



Apostolic nuncio

The Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, visited three Saskatchewan dioceses this month, and made a deep impression in each.
— pages 1, 3 and 6

Women and the church

When Archbishop Paul-André Durocher raised the question of ordaining female deacons during the first full day of the synod on the family, he stepped into one of the most contentious and complex struggles in the church — full participation of women in all aspects of their faith life, their church, writes Michael Swan.
— page 5

100 years

Regina marked 100 years as an archdiocese Oct. 7 with a special mass concelebrated by three archbishops as well as archdiocesan priests.
— page 6

Restorative justice

Rather than asking what law was broken, who broke it, and what punishment is suitable for the state to mete out, restorative justice focuses on the persons and relationships that are harmed when a crime is committed.
— page 7

Mountaintops to Mars

If summer is for superheroes, sequels, and easygoing comedies, fall is when Hollywood producers start bringing out weightier fare in anticipation of awards season, writes Gerald Schmitz. He reviews four deserving of notice.
— page 11

Stigma of suicide

Ron Rolheiser, OMI, discusses three books on suicide and reaffirms the fact that the stigmas that persist must be challenged.
— page 13

Nuncio in Prince Albert communities

By Paula Fournier

PRINCE ALBERT — “Only when we love do we have the capacity to see the abundance of life surrounding us. The beautiful land here in Saskatchewan is an expression of love for me: the trees, the sky, it’s a sign of love for me,” said the Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, during his homily at the first mass shared in the Diocese of Prince Albert at John Paul II Collegiate School in North Battleford Oct. 4. This mass marked the beginning of the nuncio’s three-day journey across the diocese.

Approximately 600 religious, priests, parishioners, parents and teachers from the local deanery gathered in the school gymnasium for mass where Bonazzi spoke on love, faith and family life. He called love “an unending journey which starts every day,” and underlined the joys of family life.

Following the mass, the congregation gathered at the Knights of

Columbus Hall for lunch, prepared by the North Battleford Catholic Women’s League. Bonazzi, happily surprised at the large gathering, recalled Pope Francis’ commonly used intention, asking those gathered to pray for him, promising he would pray for them in return.

The following day, the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary in Prince Albert held a mass in their chapel. Those in attendance included students, board members, trustees, principals, and representatives from four Catholic school divisions.

In his homily, the nuncio spoke of a cloudy day in Lithuania a few years earlier. Feeling under the weather, he headed to the chapel to pray. He spoke aloud and asked Jesus what he could do for him that day. He heard a voice in his head, asking, “Luigi, what are you saying? You are asking what you have to do for me? Please try to see what I am doing for you.” He said he wished for each person present to feel the same thing.

“In a new way . . . you open your eyes and you realize the life of God (is) surrounding you, entering and fulfilling you.”

After the mass, Bonazzi had lunch with the sisters, welcoming each one specially, giving a blessing and a smile. He spoke to them in French about how much importance he places on religious life. He spoke on humility, telling them how he thanked God, even for the times he made mistakes, and how it helped him to be more humble and attentive to others.

The nuncio’s next stop was École St. Anne School, where a group of children were waiting to welcome him. A meeting among four Catholic school divisions in Saskatchewan — including Lloydminster, Saskatoon, North Battleford and Prince Albert — took place in the newly built school’s gym.

Representatives from each division made a presentation describing their demographics, as well as the changing family structures and

dynamics that challenged them as they strove to engage families in their communities. Agreeing that problems arising today are not those of 10 years ago, the nuncio encouraged each of the divisions to turn to Jesus to help them with the problems of today, assuring them of his continued support.

He affirmed that he supported them in their mission. He then blessed the school’s Bible and a rosary for each guest. Later that evening, a mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince Albert was packed full. The large choir included many youth from St. Mary High School.

During his homily, Bonazzi spoke about Jesus, the Good Samaritan. “When we turn to Jesus, he frees us with his charity. My life is like the Good Samaritan. Who has shown more mercy? Mercy is the very foundation the church lies on. Nothing in our mission and witness can be lacking in mercy; it must show the mercy of the Good Samaritan.”

He also spoke of the jubilee year, the Year of Mercy, which begins on this year’s feast of the Immaculate Conception Dec. 8.

“‘Mercy is the very foundation of the church’s life,’” he quoted from Pope Francis’ encyclical. “All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. Everything the church does should be to show the mercy of the Good Samaritan.”

A wine and cheese social followed, catered by staff at the Prince Albert Diocesan Centre. St. Mary High School principal Mark Phaneuf acted as emcee for the evening, introducing Prince Albert mayor Greg Dion and other dignitaries. Parishes from several diocesan deaneries presented donations for the Office of Papal Charities, the department of the Holy See that is responsible for acts of charity to the poor in the name of the Holy Father.

On the last day, Oct. 6, the nuncio visited Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Laurent Shrine, northwest of Duck Lake, where the congregation recited the Hail Mary and sang a song of praise for Mary.

The nuncio said a special thank you for letting him see more fully the culture in Canada. He explained that Jesus left us the eucharist so that we may be nourished by his real presence. Bonazzi asked the congregation why, before returning to heaven, Jesus did not leave us a real presence of his mother.

“Jesus did leave us himself in the eucharist, but Jesus wishes to see his mother in people. For me this is important: I always see Mary as not just someone I must imitate, but in a special way, I must be another Mary. Thank you for keeping alive the presence of Mary in this place. Let Mary live in you.”



Art Babych

CANADIAN FEDERAL ELECTION — The Canadian flag is projected onto the Centre Block of Parliament Hill during the summer Northern Lights show, produced by Canadian Heritage. The Oct. 19 federal election resulted in a historic return to power for Justin Trudeau and the Liberal party. Trudeau, whose father was Canada’s 15th prime minister, will become Canada’s 23rd prime minister. Trudeau argued that his party’s triumph stands for the proposition that it’s possible to succeed in politics by appealing to the “better angels of our nature.” He said, “A positive, optimistic, hopeful vision of public life is not a naive dream: it can be a powerful force for change.” See story, page 9.

Vatican opens homeless shelter for men

By Nicole Pellicano

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican opened the Gift of Mercy, a shelter for homeless men, just a few hundred yards away from St. Peter’s Square.

Housed in a Jesuit-owned building, the shelter was created by and is run with funds from the papal almoner, who has taken a variety of initiatives to assist the homeless people in the area surrounding the Vatican.

Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, Pope Francis’ almoner, inaugurated the shelter Oct. 7 by celebrat-

ing mass for the first guests. The shelter offers 34 beds in an open-floor, partitioned dormitory, according to a statement from the Almoner’s Office Oct. 12.

The shelter is run by the Missionaries of Charity, who briefly interview the guests before they are checked in. Because of limited space, the guests may stay for a maximum of 30 days.

The guests agree to abide by a structured schedule with check-in each evening between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., followed by lights out at a set time.

After the 6:15 a.m. wake-up call,

guests are offered breakfast and have until 8 a.m. to tidy up their respective areas and use the washrooms. After the shelter closes for the day, guests can shower and visit the barber at a facility set up under the colonnade in St. Peter’s Square. The facility also was established by the papal almoner.

Various locations around the Vatican offer lunch and dinner, including the Vatican soup kitchen at the nearby Gift of Mary shelter for women. The shelter for women also is staffed by the Missionaries of Charity.

Challenges families face very different worldwide

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Two couples attending the Synod of Bishops on the family said what surprised them most about their first synod in Rome was reading inaccurate media coverage of the closed-door proceedings, the diversity of problems families face around the world and the synod fathers' great concern and compassion for the family.

Even though Ketty De Rezende of Brazil studied and lived in the United States and Canada, she said hearing about the diversity of challenges families face in other parts of the world came as a surprise to her.

Ketty, with her husband Pedro, are active in Brazil in the pastoral

care of families facing difficulties. But much of what they encountered in the Americas was very different from some of the problems needing attention in Asia and Africa, she said.

Ketty and Pedro De Rezende, professors in mathematics and computer science, respectively, at the University of Campinas, Brazil, spoke to the press Oct. 12 during a Vatican news conference.

The many difficulties facing families, discussed during the first week of the synod, "did surprise us. I think we weren't quite aware of all these challenges," she said.

Pedro told reporters what surprised him most was "what the press has been publishing."

"Many, many times it doesn't reflect what we see in there," he said.

The synod proceedings are closed to the press, but synod participants are allowed to be interviewed and to release their written speeches to the public.

Pedro De Rezende said that instead of objective reporting on what was being said by synod participants, what he was seeing seemed to be suggestions about "what synod fathers should talk about."

However, he said, the synod discussions are being guided by the 23,000-word working document that came out in June.

"So I was pretty surprised to see what is coming out is not being quite faithful" to the themes in the document and participants' input, he said.

Penny Bajaj of Mumbai, India,

said she was struck by the unanimous expressions of compassion and sympathy from all those attending the synod. Of the more than 360 people attending the synod, 270 are voting cardinals, bishops and men religious. The remaining are religious and laypeople attending as observers, experts and representatives of other Christian communities.

"All the synod fathers, the bishops expressed their great love and concern for the family," said Bajaj, who worked for the Catholic Church in India in a variety of capacities for 45 years.

"It was very beautiful to see the great love, the hope, the understanding: How should the family be in today's day and time knowing that, in all parts of the world, the family is really running into a lot of problems? How do we contain this? How do we change this? How do we make this better? How do we make this in God's light something beautiful?"

She said every cardinal, bishop

and priest in her small working group spoke about their concern, their love for the family, "especially for the families who are in distress."

Her husband, Ishwar Bajaj, said he was very impressed that the synod was focusing on forgiveness and mercy, even toward those who have separated from their spouse or have sinned against their family or the church.

"I found that this was a very, very compassionate and loving atmosphere and attitude that the synod was aiming at: to bring the families back into the . . . church and tell them that there was mercy" and that sins would be forgiven "as long as they repented and changed."

Ishwar Bajaj, who was raised a Hindu but was baptized into the Catholic Church 13 years ago on his 25th wedding anniversary, said he felt the synod's focus on mercy "has been a very important and dynamic stand that the church is taking in this current century."



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE FRANCIS PRESIDES AT SESSION OF SYNOD — Pope Francis presides at a session of the synod of bishops on the family at the Vatican Oct. 15.

Women's views respected at synod

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Several women participating in the synod of bishops on the family said they are encouraged that their views are not only respected but included in the discussions taking place.

"It's not just a feeling," said Moira McQueen, director of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute. "Many of the things that we have said are included in the reports. I am very happy that more women are being included, but once inside the actual meeting, I don't feel any distinct separation."

Several synod participants spoke to the press Oct. 13 during a Vatican briefing. Speaking alongside McQueen were Therese Nyirabukeye, a Rwandan who works for the African Federation of Family Action, and Benedictine Abbot Jeremias Schroder, president of the Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien.

Although both McQueen and Nyirabukeye said they felt included in the various discussions taking place at the synod, Schroder said he had hoped for a greater presence of women religious. He confirmed that a request was made by the

men's Union of Superior Generals to give half of their 10 places to representatives of the women's religious orders. After a meeting with the secretariat of the synod, the women were given three places, although they do not have a vote like their male peers do.

"There is a small recognition that women religious must be present," he said. "I had hoped that those nuns, who are involved in so many apostolates of the family, would be a much greater presence than it is currently."

The three synod participants also were asked about the synod discussions on diversity in unity and about sensitive issues such as allowing divorced and civilly remarried couples to receive communion or pastoral ministry to homosexual men and women.

Schroder said he counted about 20 speeches in favour of dealing with those issues at a regional level and only about two or three bishops who spoke against it, maintaining that the unity of the universal church must remain intact. However, he also said that there have been no votes on concrete propositions, thus "it's a bit difficult to ascertain with precision the mind of the assembly."

"I'm from Germany and the issue of divorced and remarried people or (people who are) divorced and living in a stable union with children is felt very strongly and very broadly in the German Catholic public," he said. "It seems to be much less of a concern elsewhere."

Local pastoral solutions also may be the answer to addressing issues that different cultures view differently, such as the acceptance of homosexuality, he said.

"The social acceptance of homosexuality is culturally very diverse, and that also seems to me to be an area where bishops' conferences should be allowed to formulate pastoral responses that are in tune with what can be preached and announced and lived in a prayerful context," he said.

While agreeing that certain issues may be better or more easily dealt with locally, both McQueen and Nyirabukeye said the church also must look at the risks of allowing pastoral solutions at a regional level.

"Personally speaking, I believe that on one hand, it is better and positive to have this diversity, but on the other hand, I think there are some doctrinal aspects that should be maintained," Nyirabukeye said.

Pope asks forgiveness for scandals in Rome, Vatican

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With 30,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square, Pope Francis asked forgiveness for scandals that have occurred within the church recently.

"Before beginning my catechesis, I would like — in the name of the church — to ask your forgiveness for the scandals which have occurred recently both in Rome and at the Vatican," the pope said. "I ask your forgiveness."

The pope's off-the-cuff remarks Oct. 14 followed a reading from St. Matthew's Gospel in which Jesus warns of scandalizing the "little ones."

"Jesus' words are strong, aren't they?" the pope said. "Woe to the world for scandals. Jesus is a realist. He says it's inevitable that there will be scandals, but 'Woe to the one who causes the scandal,'" the pope told people attending his weekly general audience.

Pope Francis did not explain what scandal or scandals he was referring to, but his comments came during a week that saw the leak of a private letter sent to him by several cardinals expressing concern with aspects of the synod of bishops on the family.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesperson, told reporters later, "if the pope uses a broad and general formula, that is what he intended" and it is not up to the spokesperson to offer specifics.

