school, who are you?

Other delicate passages might include the departure of your children; the new rhythm of life when all of a sudden your spouse is with you at home or the confrontation of solitude for those who have already

lost a spouse; the arrival of grandchildren; or the decline of strength and energy.

"Those are difficult issues for us to face squarely," said Ryan. He pointed to a study which found that nearly 70 per cent of adult children haven't even talked to their parents about issues related to aging.

Facing these realities squarely and accepting their inevitability has a big reward, he said.

"When we truly accept that life as we know it on this lovely blue and green planet is not given in limitless supply, we begin to think more clearly about what is

important to us.

"What do I want to do with the time I have, how do I want to use my available resources? We employ the talents which God has gifted us to leave our world better than we found it."

In 2012, Ryan published his book *Remember to Live! Embracing the Second Half of Life*. The book is a compilation of 15 years of collecting people's experiences, listening to reflections and his own experience with aging.

The book includes exercises which, if entered into, can transform the way you see the potential

of the later years of life, he said. Participating in a retreat on aging can have the same effect.

When you open your eyes to life and to its richness in each day's living, you realize that every day, every minute, every breath, truly is a gift from God, Ryan said.

"In short, you remember to live. Each day's living just becomes so much richer — cultivating gratitude in your heart for the sweetness of life, for the glories of creation, for the gift of the love received from family and friends.

"And when we live out of that gratitude, life becomes very sweet."

D&P developing statement of principles

By **Michael Swan**
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — The Canadian bishops and their development agency are developing a statement of principles in the hope of heading off future social media attacks.

The Canadian Catholic Organizations for Development and Peace will model its statement of principles on the CRS Guiding Principles developed by the American Catholic aid agency Catholic Relief Services.

The idea for a Canadian version of the statement of principles came up at a joint meeting of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops standing committee on Development and Peace and Development and Peace's own standing liaison committee for relations with the bishops.

Like Development and Peace, the CRS has been criticized by online journalists and bloggers accusing it of working with organizations that support abortion and contraception. In 2010 LifeSite News questioned Development and Peace's funding of a Jesuit-founded human rights organization because the Mexican organization had been cited along with organizations that advocated for legal access to abortion in a joint NGO report to the United Nations. Despite denials of any involvement

in pro-abortion activities or any formal relationship with pro-abortion organizations, the accusations spurred a formal investigation by the CCCB and caused a crisis for Development and Peace's public image and its fundraising efforts.

A clear statement of Development and Peace's grounding in Catholic social teaching should help protect the organization from future confusion, said national council president Ray Temmerman.

"Our work is not to respond to those attacks. Our work is to do our work with the poor and to educate in Canada. That's what we're about," Temmerman said.

Trying to answer to information that is repeated over and over on the Internet can distract the organization from its core work, Temmerman said.

"It's kind of this amorphous thing that has a capacity to get its members waving the flag and contacting bishops," he said.

The 450-word American statement of principles is a good summary of the purpose of Catholic international aid, but Development and Peace wants to put its own Canadian spin on it.

"The sense was that it was perhaps reacting to a situation that CRS was experiencing, which is what we went through some years ago," said Temmerman. "Given the work we have already done on our principles of discernment for partnerships and

other documents that we have already produced, (we thought) we would look to produce one which reflects the Canadian situation rather than the American one."

Temmerman wants the Canadian principles to be positive rather than defensive.

The American statement claims CRS "draws upon a rich tradition of Scripture and Catholic social teaching."

The first principle in the CRS list is Sacredness and Dignity of the Human Person. Other principles in the list include solidarity, the common good and the option for the poor. Produced well before Pope Francis released the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the CRS statement also emphasizes stewardship.

"There is inherent integrity to all of creation and it requires careful stewardship," it reads.

The Canadian bishops and D&P also discussed the vacant executive director's position at their June meeting. The previous executive director, Michael Casey, left Development and Peace in May having served two five-year terms.

The bishops expressed confidence in the selection process, said Temmerman.

"That isn't an issue. That wasn't an issue at all. They just said, 'Keep us informed,'" he said.

Temmerman expects the organization will be able to announce its new executive director in September.

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Art Babych

NOTRE DAME AND THE SPIDER — From the camera's point of view, Maman, a bronze stainless steel sculpture by Louise Bourgeois depicting a spider, appears to be much larger than Notre Dame Cathedral Basilica in Ottawa in the background. But the sculpture, part of the National Gallery of Canada collection, is just over nine metres high. Even so, the sculpture is among the world's largest.

Listen beyond the horror of religious violence

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Religious terror is not new; it's intrinsic to religious practice and belief and you have to listen beyond the violent actions to understand what is going on. That is one of the themes in a presentation to the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) held here July 19 - 22 at Luther College, a federated college of the University of Regina. "You have to listen to the other," said Dr. Volker Greifenhagen, professor of Religious Studies at Luther College, "instead of only to your anger. Dive deep for root causes."

Professor David Goa of the

Augustana Campus University of Alberta, Camrose, Alta., said something similar in his presentation: "You need to try and hear what is going on in the human heart underneath all of that."

Their presentation was titled Listening in the Face of Religious Terror. It was one of several workshops available to about 150 people who attended the four-day NAIN gathering.

Greifenhagen gave a history lesson on violence in religion beginning with the murder of Abel by his brother Cain and continuing through to the present.

"Religious change is accompanied by violent political up-

heaval," said Greifenhagen, referring as an example to the Reformation which he said was accompanied by a 150-year war. "Is religion the root cause or the means?" questioned Greifenhagen

Goa talked of religious relationships and social justice. "My concern is that often we reduce religious relationships to social justice and the problem with social justice is the way in which we understand justice and social," he said in an interview with the

PM following the presentation. "My point is that there is more to human life than the way in which we normally understand justice."

Goa said in his tradition of the Christian East justice flows from mercy, not the other way around. "Kyrie Eliason, that wonderful Greek phrase that remains in the Latin liturgy, the root of that word is in the Olive tree, it's in oil, it's anointing oil, it's healing things. It's not just getting your fair share, it's healing things."

"Where in violence can we stop to talk," asked a questioner, "when I get a gun in my face because of who I am?"

You can't do much at all with that person "with that kind of mental illness," said Goa.

"Those things are produced exactly to make you feel that way," said Greifenhagen. "If you don't try and listen beyond the horror that's been raised in you then the terrorists have won so to speak because they've been effective."

Sisters celebrate year

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A full day of celebration, discussion, speakers and sharing of stories celebrated 2015, the Year of Consecrated Life, announced by Pope Francis November 2013.

"It was a really positive experience," said Marian Grady a member of the secular institute Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate and one of the organizers of the event. The Sisters Association of the Regina Archdiocese (SARA) organized the day.

It was an open event that included both secular and those living a consecrated life. It included talks by several who described their vocations and how they came to it and one presentation by David and Faye Helmson describing their experiences working with some consecrated life communities.

There are 17 congregations of women religious working in the Regina archdiocese and almost all were represented at the event held July 13 at Holy Child Parish.

Sister Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, came from Saskatoon and gave a history of how sisters arrived in Saskatchewan and the work they did establishing schools, hospitals and other programs. Eric Hanna gave a PowerPoint presentation of Jesuit life. Carmelite Solitary Sister Benedicta of the Cross described her life as a solitary; Members of Madonna House described their vocation operating

soup kitchens and prayer houses in Canada and several other countries; the Myriam Family of the Prairies talked about their arrival in Saskatchewan and their work with churches and children.

Sister Yvette Plessis, SCSL, chair of the event, said in an interview with the PM that vocations in the western world are declining and the huge numbers of the past is longer the reality. "Smaller individualized not institutionalized personal ministries I think is going to be the new normal." Working in partnership with other committed lay men and women and other consecrated persons is also the new shape of consecrated men and women today. "We're not going to be six to eight people running something but we're working in partnership." Vocations are increasing in the developing countries, said Plessis.

"The day went really well. We have different forms of consecrated life and each person spoke to their form of life. We had time to prayer, to sing. We had really good feedback," said Plessis.

Plessis was also one of three sisters celebrating significant anniversaries. She and sister Bernadette Feist, OSU, celebrated 50 years and Sister Agnes Fillion, RNDM, celebrated 75 years of vocation.

The event also saw a change in SARA executive with Sister Theresa Frey, IBVM, as the new president and Sister Bernadette Feist ending her term.

St. Laurent Pilgrimage in 136th year

By Paula Fournier

PRINCE ALBERT — Come to Mary, Families are Consecrated was the theme for the beginning of the annual pilgrimage on July 15 and 16 at Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Laurent Shrine, northeast of Duck Lake, Sask.

Rev. Lucien Larre was keynote speaker for the first day. He spoke on miracles in everyday life and the appearances of Mary to St. Bernadette in Lourdes, France. His talks included many humorous moments, leaving congregation members laughing out loud. He encouraged them to begin or continue saying the rosary daily, be missionaries, sacrifice, follow the Ten Commandments, receive confession and pray for others.

"Preach the Gospel every day wherever you go, and if necessary, use words. In God's great plan, there are those who are waiting for you to help them. Be a missionary, pray for them," said Larre.



Fournier

ST. LAURENT PILGRIMAGE — Four men walk in procession down the hill to the grotto, carrying a statue of Mary on a platform surrounded by flowers. The congregation follows reciting the rosary during the 136th annual pilgrimage at the St. Laurent Shrine, northeast of Duck Lake, Sask.

Informed conscience integral to practice

Continued from page 1

tain, since a doctor's informed conscience should be integral to their practice." The CCRL defended physicians' Charter of Rights freedom of conscience and religion, emphasizing that these rights must not be violated by the CPSS.

The draft policy was also criticized by the Protection of Conscience Project. Citing Section 1 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Project states that "the limits proposed in [the policy] are neither reasonable nor demonstrably justified" because the College had no evidence that conscientious objection by Saskatchewan physicians has ever deprived anyone of access to medical services or adversely affected anyone's health.

Much of the discussion around previous drafts of the policy concerned the moral implications of making a formal referral. Most physicians who exercise a moral objection to procedures, such as sex-selective abortion, are willing to provide patients with information on how to legally access the procedure, but are not willing to be directly involved by providing a referral.

As Cardinal Thomas Collins explained in his March 24 letter

concerning a similar policy in Ontario, "by insisting they provide an effective referral on [matters of conscience], in essence, the physician is being asked to serve as an accomplice in the procedure." However, it is unclear whether or not the current CPSS draft wording, "making an arrangement," is the equivalent of making a referral.

The current policy follows a previous draft that proposed a regime in which doctors would be compelled to refer for, and in some cases provide, morally objectionable treatments, such as abortion and assisted suicide. The early draft was met with criticism during a public consultation in which the majority of over 4,000 submissions supported conscience rights. The policy was sent back to a subcommittee for redrafting following the March 28 meeting of the CPSS council.

Concerns have also been raised that the policy could be applied to physician assisted suicide or euthanasia in the future. The CPPS council has struck a subcommittee to address the issue of "physician assisted dying," which could be legally available in Canada on Feb. 6, 2016, under a Supreme Court of Canada ruling. (See related story, page 3.)



Miazga

BLESSING OF THE GRAVES — On Aug. 16, a crowd gathered for the annual mass and blessing of the graves at St. Helen Parish in Brooksby, Sask. The parish was established in 1914 and closed in 1985. The Our Lady of Consolation Parish in Melfort, Sask., approximately 40 km south of the church and graveyard, co-ordinates ministries and music annually. Family and community members of those buried in the cemetery return each year for the occasion. A social with coffee, donuts and fellowship ended the celebration.

Regina develops new procedures for pastoral plan

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — It took Regina archdiocese director of Pastoral Services Bob Kowalchuk just seven months after his appointment to develop a system to move the Pastoral Plan forward.



Bob Kowalchuk

“It’s really a solid plan,” said Kowalchuk in a conversation with the PM. “It is a great idea but there was no way to actually carry the plan forward.”

Archbishop Daniel Bohan asked Kowalchuk to look into Pope Francis’ encyclical, the Joy of the Gospel, and see how it can

be applied to the Pastoral Plan in the Regina archdiocese.

Kowalchuk said what the pope was really looking at was the mission side of the church that calls for mission and evangelization. Over several meetings with archdiocesan staff a seven-part action plan was developed, based for the most part on Francis’ *Evangelii Gaudium*:

- encourage the faithful to be rooted in prayer and family;
- rebuild and improve relationships with parishes, priests and diocesan partners;
- support parishes in growing their capacity in divine restoration and address sacramental preparation, catechesis and formation;
- encourage parishes to explore Re-imagine Generosity: Parish Stewardship;
- support catechesis and faith formation for every age and stage in life;
- offer support for aging, vulnerable and marginalized populations; and finally,
- implement equity in employment, which includes educating parishes and pastors on the compliance requirements in Saskatchewan’s employment legislation and regulations.

The entire plan was presented to a June 23 joint meeting of the archdiocesan pastoral council and the Council of Priests.

“The response from them was

by and large very positive,” said Kowalchuk. What has to happen now, he said, is to build and rebuild relationships. “It’s not that relationships were bad,” but “if you don’t focus on keeping relationships fresh, they tend to slide.”

Teams from the pastoral office will set up regional meetings with

parishes to explain the changes and the supports available for them from the pastoral office.

Kowalchuk said the plan has a lot of pieces to it and its success will depend on the parishes, the people in the parishes and the pastors, who are key.

“We have a small staff, we

don’t have a tremendous amount of money, and that’s why it’s critical that we have a good, solid relationship with people out there because, at the end of the day, we can supply support, we can provide direction, but it’s the parishes and the people in the parishes who are going to make this work.”

Iranian refugees arrive in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — It was a long journey but an Iranian family of four — father, mother 13-year-old son and two-year-old daughter — were happy to be in Canada after living two years in a Turkish refugee camp. The family did not want their photo or names used. “They have ways of finding you,” they said.

They arrived in Regina July 29 and were met by members of the St. Cecilia Parish Social Justice Committee and pastor Rev. John Weckend. The parish will be responsible for them for a year. Looking tired after their long journey, the two-year-old hanging tightly onto her mother, the family looked relieved and a little confused. With the help of committee members, luggage was retrieved and the family taken to their apartment.

The four left their home in southern Iran fearful for their safety after the father took part in a demonstration in support of an

individual who had been persecuted because of his religion. The family belongs to a faith community known as Alxaque. Through interpreter Farbod Jenabidh, the family, who speak Farsi and no English at all, said it is not associated with any other faith.

Iran is an Islamic Republic and its constitution tolerates few other religions. Adherents of other faiths often suffer discrimination, officially are unable to obtain government jobs and are often harassed to the point of violence.

Social Justice chair Bernadette Warnke said the parish has raised something over \$28,000 for the family’s support. “We are responsible for them for one year,” said Warnke, “Federal government programs help financially.”

The parish provided a fully furnished apartment in a two storey fourplex in the city’s west central district convenient to grocery and medical services. “All the furnishings were donated by parish members and others. We had truck loads and lots of volun-

teers set up the apartment,” said Warnke.

The family described life in the refugee camp as grim. “There were many times when there was no food,” they said through interpreter Jenabidh. The mother has a brother still living in the refugee camp. Asked if they knew anything about Canada before their arrival the father, smiling, said only that it was cold.