In his main talk on the family, the pope reflected on the promises adults

make to children born into the world. "Welcome and care, closeness and attention, trust and hope, are among the basic promises which can be summarized in one word: love," he said.

Betraying a child's trust through scandal causes a terrible wound in their lives, one that "they do not have the means to comprehend," he said.

"Woe to those who betray their trust, woe!" he said. "Their complete trust in our promise, which obliges us from the first moment, will judge us."

"I would like to add another thing, with respect, but also frankness, for everyone," Pope Francis said. "Their spontaneous trust in God must never be wounded, especially when it occurs because of a certain presumption — more or less unconsciously — to substitute ourselves for God. The tender and mysterious relationship between God and the soul of children should never be violated."



CNS/Paul Haring

CANADIAN BISHOPS AT SYNOD — Archbishops Richard Smith of Edmonton and Paul-André Durocher of Gatineau, Quebec, leave a session of the synod of bishops on the family at the Vatican Oct. 14. They are two of four bishop delegates from Canada.

Nuncio visits Saskatoon

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — During a recent pastoral visit, Pope Francis’ representative in Canada witnessed the diversity and outreach of the Catholic community in Saskatoon and shared words of encouragement, love and support.

Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, the Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, was in the province for the Oct. 1 dedication of the Called to Serve monument honouring the contributions of Catholic sisters to Saskatchewan. After the dedication celebration in Regina, the Nuncio visited Saskatoon Oct. 2 - 3, before travelling on to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert.

It was an historic moment for

the Catholic community, as none could recall a similar pastoral visit by an Apostolic Nuncio in the past, said Bishop Donald Bolen of the Diocese of Saskatoon.

“The Nuncio embodies Pope Francis’ own warmth and down-to-earth style of leadership,” said Bolen. “He wanted to be close to the people, and succeeded in bringing Pope Francis’ own warmth and pastoral concern very close to us.”

The nuncio’s full itinerary included visits to local schools, seniors’ residences and the prison, a media event at a restorative justice conference, and opportunities to meet leaders in Catholic health and education, as well as to pray — and eat — with the faithful of

the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy, the Roman Catholic Diocese and the Chaldean Catholic parish in Saskatoon.

On his arrival, the nuncio was welcomed with bread, salt and flowers at Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School by two Grade 8 students. Children in traditional dress lined the sidewalk singing, as the archbishop and other special guests entered the building for an assembly with students that included the singing of the Lord’s Prayer in Ukrainian, as well as a trivia contest of questions about the apostolic nuncio and the school, moderated by principal Shelly Lord.

A visit to St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre followed, where the nuncio met with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) board and administration members, Saskatoon Tribal Chief Felix Thomas, elders and community representatives, as well as teachers and doctors who work at the elementary school in the city’s core neighbourhood.

St. Mary’s serves a primarily First Nations and Métis student population, explained GSCS board chair Diane Boyko, describing the



Yaworski

NUNCIO VISIT — Saskatoon Tribal Chief Felix Thomas welcomes apostolic nuncio Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi to St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre in Saskatoon.

Communities misdiagnose causes of violence

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — No child joins a gang to gain friends, wealth or power, says a Jesuit priest who has lived and worked among the gangs of East Los Angeles for more than 20 years. Even if a gang member tells you that, it’s still not true,

those experiences to Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles, where he was pastor at Dolores Mission Church from 1986 through 1992.

Boyle started what would become Homeboy Industries, a non-profit organization employing and training more than 300 former gang members every year in enterprises such as Homeboy Silkscreen, Homeboy Bakery and Homegirl Café. Homeboy also provides essential services to 12,000 people a year. It provides on-the-job training and programs including mental health therapy and tattoo removal.

“The task at Homeboy is to dismantle the messages of shame and disgrace,” Boyle said. “Each of us is a whole lot more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.”

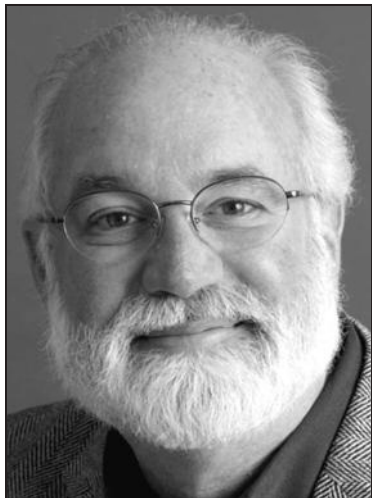
“We are called to create a community of kinship but how do we create a community where no one is standing outside of it? Margins are erased when you choose to stand there. You stand with the powerless, you stand with the easily despised and the easily left out, with the desperate, so the day will come when we stop throwing people away. Peace and justice is a by-product of our kinship. It can only happen if you stand for kinship and communities.”

Boyle said the ex-gangers — he calls them “homeys” — “taught me everything of value, including texting. People who were rival gang members used to shoot bullets at each other, now they shoot texts.”

He said the tattoo removal service began with an ex-convict who had an obscene tattoo on his forehead. “He said to me, ‘I’m having a hard time finding a job.’ I found a doctor with a laser machine who gave me one hour a month.”

“Serving is a hallway to the ballroom of community. The hope is that there is no longer a distance between us. We are all in need of healing, that is what it means to be human.”

Boyle said the measure of the health of a community “is its ability to stand in awe of what the poor have to carry, rather than in judgment of how they carry it. Find your way to the margins, look under your feet, the margins are being erased because you stood there. But beware, because you will be told you are wasting your time.”



Rev. Gregory Boyle, SJ

says Rev. Gregory Boyle, SJ.

Boyle told an audience of 300 at the University of Manitoba Oct. 6 that if you dig deeper that gang member will tell you “ ‘my mom would put her cigarettes out on my skin. My dad would hold my head down in the toilet.’ No kid is ever seeking something; they are always fleeing. If a kid can’t conjure a vision of tomorrow, if his present isn’t compelling, he won’t care what he does or what happens to him. Ninety-five per cent of gang members want what others have, and that’s purpose.”

Boyle said communities continually misdiagnose the causes of urban violence.

Boyle is the founder of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang intervention, rehabilitation and re-entry program in the United States, now it’s in 25th year. He was in Winnipeg to give this year’s St. Paul’s College Sol Kanee lecture and paid the city a high compliment saying it is “so good” because of accomplishments such as the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at the college and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Boyle, a native Angelino, was ordained in 1984. He worked in a penal colony in Mexico and California’s Folsom Prison and brought

Living with Dignity group hires director

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The grassroots Quebec anti-euthanasia group Living with Dignity has hired a new executive director with a unique background that combines overseas development and theatre.

Aubert Martin, a Montreal native, replaces Nic Steenhout who has moved on to new employment.

Martin spent much of the past 10 years in Burkino Faso, first teaching high school for three years, then returning to work another three years as a communications officer for an international development agency. But upon returning to Canada about three years ago, he returned to an earlier passion — acting, singing and songwriting and puppeteering.

“It’s all about information,” he said in an interview from Montreal. Any law allowing euthanasia and assisted suicide “will literally affect all Canadians somehow; it’s a matter of life or death.”

Quebec’s euthanasia law comes into effect in December and the next federal government will face drafting a law to come in line with the Supreme Court of Canada’s Carter decision last February striking down provisions in the Criminal Code against assisted suicide.

“I think our main focus will stay on protecting vulnerable people, mainly through information,” Martin said. “There is still a lot of confusion in the public.”

People do not know what euthanasia really is, nor what “medical aid in dying” really is, he said. Living with Dignity will “inform people of their rights” and of the dangers of medical aid in dying.

“Many are talking about free and informed consent, but if people do not know what is going on, how can they have a free choice?” he asked.

Living with Dignity is “currently working on a service that

history of the school and the opening of the new building in 2012. The school includes an early learning centre, an optometry clinic, and a pediatric clinic.

Thomas welcomed the nuncio to Treaty 6 territory and spoke about the importance of partnerships in meeting the needs of children. “We also realize, that as much as we are doing, we need to do more, not just for the kids here, but for the surrounding community.”

The nuncio expressed appreciation for the collaboration underway at the school. “When we join our efforts, in reality, the result is not one plus one is two, but three — the result is something new,” Bonazzi said. “Your common effort summons and produces something greater.”

Bonazzi also met with representatives of Our Lady of Guada-

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will help people facing these issues when the law will be enacted,” he said. “For now, it’s all theory. When it comes to practice, a lot of people will realize what’s going on in terms of pressure and counselling to receive ‘medical aid in dying’ and everything.”

“We will be seen a companion, a great help for people who would like information knowing we won’t push them to kill themselves,” he said. “We won’t stop. We are here to protect vulnerable people.”

Martin said it is ironic that the side pushing euthanasia is seen as the compassionate side, as opposite to us. “We’re talking about compassion, about helping humans throughout their entire lives, not telling them they should end their days earlier because they are a burden.”

“We are there to the end,” he said. “We will always be there with you; that’s the message we want to send.”

A graduate of the University of Montreal with an honours degree in history, Martin sees both his academic and acting background as providing him with communications skills to reach audiences and transmit that message.

“The art of speaking in public is exactly the point of being an actor,” he said. “How to reach people through emotions and words, to analyze the text and the play in the point of view of ‘What is the message and how can we get it through?’ — this background really helped me, even as a student in university.”

After university, Martin left Montreal to study theatre at the conservatory in Quebec City. After living in Quebec for a while, on a ride to Montreal with Allo Stop, a ride-sharing service, he met a young woman who had just returned from Africa. She had spent three months there and said it had changed her life.

“I remembered, when I was young, like a lot of people, I had big dreams to go to Africa, but I had forgotten about it,” he said. When he returned to his apartment, within five minutes, he received a phone call from his older brother. His brother said, “I know this is going to sound weird but how do you feel about going to Africa?”

“Yes, I’ll do it,” he said. And they ended up in Burkina Faso, a small country north of Ghana and Ivory Coast.



Aubert Martin

On this first trip there he taught geography, English and history, three classes of 67 girls for each year,” he said.

He met his wife there. “She was studying English at the university and one of her sisters was in my class, that’s how we met,” he said. “She thought at first, Canadians speak English a lot, so she wanted to chat with a Canadian to practise her English. For a French guy it’s a funny story to be approached as an English person.”

Their first child, now seven, was born in Burkina Faso. They have three girls, and a boy, nine months old.

Conference honours newly canonized married couple

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — On the eve of Zélie and Louis Martin's canonization Oct. 18, Ottawa parents, some already devoted to the new saints, took part in a conference on sanctifying families Oct. 16 - 17.

"There are innumerable attacks on the family as God designed it, and our times and marriages cry out for examples of holiness, to

help us to sanctify our own families," Cheryl Thompson, one of the conference organizers, told the approximately 200 people, mostly young families, present.

"I love that Pope Francis is canonizing a married couple," Thompson said in a talk describing the lives of the Martins, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the "Little Flower," and Doctor of the Church and the first married couple to be canonized together.

"Although I am sincerely grateful for the holiness and example of many great saints, if the church canonized only popes, or Mother Teresas, who among us could relate, in our day-to-day lives?" Thompson asked.

"Louis and Zélie were normal people, as normal as you or me, and they were by no means perfect," she said. "Yet in the normalcy of daily life, they found ways to attain personal holiness, to overcome trials and suffering, and to lead their children to holiness as well."

Thompson outlined how Louis and Zélie both worked in addition to raising their family, he as a watchmaker and she as a producer of fine lace. They also experienced much suffering, especially through the loss of four children, three in infancy, one daughter at age five. Zélie died of breast cancer at the young age of 45, leaving Louis alone to raise their remaining five daughters, all of whom entered cloistered life, a huge sacrifice for their father.

The Martins "lived out the church's teaching heroically," Thompson said, noting with their canonization, "they will become universal examples of how to be a Christian husband and wife, father and mother."

David and Theresa McPike shared their personal witness of



CCN/D. Gyapong

FAMILY CONFERENCE — Rita and Gerard McCarthy of the Marriages for Mary apostolate based in St. John's, Nfld., were keynote speakers at the Sanctifying Families conference in Ottawa Oct. 16 - 17, that focused on the example of the new saints Zélie and Louis Martin.

"Flowers from the Martin Family." Married for 10 years, the parents of five, their "world was turned upside down" when their eldest child, Naomi Therese, died an accidental death at age five. "It was the worst and most grace-filled moment of my life," said Theresa.

A week or two before Naomi's death, Thompson had given her a book, *A Call to a Deeper Love*, featuring the correspondence of the Martin family. The Martins had suffered the loss the McPike's were experiencing four times, Theresa said. Like the Martins, though sorrowing, they abandoned themselves "to God's holy will."

"Our loss and pain didn't hurt our family; it made it even stronger," she said.

"This soul-wracking experience" deepened their understanding of themselves as children of God and of the Catholic Church, David McPike said.

"The church is the place to foster the birth and growth of saints," he said, "To prepare them to be filled with God, loving mercy, justice and love."

Nazareth Family Apostolate leaders Cheryl and David Darwent shared how their offering of three or four one-week retreats a summer over the past 15 years had helped their 35-year marriage.

"We brought a lot of baggage into our marriage," said Cheryl. "No one knew the hidden suffering."

David said the baggage was mostly his, since he had been sexually abused by an older brother, now deceased, from infancy until he was 10 years old. Scripture verses 2 Corinthians 12:9 about how God's grace is made perfect in weakness and John 3:20 about how everyone who participates in evil hates the light became touchstones for his spiritual growth and deliverance, he said.

Through "exposing darkness to light," David said he found freedom "to live in the light."