Since their arrival members of the committee have taken the family to the various government agencies for registration and identification as landed immigrants. They’re also enrolled in English classes through the Regina Open Door Society (who also supplied the interpreter) and the 13-year-old boy will enter school this fall.

In an interview about a week after their arrival, the family looked settled in their apartment and said their ambition was to learn English, find work, and have their children obtain an education.

Interfaith Network meets in Regina July 19 - 22

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — There were 150 of them, they represented most of the world’s major faiths and they were in Regina for the first time.

The North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) call their gathering Connect, an apt name, as many new connections were made and old connections renewed.

Nain was established in 1988 to be a bridge builder, said its current chair Rob Hankinson of Edmonton: “to bring interfaith organizations in Canada, the United States and Mexico together on an annual basis to share best practices, common concerns and networking and fellowship.”

That’s something other organizations claim as well, but Hankinson said in 1988 there was nothing. “We were one of a kind. There was nothing like it. We predate the parliament of the world’s religions by five years,” he said in an interview with the PM.

Hankinson said NAIN has 17 identifiable group member organizations. “This year for the first time there are people here who would probably say ‘I don’t subscribe to any faith,’ and that’s a first.” Hankinson said NAIN wants people in discussion, in dialogue who are committed to peace, social justice and what he called the sustainability of creation, ecological and environmental concerns, and the person’s faith doesn’t matter.

NAIN is a non-profit organization that exists mostly on membership fees. Hankinson said NAIN has 75 member organizations in

North America and about two dozen associate individuals who pay individual dues. Their annual budget is \$12,000 and most of it, about \$10,500, is used for scholarships for young people to attend Connect. There is a 22-member volunteer board.

The three federated colleges to the University of Regina — Campion and Luther colleges, First Nations University and the University of Regina — together with the Regina Multi-Faith Forum, Multi-Faith Saskatchewan and the Regina Police Service sponsored NAIN coming to Regina. Ken Powers, one of the founders of the Regina Multi-Faith Forum, and Dr. Brenda Anderson of Luther College were co-chairs of Connect.

Powers said a lot of Regina people attended Connect, including many young adults. “In some ways multifaith activity in Regina has been lagging, so we’re hoping to pick that up and get it moving a little more strongly and get younger people involved.”

The title of this year’s Connect was Restoring Spirit through Sacred Listening. It included several workshops, panel discussions, plenary sessions and tours of several Regina locations including the RCMP Heritage Centre, the recently rediscovered Regina Residential School Cemetery, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, the Healing Gardens at First Nations University, and Wascana Centre. There were also opportunities to take part in a sweat lodge, Middle East Bazaar, quiet times of listening to music, a devotional period and BBQs.

Paraplegic convert installed as lector

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Four years ago 23-year-old Parker Love decided to convert to Roman Catholicism. He took the RCIA (Right of Christian Initiation of Adults) course and joined parishioners at Resurrection Parish. It wasn’t long after that he felt the call to priesthood and began that journey at St. Joseph’s Seminary, Edmonton.

Two years into his studies a mountain bike accident in the summer of 2013 interrupted that journey. He spent months in a Calgary hospital recovering from injuries that left him in a wheelchair as a paraplegic. But his determination to become a priest never left him and on Saturday, August 15 he took another step toward his goal when Regina Archbishop Daniel Bohan installed him as lector during Resurrection Parish’s Saturday afternoon mass; his family in the front pew witnessed the event.

There was initial concern whether he could continue his spiritual journey, but with support from the archbishop and St. Joseph’s Seminary, Edmonton, he will return to St. Joseph’s this fall to continue his studies.

Bohan in his homily told the large congregation that lector is really a lay position but it is an important ministry in the church. Referring to the four readings of the last four Sundays he pointed out that Jesus is present in the eucharist and in the Word and therefore proclaiming the Word is



Flegel

LECTOR — Newly installed lector Parker Love receives a bible from Archbishop Daniel Bohan.

important. “Jesus is the wisdom of the Word come into the world to teach us, so we do something very special when we read the Word,” said the archbishop.

Love sat in his wheelchair alongside his family at the front of the church for the beginning of mass. At the beginning of the installation ceremony Bohan called out Love’s name, who responded, “Here.” A moment later he was asked to join the archbishop on the podium beside the altar in the sanctuary. Using a ramp built when the church was constructed and hidden behind the choir area

he rolled up and joined the archbishop and Resurrection pastor Rev. Stephen Bill. He received a blessing from Bohan then accepted a leather-covered bible presented by Bohan. “Read the Word often,” said Bohan, “and meditate on it.” Love remained on the sanctuary podium for the remainder of the mass and was among the first to receive the eucharist from the archbishop.

Love and the archbishop remained in the gathering area after mass greeting the congregation as many stayed to enjoy cake and coffee.

Synod’s task to open hearts to church views on family

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

Pope Francis is asking for prayers and hoping for miracles ahead of this October’s synod on the family.

On his recent trip to South America, the pope pleaded with an immense crowd in Ecuador “to pray fervently” that the church will “deepen her spiritual discernment and consider concrete solutions and help with the many difficult and significant challenges facing families today.”

For Pope Francis, the gospel story about a wedding was the perfect opportunity to speak about the crisis in family life and the synod, which will bring together around 400 bishops. It will be the second of two synods dedicated to how the church preaches, teaches and cares for families. This synod will gather under the title *The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World*.

As with last fall’s synod on *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of the New Evangelization*, Catholics can count on another round of heated and very public debate about some of the most contentious, emotional and difficult issues in contemporary Catholic life — communion for divorced and remarried Catholics, irregular unions, secularization, poverty, contraception, the welcome gay Catholics receive in church and homosexual unions.

The church simply isn’t heard



Design Pics

FAMILY SYNOD — Pope Francis is asking for prayers and hoping for miracles ahead of this October’s synod on the family, writes Michael Swan. It will be the second of two synods dedicated to how the church preaches, teaches and cares for families. This synod will gather under the title *The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World*.

on many of the sexual issues of our time, said Michele Boulva, executive director of the Catholic Organization for Life and Family.

“Obviously, the teachings of the church — including its teachings on life and the family — need to be presented anew,” Boulva wrote in an email to *The Register*. “We need to turn to Christ to be empowered to live out the teachings He has entrusted to his church, so she can propose them to our freedom.”

Getting people to listen to the church on sex and family life is no easy task, said Carolyn Chau, a theology professor at London, Ont.’s King’s College University.

“It starts with individuals and who they will give moral credence and a moral hearing to,” said Chau. “That’s the order of authority now.”

While neither the pope nor any of the bishops is talking about changing essential teachings of the church, the language and terminology that emerges from the synod will be the key, said Chau.

“What is said, how it is said, will determine (the synod’s) significance,” she said. “One of the options is that tradition is reiterated in a way that continues to keep the door closed for people who are

lapsed, uninterested, disaffected or wounded to begin with. Then we can say it doesn’t really matter. Another possibility is that what is done at the synod is something that begins to invite people into the conversation, give people an openness in terms of their receptivity that wasn’t there prior to the fall synod.”

Many Canadian Catholics are used to framing debates about abortion, contraception and living together before marriage as questions of individual, moral choice. But that’s not the way the Vatican frames the debate in an outline of synod issues recently sent out to the world’s bishops. Time and again, the *instrumentum laboris* (working document) puts the issues in the context of economics, culture and public policy — often looking at the issues from the point of view of poor people who in the last two generations have been herded into the crowded, booming cities of Latin America, Africa and Asia.

“Basically, families live in the social, economic context,” said Chau. “It’s not sufficient to tell people to have families. Societies need to find a way to help make that life sustainable. People need to be supported in this choice to begin a family. . . . Families are essential to societies and societies are essential to the well-being of families. There needs to be social and economic constructs, supports in place to nurture this thing that has become vulnerable and weak and fragile.”

This isn’t just a message for the people living in the crowded megacities of the emerging world. Even in the rich world, people have come to distrust any officially sanctioned idea of marriage and have lost confidence in their ability to make a permanent commitment, said Boulva.

“One of the means of overcoming the (quoting the *instrumentum laboris*) ‘general attitude opposed to anything institutional or definitive’ is definitely the witness of happily married couples,” she said. “I know many young couples in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada who have not only chosen to get married, but who are raising big families — up to eight children. These young parents are strong believers and they are counting on God, trusting that he will sustain their family.”

While Chau hopes for new modes of communication, she’s not looking for a soft-focus, sugar-coated take on sexual morality.

“At a minimum, we shouldn’t drop the concept of sin,” she said. “If you lose the concept of sin you end up with a pretty sad, emaciated notion of grace. . . . There are huge risks with not talking about sin and thereby not really understanding who God is and what God is doing and has done.”

“Miracles are performed with what little we have, with what we are, with what is at hand,” Pope Francis told the crowd in Ecuador. “And many times it is not ideal, it is not what we dreamt of, nor what should have been. . . . Christ can take even what might seem to us impure, like water in the jars scandalizing or threatening us, and turn it into a miracle. The family today needs this miracle.”

African bishop expects flexibility at fall synod

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA (CCN) — One of the leading voices among Africa’s bishops predicts a new flexibility in Catholic teaching at this October’s



Catholic Register/M. Swan

Bishop Berhanyesus Souraphiel of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is one of the leading voices among Africa’s Catholic bishops.

synod on the family, allowing bishops and bishops’ conferences in different parts of the world to adapt church teaching on the family to the culture, economic situation and political landscape in their part of the world.

“The Catholic Church is a universal institution, both human and

divine,” Cardinal Berhanyesus Souraphiel, metropolitan archbishop of Addis Ababa, told *The Catholic Register*. “It is not a European church, it is not a Canadian church or a U.S. church. It’s different. The issues families are facing in some parts of the world would be different than in other parts of the world.”

Where Europe and North America face problems such as how to respond pastorally to state-sanctioned same-sex unions or divorced and remarried Catholics, families in other parts of the world face issues that arise from economic globalization or rapid urbanization.

“For us in Ethiopia, the big issue will be poverty,” said Berhanyesus. “If you are not sure if you can continue providing sustenance for the family, food and so on — not only rent, but food — if you don’t have this (basic economic stability) you might find the husband working somewhere else, the wife working somewhere else. The

family separates. And then the children suffer.”

With more and more Ethiopian women finding work abroad in Arab states as domestic workers and Ethiopian men landing jobs in mines or on large-scale industrial farms, Ethiopia’s rapidly expanding economy is making it hard to keep a family together, said Berhanyesus.

“We feel here the issue is, how can the church contribute to the alleviation of poverty?” he said.

Bishops’ conferences should play a role in helping individual bishops adapt the teaching of the synod to their country or region, according to Berhanyesus.

“The episcopal conferences have been sent, not to replace or to change the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ or the teaching of the church, but to see that the teaching of the gospel is inculturated, is put into the life situation of the particular country or particular society,” Berhanyesus said. “For the moral issues that are coming up around the family, probably the next synod will say, ‘Let us see them in context. Let us allow the conferences to come with suggestions.’ It could be done that way.”

Berhanyesus emphasized the Second Vatican Council’s teaching on subsidiarity — the idea that responsibility for solving a problem lies not with the highest possible authority but with the people who have the problem and must live with the solutions.

“What the family can decide, let not the society or the municipality

or the local government interfere. What you can do as a family — how many children should I have and so on — if you can decide on your level, let’s respect that,” he said. “They give that also to the bishop, the local bishop.”

There’s sometimes a tension between individual bishops and their conferences of bishops, which have their own staff, programs and priorities, said Berhanyesus.

“This tension is there. Is that a healthy tension or a negative tension? History will tell,” he said.

Berhanyesus concluded a three-day jubilee celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Ethiopian Conference of Catholic Bishops on July 26, hosting bishops from around Africa. There are fewer than one million Catholics in Ethiopia, less than one per cent of a country that is 45 per cent Orthodox and 35 per cent Muslim, with a mix of traditional beliefs making up the balance.

The cardinal predicted Africans will be heard loud and clear at the synod.

“The African message for the synod is family is life. So let us give importance to life. Let us stand for life,” he said. “You know life and values are tied. Things will change. Many things are changing. But there must also be values which remain. Love between husband and wife, respect between children and parents, respect for elders should remain, should endure. What should be changed or should endure? This is, of course, the big question in our lives.”

New book explores passion for baseball, learning

By Paul Paproski, OSB

Brent Loehr has tremendous enthusiasm for literature and writing. The desire to read was sparked by his mother, Karen, who brought him books from the library in Muenster, Sask.

"She modelled reading. I became an avid reader which is a huge piece in becoming a writer," he commented. Loehr, 40, of Muenster, soon developed an interest in sports and loved reading non-fiction sports stories. His favourite novels were about old-time hockey goalies. When he entered junior high the subject changed to rock bands. Then he came across Ken Dryden's *Home Game* and W.P. Kinsella's articles on baseball.

The avid reader and sports enthusiast can now boast of having a book of his own: *The Global Baseball Classroom: Reflections Beyond Home*. The book is a series of essays and anecdotes recounting Loehr's experiences as an Envoy Coach with Major League Baseball (MLB). Loehr travelled the globe promoting baseball in northern Canada, Uganda, Zimbabwe, the Czech Republic, Germany and Sweden. The accounts of his adventures exhibit a zeal for life which overflows into his love for, among other things, people, baseball, education and writing.

A chapter recalls a mysterious island on Hudson Bay. Another introduces David, a 12-year-old, of the Czech Republic who, like MLB pitcher Jim Abbot, was born with only one hand. A humorous incident in Sweden brings Loehr into contact with The Swedish Chef, his favourite character on the Muppet Show. A step is taken into a dark period of history in a former concentration camp outside of Berlin. Baseball camps in Uganda and Zimbabwe introduce readers to the daily struggles of people.

The *Global Baseball Classroom* has a connection to Loehr's hometown of Muenster. The chapter, *Just A Ball*, features a baseball cherished by the late Rev. Matthew Michel, OSB, of St. Peter's Abbey. Michel, an avid baseball fan, was given the ball by Babe Ruth following a 1929 game between the New York Yankees and Philadelphia Athletics. The baseball was signed by Babe Ruth and 14 other Yankee team members, one of whom was Lou Gehrig. The baseball is featured on the cover of the book. Another chapter, *Blame Joe*, is close to home. It recounts the riot on 8th Street in Saskatoon in 1993 after the Toronto Blue Jays captured the World Series.

Becoming an author was not something that was originally envisioned by Loehr. The achievement came to fruition after a



Paul Paproski, OSB

BASEBALL CLASSROOM — Brent Loehr of Muenster holds a copy of his new book, *The Global Baseball Classroom: Reflections Beyond Home*, and the baseball depicted on the cover. The baseball was owned by Rev. Matthew Michel, OSB, of St. Peter's Abbey. Michel was given the ball by Babe Ruth following a 1929 game between the New York Yankees and Philadelphia Athletics. The baseball was signed by Babe Ruth and 14 other Yankee team members, one of whom was Lou Gehrig.

series of lifelong events, he remarked. Loehr earned a baseball scholarship as a catcher following high school when he played with the Muenster Red Sox. He took his scholarship to North Dakota where he received an associate of arts degree at the University of North Dakota-Williston. He transferred to Minot State University where he earned his bachelor's degree in education and planned to become a teacher after earning a double major in English and physical education and a minor in coaching.

At the age of 22, a curve was put into Loehr's plans for baseball when he suffered a shoulder injury during a tournament at Trail, B.C. The injury did not put him on the sidelines of the game he loved to play competitively. Loehr decided to continue in the sport as a coach and became involved in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) in Canada. The program landed him a role in coaching with Saskatchewan Baseball's elite all-star programs. He then became certified as a facilitator to train coaches. Loehr coached with the Saskatchewan Baseball elite programs: Team Saskatchewan, Western Canada Games and Baseball Canada Cup. He provided coach certification clinics as an NCCP facilitator for Zone 5.

A milestone was reached in 2002 when Loehr was invited to offer baseball sessions in the Canadian Arctic. He was then selected as an Envoy Coach to represent MLB overseas. Having a love for writing, Loehr sent

emails to be in. A lot of these emails were from people I had never met," he recalled.

During his final year as an envoy, while serving in the Czech Republic, Loehr decided to pursue his passion for writing and enrol in a diploma in writing program at St. Peter's College, Muenster. The instructors and fellow students at St. Peter's College became interested in some of his stories. Loehr was given a spot in the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild Mentorship Program where he worked with professional editor Ted Dyck.

"He made me feel that my stories had promise, which certainly is an additional nudge coming from a guy like him whom I dearly respect. He encouraged me to submit some of the stories for publication and build up my publication credits. I did," he commented.

Some readers contacted Loehr following the publication of his magazine articles and informed him that they enjoyed them. The positive feedback encouraged Loehr to continue writing. Several stories in his book have been published in magazines. Others appear, for the first time, in his book.

"I believe in the stories and as an educator I also believe in the importance of lifelong learning. The book contains a lot of positive messages and I think people can learn from them," he remarked.

The love of learning has brought Loehr to become a career counselor for the Horizon School Division where he works in 10 schools. He is assisting with the AAA Muenster Red Sox (18 and under) team and

also works with the Rally Cap (t-ball) program that his daughter, Sarah, is on. Interestingly, Loehr comes from a small community of 400 that is recognized as an accomplished baseball centre. In 2014, Muenster was named to the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame for its success in producing competitive baseball teams and maintaining its baseball facilities. Local teams have won many provincial baseball championships. In 2012, the Pee Wee Red Sox won both the AA provincial championship and the Western Canadian championship.

Loehr's teaching career began in Lanigan where he worked as a high school physical education and history teacher for four years. The next eight years were spent at Humboldt Public School where he taught Grade 7 and looked after the physical education programming. Loehr then taught high school English, career and work exploration at Humboldt Collegiate Institute, and an online course in creative writing for students across the division. He was also the lead teacher for the Student Transitional Education Program (STEP).

Muenster has always been home to Loehr who is the fifth generation of his family. His great-great-grandfather, John Sr., and great-grandfather, Arnold, emigrated from Stearns County, Minn., in 1903 - 04. His grandfather, Irwin (I.Q.), and father, Mervin, farmed just south of Muenster with his uncle Murray. He and Melissa have two daughters, Sarah and Leia, who coincidentally love baseball.

Books

Chittister communicates with high degree of authenticity

OUR HOLY YEARNINGS: Life Lessons for Becoming our Truest Selves by Joan Chittister. Toronto, Novalis, ©2014. 104 pages, hardcover, \$14.95. Reviewed by Edwin Buettner.

Joan Chittister is a Benedictine nun whose work as a writer and speaker is widely known. In this little book, Chittister continues to offer her literary talents in the service of exploring the deeper truths of human life. Her reflections are organized into nine chapters, each dealing with a familiar spiritual theme. Included are topics such as: perfection, joy, humility, and "luminous darkness." Though such areas are likely to be familiar to readers who seek spiritual nourishment, Chittister develops them with refreshing originality, akin to distributing gold coins upon well-trodden paths.

The structure of the chapters may be compared to that of an elegant meal. The "appetizer" is a short quotation taken from a variety of wisdom sources, ranging from popular culture (Gilda Radner) to Eastern spirituality (Lao Tzu, Confucius) to the western literary world (William Blake) and to modern Science (Carl Sagan). The "main course" delves deeply and broadly into the chapter's topic. For example, in *Humility*, Chittister draws upon a Special Olympics athlete's poster that conveys not "a sign of triumph over others," but rather a heartfelt celebration of personal achievement. By contrast, modern society is infected with what the author calls a "social virus" that demands "achievement and power, control and celebrity" of those who participate in sports. As a consequence, successful athletes are driven to embody the "pathological pride" of North American culture.

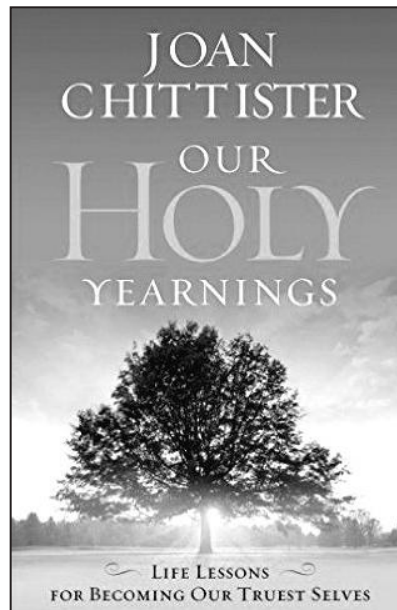
Then comes the dessert platter laden with a wide

selection of pithy nuggets of wisdom, to be savoured one at a time. Some examples from the *Humility* chapter are: "Humility frees us from the burden of perfection," "Education is the seedbed of humility," and "Natural gifts are made to be given, cannot be denied, and are the deepest kind of humility."

In reading Chittister, one is treated to a remarkable confluence of form and substance. When a pointed observation is made, her sentences are short and strong: "Beware the temptation to find yourself perfect." However, in reflecting upon more ineffable notions such as the transcendence of God, Chittister's prose takes on a more imaginative and poetic tone: "But in the end, as the soul matures, it is the yearning itself for Everything, for the Fullness of Life, that saves us." Taken together, Chittister's writing is like a beating heart: a rhythm and flow that is responsive to the demands of the text.

Our *Holy Yearnings* may be seen as an example of effective evangelization for this day and age. Chittister speaks with a voice that is never preachy; rather, she encourages the reader to enter into the deeper caverns of the soul and so discover the divine indwelling. In other words,

her approach is to awaken what is universally present in humanity, what some have called "the Christ within." Grounded in a fine-tuned awareness of the realities of today's world, Chittister communicates with a high degree of authenticity and clarity, announcing the gospel to a spiritually hungry humanity.



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Exhibit showcases Indiana Jones’ quest for the sacred

By Sara Weissman
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The exhibit Indiana Jones and the Adventure of Archaeology, at the National Geographic Museum in Washington until Jan. 3, features 100 carefully crafted film props alongside real archaeological finds.

There’s the golden Ark of the Covenant from Raiders of the Lost Ark — the model for the container that housed the Ten Commandments, complete with two winged cherubs as described in the Old Testament.

There’s the cup representing the Holy Grail from Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.

And there are the oblong, translucent Sankara stones from Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, an imagined artifact based on symbols of the god Shiva.

What is it about Indiana Jones and, more broadly, the quest for religious relics that captures people’s imaginations?

Exhibit curator Fredrik Hiebert said his archaeology students loved the movies when he used to teach at the University of Pennsylvania. So when George Lucas, cre-

ator of the film franchise, reached out to National Geographic about an exhibit, Hiebert “took 20 seconds to say yes” to the proposal.

“I like the fact that George Lucas can entertain, make you laugh and make you think deeply about God, the afterlife and the past at the same time,” said Hiebert.

And that’s precisely the appeal of Indiana Jones, according to Peter Manseau, who holds a doctorate in religion from Georgetown University.

“It’s not simply archaeology but the archaeology of the sacred, the idea that once upon a time humans had this immediate capacity to connect with something sacred,” said Manseau, who writes about Jones’ connection to sacred objects in an upcoming issue of the magazine CrossCurrents.

Sacred artifacts also excite people because they lend legitimacy to religious stories, Manseau noted. As much as religion is a matter of faith, he said, these archaeological adventures are at some level quests for proof because sacred artifacts make religion “physical in a way that’s hard to ignore.”

In his own work, Manseau has

often gone to see relics, particularly remains of saints, in the process of writing his book Rag and Bone. He recalled the impact of seeing the finger of John the Baptist in Florence, Italy, presented artfully in a glass and gold case.

“It was clearly a human finger, a real human life, and that gives stories associated with it all the more power,” he said. “These objects have been the receptacles of devotion for centuries and that also gives them their own significance.”

The Indiana Jones films themselves, meanwhile, authenticate religious stories in a way that’s unusual for Hollywood, Manseau said. For example, in Raiders of the Lost Ark, when the Ark of the Covenant is opened, rays of fire strike Jones’ rivals, confirming the ark’s supernatural powers.

But the films also critique certain religious ideas, Manseau said. In The Last Crusade, Jones finds that the Holy Grail is a simple unadorned cup from which Jesus may have drunk during the Last Supper or perhaps the crucifixion, as opposed to a bejewelled gold goblet. This is arguably an understated endorsement of a simpler,

non-ostentatious Christianity.

Today, Manseau sees a connection between Jones’ archaeology of the sacred and his own profession as a religion writer.

People’s overwhelming curiosity about quests for religious artifacts may not be unlike the search for religious stories. “You’re digging into people’s lives,” he said. “You’re digging into their experiences, looking for the most sacred moments to them.”

Meanwhile, the real-life quest for religious artifacts is ongoing. National Geographic is currently studying the oldest temple in the



Photo courtesy of the National Geographic Museum

QUEST FOR THE SACRED — The Holy Grail from Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is on exhibit at the National Geographic Museum in Washington, D.C. “What is it about Indiana Jones and, more broadly, the quest for religious relics that captures people’s imaginations?” asks Sara Weissman.

world, Gobekli Tepe in Turkey, Hiebert said.

“It gives me goosebumps,” he said. “I’m thinking this could be the next location for an Indiana Jones film.”

Conditions that allowed hip hop to flourish were changed by court ruling

By Caitlin Ward

It’s been a while since I watched Beats, Rhyme, & Life: The Travels of a Tribe Called Quest, but there’s one section of the documentary that sticks in my head these years later. Phife Dawg is being interviewed in a sunny park, sometime in 2008 or 2009, I’m guessing. He talks about recording A Tribe Called Quest’s second album, Low End Theory. In the story, he’s taking the F Train from Queens to Manhattan, writing verses on the subway and arriving late to the studio, walking right up to

Excursions A Tribe Called Quest

the mic and spitting the verse he’d just written. Then he comes out to the control room and everyone says, “Son, you’ve arrived.”

After Phife tells this story, the documentary cuts through Questlove (The Roots), Pharrell (N.E.R.D. and the Neptunes), Pete Rock, Mike D (Beastie Boys), and MCA (also Beastie Boys) talking about how intense that verse is. And if you listen to the track the verse became, Buggin’ Out, you know exactly what they mean: “Yo, microphone check one two, what is this? / The five foot assassin with the rough neck business.” It’s the only song in existence where I’m actually annoyed to hear Q-Tip start rapping. And when I say

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

that, you need to know that the only reason I started listening to alternative hip hop at all was because of Q-Tip’s voice. I love it that much, and Phife is that good on this track.

I think this part of the documentary stands out not only because this song is such a punch to the gut, but also because it’s one of the few moments in the film that’s this focused on the group’s music. Much of the narrative revolves around the difficult relationship between Phife and Q-Tip, the group’s main MCs. They use the history of Quest’s music as a way into that narrative, and in fact the music might not exist without that narrative. Members of the group talk about themselves like a series of interlocking pieces, and the spiritual place they occupy in the group is as important as the skills they bring to the table. Q-Tip is characterized as some sort of cosmic alien genius, and Phife the earthbound five-foot assassin who keeps the music from sailing off into the ether, so that it might still be comprehensible to us mere mortals. That contrast in personality doesn’t make for an easy relationship, but it has made for some excellent albums.

If you haven’t listened to much of A Tribe Called Quest, the idea of hip hop floating into the cosmos or an MC being a semi-celestial extra-terrestrial may seem strange. But when you do listen to their music, especially their second album, you begin to see why people talk about them that way. It’s in the first hissing seconds of the album: a bassline stripped out of a song from decades previous, a lyric that finds music in the rhythms of speech rather than traditional

melody, and a kind of social and political resistance that is defined by sound as much as words. Excursions, that first track on Low End Theory, is the album’s statement of purpose. The idea of

Back in the days when I was a teenager
Before I had status and before I had a pager
You could find the Abstract listening to hip hop
My pops used to say, it reminded him of be-bop
I said, well daddy don’t you know that things go in cycles
The way that Bobby Brown is just ampin’ like Michael
It’s all expected, things are for the looking
If you got the money, Quest is for the booking

Come on everybody, let’s get with the fly modes
Still got room on the truck, load the back boom
Listen to the rhymes, to get a mental picture
Of this black man, black woman venture
Why do I say that, ’cause I gotta speak the truth man
Doing what we feel for the music is the proof and
Planted on the ground, the act is so together
Bona fide strong, you need leverage to sever

The unit, yes, the unit, yes, the unit called the jazz is
We deliver it each year on the street for the beat ’cause
You can find it on the rack in your record store (store)
If you get the record, then your thoughts are adored and appreciated
Cause we’re ever so glad we made it
We work hard, so we gotta thank God
Dishing out the plastic, do the dance till you spastic
If you dis, it gets drastic

Listen to the rhymes, ’cause it’s time to make gravy
If it moves your booty, then shake, shake it baby
All the way to Africa a.k.a. The Motherland (uh)
Stick out the left, then I’ll ask for the other hand
That’s the right hand, Black Man (man)
Only if you was noted as my man (man)
If I get the credit, then I’ll think I deserve it
If you fake moves, don’t fix your mouth to word it

otherworldly dudes from Queens making hip hop jazz might be weird, but some of the tracks really are transcendent.

Unfortunately, the conditions that allowed this album to come

Get in the zone of positivity, not negativity
'cause we gotta strive for longevity
If you botch up, what’s in that (ass) (what?)
A pair of Nikes, size 10-and-a-half (come on, come on)

CHORUS
We gotta make moves
Never, ever, ever could we fake moves (come on, come on) (x4)

You gotta be a winner all the time
Can’t fall prey to a hip hop crime
With the dope raps and dope tracks for you for blocks
From the fly girlies to the hardest of the rocks
Musically the Quest, is on the rise
We on these Excursions so you must realize
Hip hop continually, about the Zulu
If you don’t like it, get off the Zulu tip

So what can you do in the times which exist
You can’t fake moves on your brother or your sis
But if your sis is a (. . .), brother is a jerk
Leave ‘em both alone and continue with your work
Whatever it may be into this society
Everything is fair, at least that how it seems to me
You must be honest and true to the next
Don’t be phoney and expect one not to flex

Especially if you rhyme, you have to live by the pen
Your man is your man, then treat him like your friend
All it is, is the code of the streets
So listen to the knowledge being dropped over beats
Beats that are hard, beats that are funky
It could get you hooked like a crackhead junkie
What you gotta do is know that the Tribe’s in this sphere
The Abstract Poet, prominent like Shakespeare

CHORUS

Yes, Woody, there are many reasons to believe

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



It’s hard to take most summer movies seriously. With few excep-tions mass entertainment profit is their sole intention and, some may ask, what’s wrong with that? Still there are always several that stand out as more than mere distractions innocent of meaning.