He found the stigma of the abuse, that had been "kept in darkness," no longer had power over him as he shared it how it had contributed to lust, anger and selfishness in his family life.

The retreats provided a place where God could heal their marriage and family life in ways they never thought possible, he said. The Darwents said the retreats

have helped them experience the support of other Catholic families. "We are not alone in this journey of holiness," he said.

Keynote speakers Rita and Gerard McCarthy, founders of the St. John's, Nfld.-based Marriages for Mary apostolate, spoke on God's divine plan for marriage and on families' mission to love.

So many confuse love with a feeling, on "what you are getting, not what we're giving," said Rita. Jesus calls us to love one another "as I have loved you."

The McCarthys said they have tried to intentionally live out unconditional, merciful and sacrificial love in their marriage.

"Mercy is critical in marriage, day in and day out," she said. "Family life offers so many opportunities for mercy."

"We must never give up on one another," said Gerard.

The message of, "No matter what, we are together," sends a message of the indissolubility of marriage, he said.

As for sacrificial love, to follow Jesus' example, "we literally have to love each other to the point of death, letting go of our own agendas to love sacrificially," Rita said. "Letting go of our own agendas to love sacrificially, being intentional on this is really hard."

Gerard recalled a weekend where he had promised Rita a walk around the lake and lunch out. Then, however, he got a call from his brother-in-law, asking if he would like to join him in moose hunting that weekend.

"You're joking, right?" when Gerard told his brother-in-law why he could not go. "I did not go. I was present with my wife on that day."

Rita said she was elated that day. "I am more important than a moose!"

Gerard added, "The byes (boys) did not get a moose that day."



CCN/D. Gyapong

SHARING THEIR STORY — Theresa and David McPike were helped through the loss of their eldest child by the example of the Martins, a recently canonized Catholic couple.

Health care a mission of the church

Continued from page 3

lupe Parish, which serves First Nations, Métis, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Catholics in Saskatoon.

Parish life director Debbie Ledoux, elder Gayle Weenie, and Deacon Paul Labelle greeted the nuncio, and Weenie explained First Nations traditions that are incorporated into parish life. The nuncio took part in a smudging ceremony, and was presented with a star blanket.

Bonazzi also met with Catholic health leaders at Trinity Manor, a faith-based facility offering both independent and assisted living accommodations. The nuncio expressed appreciation to all those continuing to advance the legacy of Catholic health care. Health care "is part of the mission, of the nature of the church," he said.

Conveying the gratitude and the blessing of Pope Francis, the nuncio urged leaders in Catholic health care to take the upcoming Year of Mercy as an opportunity for reflection and to seize new opportunities to expand outreach, since "what must be done is greater than what has already been done."

The Sacred Heart Chaldean community in Saskatoon celebrated the eucharist with the nuncio Oct. 2, followed by a community dinner. During the mass, Bonazzi spoke to children participating in the catechism program, encouraging them to have "a friendship with Jesus Christ."

He expressed love and concern for the Christian community undergoing persecution and suffering in Iraq and throughout the world. He also encouraged the parish to work together to follow Jesus and serve those most in need.

An early morning Moleben at the Ukrainian Catholic Shrine of the Blessed Nun Martyrs Olympia and Laurentia was held Oct. 3, with the nuncio and the two Saskatoon bishops in attendance. Sister Sophia of the Ukrainian Sisters of St. Joseph presented the nuncio with an icon of the two 20th-century martyrs, whose relics are housed at the Saskatoon shrine.

At the Musée Ukrainian Museum, the Apostolic Nuncio was greeted by Bishop Bryan Bayda and leaders of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon. Bonazzi viewed museum exhibits, describing the building as "a sanctuary of culture."

Following a reception with the eparchial leaders, Bonazzi joined Bayda on a visit to St. Joseph's Nursing Home, before returning to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of St. George for a meeting with clergy and religious from both the eparchy and the Diocese of Saskatoon.

The Nuncio spoke about principals of priestly life, which he said apply to the journey of every Christian. There is no such thing as a part-time priest, he noted. The call of the priest, and of all Christians, is to listen to the word of God. "What Christ does in me is more important than what I do myself," he said, stressing the importance of service, and seizing the most important value, the value of the cross.

After a lunch with clergy and religious at St. Mary's Parish Hall, the nuncio joined Bolen and Bishop Gary Gordon of Victoria on a visit to the Saskatoon Correctional Centre for a sharing circle with inmates led by Dianne Anderson of the diocesan office of Restorative Ministry, and volunteer Russ Powell.

Bonazzi also met with participants in the diocesan, eparchial and Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation program, immediately before a diocesan celebration of the eucharist Oct. 3 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

The diocesan mass reflected the diversity of the community, and included prayers in nine languages, as well as an honour song during the procession of gifts, with the gift family accompanied by a First Nations dancer.

"How significant it is that the cathedral of your diocese is dedicated to the Holy Family, because the vocation of the church is to be a family, a family of people from every nation, every tribe, every culture, recognizing ourselves as brothers and sisters, children of the one Father," said Bonazzi, conveying the request of Pope Francis for prayers for the Synod on the Family beginning in Rome Oct. 4.

After mass, the community gathered for a multicultural meal with food prepared by Vietnamese, East Indian, Filipino, Ukrainian and First Nations communities.

The visit concluded later that evening with a candlelight rosary procession around St. Paul's Co-Cathedral in downtown Saskatoon with the Filipino Catholic community, held in spite of a steady rain.

The nuncio expressed his joy at the faithfulness of the Filipino people, and spoke about the power of prayer and the gift of the rosary.

Closing with words of thanksgiving at St. Paul's, Bonazzi prayed a blessing over the people as the representative of Pope Francis. The people in turn sang a blessing over the Apostolic Nuncio, concluding the last event of his Saskatoon visit.

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Women's roles in the church: an ongoing debate

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

When Archbishop Paul-André Durocher raised the question of ordaining female deacons during the first full day of the synod on family, he stepped into one of the most contentious and complex struggles in the church — full participation of women in all aspects of their faith life, their church.

It's an issue that not even women can agree on.

Addressing synod fathers in the Vatican on Oct. 8, the Gatineau, Que., archbishop proposed that qualified women be given higher positions and greater decision-making authority and additional opportunities in the church, possibly to include ordination to the diaconate.

"I think we should really start looking seriously at the possibility of ordaining women deacons because the diaconate in the church's tradition has been defined as not being ordered toward priesthood but toward ministry," he said to Catholic News Service.

"I think for Archbishop Durocher it took an extraordinary amount of courage, which is a sad thing to say," said Doris Kieser, a theologian at the University of Alberta, St. Joseph's College. "That for a bishop to say 'Gosh, we need to think about women' takes courage in the year 2015. That makes me sad that I'm actually saying it."

It's no surprise that Durocher is calling for a discussion about a bigger role for women in the church, said Leah Perrault, Diocese of Saskatoon director of pastoral services. He is hearing that message "from the People of God," she said. "And I believe that is his job, to say what he is hearing from the People of God in his part of the world. I think it takes great courage in a church that's as polarized as we are."

When Durocher makes the case that church culture and practice must do justice to women, the archbishop has a powerful ally also speaking out on the issue.

"A church without women is like the college of the Apostles without Mary," Pope Francis told journalists in 2013. "The role of women in the church is not simply that of maternity. We can't imagine a church without women, but women active in the church, with the distinctive role that they play . . . I believe that we have not yet come up with a profound theology of womanhood in the church."

The idea of ordaining women as deacons is not new. Twenty years ago the Canon Law Society of America struck a commission and produced a thorough report that investigated the history, canonical precedents, theology and spirituality of deaconesses. It recommended the church could and should ordain women as permanent deacons.

The commission included some of the most respected scholars of canon law and theology in the United States, but Dr. Marie Jeanne Ferrari, a member of both the American and Canadian canon law societies, was not impressed with its report.

"Their document was so flawed that I don't know where to start with that," she told The Catholic Register.

Ferrari wrote her own 15-page counter-argument in response to the 1995 CLSA paper.

"The priesthood cannot be demanded as a right, nor can the diaconate," Ferrari wrote in 1996.

Ferrari questions her fellow canonists' scholarship. "Many of their key references . . . are either misleading, incomplete, quoted out of context, unrelated to the subject or even inaccurate," she wrote. But her fundamental accusation is that the drive to ordain women even to the diaconate is the misguided result of modern feminism.

"Women are pushing. They want everything. And if they don't get it, there's lots of little groups that raise a riot," she said in a recent interview. "The church has always honoured female saints. You can't blame the church for not honouring women. It has. It

really doesn't make sense that a group of women in New York City would browbeat other women into thinking that they were ill-served in the Catholic Church."

Lynda Robitaille is an independent canon lawyer and dean of theology at St. Mark's College in the University of British Columbia. She doesn't think the problem of women and their voice in the church is a trumped-up, fake problem or a hobby horse of a few privileged intellectuals.

"Certainly women's voices are not well represented in leadership in the church," she said. "A lot of leadership in the church is dependent on ordination."

The issue isn't the diaconate, a rank of orders in the hierarchy dedicated exclusively to service and ministry and specifically excluded from governance, she said. The issue is leadership — the ability to make decisions, spend money, make appointments and set policy.

"Even Pope Francis has said we need women in leadership," Robitaille said.

Rather than focusing on ordination, Robitaille believes the church needs to deepen its understanding of baptism and translate that understanding into action. A few women chancellors of dioceses or presidents of Catholic hospitals and universities doesn't really make women's voices heard and felt throughout the church, she said.

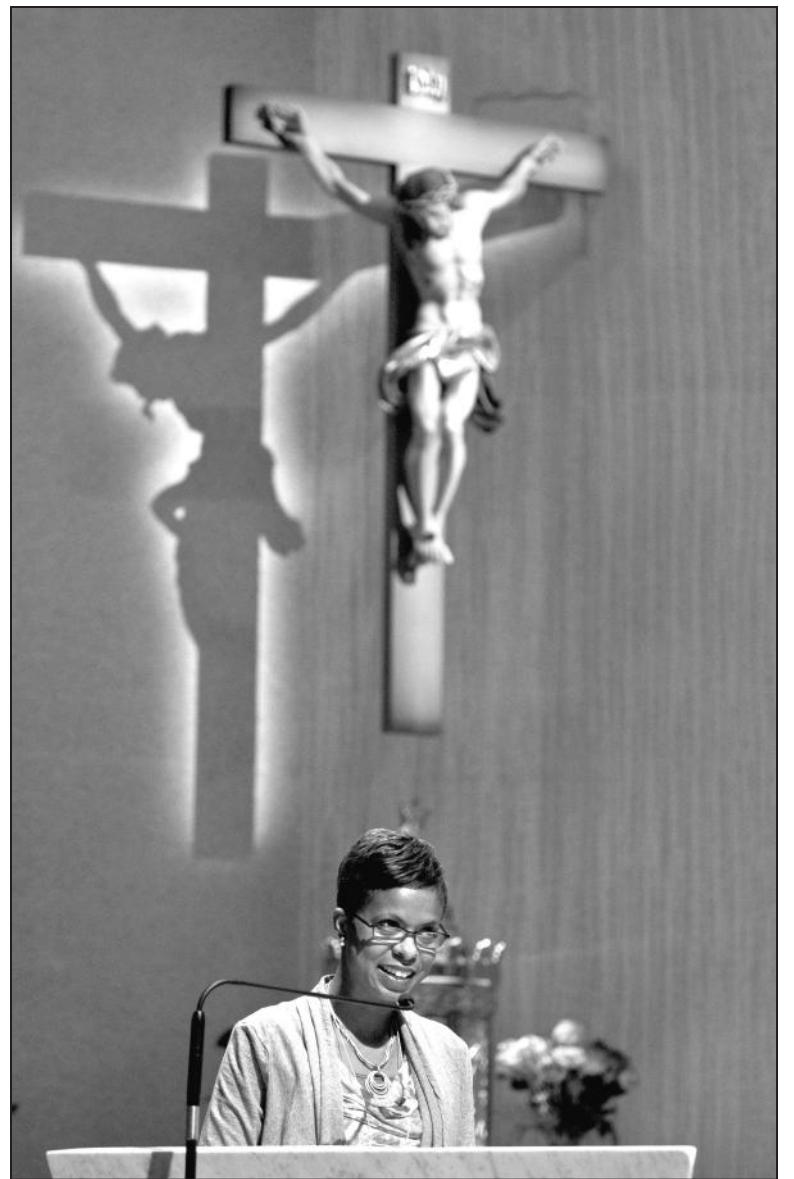
"What I think we are really looking for is true decision-making, not just figureheads," Robitaille said.

As director of pastoral services, managing a staff of 20 and with a significant voice in a recent Saskatoon decision to ordain permanent deacons, Perrault is one of those rare women involved in policy in the church. She knows what's possible, but she also knows Catholics have shied away from our possibilities.

"Under the right circumstances, the church has the capacity to allow a full flourishing of women and women's vocations in its current state," said Perrault. "Does that mean we don't have room to grow? This isn't about me or about women or about men. It's about the kingdom of God and the kind of kingdom that God wants."

Perrault is hopeful that the church is moving on the question of women.

"Pope Francis and others have identified as a problem how do we include women more, use women's gifts more, call on women more effectively," she said. "It's really exciting to me that our bishops have heard this from their people and that they're willing to raise this in the appropriate place (the synod)."



Catholic Register/Michael Swan

WOMEN AND THE CHURCH — Full participation of women in all aspects of their faith life, and their church, is an issue that not even women can agree on, writes Michael Swan.