Gerald Schmitz

FILM POSTER — A Woody Allen poster for Irrational Man can be seen on Nevsky Prospekt in St. Petersburg, Russia, in July.

Woody Allen, who turns 80 in December, is definitely an acquired taste dividing audiences and critics. His 45th feature **Irrational Man** proves that in spades since its May debut at Cannes and late July North American release. It has drawn both effusive praise and caustic criticism, with one New York reviewer even calling it his worst movie. I’ll put my cards on the table: Allen is still one of America’s most consistently interesting filmmakers and I loved Irrational Man, though less so when I thought about it more.

Part of my initial delight is that the scenario of the movie — like last year’s Blue Jasmine set in mainstream U.S.A., not a Euro-pean escape — pokes gentle fun at academic philosophizing while giving a mock-serious existential-ist and Dostoevskian edge to its parade of human foibles, ending with a startling crime-doesn’t-pay twist worthy of Hitchcock. Indeed Irrational Man is shot through with Dostoevskian allusions, par-ticularly to the novel Crime and Punishment, which also influ-enced Allen’s arguably superior films Crimes and Misdemeanours (1989) and Match Point (2005). Dostoevsky is my favourite author and while in St. Petersburg last month I made it a point to visit some of his literary haunts includ-ing the house of Raskolnikov, that novel’s notorious protagonist. Irrational Man was also playing in

a cinema off the Nevsky Prospekt. The man of the title is the ill-fated Abe Lucas (Joaquin Phoenix), a paunchy rather slovenly middle-aged college philosophy professor of dubious reputation whose arrival at Rhode Island’s Braylin College provokes a stir. Lucas has suffered past personal woes (a moth-er’s suicide, the death of a close friend). Despite profes-sional and hu-manitarian pur-suits he just “can’t get no satisfaction,” to quote the Rolling Stones anthem. He’s stalled writing a book on Heidegger that nobody needs. His rambling lectures touch on Kantian moralism, vari-eties of exist-entialism and nihilism with-out any real commitment yea or nay. One could be for-given for con-cluding that all this pondering of the human condition is a

time-filling but fruitless dead end. The unattractive picture is of a soli-tary man adrift who self-medicates with alcohol to alleviate the appar-ent meaninglessness of his exis-tence.

Given these defaults, Lucas, who also confesses to long-term im-potence, hardly seems like much of a catch in the romance department. Yet in Allen’s universe he is capable of setting female hearts aflutter. Specifically two. The excellent Parker Posey plays Rita Richards,

Irrational Man

(U.S. 2015)

Testament of Youth

(U.K. 2014)

an unhappily married fellow profes-sor who gloms on to Lucas from the outset as if he were a raft in her ocean of sexual frustration. Suffice it to say that the seduction attempt satisfies neither. Allen has his most recent sweet-young-thing muse Emma Stone play an impress-ionable student of Lucas, Jill Pollard, whose parents teach in the music department and who increasingly falls under his tormented-intellectu-al spell (it can’t be his charms or physique) despite maintaining her loyalty to increasingly exasperated boyfriend Roy (Jamie Blackley). How can this not end badly?

The twist begins with Jill and

Abe overhearing a conversation in a restaurant by a distraught mother explaining how a corrupt mean-minded judge is in cahoots with her estranged husband’s lawyer to deny her custody of her children. Aha, thinks Abe, would not the world be better off were this judge to depart this world? Just a philosophical proposition of course. But as Abe becomes seized with a sense of pur-pose (i.e., solving the aggrieved woman’s problem), he schemes to pull off the perfect crime. A signif-icant side benefit is regaining his potency so that the platonic rela-tionship with the clueless Jill turns passionate. That is until someone is falsely accused of the judge’s mur-der, Jill wises up, then threatens to turn him in. Poor Abe didn’t per-fectly cover his tracks with the poi-soned orange juice and elevator justice can be swift indeed.

With the exception of the closing chance act of retribution, what I did-n’t love about Irrational Man is how it plays to Woody’s ever world-weary cynicism which applies to metaphysical inquiry as well as the pathetic quotidian lives of men and women. (A continued infatuation with young women in thrall to older men is also somewhat creepy given his history.) His dialogues are sprinkled with clever pseudo-intellectual references (Sartre’s “hell is other people,” Arendt’s “the banality of evil”), but this philosobabble amounts to little more than throw-away lines from the absurd comedy of life. Frankly, rationality or ir-rationality is pointless if the human prospect is ultimately meaningless.

Allen’s world lacks anything one might recognize as spiritual strength, faith and hope. He has

his Professor Lucas argue that “Dostoevsky got it,” yet he does-n’t get it. Dostoevsky was a deeply moral believer in the high-er purpose of human existence. “If there is no God then everything is permitted,” he wrote. He was no nihilist denier of the redeeming divine spark in the human soul.

* * *

The faith in humanity of those who survived the horrors of the last century’s world wars was surely far more severely tested than in any Allen fantasy. Nevertheless many, like psychiatrist and Holocaust sur-vivor Viktor Frankl, author of Man’s Search for Meaning, found reasons to believe (cf www.viktor-frankl.org). And so did Vera Brittain, the English writer, femi-nist and pacifist whose 1933 auto-biography has been expertly adapt-ed to the screen by director James Kent and writer Juliette Towhidi.

Testament of Youth begins in 1914 in the months before the guns of August would throw Europe into the misbegotten and mis-named “Great War” to end all wars. The bright and headstrong Vera — an exceptional perform-ance by emerging Swedish star Alicia Vikander (Ex Machina, The Man from U.N.C.L.E.) — begs her upper-class parents to be allowed to sit for the Oxford university entrance exam. Her brother Edward is headed there and in these innocent months is joined on the estate by handsome friends Roland (Kit Harington, a.k.a. “Jon Snow” from Game of Thrones) and Victor (Colin Morgan). Vera turns heads and hearts, in particular

Roland’s, as they enjoy the pleas-ures of youth. It’s still very much a world of male privilege even after Vera’s father relents and allows her to pursue higher learning.

The looming catastrophe is that the flower of British manhood is about to be squandered in the trenches over the next four terrible years. Roland, by then her fiancé, is the first to be lost, Edward the last, each tragedy inflicting more wounds on Vera’s soul. She goes to the front as a battlefield nurse but realizes that nothing can heal much less justify this senseless horror. She seeks sanctuary when crowds cele-brate the 1918 armistice. Reflecting on the sorrow and pity of it all, she joins forces with peace activist George Caitlin, her future husband, to campaign for reconciliation with the defeated powers and general disarmament. That is the necessary lesson to be drawn from an other-wise meaningless waste of youth. As Vera, Vikander’s brilliant mov-ing portrayal does full justice to a challenging role.

Events like the First World War, or subsequent slaughters and genocides, might provide evidence on a grand scale of the enduring flaws and follies of human nature in which pessimists and cynics like Woody Allen indulge on a tiny canvass. Yet the inspiring story of Vera Brittain shows how, in a violent and misogynist world, it was possible to find reasons not just to carry on but, as men and women striving for a better future, to believe that humanity is not beyond saving from its many errors. Indeed that testament of faith, hope and love is what ulti-mately makes life worth living.

A life well-lived: in memory of Denise

By Gerald Schmitz

This is a column that I had hoped not to write for some time yet. Even at age 102 my amazing mother Denise, an avid reader and supporter of this paper, seemed in fine form when I visited her in late June. In mid-July she moved into a wonderful new personal care home with no problems. Even after I received the news, while still trav-elling in Russia, that she had been hospitalized with pneumonia, recovery was my expectation until persistent infection and added complications proved too much.

After days in airports I reached her bedside while she was still aware of my presence, carrying with me an icon of Jesus in whom she had a deep faith. No one be-lieved more in his promise of eter-nal life. She entered it on July 30. I have no doubt she was at peace leaving this world for the next. I remember her telling me the words of her patron saint, St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus: “I am not dying, I am entering into life.” As the Prayer of St. Francis con-cludes: “It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

I had these words added to her memorial card in French as well as English because the former was her mother tongue which she made a point of speaking to me and my siblings, sister Yvonne and brother Roger, as we were growing up on the Schmitz home-

stead farm near Englefeld. That was not easy in the 1950s with no local French resources, so she would order books in French for us from Madonna House in Com-bermere. Her lifelong love of learning, compassion for others and passion for social justice were qualities that set an example for us. Indeed my mom is the biggest influence and inspiration in my life. I say “is” not “was” because although I will miss her greatly I have faith that with me always will be her abiding spirit of cu-riosity, generosity, and openness to the loving grace of a Creator whom we encounter on life’s jour-neys until we meet again in a blessed reunion.

Despite the hardships of a pio-neer upbringing in northwest Sas-katchewan, Denise was an excep-tional student, finishing high school at age 16 and becoming a teacher at 17. Born to Jean and Corentine Le Grand on the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, she worked hard through the Depression and war years. At one point she considered a religious vocation but decided it was not her calling. She married my father Bernard in 1948 and spent the next 25 years as a devoted farm wife. After moving to Saskatoon she cer-tainly never “retired” or stopped helping others. The Friendship Inn, CWL Clothing Depot, refugee fam-ilies, and organizations committed to the world’s poor, are among those that benefited.



Gerald Schmitz

Denise (Le Grand) Schmitz

My mom never lost interest in the world around her. We made good use of an iPad (gift of the Aschenbrenner family) she got for her 100th birthday. When I would bring out books on complicated subjects (some reviewed in these pages) she always wanted to read them too. One of her last requests was for donations to be made to the Prairie Messenger Sustaining Fund or the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace.

Denise had an amazing grace that touched many lives. For that I give thanks and remember a beau-tiful soul that has gone to its repose.

Close calls: many times we look but don't really see

Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



It was a close call. Our summer vacation road trip and we were travelling at 90 km per hour on a connector highway. Preparing to merge onto a freeway where the posted speed was 110 km, I shoulder checked, glanced into side-and rear-view mirrors and, one more time, the side-view mirror: all clear. I started my merge, taking one more quick shoulder check as I did so. There, zooming up in the lane I was about to enter, was a half-ton truck pulling a trailer. I twisted back into my lane as it passed us at about 130 km. Shaken, I exclaimed, "I didn't even see him!" My passenger queried, a little excitedly, "How could you not see him? He's

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huge!" "I didn't see him because I wasn't looking," I replied. I thought about that later. I had of course, been looking, but not at the right time. He was there, coming up fast, but it was only the second look, nearly not taken, that allowed me to see him. Silently, I gave thanks for such second looks, which let us see what isn't apparent at first glance. That relationship between looking and seeing is an interesting one. "It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see," Henry David Thoreau writes. Our assumption is that we look and see "reality" but sometimes it's good to re-examine that, asking what precisely are we looking at and how does that determine what we are seeing? Sound confusing? A few examples might help. One of my grandchildren turned 13 a few months ago. For about a year, she and her parents have been at loggerheads. I have had more than a few lengthy conversations with my daughter, her mother, about how terrible she and her husband are finding these

teenaged years. I hear a litany of complaints: a consistently messy bedroom that never gets cleaned, lots of attitude toward her parents and siblings, moodiness, lack of communication, laziness, etc. The list goes on and on. Her mom looks and sees one thing, a daughter she fears she is losing, a child she can't control. Here's one of the delightful tasks of grandparenting: helping the parents to take a second look. I look at my granddaughter and see not a wild teen, but a beautiful young girl on a threshold of adulthood, growing, maturing and testing her strength and her freedom. I remind my daughter of all the things she and her husband seem to be overlooking: this girl is a straight-A student, well-liked and respected by her teachers; she's an excellent, high-achieving athlete, balancing school work while playing on several different competitive sports teams; she is a warm and supportive friend, an affectionate niece to numerous aunts, uncles and a loving, kind grandchild to both sets of grandparents. She's bright, funny, articulate and a wonderful girl. When I remind my daughter of all these things, when I point out what I see when I look at my granddaughter, my daughter always sighs and agrees, "I know she is all those things. I just don't often see it!" And that's true. She needs to take that second look. A second example: I have a

friend who recently underwent cancer treatments. Each time he came back from his chemotherapy treatments at the Cancer Institute, he was full of admiration and praise for what he had experienced there. It was, he said, a place full of caring, compassionate and kind people. It was, he said, what the kingdom of God might look like and he wished that all the world was as kind and gentle as that place. I marvelled at him. Where many people, patients and loved ones accompanying them, might see a cancer hospital as a place marked by pain and suffering, he saw grace and joy. A final example: How do we "see" our church? People have looked at the Catholic Church and seen many things. Some look and see a rigid institution governed more by rules, laws and dogmatic teaching than by mercy and love. Others look and see only the scandals, abuses and coverups, a church intent on maintaining power. Some see a patriarchal and rich church, in love with pomp and ceremony, lacking sensitivity to women, the poor, the LGBT community and divorced and remarried Catholics. And, in truth, all those things are there to be seen. But perhaps one of the great gifts of Pope Francis is that he is causing people to take a second

look. From the very beginning of his papacy, his way of "being church" has caught people's attention. They are looking again and seeing other things. The eschewing of pomp and ceremony; the rejection of the trappings of power and prestige; the simplicity of life; the reclaiming the gospel as a gospel of joy and mercy; the proclamation of a God of justice who stands by the side of the poor; the upholding of creation as sacred: these too are in and of the church. They too are there to be seen if we have the eyes, if we take the second look. Eyes to see: Jesus talks about those. The second look . . . and the question, "What precisely are you looking at, and indeed, what do you need to see?"

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TAKE MORE THAN A LOOK — Whether in traffic, with our children, at the hospital or in church, we all are guilty once in awhile of looking without really seeing, writes Sandy Prather.

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Faith that is expressed through love is true faith



Liturgy and Life

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI

A Sunday school teacher asked her children, as they were on the way to church service, “And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?” One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”

Faith that expresses itself through love is true faith indeed.

The first reading of the Sunday liturgy often contains an element of prophecy. This Sunday is no different. The prophet Isaiah tell us in no uncertain terms that God will come as a saviour to rescue us. He encourages the fearful and weak in faith to truly believe in the powerful presence of God in their lives. He promises that miracles of healing will be the sign of the inbreaking of God’s presence in the world. The blind, the lame, the deaf will be healed and there will even be ecological renewal. Could he have been intuiting the new encyclical of Pope Francis?

In the gospel we see Jesus fulfilling the prophecy of the first reading. In a way that breaks open all the restrictive and protective prescriptions of the traditions of Jewish religion, Jesus touches an unclean person, a handicapped person; a man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech. He even goes beyond touch to use radical actions such as using spittle and putting his fingers in the man’s ear.

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI, Archbishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Keewatin-The Pas, is chaplain at the Star of the North Retreat House in St. Albert, Alta. He continues to live out his motto, Regnum Dei Intra Vos (the kingdom of God is among you), which is his overriding focus and passion.