For Kieser, the problem is that "women don't have any substantive voice in the church."

"By substantive, I mean anything that holds water," said Kieser, who teaches courses in the sexual body, theological anthropology and women's spirituality at St. Joseph's in Edmonton. "We can speak. We might consult. But we are never ultimately decision-makers."

It's not enough to have bishops or even popes raise the issue, she said.

"I do love Francis," she said. "But I think there is a bit of a blind spot for him in terms of women."

The problem isn't that there isn't an adequate theology of womanhood, she believes.

"Women have been doing theology for 50 years about what it means to be a woman of faith," she said. The problem is that very little of that theology is taken seriously by the men in the offices around St. Peter's Square.

When popes have waded in on how women are or should be part of the church, women have not seen themselves in that teaching, said Kieser. St. Pope John Paul II's 1988 encyclical *Dignitatis Mulieris* is one example.

"I think it created more problems . . . I've engaged it in the hope I would find something in there for me and what I find in there is an idealized sense of human persons in relationships."

When Pope John Paul appeals to Mary, his vision of a self-abnegating humble servant just doesn't square with the Mary who Kieser knows and loves.

"Mary is my girl. I have a very strong Marian sense about myself, but it doesn't look like that," she said.

Not all women, however, share Kieser's view. Maria Reilander, the senior development officer and occasional lecturer at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy in Barry's Bay, Ont., is implacably opposed to the idea of ordaining women as deacons or anything else, and she dismisses most of the debate about women's roles in the church as a power grab.

"Why do we think women have to take on a man's role as priest or deacon in order to have status?" she wrote in an email to The Catholic Register. "I won't be any more fulfilled as a woman by trying to be a man."

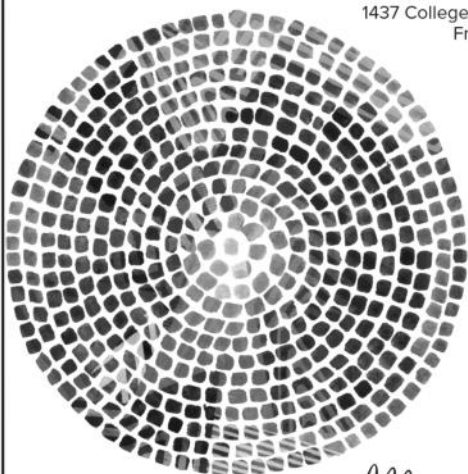
Reilander has a different vision of how women claim their dignity in the church.

"There is more room for people in the church to appreciate and encourage the uniquely feminine gifts. These gifts can be summed up in one word — motherhood," she said. "Not just in raising families, but also in their professions and in their religious vocations, their life-giving care and personal attention to all they meet and relate to. There's nothing like the motherly touch."

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Regina celebrates 100 years as an archdiocese

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Holy Rosary Cathedral was standing room only the evening of Oct. 7 as the faithful came from all over the archdiocese to celebrate 100 years as an archdiocese. The sanctuary was almost overflowing with priests and there were three archbishops in attendance: Daniel Bohan of Regina, Winnipeg Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber and Canada's Apostolic Nuncio Luigi Bonazzi. Bohan concelebrated mass with the archbishops and several priests and Bonazzi delivered the homily.

The nuncio reminded the congregation how far and how quickly the Regina metropolitan see was created after only a few years as a diocese. "The prelude to these developments was long and arduous, to be sure, considering the fact that the first mass celebrated in Regina by Rev. Hugonard, an Oblate Missioner in 1882, was offered in a tent." It became a diocese in 1910 and just five years later,



Flegel

CENTENNIAL MASS — Priests crowd the sanctuary of Holy Rosary Cathedral in Regina to celebrate 100 years as an archdiocese Oct. 7. There were three archbishops in attendance: Daniel Bohan of Regina, Winnipeg Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber and Canada's Apostolic Nuncio Luigi Bonazzi. Bohan concelebrated mass with the archbishops and several priests and Bonazzi delivered the homily.

December 1915, it was "raised to the dignity of a metropolitan see under the remarkable leadership of Archbishop Olivier Mathieu."

Frequently departing from his text, Bonazzi described the responsibility of an archdiocese and its relationship to the other

dioceses in the ecclesiastical province of Saskatchewan. He said the church can't effectively follow Christ's Gospel and teach-

ings sitting alone. "That is why from ancient times neighbouring dioceses were gathered together in ecclesiastical provinces to foster common pastoral action and to strengthen the relationship between the bishops and their dioceses." He expanded on that to include neighbouring countries working closely together, "and all of this receives beautiful expression in the moments of communion between the bishops of the world and the successor to Peter."

Bonazzi also referred to the dedication of the monument to the sisters of various congregations that he unveiled and blessed in Wascana Park Oct. 1. He called it a fitting tribute and an appropriate way to mark the Year of Consecrated Life. "They trusted in God and set about building up the Body of Christ in their midst," he said later in his homily. "They dared to believe the message of Gabriel" delivered to Mary when informed she was to be the mother of God: "With God, nothing is impossible."

He noted that the celebration was taking place on the feast day of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, the cathedral's patron.

Most of the congregation gathered in the cathedral hall for a reception following the mass and many took advantage of the opportunity to talk with and have their photo taken with the nuncio, who was happy to oblige.

The mass was live-streamed on the archdiocesan website courtesy of Rev. Barry Anwender and his volunteers, who manned four cameras as Anwender directed.

Archivists gather in Saskatoon for convention

By Margaret Sanche

SASKATOON — Fifty-four archivists travelled from across Canada to spend three days at Queen's House in Saskatoon for the annual conference of their professional organization, the Catholic Archivist Group (CAG), in September.

Participants included the archivists of Roman Catholic dioceses across Canada and archivists for religious congregations, as well as one archivist of a Ukrainian Cath-

olic eparchy and one religious congregation archivist from Wisconsin.

The many beautiful bridges of the host city gave the conference its theme: Catholic Archivists: Building Bridges of Faith and Understanding.

There was much sharing of information, concerns, ideas and stories. In addition to the formal presentations, there were many opportunities for conversations and networking over meals and refreshment breaks, as well as prayer and communal worship in eucharistic liturgies.

Among the conference's formal sessions was a presentation by Sister Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, about the history of the 61 congregations of women religious that have served in Saskatchewan since 1860.

In another session, Rev. David Tumback and Rosa Gebhardt of the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon spoke about dealing with the many sacred items — liturgical vessels, vestments, liturgical books — which are given to archives in conjunction with the closure of churches and convents.

Tumback spoke about what to keep and what not to keep for historical purposes, and reviewed canonical guidelines, while Gebhardt presented ideas for the respectful "repurposing" or "transforming" of beautiful fabrics from no-longer-useful-vest-

ments into works of art for the enhancement of liturgical worship spaces.

Another session dealt with the practical aspects of the care of artifacts of various kinds and one presentation offered suggestions and ideas for outreach projects.

Some of the challenges discussed were the need for records management in religious congregations, dioceses and parishes, planning for selective digitization of records and photographs, and the developing of policies for the collection, care and research use of the historical records of dioceses or religious congregations.

An ongoing concern for many of the religious congregation archivists is the need to provide for the future care of their records.

Two examples of collaborative bridge-building were presented — that of a congregation of women religious in Ontario, Our Lady's Missionaries, which is in the process of placing its historical records and artifacts in the care of a local historical museum and archives, and that of the Diocese of Saskatoon, in which the records of several congregations of women religious, as well as those of the Oblates of the former St. Mary's Province, are now housed and cared for in the new diocesan archives facility at the Catholic Pastoral Centre.

During their time together, the archivists toured the Western Development Museum and visited the new Cathedral of the Holy Family, where they heard a talk on the stained glass windows, toured the diocesan archives, and gathered in the Queen of Peace chapel for the eucharist, with Bishop Donald Bolen presiding.

Bolen thanked the archivists for their work in caring for the records of the history of the church, following in the footsteps of those unnamed early Christians who gathered and cared for the letters of Paul and others, and the Gospel writings of the early evangelists and their Christian commu-

nities, which came to form our New Testament scriptures.

Bolen stressed the many ways God has been revealed to us through faith and tradition. "That is all of our story, repeated in time: God reaches out to us in mercy. And a part of what archivists do — working in the church, or for Christian communities — is to remember those acts of God's mercy, to be keepers of the memory of mercy."

Papal nuncio visits Regina schools Oct. 7

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Apostolic Nuncio to Canada Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi and Archbishop Daniel Bohan had a busy Oct. 7. The day began with an early morning breakfast at the Hotel Saskatchewan, greeting recipients of papal honours. A tour of three Catholic elementary schools and one high school followed breakfast. An afternoon rest period and an evening centennial celebration mass at the cathedral ended their day.

Bonazzi said he was well aware of how proud Bohan is of the people who help in the archdiocese. He also expressed the "deep and profound gratitude of Pope Francis" for their work.

The school visits followed a pattern where the nuncio was introduced to staff and students in classrooms, except for St. Luke Alternative School and Miller Catholic High School. The nuncio was introduced, usually said a few words, conferred a blessing, was given a brief tour then left for the other schools. St. Michael's and Mother Teresa Middle School were the other two schools visited.

The school tour was joined by Director of Education Rob Currie, Co-ordinator of Religious Education Miles Meyers and archdiocesan Director of Pastoral Care Bob Kowalchuk.

St. Luke's Alternative School was next, where a thanksgiving celebration was scheduled. Bonazzi addressed the students and staff and delivered a blessing.

The final visit was to Miller Catholic High School where they were ushered into a room where some 20 students from various grades were seated. Lunch was offered followed by a question period. It was here that Bonazzi told of his journey to the priesthood and his current vocation as nuncio.

His first stirrings to become a priest occurred when he was 14. He eventually entered the seminary but in his fifth or sixth year had doubts. "I eventually overcame them and was ordained," he told the group. He attended a diplomatic school and began his diplomatic career with a posting to Cameroon in Africa. He spent several years in various postings in Africa then Europe, came to Canada briefly in 1999 and returned as nuncio about a year and a half ago.

After lunch the students gathered with Bonazzi and Bohan in the school lobby where they were photographed and in a special scene the students gathered around the nuncio who blessed them, first as a group then individually by marking a cross on their forehead and reciting a short prayer while placing his hand on their head.



Flegel

LIFE CHAIN — About 200 pro-life supporters showed up Oct. 4 for the annual life chain in support of the unborn. It was cold, windy and wet but it didn't stop the supporters from lining up on both sides of Albert Street, one of Regina's major arteries, carrying signs supporting life from conception to natural death. The abortion issue and support for life is rarely raised among politicians but in the latter stages of this year's federal election campaign it has garnered some coverage in local and national media. Terri Bergen, president of Regina Pro Life, said she was pleased at the turnout and pleased that the issue is getting more play in mainstream media. One young supporter was Georgina Schuck, shown above.

Restorative justice seeks a culture of hope

By Gertrude Rompré

SASKATOON — What does it mean to call someone home? This was the key question posed by Bishop Gary Gordon of the Diocese of Victoria at the Restorative Justice: Building a Culture of Hope Conference held at Queen’s House and St. Thomas More College Oct. 1 - 3.

Restorative justice, Gordon said, is about asking different ques-

tions than those posed by our current retributive criminal justice system. Rather than asking “What law is broken? Who broke it? How shall the state punish that person?” restorative justice focuses on the persons and relationships that are harmed when a crime is committed.

Restorative justice holds the person responsible for that harm to account and, ultimately, seeks to bring healing to the broken fabric of our communities. It is about

giving people the possibility of coming home to themselves and to their communities.

Gordon addressed a diverse crowd at two public lectures. The first lecture focused on the theme of the conference and explored what is needed to build a culture of hope.

The second lecture went further to suggest that there is something beyond justice: mercy. Mercy is only made possible through divine grace that allows us to break the cycle of violence that a retributive model of justice only serves to fuel, said Gordon.

Other speakers at the event included Rev. Brian Rude who serves as a Lutheran minister and practises restorative justice in El Salvador, and Justice Steven

Point, who spoke about restorative justice from an indigenous perspective.

Workshops on the foundations and practise of restorative justice were also led by the members of STR8 UP (on leaving gangs and joining the community), Moira Brownlee (on the media’s role in promoting or preventing restorative justice), Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz (on putting the victims of crime into the equation), David Feick (on prison visitation) and Chris Hrynkow (on finding a socially just alternative to a broken system).

A panel discussion explored the topic, When those we Love Go Missing, Are Harmed, and Are Found Murdered. The most poignant moments of the confer-

ence occurred when Carole Wolfe made her presentation, telling her own story of her search for her missing daughter.

Similarly, Adam Gervais gave a presentation about his own experience of being harmed in an unprovoked assault in 2006.

Giving voice to those directly harmed by crime is a key element of restorative justice, bringing people, rather than simply the law, into the centre of the equation.

The restorative justice conference was a joint initiative of the Micah Mission, St. Thomas More College, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, the Mennonite Central Committee, the Lutheran Synod and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.



Adele Craswell

YOUTH RETREAT — Sept. 26 - 27 St. Therese Parish in Leoville, Sask., hosted a Face to Face Ministries Youth Retreat. Approximately 50 youth and 25 adults from communities throughout the Prince Albert Diocese attended the weekend retreat of talks, testimonies, music, prayer ministry, small-group sharing and adoration. Leader Adele Craswell said, “We were blessed to have the team spend the weekend with our youth. We truly value their gifts, commitment and dedication. Their work is changing lives.” She is thankful for the support of Bishop Albert Thévenot, M. Afr., their pastor and the diocese for their support and hopes the youth who attended the retreat continue to pursue their “Yes” to Christ and continue the challenge that Face to Face Ministries brought to them — to encounter Christ and embrace the call to be saints.