I believe it is this experience of total attention, caring and compassion on the part of Jesus toward this poor, suffering marginalized individual that healed him on the spot. No one before had ever treated him with such dignity, care, reverence, as did Jesus. And the man was healed. Surely this was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah. God had come in the person of Jesus, and the messianic promise was being fulfilled.

Interestingly, Jesus orders the people not to indiscriminately spread the news of the healing. This is called the messianic secret that is especially characteristic of the gospel of Mark. Jesus did not want to be known only as a wonder worker or miracle worker. He was about so much more than that. He was about establishing the very reign of God in the hearts of those who would believe in him and surrender their lives to him. All his miracles had that underlying purpose. Perhaps that is why they focused so much on illnesses to do with seeing, hearing, speaking and walking — he never healed appendicitis!

How would those who were in authority ever understand that kingdom orientation, until they had seen the full extent of the love and compassion of the kingdom displayed on the cross and realized in the resurrection? So in the meantime, he ordered the people not to say anything about the miracle.

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 6, 2015

Isaiah 35:4-7
Psalm 146
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-17

The second reading from James, a leader of the first Christian community after Jesus ascended into heaven, demonstrates that some of the followers of Jesus understood the import of what he was all about, that the reign of God was a manifestation of a new power, one that is countercultural and not easily understood by the world. Nor was this new reality easy to accept for the early followers of Jesus. They too were tempted to think that this new religion could give them status, power, importance, and a feeling of false security based on superiority over others. James nips that temptation in the bud. Real religion is not at all about class, status or

making distinctions. James intuitis correctly that to believe in Jesus is to see him in the least, the marginalized, the poor. It is to be humble, compassionate and caring, as was Jesus.

The psalm affirms this simple truth. God not only comes to save us, but also to bring justice to the oppressed, the poor and the marginalized. The message is clear. Our God does come to save us, not in the way of the world, but in a new and marvellous way of compassion and love for the least among us. And the way God wants to do this is through us, those who believe in Jesus. We must express our faith in the same way — the way of compassion and caring for all those in need.

Jean Vanier, son of the former Governor General of Canada and founder of L’Arche, has written a book entitled Becoming Human. In that book he writes eloquently how he discovered new depths of meaning and purpose in his life by living with the mentally challenged. That experience challenged his faith and helped it to grow. Here is how he puts it:

I believed in love but for me, love meant generosity, doing good for others. At that time, I did not realize that through our love we can help others to discover their own intrinsic value; we can reveal to them their beauty and their uniqueness. Gradually, through L’Arche, I began to see the value of the communion of hearts and of a love that empowers, that helps others to stand up; a love that shows itself in humility and in trust.

The L’Arche communities have actually worked miracles in the lives of some of their members. They have done so through an unconditional love and acceptance of the mentally challenged as they are. Some who were even considered mentally insane found new life and love through the L’Arche community. The L’Arche communities shine out as a bright light of genuine faith and love in our society that so often has as its false gods possessions, prestige and power.

The eucharist we celebrate today is one way Jesus uses to love us, to remain with us, to continue to transform us today. It is an act of faith that expresses his unconditional love for us.

May our celebration today of this eucharist empower us to express our faith in Jesus through unconditional, compassionate love of all others, especially the weakest and the wounded of our world.

An obituary for a suicide should provide understanding and warmth

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



The more things change, the more they stay the same. That axiom still holds true for our understanding of suicide. Despite all the advances in our understanding, there are still a number of stigmas around suicide, one of which pertains to how we write the obituary of a loved one who dies in this

way. In writing an obituary we still cannot bring ourselves to write the word suicide: *He died by his own hand.* We still turn to euphemisms: *He died unexpectedly. Her sudden death brings great sadness.*

Suicide, in many cases, perhaps in most cases, is the result of a disease, the emotional and psycholog-

ical equivalent of cancer, stroke, or heart attack. If that is true, and it is, why then, when a loved one dies of suicide, might we not write this kind of an obituary?

We are sad to report the death of J__ D__ who died after a long and courageous struggle with emotional cancer. Jane, as you know, was born into this world with a tortured sensitivity, a gift and an affliction she grappled with from her earliest youth. She found comfort and peace at times, but was never able to fully extricate herself from some inner chaos which was always partially hidden to those around her and which medicine could not cure, counsellors could not quiet, and our affection and solicitousness could not adequately soothe.

In the end, despite her courage and our best efforts to help her, the disease was incurable. Her temperament was both her blessing and her curse. She was a gentle person, not given to ego and unhealthy self-assertion, always overly anxious not to hurt others or to claim too much space for herself. But her self-effacement was part of her disease as well. No amount of encouragement was able to ultimately take away this inchoate constriction that some-

how deprived her of her full freedom.

In the end, she died, against her will; but her life, lived with such sensitivity, was a precious gift to all who knew her, even as it sometimes brought anxiety and heart-break to those around her. Given the sad circumstance of her death, she, with her extraordinary sensitivity, would be the last person who would want us to feel guilty and second-guess ourselves about what we might have done to help prevent her death. When a disease is terminal, all the love and concern in the world can still not bring a cure. But she died inside of our love even as we feel frustrated that our love could not do more to help her.

She lives now, still, inside our love and affection, and, God willing, inside a peace and security that so much eluded her in this life. In lieu of flowers please make donations to the Mental Health Association.

Or perhaps, in another situation, it might read like this:

We are sad to report the death of J__ D__ who died unexpectedly of an emotional heart attack. His death came as shock since those closest to him had no reason to suspect that he suffered from dangerously high emotional cholesterol or that he carried inside him some congenital heart disease that had not yet manifested itself clearly and had not been medically or psychologically diagnosed. In the face of this, understandably, we find we are questioning ourselves as to why we were not more alert or attentive to his person and his health and why we did not pick

up on any symptoms manifesting themselves in his situation.

Sometimes a potentially fatal disease can lurk beneath the surface and remain unobserved until it is too late. Such is the nature, often times, of deadly heart attacks and strokes. While his death leaves us feeling raw, struggling for understanding, at loss to explain how this could happen, and needing to resist the temptation to project a certain anger at him for keeping his disease so private and hidden, we can also understand that much of his disease was hidden from him too and that the anatomy of this particular kind of death has within itself a particularly pernicious pathology which demands of its victim precisely this propensity to hide what he is undergoing from those closest to him. And this asks for our understanding: Everyone’s life is its own mystery, and not always open to outside understanding. Moreover, emotional heart attacks and strokes, like their biological equivalents, are not willed and claim their victim against his or her will.

J__ was a gentle soul who wished no one any harm and tried to do no one any harm. He, no doubt, is as grieved as we are that his unwanted death has caused so much pain. But, no doubt too, he asks for our continued love and affection and, especially, for our understanding. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to your local mental health association.

It is hard to lose loved ones to suicide, but we should not also lose the truth and warmth of their mystery and their memory.

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

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Trudeau, from the heart outward, and his critics



The Harperites and their fellow travellers in the Conservative universe have been scathing in their criticism of Justin Trudeau for saying recently that he wants to grow the economy “from the heart outwards.” After the Liberal leader made his comments during a stop at a Regina farmers’ market, the Conservative war room rushed out a news release to reinforce the party’s television attack about Trudeau not being ready. “Justin is an inexperienced politician who isn’t capable of managing Canada’s \$1.9 trillion dollar economy,” the release said. This is rich coming from a gang that has run eight consecutive deficits and presided over the hollowing out of Canada’s manufacturing and energy sectors, as well as the replace-

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ment of full-time jobs with precarious work.

For the record, here is a somewhat longer quote from Trudeau’s remarks: “We’re proposing a strong and real plan, one that invests in the middle class so that we can grow the economy not from the top down the way Mr. Harper wants to, but from the heart outwards.”

The Conservative attacks on Trudeau elicited the predictable knuckle dragging commentary in the Twitterverse where the phrase “care bears economy” was trending. The Post Media newspaper chain quickly provided its member papers an editorial dripping with venom. “A flower child from the 1960s wants to run the country,” said the editorial. “A barefoot Liberal leader wrapped in a sarong.” Then we get to the lines that bear striking resemblance to the Conservatives’ attack ads: “We need a leader, preferably one that’s all grown up,” Post Media wrote.

“Trudeau’s qualified to be a drama teacher, not prime minister.”

The Post Media empire was founded by Conrad Black beginning in 1998. Mr. Black, of course, encountered some misfortune along the way and he now serves as a columnist for the newspapers that he once owned. He sold to the Asper family who got swallowed in debt and sold in turn to a group backed by a American private-equity firm. Post Media has been thoroughly Conservative in its support but it has crossed an ethical line with its derisory anti-Trudeau editorial.

But there’s more. Todd Mackay, prairie director for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF), contributed an opinion piece to Post Media on the same day bashing Trudeau for his comments. The newspaper chain described Mackay as a “guest columnist.” Indeed, CTF functionaries are frequently guest columnists for Post Media but this was a record turnaround time.

Mackay wrote: “Did (Trudeau) mean that he’s going to grow the economy by encouraging Canadians to follow their heart and only do the kind of work they love? Maybe there will be a tax credit coming for hockey bloggers and street poets?” The writing is crude and turgid but you get the picture. It is worthy of note that over the years a good number of

CTF employees have made the short leap to becoming Conservative candidates. For example, Jason Kenny, the defence minister, was once the CTF’s president and CEO.

The ridicule aimed at Trudeau is for his comment that our hearts should rule how we approach the economy. Anyone who has taken a high school English class will know that it is entirely common to have one word represent another associated with it in meaning. The word “heart” is often used to represent words such “courage” or “commitment.” It is said, for example, that Jonathon Toews plays with a lot of “heart” or that he is the “heart and soul” of the Chicago Blackhawks dressing room. This description of Toews has never resulted in howls of ridicule from the Conservatives and their friends.

Trudeau used the word “heart” to represent “values” when it comes to running an economy and there is nothing wrong with that. In fact, he may have been attempting to echo a line from President Obama in April 2012. The president was describing America as a place where prosperity should not “trickle down from the top, but (it) grows outward from the heart of the middle class.” Of course, Post Media and the CTF, not to mention the Conservatives, are not likely to be impressed with



unequivocal call for a change, a conversion, in the way in which we live our lives and order our economy. He said, “We need to experience a conversion, or change of heart.”

There is that word again. Trudeau’s stated his phrase somewhat inelegantly, but he was talking about a values-based economy. He is being pilloried for his values by people who don’t have any.

Social media provides modern twist on an ancient story



It’s a modern twist on an ancient story.

Recounted in the Gospel of John, the ancient story is commonly referred to as “the woman caught in adultery.” Our modern-day story concerns some scandalous behaviour that occurred during a Canadian summer celebration. The ancient story goes something like this. Some Scribes and Pharisees, accompanied, I imagine, by a crowd of onlookers, brought a woman “caught in the very act of adultery” to Jesus. Their motives are questionable. Not terribly concerned about adultery, they want to trap Jesus with a tricky question. They ask him if they should stone the woman. Jesus, who is in no hurry to answer, bends down and writes in the sand before he looks at the woman’s accusers and says, “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.” Beginning with the elders, the crowd slowly disperses as

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individuals slink away in embarrassed, guilty silence. Left alone with the woman, Jesus asks her, “Does no one condemn you?” to which she replies, “No.” “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more,” responds Jesus.

The modern version of the story goes like this. A young woman and two male friends were cavorting in an alley when a Peeping Tom spotted them, filmed their tryst and posted the video online where it went viral. Viewed by several million people, the woman became the object of online shaming, while the men were applauded.

There have been a number of comments on our modern version of the story. Some contend that there has been a violation of privacy, others focus on society’s growing acceptance of online shaming, while others draw atten-

tion to the misogyny inherent in the shaming that slams the woman and high-fives the men. All of these are valid concerns that point to the precarious condition of the collective moral compass.

Let’s return to the crowd in John’s story.

A few individuals had probably whipped up the moral outrage of some in that ancient crowd. Others may have just been along for the ride, not wanting to miss out on a good spectacle. And a spectacle it was, although not the kind they were expecting.

Jesus silenced everyone, effectively asking, “Are you sinless?”

He created space for people to think about their own behaviour. With the moral compass swinging away from the woman toward their own shortcomings, people in John’s crowd had the good sense to shut up and go home.

Not so for today’s online crowd. With technology providing an instant platform to condemn someone else’s bad behaviour, our crowd was neither predisposed nor inclined toward self-reflection. And with no one but the online mob as guide, it was all too easy for people to throw stones, while claiming the moral high road for themselves.

Without even realizing it, the online crowd called its own moral credibility into question. It was, you might say, “caught in the very act” of voyeuristic tendencies, which are hardly a hallmark of integrity. In shaming, the group restricted moral conduct to the breaking of sexual taboos. They forgot that the way we treat others outside of intimacy also speaks to the content of our character.

The collective moral compass is in need of repair. No one involved in this sad and sordid affair can claim the moral high road. Everyone — the threesome, the filmmaker, and those who viewed and commented — sullied themselves with their failure to respect the innate dignity of the human person.

Our ancient story teaches that sin is not excused, but forgiven. Moral slipups are not a cause for condemnation. They are an opportunity for tweaking a wobbly moral compass and getting back on track.



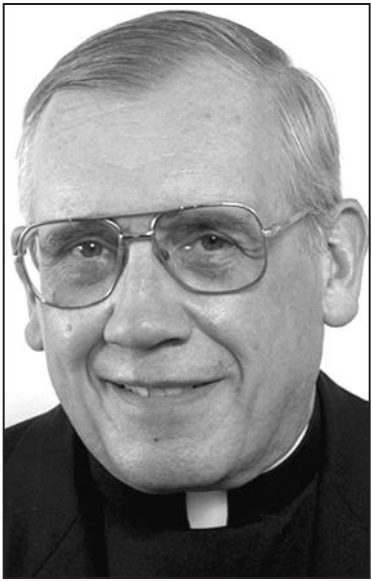
MORAL COMPASS — A recent example of online shaming indicates that our collective moral compass is in need of repair, writes Louise McEwan.

What dialogue looks like: Catholic-Jewish relations

Leading up to the October anniversary of the historic document *Nostra Aetate*, the *Prairie Messenger* is featuring “capsule biographies,” which are also posted on the “Catholic-Jewish Relations” section of the Scarboro Interfaith website (http://www.scarboromissions.ca/JC_Relations/dialogue_partners.php). By late fall there will have been featured material on numerous individuals — Jews and Christians, men and women — who have played key roles in drafting the conciliar declaration, or who have led local, national or international efforts to put *Nostra Aetate*’s vision into practice, through various forms of dialogue, action and scholarship. This is the sixth in the series.

Rev. Dr. John T. Pawlikowski, OSM

It is hard to find an English-language book on Jewish-Christian relations written in the last 30 years that does not either reference, or include a contribution from, Servite Father John Pawlikowski. A native of Chicago, born in 1940, Pawlikowski is one of the most prolific and respected contemporary writers and speakers on the Holocaust, and on the dramatic change in Christian attitudes toward Jews in the decades since the Second World War. His published work includes dozens of books and hundreds of lectures and scholarly articles. Much of Pawlikowski’s time as a university student coincided with Vatican II, and much of his energy in the years since has been dedicated to unpacking, teaching and furthering the Coun-



Rev. John T. Pawlikowski, OSM

cil’s vision regarding inter-religious dialogue. An early student of John Dominic Crossan (a leading scholar of the historical Jesus and early Christianity, who was a Servite priest at the time), Pawlikowski attributes much of his passion for Jewish-Christian dialogue to Crossan’s teaching back in the 1960s:

“In his courses at the Servite theologate, Crossan instilled in me a tremendous respect and an appreciation for Sacred Scripture and an interest in the long history of Christian anti-Semitism, which he saw as rooted in New Testament interpretation. Crossan delivered one of the earliest lectures on anti-Semitism and the New Testament in light of *Nostra Aetate* at a public series on the Second Vatican Council held at Chicago’s Loyola University . . . I was in the audience that evening as a proud student.”

And yet Pawlikowski would later come to realize that some aspects of Crossan’s biblical interpretation remained troublingly mired in earlier approaches, which exalted Christianity at the expense of Judaism: “It became apparent to me how deep-seated and yet subtle anti-Semitism remains in Christian self-understanding so that even those who staunchly oppose its outer manifestations sometimes remain unaware of its subtle dimensions. . . . Without his encouragement in the midst of the new spirit of the Vatican Council, I doubt I would have ever made Christian-Jewish relations such a central part of my academic and ministerial career.”

Ordained a priest of the Servite Order in 1967, John Pawlikowski joined the faculty of Catholic Theological Union in 1968, where today he is professor of social ethics, the director of its Cardinal Bernardin Center for Theology and Ministry, and of its Catholic-Jewish Studies program. For more than four decades, he has been a leader in Jewish-Christian dialogue on the local, national and international levels, serving as a consultant to the U.S. Catholic bishops’ Advisory Committee on Catholic-Jewish Relations, to the National Council of Churches, and serving several times on official Vatican delegations to international Jewish-Catholic dialogues. In 1980, then-President Jimmy Carter appointed him as a founding member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, an appointment that was renewed by

presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton. Pawlikowski continues to play a leading role in the Holocaust Memorial’s educational and interfaith outreach work.

In 1961, Sister Rose Thering, OP, had received her doctorate for a dissertation on the treatment of Jews and Judaism in Catholic religious textbooks. Two of her colleagues had undertaken similar studies in social studies and literature textbooks. Thering felt, however, that her findings would only be considered credible if published by a priest, and she suggested Pawlikowski for the role. His 1973 book, *Catechetics and Prejudice: How Catholic Teaching Materials View Jews, Protestants and Racial Minorities* (Paulist Press), synthesized those studies’ key findings, and shared them with a wider audience. As Thering herself later admitted: “He gives me credit in the book. However, it’s a priest who’s telling it, which at that time was acceptable . . . the findings had to come out.”

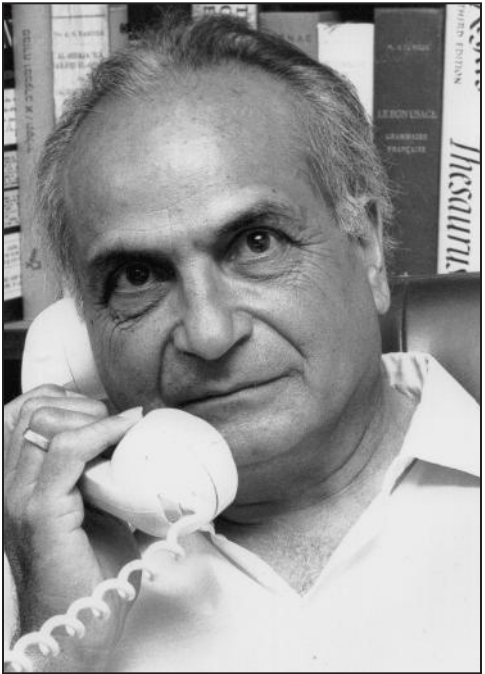
In the year 2000, Pawlikowski was elected as a vice-president of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) and he served as the ICCJ’s president from 2002 to 2008; in 2014 the ICCJ named him one of its honorary presidents in recognition of his outstanding contributions to promoting positive relations between the Jewish and Christian communities. His work was further honoured by his peers with the conferral of the Catholic Theological Society’s 2014 John Courtney Murray Award, and with an honorary doctorate from Australian Catholic University. Pawlikowski maintains a demanding schedule of teaching and lecturing worldwide, challenging his listeners to put contemporary church teaching about Jews and Judaism into practice, and exploring new and promising avenues of theological reflection and social engagement.

prior to the expulsion of Spain’s Jews in the late 15th century. Raised in a multi-religious (Jewish, Christian and Muslim) environment, he developed a curiosity about other religions (and an openness to them) from a very early age, which his family encouraged.

Having largely abandoned his religious practice during his years studying in secular French schools, it was the rise of Hitler and the Nazis, and their undisguised threats against Europe’s Jews, that led Chouraqui to devote himself to a rediscovery of his Jewish identity through studies at France’s rabbinic seminary in Paris, until it was shut down by the Nazis. He spent the remainder of the war years in the French Underground, where he was struck by the fact that religious affiliation was apparently not a consideration to most of his comrades. After the war, disillusioned and stunned by the devastation of the Holocaust, he immediately began to work with other like-minded individuals in France (such as the French Jewish historian and interfaith pioneer Jules Isaac), to find ways to address anti-Jewish attitudes through education and friendship, to ensure that such atrocities would never again be possible. In 1958, he and his wife Annette settled in Israel, where he promptly became involved in the young country’s political and social life, first in the cabinet of Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, and later as Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem for six years under Teddy Kollek, during which he was respected as a bridge-builder between Jerusalem’s cultural, linguistic and religious groups.

Scriptures, their profound connectedness to Judaism, and the Jewishness of Jesus and the early church.

In the 40 years since its initial publication, Chouraqui’s distinctive version has attracted both admirers and detractors, and earned him a number of awards and honorary doctorates. His translation (which he continued to improve



Natân André Chouraqui

and revise almost until his death in 2007) was eventually followed by a French translation of the Quran in 1990, making him probably the only person in history to have singlehandedly translated the holy books of the three Abrahamic religions — and giving him a unique insight into what they shared in common.

André Chouraqui was a tireless, vocal and articulate advocate of Jewish-Christian friendship and dialogue, and travelled widely, lecturing on that relationship and encouraging groups dedicated to building inter-religious bridges. In the late 1970s, he (as an Arabic-speaking Israeli) worked behind the scenes to lay the foundations for the eventual Camp David peace accords between Israel and its southern neighbour, Egypt, and he was a ceaseless proponent of efforts to build peace and understanding between Israelis and Palestinians. He met with politicians and religious leaders of all types, sharing with them a lifetime of inter-religious engagement and leadership, which he also distilled into three autobiographical books, and close to 30 other volumes on various historical, political and theological topics.

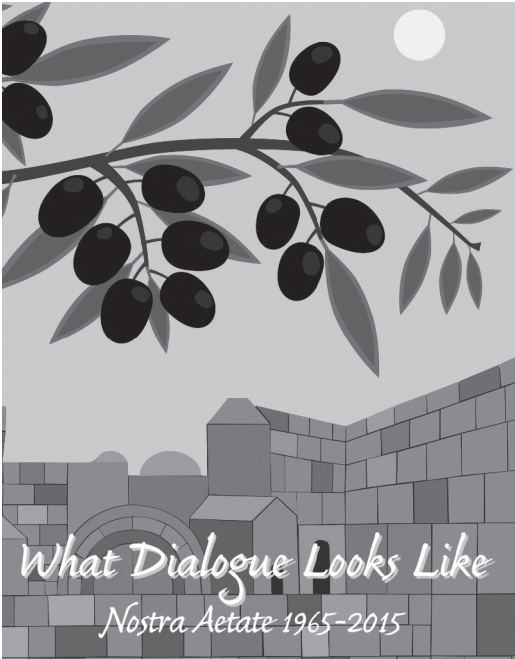
After several years of declining health, Chouraqui died in Jerusalem on July 9, 2007, and he was eulogized by a broad spectrum of Christian, Jewish and Muslim friends and colleagues (including Shimon Peres) and then-prime minister of France Nicolas Sarkozy, who praised Chouraqui’s many intellectual and interfaith accomplishments. Even eight years after his death, Chouraqui’s work continues to inspire a new generation of scholars and inter-religious activists, who look to his ground-breaking work as a model of how passionate commitment, learning and personal warmth can make possible great strides in the work he was so dedicated to — a work that is by no means finished.

OBITUARY



Peacefully on Sunday, July 26, 2015, at the Belvedere Care Centre in Coquitlam, B.C., Sister Dorothy Becotte, aged 86 years, went to her true home in heaven. Sister Dorothy was born in Richard, Sask., in 1928, and spent her young life in Saskatchewan. In 1948 she entered the Sisters of the Child Jesus and made her novitiate in Sherbrooke, Que. Dorothy served in many ministries in both Saskatchewan and British Columbia, where she lived the charism of our foundress Anne Marie Martel: a presence of love to the Father and her brothers and sisters for the awakening and deepening of the faith. She made Anne Marie’s prayers her own: “May my only pleasure be to please you.” Remaining to forever cherish her memory are the Sisters and the Associates of the Child Jesus; four sisters: Leona, Jeanne, Noela (Marcel) and Beatrice (Laurence) numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, former students and friends. Prayers were held Thursday, July 30, 2015, at 7 p.m. and the Funeral Mass on Friday, July 31, 2015 at 11 a.m. Both services were celebrated at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Coquitlam. We wish to thank all those who have journeyed with Dorothy throughout her life for their prayers, kindness, and support.

Condolences can be made online at: www.kearneyfs.com
Columbia-Bowell Funeral Chapel
604-521-4881

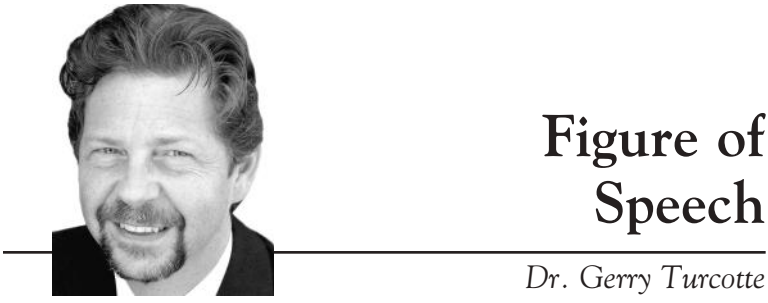


Natân André Chouraqui (1917-2007)

One of the principal architects of the modern Jewish-Christian friendship in the French-speaking world and in Israel, André Chouraqui is not as well-known today as his many contributions and achievements would seem to warrant. Chouraqui was born on Aug. 11, 1917, in Algeria, into a devout and distinguished Sephardic Jewish family which had fled to North Africa just

A good friend of many Christian religious figures, Chouraqui was personally present in Rome in September 1965 when *Nostra Aetate* was approved by the bishops at Vatican II. When he retired from politics in 1973, Chouraqui decided to dedicate himself to a long-standing dream of his: to translate the Bible into a new French version that would, he hoped, capture more of its literary and linguistic richness, but in a less “traditional” manner. His new translation, called simply *La Bible Chouraqui*, was dramatically different from previous translations, and immediately caught the imagination of many readers in the francophone world, for its rugged and unorthodox renderings, but also for the fact that he, an Israeli Jew, had chosen to translate, not merely the text of the Hebrew Scriptures (or Old Testament), but also the Greek New Testament. It was, he said, his attempt to highlight the *Jewish* context and content of the Christian

Mary: a welcoming saint to all peoples and cultures



And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars.
— Revelation 12:1

The first prayer I ever learned as a child was the Hail Mary. To this day I experience a sense of comfort and sacredness from those opening lines: “Hail Mary full of grace. The Lord is with thee.” I remember a feeling of awe when, as I backpacked through Turkey as a young man, I came across *Meryem ana*, or the House of Mary, arguably the last place she lived before her death. This is where the Apostle John is said to have finally taken her after Christ’s instructions, from the cross, to care for his mother. Not far from Ephesus, the humble dwelling, protected by Muslim caretakers, seemed to epitomize

Turcotte is president of St. Mary’s University in Calgary.

the Virgin Mary in so many ways. A nearby rusted tap flowed water believed to have miraculous properties, while the humility of her dwelling place reminded me of that modest soul, prostrate before Gabriel, who proclaims, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word” (Lk 1:38). It is fitting, too, that the first and last two mysteries that begin and end the rosary are about Mary: the annunciation, the visitation to Elizabeth, her assumption into heaven, and her coronation as Queen of Heaven and Earth. In August, of course, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption, an observation that dates back to the sixth century. Written references to the assumption of Mary’s body into heaven,



Paul Paproski, OSB

COMFORTER OF THE AFFLICTED — *Consolatrix afflictorum* (Comforter of the Afflicted) is the inscription on the statue of Mary at Mount Carmel, 27 kilometres west from St. Peter’s Abbey. “For all of the majesty of Mary,” writes Gerry Turcotte, “I have always been most comforted by her accessibility. I have never encountered a story, an image or a biblical verse where Mary is not somehow reaching out to all who need her.”

however, date back to the fourth century! The event celebrates her actual bodily assumption into heaven, whole and without decay, in defiance of the mortality that

applies to all of us, but that also reminds us of the biblical promise of resurrection. The Virgin Mary is the patron saint of our university, and in this

sense there is a special quality to our Patron’s Day Mass, and the opportunity to celebrate our namesake. Indeed, the St. Mary’s University logo, adopted in 2004, is a star comprising four letter Ms representing her simplicity, clarity, purity and confidence. The logo holds a central place on the university’s coat of arms, and it adorns our buildings. In an odd way, the logo is both modest in its simplicity but also bold in its declaration: these are the values that underpin our Catholic institution. For all of the majesty of Mary, her place as the most supreme among all the saints, her exalted status as Queen of Peace — for all of this, I have always been most comforted by her accessibility. I have never encountered a story, an image or a biblical verse where Mary is not somehow reaching out to all who need her. Mary is always welcoming: of all people; of all cultures. She is even the only woman to have an entire chapter, or Sura, named after her in the Quran (in fact, she is mentioned more often in the Quran than in the New Testament). For me the Magnificat, the most ancient of the Marian hymns, summarizes all that is most powerful about Mary: spoken from her own lips, it announces God’s favour, bestowed upon the “lowliness of his handmaiden,” and it reminds us that there is always an advocate for us here on earth: to intercede, to uplift and to nurture.

Late-August reflections on the sweet side of summer

By Helen Mourre

The smell of the first beets from the garden simmering on the stove for supper tells me that summer is in full swing. We’ve already had a feed of yellow beans and soon there will be new potatoes and cucumbers and tomatoes. The psalm this past Sunday contained this beautiful line. *You open your hand to feed us, Lord, you satisfy all our needs* (Ps 145). Despite a challenging spring that included drought, hail, poor germination and frost, my garden is spectacular. While dry conditions have taken their toll on crops in the surrounding area, with a little perseverance, some extra watering and help from above, we are enjoying the fruits of our labours.

Mourre is a freelance writer from Rosetown, Sask.