‘Everyone loves the pope’

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — Security was tight and obvious when James and Holly Gustafson and Brett and Flannery Salkeld attended the World Meeting of Families and the papal visit to Philadelphia, but it didn’t take away from the experience. Everyone was issued a transparent plastic backpack and you had to carry everything in it. You could carry something else, said Gustafson, but it would be a real hassle.

James said the atmosphere was the most unreal thing he had ever experienced. “Everyone loves the pope, as we love the pope. They love their faith. It was stunning to see that in action and everyone was happy.” The pope just brought that attitude, said James.

“It was a life-giving experience,” said Brett Salkeld. “Seeing the pope was the highlight, but hanging out with the Gustafsons and getting to know other people from the diocese was great.”

Holly said she, too, experienced that joy. “I loved walking through the streets and seeing the cardinals getting a sandwich in the convenience stores, groups of nuns walking by that made our Catholic faith feel really normal. It was nice being surrounded by people who were having as nice and as joyful an experience as we were.”

“Inspiring and encouraging,” said Flannery. “It was very special

to be at the papal event and hear him talking live.”

The downtown area was shut to vehicular traffic so walking was the only way to get around.

Six different families were presented to the pope, who heard their testimonial. “They came onstage and told their stories in front of the pope and every story was heart-breaking and wonderful at the same time. Their struggle and how they used their faith to get through it,” James described.

There was one family that particularly moved him. “They were married 60-some years and they had had hard times. They moved to Canada and spoke only Spanish and they struggled. They talked about the joy of their grandkids and their own kids and how family was important.”

The pope gave each a blessing with their foreheads touching, “and that was the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen.”

Holly said the testimonies of the families were the most moving for her as well, but there was also a concert with one great act after another. “We were having so much fun singing with Catholic artists together. There was amazing joy.”

“I came home with some practical ideas about family,” said Flannery. “Family prayer times and reinforcing the importance of being together, playing, working, praying and serving together as a family.”

Tough on crime policy simplistic

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Church and indigenous leaders speaking during a restorative justice conference held recently in Saskatoon called for a vision of justice that is genuinely transformative.

Harry Lafond of the Treaty Commissioners’ Office and Victoria Bishop Gary Gordon, Correctional Ministry Liaison for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) gave a joint statement Oct. 2 at Queen’s House, urging a more effective solution than a simplistic “tough on crime” response.

“True restorative justice means effective intervention, restitution, and rehabilitation that heals individuals, families and communities and must include both those who have been harmed and those who have inflicted the harm,” said Lafond, one of the panelists at a media event held in conjunction with a Building a Culture of Hope Conference on restorative justice Oct. 1 - 3 at Queen’s House and St. Thomas More College.

“We invite the people of our communities to place hope at the centre of our conversations about justice and promote a vision of justice that is genuinely transformative,” added Lafond.

He also disputed the belief that putting people in jail and keeping them there longer, “out of sight and out of mind,” will create safer communities. “This is a simplistic

response to broken social, economic and cultural conditions,” Lafond said. “Perhaps no other group in our country has experienced this sad reality more than our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.”

The rate of incarceration of Aboriginal Canadians is seven times the national average, pointed out Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen, the chair of the CCCB national justice and peace commission, who attended the public event in Saskatoon along with visiting Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi.

“When it comes to restorative justice, when it comes to our prisons, in this country we have a problem — and within this province we have a problem,” asserted Bolen.

Bonazzi said society must work to bring healing rather than punishment. “Society must be prepared to take care of a person who suffers, who is in difficulty,” he said. “We always consider that redemption, restoration is possible.”

Among the many tools that bring about rehabilitation is love, said the nuncio. “We grow and we become more mature as humans . . . not because we do not have moments of failure, but because we learn to transform our defeat into occasions to build up a more human society.”

“Creating a vision of restorative justice is challenging work,” said Lafond. “It invites dialogue that pursues fundamental ques-

tions of safety, freedom and cultural security.”

Gordon, who was one of the keynote speakers at the conference, noted that when prisoners are simply pushed “out of sight and out of mind,” no one asks the questions that will bring about real change for individuals and for suffering communities.

“Our cultural landscape and economic direction continue to be dominated by a ‘throw-away’ mentality, which is sometimes justified by arguments of personal freedom and security, rather than inclusion, protection, and the inherent value of every person, family and community,” said Gordon.

“Many church and Aboriginal leaders are demonstrating the way the wisdom of the elders and traditional cultural interventions can be used to create restorative justice processes to heal the effects of crime,” Gordon added.

“As leaders, we endorse dialogue with our governments and the courts so that these processes can be more widely adopted, and our communities can be made safer through the transformative work of restorative justice.”

The Building a Culture of Hope Conference continued with a panel discussion on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. In addition to Gordon, conference speakers included Rev. Brian Rude and Justice Steven Point, and a number of workshop sessions.



FALL SUPPER — On Sept. 27, St. Mark Parish in Prince Albert hosted over 500 guests during their annual fall supper. Co-ordinators Lorraine Tremblay and Marlene Park helped the 24 volunteers with preparations. Newly appointed pastor Rev. Jim Kaptein walked around the hall, socializing with visitors and making balloon animals for children. Members of the parish donated almost all food items.



Called to Serve monument in Wascana Park

With Gratitude...

Thank you to everyone who made the October 1st “Called to Serve” celebrations in Regina so special:

- The Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi
- Regina Archbishop Daniel Bohan and all the Bishops of Saskatchewan
- Our Dioceses and key provincial Catholic organizations who support Catholic education and health
 - The generous donors who recognized the importance of this lasting tribute
 - All the suppliers, especially sculptor Jack Jensen of Prince Albert
- The nine members of the Catholic Sisters Legacy Recognition planning committee who invested their time and talents over 3 ½ years to mark this legacy in an enduring way

And thank you to our dear Sisters – those who were present on October 1st, those who could not be, and those who have gone before us – more than 5,500 Sisters from 61 different orders in total. Thank you for the gift of your service in laying the foundations of education, health care, and social services in our province. We are indebted to you, and we honour your legacy in answering the call of Jesus to fulfill his mission.
Thank you for saying Yes when you were called to serve.

Bert Yakichuk, Chair
Saskatchewan Catholic Connections

Saskatchewan Catholic Connections Representatives

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LOOKING FOR MORE? Event photos and commemorative video can be found at www.calledtoserve.ca

Election sees massive victory for Trudeau’s Liberals

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The massive Liberal victory Oct. 19 has given hope for those who want action on climate change, poverty and help for refugees that the new Trudeau government will deliver on its promises in these areas.

“Watching the election results felt like Trudeaumania II: The Sequel,” said Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) executive director Joe Gunn. “The Liberals hit more home runs than the Blue Jays!”

“It was gratifying to see a resurgence of democracy, as it seemed certain that more Canadians went to the polls,” he said. The Liberals won a solid majority with 184 seats, to the Conservative’s 99, the NDP’s 44, the Bloc Québécois’ 10, and the Green party’s one.

Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) deputy communications director Ryan Worms said his organization had been pushing for the high level of participation witnessed at the polls.

“Canadians want to have a change and also to get involved in policies for the next four years.”

On international development, Worms said he hopes the new Liberal government will “restore a

stronger dialogue with civil society with definite international development goals and strategies and that we will also get back to a level of funding that will allow Canada to meet expectations. We hope the needs of the poorest in the Global South will be at the centre of the new government’s concerns.”

Worms noted the Liberal party seemed more “open to dialogue” and willing “to find real strong solutions to fight climate change” and “to commit” to a binding agreement in upcoming talks.

“We will continue our campaign mobilization in the coming weeks and we hope that the Catholic mobilization around the issues of protecting our common home will be taken into account by the new government and in their position in Paris in December.”

Gunn said Canadians “are looking for some pretty immediate tone changes from their new majority government: the re-establishment of a functioning census, evidence-based decision-making with civil servants’ views able to be publicly expressed, no more demonization of refugees and those who work to help resettle them, and respect for women who wear traditional clothing

from their culture or religion, for example.”

“CPJ works on three issues where we need to see content changes from our federal government as well: on refugees: the immediate facilitation of 25,000 Syrians as promised during the campaign; on poverty, the implementation of the child benefit that should lift thousands of kids from poverty, and on climate change, a specific target for greenhouse gas reductions that is far more ambitious than Canada’s current, extremely weak, limit — and a workable plan to achieve that target — all before the UN climate summit begins on the First Sunday in Advent in Paris,” Gunn said. “Canadians massively decided that Justin is ready. Now we need to see if a Liberal government is.”

Campaign Life Coalition (CLC), the political arm of the pro-life movement, expressed concern the newly elected government “will push for more abortion access in Canada and around the world,” and will “refuse to invoke the notwithstanding clause to allow the democratic process to decide euthanasia and assisted-suicide legislation in Canada.”

“CLC urges the Liberal caucus to refrain from passing a permis-

sive euthanasia and assisted-suicide law that will surely put the lives of many vulnerable Canadians at risk,” said CLC president Jim Hughes, “I also call on Trudeau to represent all Canadians and allow his MPs to vote their conscience on moral issues, issues that many of their constituents feel very strongly about.”

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (EPC) executive director Alex Schadenberg said he is “incredibly worried” Canada will see a Belgium-style euthanasia regime imposed on Canada, because the wording of the Supreme Court of Canada’s Carter decision is so broad and imprecise.

“It’s possible the Liberals may decide not to legislate at all and let the provinces take over euthanasia and assisted suicide,” Schadenberg said. “Then they would be officially defined as health care.”

Doing so would negatively affect the health care system and put vulnerable people at risk, he warned.

Many people become “emotionally drained” and go through a “dark time in their soul” when they become sick, and might think “their life has lost value,”

Schadenberg said. These people are “very vulnerable” and may end up euthanized when they are really asking for help with their suffering.

Schadenberg also expressed deep concern for physicians and other health care workers who want nothing to do with killing their patients. “Under this government, will they be forced to refer or in some way participate?”

Institute of Marriage and Family (IMFC) executive director Andrea Mrozek sees a positive message in the repudiation of the NDP’s \$15 a day national daycare program.

“Nobody voted for national daycare,” she said. “That is a clear statement that this is not the type of childcare program that families want.”

While the IMFC supported the Tories plan for income-splitting for families, Mrozek said the “Liberal plan on help for parents is actually more complicated than the Conservative plan, but it does involve financial support that goes directly to parents. So I hope the idea of national daycare is laid to rest. When you ask parents what they want to do, they don’t prefer this form of care.”

Parishioners gather to sew handmade winter coats for the homeless

By Agnieszka Krawczynski
The B.C. Catholic

SURREY (CCN) — Dozens more homeless people will stay warm and dry this winter thanks to a dedicated group of sewers at

Star of the Sea Parish. The Helpers of St. Anne and St. Joachim are in their 16th season of making thick, waterproof coats that convert into sleeping bags for people on the streets.

“We pray for the receivers of these coats every day,” said organizer Carolyn Wharton on this year’s first day of sewing, Sept. 29.

About 30 volunteers will work to the whirring sound of sewing machines in Star of the Sea School gymnasium every Monday until the end of November. They intend to make 25 coats.

The handmade Santa Anna Comfort Coats are thick and made with fleece, insulated, with waterproof layers.

Wharton designed them without buttons, zippers, or other breakable parts; the coats have loops, ties, and knots.

“It’s a passion of mine. I just love helping people and reaching out to people,” said volunteer Brenda D’Souza. She has joined the group just this year.

D’Souza used to help out at Luke 15 House, a transition home for former prisoners with addictions. When she moved to Star of the Sea Parish two years ago, she started looking for other ways to help out in the community.

“More than anything, I’m really grateful for what I have in my life and what God has given me. It’s the smallest way I can pay back.”

She is also involved in the King’s Banquet Soup Kitchen, an initiative by the Helpers of St. Anne and St. Joachim that’s been running for 11 years.

Member Geraldine Meagher said she joined the group four years ago because she loves to sew and enjoys the company.

“When you see the results and you think about people actually being able to use this, it’s really a great project. It’s unique,” she said. “It’s where I can use my talents.”

Before giving the coats away, the ladies stuff the pockets with handmade toques, scarves, and mittens, as well as toiletries and a St. Anne prayer card.

“We put prayer cards in the



B.C. Catholic/A. Krawczynski

COMFORT COATS — Members of Star of the Sea Parish in Surrey, B.C., sew Santa Anna Comfort Coats — thick, waterproof coats for the homeless — in the school gymnasium.



B.C. Catholic/A. Krawczynski

HANDMADE COATS — The Helpers of St. Anne and St. Joachim are in their 16th season of making thick, waterproof coats that convert into sleeping bags for people on the streets. Volunteer Donna Sali sports a finished coat.

Handmade Santa Anna Comfort Coats are thick and made with fleece, insulated, with waterproof layers.

pockets so people understand these are gifts from Almighty God, and he doesn’t forget about his children,” Wharton explained.

“It is thanks to his inspiration that we’re doing this project.”

Since its inception, the group has handcrafted 460 Santa Anna Comfort Coats. Wharton also had 100 manufactured to hand out during the Olympics in 2010.

Finished coats are typically delivered to organizations that serve the homeless, such as Covenant House, the Missionaries of Charity, or St. Mary’s Street Ministry.

“There’s no shortage of ministries that need them,” Wharton has had requests from Victoria, Calgary, and Edmonton.

She said homeless recipients are “weeping” and “tongue-tied” when they are given these coats for free. It’s a time-consuming effort that yields only 25 coats a

year, and the volunteers aren’t getting any younger, Wharton said.

In an effort to find ways to produce more coats to fill the need, she hopes to get a manufacturer to make a batch that she could sell as gifts or emergency preparedness items to average Canadians.

The funds would then go toward another batch for the homeless, for free. Though manufacturing is more expensive, it would get more coats out, faster.

“I have found no other way thus far to ensure that these specially designed garments will continue to be gifted to homeless people,” Wharton said.

She urges those interested in purchasing a coat, sponsoring a coat for a homeless person, or getting involved another way to email cawharton@shaw.ca

Website:

<http://www.prairiemessenger.ca>

Just ‘imagine’: John Lennon would be 75 years old

By Jeffrey Salkin
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Just imagine: John Lennon would have turned 75 on Oct. 9.

I use the word “imagine” for a reason.

According to Rolling Stone magazine, his song with that name was the third most important popular song in history (the first being Like A Rolling Stone by Bob Dylan, and the second being (I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction by The Rolling Stones).

I never liked Imagine. I am not the only Jewish teacher who feels this way.

“Imagine there’s no countries/ It isn’t hard to do/Nothing to kill or die for/And no religion too.”

Lennon was saying: Let’s get rid of nations; let’s get rid of religion; let’s get rid of the idea that there is something above me that is worth dying for, and that might even be worth killing for.

Let’s get rid of the passions that help us transcend ourselves. Maybe that’s why the melody of

Imagine is so subdued — almost like sleepwalking.

Imagine is a dream, and not a very good one.

Imagine no nations, no separate peoples, no distinctive languages, lifestyles, or cultures.

A world of radical sameness.

A world that erases difference.

I actually like cultures, and lan-

guages, and national dreams (as long as they are not lethal national dreams, and make room for others).

As for “Nothing to kill or die for,” ask the loved ones of the students who were killed in Oregon recently — simply because they answered “Christian” to the question “What religion are you?” —

what that means to them.

Ask the loved ones of the Jews who have been killed in Israel in past weeks — killed because they are Jews.

When I was the rabbi in Columbus, Ga., every year during the High Holy Days we would welcome soldiers from nearby Fort Benning. I always called

them up for a blessing. I would ask God for two things.

First, that God should return them to their families safely.

Second, that God would put them out of work.

That was my way of saying: May there be no more war.

But since there is still war, and because some of those wars are regrettable but necessary, I am glad that there are soldiers.

As for “And no religion too,” Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot imagined a world without religion. The results were demonic.

I don’t even think that it is possible to imagine no religion.

Consider the words of the late writer David Foster Wallace:

“In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship. And an outstanding reason for choosing some sort of God or spiritual-type thing to worship — be it J.C. or Allah, be it Yahweh or the Wiccan mother-goddess or the Four Noble Truths or some infrangible set of ethical principles — is that pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive.

“If you worship money and things, then you will never have



RNS/Reuters/Eduardo Munoz

LENNON MEMORIAL — Mementos and flowers left by fans lay around the Imagine mosaic in the Strawberry Fields section of Central Park on the 33th anniversary of the death of former Beatle John Lennon, in New York on Dec. 8, 2013.

Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin is the spiritual leader of Temple Solel in Hollywood, Fla., and the author of numerous books on Jewish spirituality and ethics, published by Jewish Lights Publishing and Jewish Publication Society.

— SONGS, page 12

Sometimes listeners are better off not being able to understand the lyrics

By Caitlin Ward

The thing about some singers is that it’s basically impossible to understand what they’re saying. The most notorious example of that must be Louie Louie, which was made famous by The Kingsmen in 1963. The words were so garbled that they became the subject of a bona fide FBI investigation shortly after. If the words aren’t understandable, parents of the nation thought, it must be because there are swears in it. Or worse, it might have been about sex! And so, concerned parents of the nation wrote letters to

Little Bitch
The Specials

then-Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, and thus began perhaps one of the silliest FBI investigations in the history of the Bureau. Because there’s nothing worse than a song with swears in it.

Palpable nonsense, of course, but it is easy to misinterpret a song when a singer doesn’t speak clearly. I had Gangsters by the Specials stuck in my head recently. It’s a disconcerting but incredibly catchy song, which perhaps accounts for its success in 1979 despite the fact that when it goes through your head, it sounds like, “Nnngh . . . ngh ngh nnngh . . . ngh

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

ngh ngh ngh nnnnngh.” That’s neither here nor there. After looking it up, I realized that the song’s about corruption in the government, and the line is, “why must you record my phone calls?”

It occurred to me at that point that I had not understood the vast majority of Specials lyrics during my life — or at least, not the songs sung by Terry Hall, who seems to have had a chronic fear of enunciating.

The band’s been lauded as being deeply political, both in their music and the very makeup of the band (they had both black and white members, a phenomenon that’s still pretty unusual). Though ska is often a point of fun among music fans here in North America, in 1970s and 1980s U.K. it was part of a movement. Like their punk counterparts, The Specials were anti-fascist, anti-racist, anti-oppression, and often pretty controversial for all of those reasons.

What seems not to have been particularly controversial was how incredibly misogynistic their lyrics could be. After listening to the band on and off for years, it seems strange for me to have only just realized this. It makes sense, I suppose, given that I primarily listened to the band in high school, before lyrics sheets were so ubiquitous on the Internet.

I’m not sure how I feel listening to the band, now. I mean, sure, there are politically subversive songs like Gangsters, Racist Friend, or Ghost Town. But then there’s Little Bitch and Hey Little Rich Girl, which honestly, are pretty hateful.

It’s not an issue that’s unique to The Specials, of course. The rea-

son I’m talking about them is not because the band is more than uncommonly prone to misogyny in their lyrics. It’s also not that it’s startling that a band could be so sensitive about racism and classism and so blind to sexism. That’s unfortunately common, as well. I think, perhaps, it’s just that I happened to notice it about this particular band. And it added another thing that I’m ambivalent about to the ever-growing list in my head.

You see, I’m not sure if listening to such songs despite such lyrics and such behaviour is tacit approval of it. I suppose things that are historical are a bit different, as you can set them in their context. With contemporary artists, though, it becomes harder, as you are quite literally supporting them if you choose to buy their art.

The trouble is that if you stop listening to bands because of their misogynistic songs (or misogynistic behaviour), you cut down the list of bands you like very quickly. And even if we take into account the social norms of the times the bands were popular, we’d be hard-pressed to justify some of it. It may have been the 1970s, for example, but Jimmy Page still kidnapped and raped an underage girl, and then basically held her captive for years.

You might think I’m splitting hairs. Jimmy Page was a predator, but The Specials just said some mean things about girls. Here’s the thing, though: they’re kind of connected. There’s this idea in our culture that bad things happen to women because monsters emerge from some black lagoon and com-

mit horrible acts, and then retreat back to their swamps.

It’s more convoluted than that, though. We have songs that devalue women because our society devalues women, and songs that only portray women as Little Bitches or sex objects reinforce those ideas. And if we live in a society that devalues women, it doesn’t take a monster to trespass against a woman; it takes a person who wasn’t raised to respect women. And when I say respect, I don’t mean, “respect as a mother” or “respect as a sister” or “respect as a daughter.” I mean respect as a person in her own right.

So maybe it’s OK that I couldn’t really understand the words to Little Bitch very easily. Maybe it’s better that when I was 14, I didn’t know.

One two!

If you ever hear a noise in the night
Your body starts to sweat,
It shakes and shivers in fright
You go and sleep with your mother
She hates your guts
She knows that you love her
So she holds you tight
All through the night in to the broad daylight
And when she doesn’t come home
You’ll have to sleep alone
Then you wet your bed and I think that’s sad
For a girl of 19 it’s more than sad, it’s obscene!

One Two!

And your girlfriend sweet little 17
She’s got her layered hair and her flared jeans
You know what that means, she’s just a little queen
She shares your London flat
She thinks that London’s where it’s at

Although it stinks and when it rains you wear your hat
And your plum coloured pvc wet-look maxi mac
You tie your ginger hair back in a bun
You’re the ugliest creature, under the sun!

One Two!
Go!
One Two!

And you think it’s about time that you died, and I agree
So you decide on suicide
You tried but you never quite carried it out
You only wanted to die in order to show off
And if you think you’re gonna bleed all over me
You’re even wronger than you’d normally be
And the only things you want to see are kitsch
And the only thing you want to be is rich
Your little pink up-pointed nose begins twitch
I know you know you’re just a little bitch!

One Two!

From mountains to mean streets, Manhattan to Mars

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



If summer is for superheroes, sequels, and easygoing comedies, fall is when Hollywood producers start bringing out weightier fare in anticipation of awards season. Here are four deserving of notice. Icelandic director Baltasar Kormakur’s **Everest**, which opened the Venice film festival, assembles a top-notch cast to relive the events of May 1996 that resulted in one of the deadliest days on the world’s highest mountaintop — the supreme climbing challenge that tempts some adventurers to take fatal risks. The movie draws on *Into Thin Air*, the acclaimed account by Jon Krakauer (played by Michael Kelly), a reporter for *Outside* magazine who joined a diverse group making the ascent. From their

Everest
(U.K./U.S./Iceland)

Black Mass
(U.S.)

The Walk
(U.S.)

The Martian
(U.S.)

arrival in the crowded squalor of Katmandu up to the untidy base camp, it’s led by charismatic Australian tour leader Rob Hall (Jason Clarke) of Adventure Consultants, supported by assistant guide Guy (fellow Aussie Sam Worthington) and logistics co-ordinator Helen (Emily Watson).

As they acclimatize to the altitude and prepare to ascend in stages before a final assault on the summit, the characters and motivations of the members emerge. Beck (Josh Brolin) is an assertive middle-aged Texan who has paid a lot of money for this achievement while having to reassure a nervous family back home. Doug (John Hawkes) is a quiet postal worker for whom this is a last chance after a previous failed attempt. Yasuko (Naoko Mori) is a Japanese woman who has scaled six of the seven highest continental peaks and needs this to complete that accomplishment.

Rob is the type to inspire confidence that they will be in safe hands. He has every reason not to take risks with a pregnant wife (Keira Knightley) waiting for him, with whom he keeps in touch by satellite phone. He also contrasts with several other tour leaders making the ascent — the long-haired hippie-like American Scott Fischer (Jake Gyllenhaal) and macho Russian Anatoli Boukreev (Ingvar Sigurosson) who eschews the use of supplementary oxygen. The role of the Nepalese sherpas remains peripheral but this isn’t their story.

After crossing treacherous ice-falls and crevasses, all three

groups see a window to reach the top on the same day. But things quickly go awry. Time has run out when Rob makes a fateful decision to help a labouring Doug attain his dream. The notoriously changeable weather turns against them. In the end, eight bodies will be left on the mountain.

Both visually (especially viewed in IMAX 3D) and in dramatic intensity, the unfolding of the disaster is brilliantly realized. *Everest* is a chillingly effective cautionary tale.

Scott Cooper’s **Black Mass** offers Johnny Depp’s best role in years, physically transformed into the menacing character of James “Whitey” Bulger, a real-life crime boss from the mean streets of south Boston whose Winter Hill Gang rose to underworld dominance during the 1970s and ’80s while being protected from prosecution by the FBI. The incredible story was the subject of a 2014 documentary *Whitey: United States of America vs. James J. Bulger*.

The key to this unusual arrangement was Bulger’s childhood friendship with fellow “Southey” John Connolly (Joel Edgerton, equally superb), a brash ambitious FBI agent who convinced his Bureau colleagues, including a skeptical supervisor played by Kevin Bacon, that Bulger could provide valuable information on a rival Italian mafia. Bulger played the FBI, refusing to see himself as an “informant” (though keeping the relationship secret from his associates including a devoted young driver). The benefit was he and his henchman getting away with multiple murders and lucrative criminal operations. While Bulger could be a ruthless killer, he also doted on his mother and kept in touch with notably successful brother Billy (Benedict Cumberbatch), a lawyer and educator who became president of the state senate as well as the University of Massachusetts.

Eventually both Bulger and Connolly overplayed their hands. The arrangement came crashing down when a determined federal prosecutor (Corey Stoll) started digging into why the gang’s notorious activities had been shielded for so long. Key members were arrested and gave evidence against the mastermind in exchange for lesser sentences. Connolly was trapped too and received a lengthy prison term. Bulger escaped into hiding in 1994 and was not apprehended till 2011, subsequently sentenced to several life terms.

Black Mass is a cut above the usual gangster movie or action thriller in the way that it gets under



CNS/Sony

THE WALK — Joseph Gordon-Levitt stars in *The Walk*, a work of “awe-inspiring screen magic,” writes Gerald Schmitz.

the skin of its characters and in its impressive attention to period details. Depp especially is thoroughly believable as Bulger and deserving of early Oscar buzz.

Director Robert Zemeckis brings an awe-inspiring screen magic to **The Walk**, also based on the exploits of a real person, intrepid French highwire artist Philippe Petit, who stunned the world on the morning of Aug. 7, 1974, when he walked back and forth on a cable illegally stretched between the 110-storey north and south tower roofs of Manhattan’s barely finished World Trade Center (WTC). The movie, for which Petit was a “coach and consultant,” draws on his memoir *To Reach the Clouds* and is an effective dramatization of his story that was the subject of James Marsh’s Oscar-winning 2008 documentary *Man on Wire*.

Key to that is the quite exceptional performance of American actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Petit who speaks directly to the audience as the narrator of his incredibly daring “coup.” Gordon-Levitt carries off the physical demands and the language — switching between French and French-accented English — with surprising aplomb, perhaps enough to have a legitimate shot at an Oscar nomination.