As I relax in an Adirondack chair and wait for the barbecue to heat up, I bask in the gift of summer, a glass of chilled pinot grigio enhancing my experience. I survey the backyard. An expanse of lush green lawn borders the garden where a row of nasturtiums is so luxurious it actually forms a hedge, the yellow and orange blossoms hidden amongst the dense foliage. Fuchsia and white petunias, superbellis and ivy cascade like waterfalls over the sides of huge pots that mark the corners of the garden. The rows of lettuce, carrots, beans and potatoes are planted so close together they create a tangle of green, broken only by tall sunflowers, their happy faces declaring: It’s summer! Here, where I sit under the shade of the ornamental cherry tree, I am soothed by the hum of insects and the trickle of water from the rustic fountain that is surrounded by

hostas with leaves the size of dinner plates. Still, I realize there is work to be done in the shade bed. My daughter keeps telling me, “It needs more colour, Mom.” In the bed by the north fence, the pale pink rose blooms endlessly, while a new rose specimen called “campfire” (named after a painting by Tom Thomson) makes a delightful contrast with its coral, deep pink, and gold colour combination. It really does resemble the final burning coals of a campfire. I am really excited this year about my coleus container gardens (don’t tell the begonias). Coleus foliage used to be grown only in shade, but the newer cultivars can actually withstand partial sun or even full sun. Plant breeders realized the latent ability of coleus plants to produce new and exciting cultivars with improved versatility and speeded up the process, the result being an endless variety of coleus — over 1,400 specimens and counting. I have several pots this year filled exclusively with these exotic plants — electric lime, henna, inky fingers, to name a few. Of course, each gardening year has its disappointments. I lost many begonias this year and I don’t understand why — usually they thrive on my shady patio. I water them too much? Were the pots too big? Was it too cold? The apple harvest will be scant. Will I have enough for a pie or two, a few jars of sauce? The short but fierce hail storm in the spring just as the trees were blooming had a disastrous effect. The nicotiana in the north bed seem stunted even after multiple applications of fertilizer, regular watering and weeding. I remind myself that every plant has its own unique needs of sunlight, water and soil.



Tiffany Banow

SWEET SUMMER — You open your hand to feed us, Lord, you satisfy all our needs (Ps 145). Helen Mourre shares the gifts of her summer garden.

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Everything old is new again, even riding a bike

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



In the midst of a long bout of depression, the low-grade kind that gnaws at your bones until you have no shape, I was feeling like a tattered quilt — old skin draped over the sofa. One day Leigh, my Ottawa daughter who sometimes bikes the Ottawa River Pathway to work, suggested I take the bike out for a spin to change my routine. Janice and Allison seconded the suggestion.

We have a bike but I hadn't been on it for well over a year, and then only to pick up a DQ sundae

a block-and-a-half away. We'd recently tuned it up and replaced the hard narrow seat because I was going to offer it to our son Gerard who could use it to commute to work in the city.

A few evenings went by before I thought about the conversation with Leigh again. I unfolded myself from the sofa and biked around a couple of streets.

The effect was almost immediate. The breeze pushing against my face dispelled parasites from my head, freeing up memories.

Summer of '66. I was about to turn eight and there was a turquoise CCM bike in the window of the hardware store on Central Avenue. My parents and I walked by it every time we went to the OK for groceries. My dad was going to university at the time and I had three younger brothers, so even at my young age I knew the likelihood of my first two-wheeler was only a dream. Yet one day Dad took me for a walk and we ended up at the hardware store. Dad told me to sit on the bike in the window to try it out for size. I could hardly breathe. Back then excitement could charge in my body like an electrical storm. We wheeled the bike home, only a few blocks down, but my elation was short-lived when I realized I could not simply jump on and cruise down the street.

Dad walked in endless circles on the grass in the backyard that

summer, holding me upright while I struggled to maintain balance. It might have been my first indication that finding balance was going to be a lifelong challenge.

But every kid learns to ride a bike and I was no exception.

In high school there was another turquoise CCM, but no girl's bike for me this time. It was a 10-speed racer with curled down handlebars covered in white tape. I was tough. I was cool. One of our friends had a green glider with a carrier basket in front and a wide seat, and I secretly envied her ease with looking so dorky. My cool uncomfortable bike spent more time in the garage than it did on the street. When I left home to attend university I forgot all about biking.

Six years later I received my very first Mother's Day present, five months before the birth of our first child. It was a red bike. That summer I felt elegant upon the high seat, my neat little belly nestled on my lap as I drove and tiny baby Janice rocking within as the pedals went round. It's probably why Janice is so at home on a bike, even in dresses and heels.

comatose. Like my cat Linus when he hears an unfamiliar sound at the door, I hide from adventure.

Fear and depression ride in tandem. If you let them, they'll conspire to keep you off the road, making you believe you're too old, too tired, too . . . nothing.

Recently CBC Radio's Wiretap announced the end of its 11-year run with a video on how to age gracefully. It features a series of people, from young to old, who share their wisdom. The first kid tells us that training wheels are for babies. "Just let go already." She's right, and not just about training wheels.

Rather than let go we grasp — at schedules, intensity, reps and mandatory maximums. Exercise in a gym with no windows on a sunny summer day. Walk the route with a pedometer and grim determination. Ten thousand steps a day.



M. Weber

LET GO ALREADY — “Just let go already” is good advice. Riding a bike is a good start.

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Court ruling changed the ‘ears of hip hop’

Continued from page 10

built tracks by pulling song samples apart and putting them back together in their own image. Those songs were almost familiar but at the same time unrecognizable. It was a new way to make music, and a new art form: sound collage.

The trouble was that this new art form, while popular, was really flouting copyright law. Excursions, for example, samples four different songs, and it's pretty stripped down compared to a lot of hip hop tracks of the era. Public Enemy's Fight the Power has about 20 samples. So far as I know, neither group got permission for any of them. That was fine for a while, but in 1991, the landmark case Grand Upright Music vs. Warner Brothers Music ended hip hop's "Wild West" era. Without any precedents one way or the other, the judge ruled that sampling was

stealing. That ruling irrevocably changed the ears of hip hop. People mark the end of the Golden Age of Hip Hop in different places, but in most historians' view, it follows relatively quickly on the heels of that lawsuit.

I sometimes wonder what hip hop would have become if that ruling had been different — if a burgeoning art form hadn't been crippled so early in the game. Oh, people still use samples now, but not so many and not so well. The use of each one has to be weighed against the potential cost. I don't profess to be an expert on hip hop, either historical or contemporary. I think it's safe to say, though, that it would be difficult if not impossible for an album like Low End Theory or Fear of a Black Planet (Public Enemy) or Three Feet High and Rising (De La Soul) to emerge these days. Back in 1991, a judge ruled that a corporation's musical property was more important than an individual's expression.

There are no doubt many eloquent things to say on the unfairness of that, never mind the fact that it seems no coincidence that a predominantly African American art form was cut off at the knees by a predominantly white establishment. Instead though, I'll quote the man who brought us to this conversation in the first place. As Phife Dawg would say, "what is this?"

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Saving our cultural heritage

The destruction of ancient artifacts in Syria and Iraq is very distressing news. The area has some of our civilization’s most ancient sites — sites treasured by all civilized people. The Islamic State, unfortunately, sees this heritage differently.

In the past week, IS militants demolished the ancient temple of Baalshamin in the Syrian city of Palmyra after laying explosives around it. IS also beheaded Khaled al-Asaad, an 81-year-old antiquities scholar who had dedicated his life to overseeing the ruins of Palmyra, one of the Middle East’s most spectacular archaeological sites. They hung his bloodied body from a pole in the town’s main square.

A few days earlier, the militants bulldozed the 1,500-year-old St. Eliane Monastery, near Qaryatain in central Syria. It housed a fifth-century tomb and served as a major pilgrimage site. In the past year IS fighters have destroyed mosques, churches, ancient statues and archaeological sites, causing extensive damage to the ancient cities of Nimrud, Hatra and Dura Europos in Iraq.

IS extremists in Syria and Iraq are engaged in the “most brutal, systematic” destruction of world heritage since the Second World War, the head of the UN cultural agency said Aug. 21. UNESCO chief Irina Bokova told The Associated Press that recent attacks have stoked fears

that IS is accelerating its campaign to demolish and loot heritage sites.

The destruction is reminiscent of the burning of books in Nazi Germany in 1933. On May 10 students from the Wilhelm Humboldt University, all members of right-wing student organizations, transported books from their university library and from other collections to the Franz Joseph Platz. There they tossed thousands of books into a huge bonfire. The frenzy, interrupted by the incantation of Nazi songs and a speech by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, went on for hours and was repeated in other cities.

It is also reminiscent of the destruction of pagan books and statues in the fifth century, as Christianity gained ascendancy in Europe.

During the Dark Ages in Europe, it was often monasteries that preserved the books of pagan Greek and Latin authors. They built libraries and were more tolerant of the cultural heritage of the past, whether Christian or not.

That tradition continues today.

While studying at St. John’s Abbey and University in the 1960s, I recall the establishment then of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML). Initially, it was founded to microfilm books in European monastic libraries as a response to the loss of manuscripts and books during two world wars. HMML expanded its focus in 2003 to include manuscripts from other Eastern Christian

traditions and ancient Islamic manuscripts. The new technology of digitization and the Internet has expanded both the quality and availability of its manuscripts for scholars.

The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library’s mission is to identify, digitally photograph, catalogue and archive endangered manuscripts belonging to threatened communities around the world, according to its newsletter. Having formed partnerships with over 560 libraries and archives, HMML has photographically preserved over 140,000 manuscript books from Europe, Africa, the Middle East and India. That includes 40,000,000 handwritten pages.

It is now expanding into Lebanon, Iraq, Jerusalem, Egypt, Mali and Malta.

The recent destruction of ancient artifacts and books by IS makes the work of HMML all the more relevant and important today. Since 2009, HMML and its partners have digitized over 5,000 manuscripts in Iraq. From 2004 - 2012, HMML digitized almost 3,000 manuscripts in Syria until conditions made further work impossible.

“No one knows when and if the situation in Syria and Iraq will improve,” said Rev. Columba Stewart, OSB, executive director of the HMML. “We are all grateful that HMML was able to begin work several years before these most recent conflicts.”

More information about their invaluable projects is available at www.hmml.org — PWN

Canadian bishops issue Federal Election Guide on voting responsibly

Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Canadian Catholics are being called upon as citizens to exercise their right to vote. The church encourages and reasserts its belief in “the political freedom and responsibility of citizens.” By exercising their right to vote, citizens fulfil their duty of choosing a government and at the same time send a clear signal to the candidates being presented by the political parties.

Political candidates are citizens too. In addition, they assume responsibility for the well-being of the public. Their commitment and dedication are a generous contribution to society’s common good. Indeed, the purpose of the political community is the common good. What is the common good? It is

“the sum of those conditions of . . . social life whereby people, families and associations more adequately and readily may attain their own perfection.”

Examples of the application of Catholic moral and social teaching

The following are examples of how Catholic moral and social teaching is to be applied. They do not constitute a political platform but a magnifying glass by which to analyze and evaluate public policies and programs. What do the political parties say about these issues? What positions are the candidates taking?

1. Respect for life and human dignity: from conception to natural death

Choosing life means:

- Demanding the right to life for even the smallest among us — the human embryo and the fetus — since they too belong to the human family, while also providing assistance to pregnant women facing difficulties;
- Respecting the life and dignity of the dying, accompanying them until their natural death and promoting greater access to palliative care;
- Raising our voices against practices like physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, which deny the intrinsic value of human life, endanger the lives of vulnerable people, and threaten to morally compromise medical professionals;
- Protecting all persons from being exploited by biomedical technologies;

- Rejecting capital punishment;
- Defending and caring for individuals in all circumstances, beginning with the poorest and most vulnerable;
- Supporting and accompanying individuals with disabilities, the elderly, the sick, the poor and those who are suffering.

2. Building a more just society

The desire to create a more just society includes:

- Ensuring respect for the freedom of conscience and religion of all, in private, public, and professional life;
- Standing in solidarity and dialogue with indigenous communities, and responding to the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission by providing adequate funding for Aboriginal education, health and housing;
- Adopting measures to reduce poverty;
- Introducing equitable fiscal policies for companies and individuals;
- Ending excessive, unjustified spending;
- Promoting access to safe, affordable housing for destitute families;
- Coming to the aid of the homeless;
- Fighting child poverty;
- Ensuring a basic income that is sufficient for the basics of food and housing;
- Facilitating access to drinking water for communities that are lacking.

- Providing access to quality hospital care for all;
- Supporting the reunification of immigrant and refugee families;
- Facilitating the recognition of the skills of immigrants;
- Taking actions against human trafficking;
- Promoting the rehabilitation of criminals through restorative justice and ensuring support for their victims;
- Protecting people from addictions to drugs and gambling.

4. Canada in the world: providing leadership for justice and peace

Believing in justice and peace includes:

- In developing nations, striving to reduce poverty and hunger and supporting universal primary education and improved health care;
- Choosing policies that promote dialogue leading to peace rather than confrontation among nations;
- Working to eliminate nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and encouraging strict worldwide controls on the sales of small arms and personal weapons;
- Honouring international treaties on human rights;
- Protecting the dignity of immigrants and refugees when handling their files;
- Protecting the rights of seasonal workers from abroad;
- Combating business and industry practices that have little regard for workers’ rights and dignity, including holding to account Canadian commercial interests that commit abuses abroad.



CNS/Darrin Zammit Lupi, Reuters

RED CROSS WORKER GIVES INSTRUCTIONS TO MIGRANTS IN SICILY — A Red Cross worker gives instructions to migrants following their arrival on-board an Italian Coast Guard vessel in the Sicilian harbour of Palermo, Italy, Aug. 20. For World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2016, Pope Francis has chosen the theme: “Migrants and refugees challenge us. The response of the Gospel of mercy,” the Vatican announced Aug. 20.

3. The person and the family

Promoting the integrity of the person and family includes:

- Promoting a better balance between familial and professional responsibilities;
- Ensuring pay equity between men and women;
- Guaranteeing sufficient basic income for an adequate quality of life;

5. A healthy country in a healthy environment

Protecting the environment means, among other things:

- Implementing responsible stewardship practices for the environment;
- Honouring international agree-

— JUDGMENT, page 19

Ecological crisis demands change

Continued from page 1

arch at the public presentation June 18 of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, had suggested there that all Christians join in prayer Sept. 1.

"This would mark a step toward further closeness among them," he had said.

Pope Francis said Christians want to make their special contribution to safeguarding creation, but to do that they must rediscover the spiritual foundations of their approach to earthly realities, beginning with an acknowledgment that "the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or

from nature," but lived in communion with all worldly realities.

The ecological crisis, he said, is a summons "to a profound spiritual conversion" and to a way of life that clearly shows they are believers.

Quoting his encyclical, he said, "living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."

The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Francis said, will be a time for individuals and communities to "reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful

handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live."

The pope asked Koch to consult with and work with the Catholic Church's ecumenical partners and the World Council of Churches to make sure the prayer day becomes a sign of Christians' commitment to work together to safeguard creation "in order to be more credible and effective."

He entrusted to the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace the task of working with Catholic bishops' conferences and environmental organizations to publicize and co-ordinate the specifics of the celebration.