Petit was an itinerant street performer in Paris who had gained attention for walking between the spires of Notre Dame Cathedral. Transfixed by a 1973 magazine image of the twin towers under construction, he became obsessed with the ultimate challenge of walking between the world’s tallest structures, roping in girl-

friend Annie (Quebec’s Charlotte Le Bon) and several others as part of his plan.

Fascinated by circus wire-walkers since boyhood, Petit was an eager student of Papa Rudy Omankowski (Ben Kingsley), the patriarch of a Czech family of performers. Still, the WTC attempt, demanding many hours of illegal access to the buildings and eschewing any safety harness, must have seemed like suicidal madness. One of Petit’s assistants was even afraid of heights.

Once in New York Petit found additional accomplices (one of whom conveniently worked on an 82nd floor). Lengthy detailed preparations for his coup included using disguises to enter the towers multiple times in order to scout the terrain. For all that, the critical night leading up to the walk was a very near-run thing. The movie, much of which was actually filmed in Montreal, expertly recreates the incidents and atmosphere of high anxiety.

It’s the defiant walk itself, requiring a remarkable digital reconstruction of those iconic towers destroyed on 9/11, which stands out for breathtaking vertigo-inducing images worth the extra to watch in Imax 3D. Petit spent 45 minutes going back and forth between the towers, stealing the headlines the day before a disgraced President Nixon announced his resignation over Watergate. There are photographs but no moving pictures of this feat of crazy genius that can never be repeated. This is the closest we will come to imagining what it was like.

We are in another period of popular interest in Mars, spurred

by NASA’s recent discovery of flowing water on the red planet suggesting the possibility of life. Billionaire inventor-entrepreneur Elon Musk, founder of SpaceX, has said he wants to die on Mars. Ridley Scott’s futurist sci-fi epic **The Martian**, based on the Andy Weir novel, is all about keeping one man alive on Mars, which humans have been visiting for some time, notwithstanding the four years it takes to traverse at least 34 million miles of space.

NASA’s Ares III mission, led by commander Melissa Lewis (Jessica Chastain), is going about its work when a severe Martian storm forces the crew to evacuate. Botanist Mark Watney (Matt Damon) is hit by debris and, presumed dead, left behind. Amazingly he survives and gets back to the base where he has to use all of his scientific wiles to figure out how to make water and grow food so as to last the many hundreds of “sols” (Martian days) before any rescue would be possible. Potatoes and human waste play a role until zapped by another destructive storm.

At first Watney has no communication with NASA, headed by a calculating bureaucrat Teddy Sanders (Jeff Daniels), but still gamely records his efforts. He’s never going to give up. The discovery he’s alive presents NASA with troubling dilemmas of whether, then how, to try to bring him home. Two years pass before the returning Ares III crew are even told, at which point they defy orders and reverse course back toward Mars to retrieve their stranded mate. Every step involves huge improbabilities too numerous to mention, as well as a crucial assist from a Chinese space agency rocket.

There’s little doubt Watney will make a triumphant return to earth against all odds, which lessens the suspense. Still *The Martian* is consistently entertaining, with the pseudo-scientific mumbo-jumbo leavened by often humorous exchanges. Kudos as well to the cinematography by Dariusz Wolski (who also worked on *The Walk*) and spectacular special effects. Jordan’s Wadi Rum landscape doubled for Martian exteriors and most of the rest was shot on sound stages in Hungary.

The potential to put astronauts on Mars may still be a long way off but it doesn’t hurt to dream at the movies.



CNS/Twentieth Century Fox

THE MARTIAN — Matt Damon stars in Ridley Scott’s futuristic sci-fi epic *The Martian*.

God is with families in all their blessed diversity

Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



"And a sword shall pierce your heart." Simeon's prediction to Mary that her son would be for her a cause of piercing sorrow was probably not at all what the new mother expected to hear. On that glorious day when she and Joseph brought their precious child to the temple for the appropriate rituals, undoubtedly their hearts were full of joy and they were expecting to hear words of congratulations not warnings of impending grief.

Yet Mary was a parent, and as she would come to learn first-hand, along with the joy of parenting comes the heartache of parenting. Both are inevitable because family life is not a happy-ever-after idyll but a lifetime process of engaging in real relationships where laughter, celebration and joy intermingle with blood, sweat and tears.

Mary's own life reflects this. Alongside such celebratory events as the wedding banquet at Cana, we hear of harsh realities: a pregnancy before marriage; a birth in impoverished circumstances; a flight from home because of political violence; the reality of being refugees and immigrants, strangers in a strange land.

There are the hidden child-rearing years where, somewhere along the way, Mary loses her life partner and becomes a widow. Her concern and worry for her adult son grows as he follows his chosen path which, increasingly, arouses political and religious opposition. Her fidelity finds her standing, poignantly, heart-broken but strong, beneath a cross as mother of the condemned, mother of the unjustly executed. Truly, Mary's familial journey was hardly idyllic.

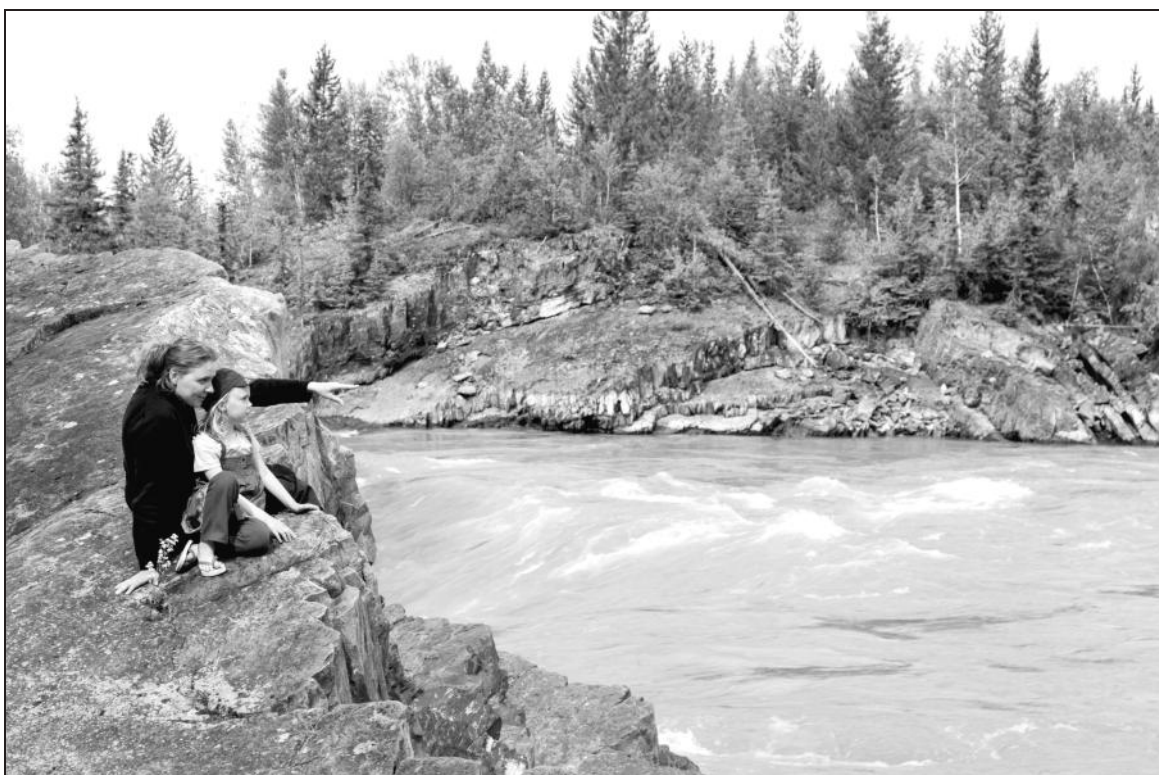
Yet, with all of this, we still name them as the Holy Family. Perhaps it is time to point out that, while Mary, Joseph and Jesus rightly together constitute the "holy family," it is not because their lives are picture-perfect and without strife. Rather, it is because the presence of God is always with them and they live in and out of God's grace. In their

joys and celebrations as well as their struggles, tensions and crucifixions, they are always open to a God who is present and active, working to bring about good. The family is holy primarily because God is present in and with them.

We have been watching and listening to the Catholic bishops gathered this month to consider family life in today's context. Pope Francis has asked the bishops to take a pastoral point of view and not a dogmatic nor a legalistic one. A pastoral point of view will take seriously the opening lines of *Gaudium et Spes*, the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the (people) of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ."

To consider families from the vantage point of their joys and their hopes, their griefs and anxieties, with a special heart for families who afflicted in any way, is to be willing to look at real families with an eye to seeing how the church might help them. It is not about defining what a "perfect family," or even a "holy" family, might look like. Nor can it be about judging how well families "measure up" and fit into preconceived patterns. A pastoral approach wants to walk with families as they are, the notion of accompaniment that Pope Francis writes about in *Evangelii Gaudium*. It would want to help families see how, indeed, they are already holy, and where, in the daily circumstances of their lives, God and grace are already present and active.

A pastoral approach would acknowledge the complexity of family life. Families come in all shapes and sizes: nuclear, extended, or blended; single-parented, cohabiting, divorced, divorced and remarried, same-sex, widowed, childless or empty-nest. They can be peaceful or torn apart by violence, stably rooted or on the move because of war or poverty. Today's



Design Pics

DIVERSITY OF FAMILIES — "Families come in all shapes and sizes: nuclear, extended, or blended; single-parented, cohabiting, divorced, divorced and remarried, same-sex, widowed, childless or empty-nest," writes Sandy Prather. What might happen, she asks, if the church looked with a merciful and loving eye at today's families, in all their diversity, and tried to walk with them, rather than decrying what is missing in their lives?

families are pluriform, yet what they have in common is that they constitute the primary relationships where life is nurtured and where one belongs. Recognizing the diversity of families is necessary if we are to accompany them on their unique journeys.

Pastorally, it means we recognize that our families are, often at the same time, gift and wound, blessing and curse. Sometimes we can't live without our families, and sometimes we can't live with them. Our families are celebration and delight, our haven and refuge, but they also might be grief and sorrow, agony and anger. Family can be a battleground or even a war zone.

It is here, pastorally, that we need to give witness that families are holy not because they are perfect. They are holy because they are places where God is present, even and perhaps especially in the places where they are broken. They are, after all, primary places where we live the Christian commandment to love one another. They are the places where life is created, cherished and nurtured.

In our families we see love in action, and where love is, God is. However imperfectly we may live that love, it is in our commitment to it and our struggles to be faithful that God is present.

What might happen then, if the church looked with a merciful and loving eye at today's families, in all their diversity, and tried to walk with them? What if, rather than decrying what is missing in families, we helped people see what is blessed and good about

them? What if we helped people see that even and perhaps especially in the places of brokenness and crucifixion, God is present working to bring new life? What if we helped people to say, "It may not be THE Holy Family, Lord, but it's MY holy family?"

Other songs more optimistic

Continued from page 10

enough, never feel you have enough. Worship your body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly. Worship power, and you will need ever more power over others to numb you to your own fear. Worship your intellect, you will end up feeling stupid, a fraud, always on the verge of being found out."

I loved John Lennon. I loved his sardonic sense of humour. I loved his literary flair. I loved his musicianship. He was my favourite Beatle.

But, I am not a "Lennonist." I don't imagine that "there's no heaven," and that above us is "only sky." I don't long for a world in which people "live for today," and only today.

My favourite Lennon song?

Give Peace A Chance. I love its

hopefulness — not to mention that it is the only rock song in which the word "rabbi's" appears. It was recorded during John and Yoko's famous "bed-in" in Montreal, and the late Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, the retired rabbi of Toronto's venerable Holy Blossom Temple, visited them and sang along.

My runner-up? Starting Over, from John's final album, Double Fantasy.

I love its optimism, which, considering the album was released the month before his death, turned out to be tragic and poignant.

At this time of the year, I like the idea of "starting over."

Happy 75th birthday, John.

And since I cannot "imagine there's no heaven," let me imagine you in it — jamming with fellow Beatle George Harrison, B.B. King, and all the others in God's rock 'n' roll band.

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We are all called to be saints, living life to the full



Liturgy and Life

Sylvain Lavoie, OMI

Help people be fully human, then help them become Christian, and finally help them to become saints.

These words are from St. Eugene de Mazenod, founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. That advice given to his missionaries still holds true today, especially on this feast of All Saints' Day.

Our task as followers of Jesus is to live fully human, saintly lives and help others to do the same.

Unfortunately, an all too common misconception is that saints are rare, extraordinary and eccentric. These words of St Eugene remind us that we are all called to be saints, to be holy, to live life to the full.

According to Pope Benedict, the solemnity of All Saints “was gradually affirmed over the course of the first Christian millennium as a collective celebration of the martyrs. Already in 609, in Rome, Pope Boniface IV had consecrated the Pantheon, dedicating it to the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs. This martyrdom, on the other hand, can be understood in a broad sense, that is, as love for Christ without reserve, love that is expressed in the total gift of oneself to God and to neighbour.”

Rev. Thomas Rosica, of Salt + Light Television, states that holiness is a way of life that involves commitment and

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.

activity. It is not a passive endeavour, but rather a continuous choice to deepen one's relationship with God and to allow this relationship to guide all of one's actions in the world. Holiness requires a radical change in mindset and attitude. The acceptance of the call to holiness places God as our final goal in every aspect of our lives.