"I invoke upon this initiative the intercession of Mary, mother of God, and of St. Francis of Assisi, whose Canticle of the Creatures inspires so many men and women of goodwill to live in praise of the Creator and with respect for creation," he said.



PM

My heart is human

My heart is only human
a creation strung unbroken
from a throne to poor man's table
and then hung up again
wanting wine to go with bread
my longing makes me
unaware of gold already there,

mixed with dust

By Dayna Mazzuca

Letters to the editor

We welcome your response to articles published in the *Prairie Messenger*. Two-way communication assures everyone of a better exposure to the truth.

We cannot publish any letters to the editor unless you give us your full name, your address and your telephone number. (*It is especially important to remember this if you are sending your comments by email*).

Due to limited space we ask you to keep your letters short — 300 to 350 words maximum. The *Prairie Messenger* reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space requirements and newspaper style.

Use judgment when you are voting

Continued from page 18

ments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

- Reducing our dependence on

fossil fuels;

- Taking steps to control urban pollution;
- Introducing forms of transportation that are less harmful to

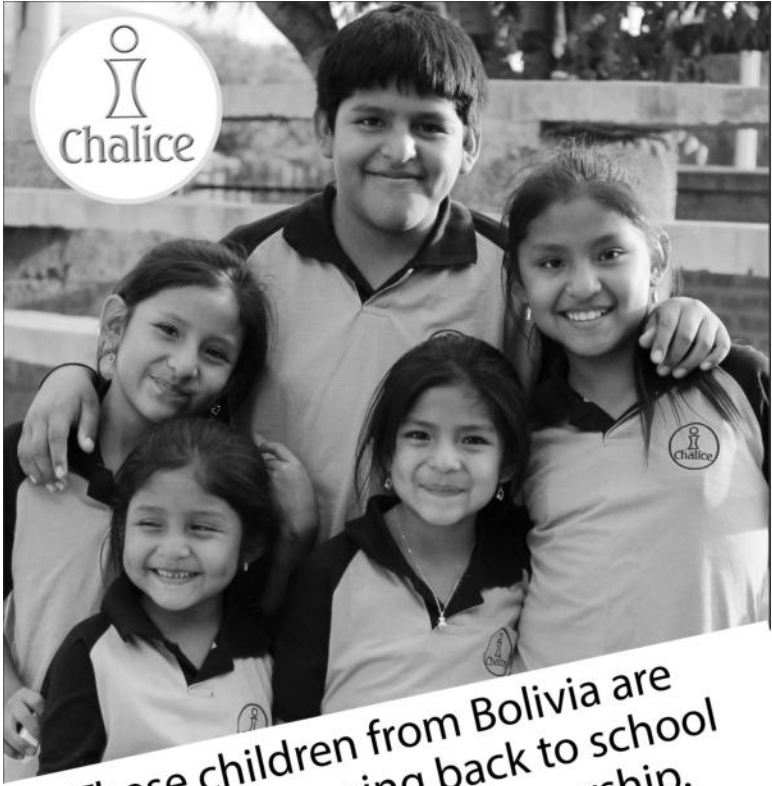
the health of citizens and the environment;

- Encouraging companies to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- Developing natural resources without harming the quality of life in communities;
- Protecting water as an essential resource;
- Bequeathing a sustainable and healthy environment to future generations.

Voting means using your judgment

Exercising the right to vote means making enlightened and well-thought-out judgments about the choices available. There are times, however, when these choices may prove very difficult. The church reminds us that "in this context, it must be noted also that a well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law in which the fundamental content of faith and morals is replaced by the introduction of proposals differing from this content or opposing it."

It is a sign of a healthy community when informed and responsible citizens engage in an ongoing dialogue on major social issues with their political leaders. This is precisely the kind of community we should strive to support and develop. No less is expected of us, since we are all called to be truly responsible for one another, especially for the most vulnerable members of our society.



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"Prayshop": "Belonging To The Universe: An Exploration of Ecological Spirituality and The New Cosmology"

Thursday, Nov. 5, 7 p.m. – Saturday, Nov. 7, 4 p.m.

"Prayshop" (includes lunches)

** \$135

Accommodation and Thursday supper add \$100

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Dr. Alexandra Kovats, csjp

"The Universe is the primary revelation of the divine, the primary scripture, the primary locus of divine-human communion." Thomas Berry

We live in an amazing Universe. Our spirituality, our way of relating to Mystery, is relational. It involves all our relationships. There is a growing awareness among us that all life is interdependent. Mystics, past and present as well as many scientists today, acknowledge this reality from their particular perspectives. During this "prayshop", we will explore the story of the Universe based on insights from the new scientific evolutionary cosmology. Special attention will be given to the three cosmic principles of differentiation, subjectivity and communion and their implications for living an awakened spiritual life. The first part of this "prayshop" will ground us in this new story of the Universe and the three cosmic principles. We will engage with stories, poetry, and music to enhance our fuller understanding of this story. The second part of this "prayshop" will look at the practical implication of this Universe story and the three cosmic principles for our daily living and for our spirituality.

Alexandra Kovats, csjp, PhD, has served in formation and leadership in the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace of which she is a member. She holds a PhD in Ecological Spirituality from The Union Institute and University, Cincinnati and is well-known in the United States and internationally as a teacher and lecturer on ecological and creation spirituality, spirituality and cosmology, eco-feminism and religious life. Currently involved in the ministry of spiritual direction and retreat facilitation, Dr. Kovats is Adjunct Professor in the field of spirituality for the School of Theology and Ministry (STM) at Seattle University.

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Coptic Catholics warn of loss of personal freedoms

By Jonathan Luxmoore

OXFORD, England (CNS) — Egypt’s Catholic Church has welcomed tough new anti-terrorism laws, but warned the military-backed government not to violate personal freedoms.

“Recent bomb attacks have shown terrorism is a major problem here, so we really need strong laws to help the police and

Interior Ministry combat it,” said Rev. Hani Bakhoum Kiroulos, patriarchal vicar of the Coptic Catholic Church.

“But such laws must be applied in ways that protect personal freedoms. Although the Catholic Church does not intervene on specific laws, especially when they’re already passed, it will go on repeating this message,” he said.

Human rights groups criticized

the laws, which prescribe tough penalties against citizens judged to be supporting terrorism or spreading propaganda. Amnesty International warned the legislation would expand the use of emergency powers and restrict freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Under the new laws, special courts will impose the death penalty or 25-year sentences on mili-

tants convicted of leading or financing terrorist groups. Military officers and police using force will be given additional protection, while media workers deemed to incite violence will face jail sentences and heavy fines for wrongly reporting militant attacks.

In an Aug. 21 interview with Catholic News Service, Kiroulos said a careful reading of the laws suggested “responsible media” would not be restricted.

“There is a serious problem with some media here, which simply inflate the truth,” he said. “Those which respect the media law won’t have a problem with these new measures, which will only affect those clearly and deliberately

engaging in false reporting.”

“The main problem here isn’t between Muslims and Christians, but between the Egyptian people and terrorists,” he added. “The government is already doing much to tackle this, but needs to do more.”

The new laws follow a two-year crackdown on the now-outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, which has seen at least 1,200 members condemned to death in mass trials, although no executions have been carried out, according to UN monitors. Hundreds of soldiers and police have also been killed in militant attacks in Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula. Nearly 30 people were injured by an Aug. 20 bomb blast in Cairo; Islamic State claimed responsibility.

Catholics address same-sex attraction

By Mike Stechschulte

PLYMOUTH, Mich. (CNS) — Almost everyone knows someone who experiences same-sex attraction, and faithful Catholics are often at a loss for how to engage a friend or loved one who declares he or she is gay, said speakers at a three-day international conference at the Inn at St. John’s in Plymouth.

Nearly 400 people attended the

the conference with the Archdiocese of Detroit and Our Sunday Visitor.

Rev. Paul Check, Courage’s executive director, said when it comes to explaining and defending the church’s teaching on same-sex attraction, “our best ambassadors are our members.”

Check said in the run-up to the 2014 synod of bishops on the family, when secular attention was at its

highest over the issue of same-sex attraction in the church, “one voice was missing: the voice of the person for whom same-sex attractions are a lived reality and who also believes that what the church teaches on the matter of homosexuality is true and ultimately leads to peace.”

One of those voices, Dan Mattson, a Midwestern man who speaks often in Catholic media about his struggles with same-sex attraction and eventual re-conversion to the church, acknowledged the biggest question he’s had to face is why God allowed him to feel attracted to other men.

After years of struggling to reconcile his faith and desires, Mattson said, his “world was turned upside down” when he realized his same-sex attraction could instead be viewed as a cross to help him achieve sanctity.

“This has become my central conviction about why God allows men and women to live with confusion about sexuality: To be seen correctly, same-sex attraction must always be viewed through the lens of suffering,” Mattson told those gathered from 78 dioceses in 34 states and six countries. “It must be viewed as connected with the cross of Christ.”

During the conference, masses were celebrated by Detroit Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins and Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Michael J. Byrnes.

Many speakers acknowledged the Catechism of the Catholic Church’s teaching that feelings of same-sex attraction in themselves

are not sinful, and that people with same-sex attraction must be treated with compassion and sensitivity.

Timothy Lock, a licensed clinical psychologist from Brookfield, Connecticut, said it’s “striking” how many of his patients had been treated with disrespect and insensitivity throughout their lives, and stressed that the condition of same-sex attraction is difficult and deserves a listening ear.

Lock pointed to studies showing much higher rates of anxiety, mood disorders, substance abuse and suicide attempts among gay men and women, even in countries such as the Netherlands that are generally accepting of homosexuality.

“We need to listen to their experiences and not get hung up on perceptions, but hear their heart,” he said.

Three religious leaders — including a Catholic archbishop — have been honoured for promoting interfaith reconciliation in the conflict-torn Central African Republic.

“This award doesn’t belong to us,” Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga of Bangui, president of the Central African bishops’ conference, told the British Catholic aid agency CAFOD.

“It honours the dedication of ordinary people from all walks of life who have refused to be overwhelmed by the violence and instead, with brave hearts, go and talk peace and reconciliation in their communities,” the archbishop said in a statement shortly before receiving the 2015 Sergio Vieira De Mello Prize in Geneva. He shares the award with Imam Omar Kobine Layama, president of his country’s Islamic Council, and Rev. Nicolas Guerekoyamene-Gbangou of the Evangelical Alliance.

A De Mello Foundation press release said the award, commemorating a Brazilian UN diplomat killed in an August 2003 bomb attack in Iraq, was intended “to draw world attention to unnoticed efforts by an individual, group or organization having done something special and unique.”

It added that the three religious leaders had worked via their Interfaith Peace Platform, founded in 2013, “to reconcile religious groups in the hope of a lasting peace,” while promoting dialogue to prevent religious violence.

Year of Mercy hymn

By Cindy Wooden

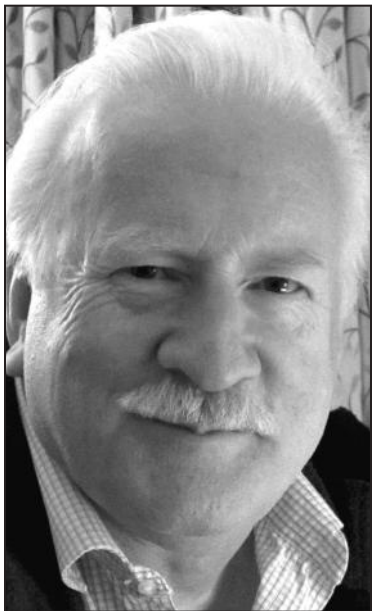
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Paul Inwood and 89 other composers around the world had two months to submit their compositions of the music for the official hymn of Year of Mercy.

Inwood, a British composer whose work is a staple of many parish liturgies across North America, said he learned in June that his music was chosen and that the Sistine Chapel Choir was about to record it. The only problem was, they wanted a little extra musical flair.

“I spent the next 24 hours writing a brass prelude and interludes and a choral coda” for the ending, he said Aug. 6 in a telephone interview with Catholic News Service.

The hymn’s title and refrain, *Misericordes sicut Pater*, is the official Latin theme of the Year of Mercy and translates to Merciful Like the Father.

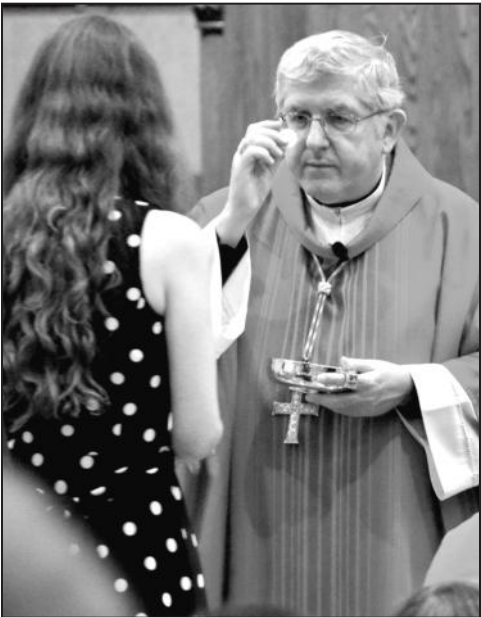
The Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, which is charged with co-ordinat-



CNS/Paul Inwood

Paul Inwood

ing the Year of Mercy events, released the hymn Aug. 6, posting the text and music on its website — www.im.va — and posting the Sistine Chapel Choir’s recording of the hymn in Italian on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/-N0Dto5s9fg>.



CNS/Mike Stechschulte

CARDINAL COLLINS — Cardinal Thomas Collins of Toronto offers communion to a conference participant Aug. 10 at the Inn at St. John’s in Plymouth, Mich., during the opening mass of a three-day conference exploring the Catholic Church’s ministry to those living with same-sex attraction.

Aug. 10 - 12 conference, Love One Another as I Have Loved You: Accompanying Our Brothers and Sisters with Same-Sex Attraction, designed for clergy, pastoral staff and others who minister or teach on the topic of same-sex attraction.

“We want to do the right thing. We want to speak the truth in love,” said Janet Smith, professor of moral theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and the conference’s chief organizer. “We want to be loving, and we want to be truthful. How do we do that?”

Talks seeking to answer that question were given by a wide range of experts, from Catholic moral theologians to psychologists, doctors and pastors.

Courage International, an apostolate that supports those with same-sex attraction in living a lifestyle of chastity, was co-host of

his same-sex attraction could instead be viewed as a cross to help him achieve sanctity.

“This has become my central conviction about why God allows men and women to live with confusion about sexuality: To be seen correctly, same-sex attraction must always be viewed through the lens of suffering,” Mattson told those gathered from 78 dioceses in 34 states and six countries. “It must be viewed as connected with the cross of Christ.”

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CNS/Mike Blake, Reuters

PROTEST PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINIC — Protesters carry signs outside a Planned Parenthood clinic in Vista, Calif., Aug. 3. Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley, head of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee, urged U.S. senators to take the federal money that goes to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and instead fund women’s health care providers that do not promote abortion. Planned Parenthood has come under fire recently with the release of undercover videos showing physicians and others associated with the organization describing the harvesting of fetal tissue and body parts during abortions at their clinics.

We plant seeds that will flower as results in our lives, so best to remove the weeds of anger, avarice, envy and doubt, that peace and abundance may manifest for all.

— Dorothy Day