Rosica goes on to quote Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the World Youth Day in Rome in the year 2000: "Young people of every continent, do not be afraid to be the saints of the new millennium! Be contemplative, love prayer; be coherent with your faith and generous in the service of your brothers and sisters, be active members of the church and builders of peace."

The gospel today offers us a blueprint for holiness, for wholeness. The Beatitudes are a succinct presentation of the highest values that followers of Jesus are called to live. To live them is to live a holy life, one that will challenge the values of the world we live in.

To be *poor in spirit* is to be humble, to live out of the truth, to be free from pretense, to actually live within the reign of God here and now. To be *meek and gentle* is to be at peace with all of God's creation, in a sense to be at home anywhere and everywhere.

All Saints	Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14
	Psalm 24
November 1, 2015	1 John 3:1-3
	Matthew 5:1-12a

To be able to *mourn* and be compassionate is to experience the comforting presence of God's Spirit in one's life. To *seek justice* and fairness is to strive for a right relationship with God and with others, building up the reign of God here on earth.

To be merciful is to be able to forgive, to live free of anger and resentment, and to seek to be reconciled with all others. It is to be Godlike, for God is forgiveness.

To be a peacemaker is to strive to overcome conflict with communication and understanding and to truly be a child of God.

To be *pure of heart* is to be single-minded in one's daily life, focused only on the goodness of God and doing God's

will. It is to surrender our intellect, will, senses, imagination and human sexuality into an intimate relationship with God and joyfully serving God. We will be able to see God working in our life as well as the lives of others. Step 3 of the A.A. program puts it succinctly: “Surrendered our lives and our wills over to the care of God.”

The second reading simply affirms the beatitude to be pure in heart. Those who hope to see God “as God is” must purify themselves, for God is pure. The first reading honouring the martyrs bears out the words of Pope Benedict, that this feast was first of all one that celebrated the lives of all those who gave their lives for Christ, who accepted *persecution*, the last beatitude.

In a sense, we are all called to live martyrdom in slow motion, for that is what living a life given over to loving God, and loving others as we love ourselves, will entail. That selfless love will manifest itself in our lives in countless different ways.

Rev. John Corapi, a popular speaker on Christian life, shares an example of James, a fellow seminarian, who became terminally ill. All who knew him questioned why this should happen to someone so gifted, athletic and planning to be a priest. That question intensified as they journeyed with him and watched him waste away with the disease.

One day, Father John came into James' room to witness what to him was another *Pieta*. James' mother was holding him in her arms and wiping away the sweat that poured from his brow in his suffering. When he saw John enter, he motioned him to come closer. Putting his ear close to James' mouth, John heard him whisper the words, "You can never imagine such joy." James slipped into a coma some days later. A priest came in with communion and decided to bless him with the host, saying loudly, "Behold the Lamb of God." At those words, James abruptly sat up, was able to swallow a portion of the host, and said, "Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia" before expiring — truly a saint who lived the beatitudes.

The eucharist that we celebrate today is food for saints and sinners. We are forgiven, healed and sent out to make the world a better place, to make it the reign of God here on earth.

So today, as we celebrate the feast of All Saints, let us pray for the faith to be fully human, to be Christians, to become saints and to help others do the same.

Stigma of suicide still exists, and needs to be challenged

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



Recently I read, in succession, three books on suicide, each written by a mother who lost one of her children to suicide. All three books are powerful, mature, not given to false sentiment, and worth reading: Lois Severson (*Healing the Wound from My Daughter's Suicide*, Grief

Translated into Words) lost her daughter, Patty, to suicide; Gloria Hutchinson (*Damage Done*, *Suicide of an Only Son*) lost her son, David, to suicide; and Marjorie Antus (*My Daughter, Her Suicide*, and *God, A Memoir of Hope*) lost her daughter, Mary, to

suicide. Patty and David were in their mid-20s. Marv was still a teen.

You cannot read these biographies and not have your heart ache for these three young people who died in this unfortunate manner. What these books describe in each case is a person who is very loveable, oversensitive, has a history of emotional struggles, and is in all likelihood suffering from a chemical imbalance. Hearing their stories should leave you more convinced than ever that no God worth worshipping could ever condemn any of these persons to exclusion from the family of life simply because of the manner of their deaths. Gabriel Marcel had an axiom: *To love someone is to say of that person, you at least will not die.* That's solid Christian doctrine.

As Christians we believe that, as a community of believers, we make up the Body of Christ along with all of those who have died in faith before us. Part of that belief is that Christ has given us the power to bind and loose which, among other things, means that our love for someone can hold that person inside our family, inside the community of grace, and inside of heaven itself. In all three of these books, these mothers make it clear that this is exactly what they are

doing. Their family, their circle of grace, their love, and their heaven includes their lost child. My heaven too includes these three young people, as should any true understanding of God, of grace, of love, and of the family of life.

That's a deep consolation, but it doesn't take away the pain. For a parent, the loss of a child to any kind of death leaves a wound that, this side of eternity, will find no healing. The death of one's child goes against nature: parents aren't supposed to bury their children. The death of any child is hard, but if that death comes by suicide, that pain is compounded. There's the frustration and anger that, unlike a death from a physical disease, this is unwarranted, unnecessary, and an act of betrayal in some way. And there's the endless second-guessing: How responsible am I for this? How should have I been more alert? Where was I negligent? Why wasn't I around at the crucial moment? Guilt and anger comingle with the grief.

But that isn't all. Beyond all of this, which is itself more than sufficient to break a person, lies the stigma attached to suicide. In the end, despite a better understanding of suicide and a more enlightened attitude toward it, there is still a social, moral, and religious stigma attached to it, equally true in both secular and religious circles. In the not too distant past, churches used to refuse to bury someone who died by suicide on blessed ground. The churches have changed their attitudes and their practice on this, but, truth be told, many people still struggle in their gut to accord a

blessed, peaceful farewell to
 someone who has died by suicide.
 The stigma still remains. Someone
 who dies in this manner is still
 seen as somehow accursed, as
 dying outside the family of life
 and the circle of grace. There is,
 for most people, nothing consoling
 in their deaths.

I have suggested elsewhere in my writings that the majority of suicides should be understood as death by a mortal illness: a deadly chemical imbalance, an emotional stroke, an emotional cancer, or an oversensitivity that strips someone of the resiliency needed to live. Here, however, I want to address more specifically the issue of the stigma attached to suicide.

It's clear that there is still a stigma attached to suicide. With that in mind, it can be helpful to reflect upon the manner in which Jesus died. His death was clearly not a suicide, but it was similarly stigmatized. Crucifixion carried a stigma from every point of view: religious, moral, and social. A person dying in this way was understood to be dying outside the mercy of God and outside the blessing and acceptance of the community. The families of those crucified carried a certain shame and those who died by crucifixion were also buried apart, in grounds that then took on their own stigma. And it was understood that they were outside the mercy of God and of the community.

Jesus' death was clearly not a suicide, but it evoked a similar perception. The same stigma as we attach to suicide was also attached to the manner in which he died.



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Deliberations, intrigue continue at high-stakes synod

By David Gibson

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Ever since a Vatican summit last year raised the possibility of making the church more open to those whose family lives may not mirror the Catholic ideal, conservative foes have been in uproar, waging an intense campaign to block any reforms from being adopted.

Yet as a followup meeting this month has progressed, the enthusiasm of the traditionalists could be overwhelming their tactical judgment — annoying and even angering enough of their fellow bishops they may have weakened what was once considered a strong position.

Still, the conservatives may also have created enough disarray and disagreement to ice any significant moves toward change, or taint any proposals they may offer to Pope Francis when the synod concludes on Oct. 25 after three intense weeks.

The most public, and, for the conservatives, embarrassing episode came early last week with the leak of a private letter to the pope from 13 cardinals opposed to reforms.

In the letter, the senior churchmen complained that Francis had set up this meeting of 270 bishops from around the world in a way that would favour reformers who want, for example, to adopt a new approach to gays and lesbians or find a way that divorced and remarried Catholics could receive communion.



Art Babych

SYNOD DRAWING TO A CLOSE — Worshippers gather at St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Shrine in Ottawa. The synod on the family, which comes to a conclusion this weekend, has been in deliberations about making the church more open to those whose family lives may not mirror the Catholic ideal.

Several cardinals quickly denied signing the letter, and others said the letter they signed was a bit different from the leaked version, though they did not say how.

That sent synod delegates and Vatican-watching media into a frenzy of speculation, until it was reported that there were in fact 13 signers, only some of them were different from those originally claimed.

Moreover, one of those newly revealed to have signed was Houston Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, a top official of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

DiNardo's participation in the secret campaign was seen as a knock at Washington Cardinal Donald Wuerl. That's because Wuerl is a member of the committee named by Francis to draft the synod's final report — a group whose composition had irked the conservatives.

New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan was also a signer, and after

initially declining to comment, Dolan gave a radio interview that offers a circuitous rationale for the letter. At the same time, Dolan pegs conservative Australian Cardinal George Pell — a top Vatican official and outspoken opponent of reforms — as the ring-leader of the effort:

"Cardinal Pell in his good shrewd way said, 'Am I correct in summing up some of the concerns?' " Dolan says in the interview. "And some of us, myself included, said, 'Boy, that sounds good to me. If you have a letter to

the pope, count me in.' And, sure enough, I signed it."

But, Dolan added, the letter was in Italian, and he said he "had forgotten about it" and was stunned when it emerged.

With all these twists and turns the saga was quickly becoming as absurd as it was convoluted, and it might have been seen as just another chapter in the legacy of Vatican intrigue that stretches from the era of the Borgia popes to the novels of Dan Brown — except that the plot seemed so backhanded it made the synod look faithless as well as foolish.

"The general opinion I detected among the bishops was a sense of disgust," Bishop Marcello Semeraro, an Italian who is on the final drafting committee along with Wuerl, told Vatican Insider.

Another synod delegate, Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Australia, called the leaked letter affair a "typically Roman melodrama" that was "not untinged with psychodrama."

The problem, Coleridge wrote on his blog, is that episodes like this tend to "aggravate the sense that the synod is not much more than a political caucus, with ideological riptides swirling around us and the odd stinger drifting by."

Already, he said, the deliberations are struggling to battle against "a fear that can become a kind of paranoia."

"My reading of all this is that the ploy has backfired," wrote veteran Vaticanista John Thavis. "I suspect most synod participants

— CONSENSUS, page 16

Bishops admit: we don't know much about sex

By Rosie Scammell

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Bishops participating in the Vatican's synod on the family have admitted that they don't know much about sex — and that they need the help of laypeople to fully understand marital intimacy.

Laypeople play an important part in the discussions at their synod on the family, Rev. Thomas Rosica, English-language assistant to the Vatican press office, said Oct. 16.

"At the heart of the synod is human sexuality. And oftentimes it's muted and we don't know how to talk about it, because most of us in the room are male celibates," he said, citing comments of unnamed bishops.

Fourteen married couples and other laypeople have been brought in to fill in the gaps in the churchmen's knowledge, advising the 270 bishops as they discuss family issues.

Rev. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican's chief spokesperson, cited bishops who said it is essential to grasp "the importance of sexuality in spouses' lives."

But Rev. Manuel Dorantes, assisting the Vatican press office in Spanish, said bishops also discussed the need for families to change the way they talk about sex.

"Many fathers don't talk about the beauty of sexuality with their children. The church itself is not entering into this role; they should

present the good news of human sexuality as a pathway of love, not sin," he said.

Quoting an unnamed synod bishop, Rosica noted the sacramental nature of both the eucharist and marriage. " 'This is my body, given for you.' We need to root that in human sexuality and in love. It helps to appreciate even better the sacrament of the eucharist," he said.

The bishops have some way to go if they are to convince Catholics they understand their lives, according to Sharron Cole, president of Parents Centres New Zealand, who has been participating in the discussions.

Until now the Catholic Church has responded to married couples' use of artificial contraception, for example, by either ignoring it or calling for greater religious instruction, Cole told bishops. "This 'paralyzed status quo' cannot continue. The matter must be discussed afresh, but laypeople will not be content to leave it to clergy alone."

Cole said clergy's response to the sexual abuse scandal demonstrated a lack of "expertise in sexuality and psychology to make good decisions," leading to further harm and a loss of credibility.

"The time is now for this synod to propose that the church re-examine its teaching on marriage and sexuality, and its understanding of responsible parenthood, in a dialogue of laity and bishops together," she said.

Human values handed on through family

The following editorial from the May 26, 1999, issue of the Prairie Messenger, titled Strengthening marriage, was written by Andrew Britz, OSB, and is featured in Chapter 8 The Ethic of Life in his book Truth To Power: The Journalism of a Benedictine Monk. The Vatican synod on the family had some bishops noting the fact that they "don't know much about sex" (see related article, this page). Rev. Thomas Rosica quoted an unnamed bishop who spoke of the sacramental nature of both the eucharist and marriage, something Britz wrote about frequently over his years as editor of the Prairie Messenger.

Civilization is as healthy as its families. When the family as the primary social unit loses its moorings, the whole of human life is endangered.

Human values, even the central value of life itself, is handed on in a family setting. It is here that mysteriously most of us find the strength, the courage to ultimately believe enough in ourselves to find meaning in our very existence.

This cannot be taught; it can only be experienced — experienced in the unconditional love given by parents. And, ideally, parents find the grace to image — albeit imperfectly — the unconditional love of the God revealed in Jesus Christ in their own experience of marital love, in the marriage bed and in their daily sharing in the myriad of little activities known as family life.

Pope John Paul II loves to see the Christian home as a domestic church. As we become in the eucharist the one Body of Christ filled with the Holy Spirit, so in marriage the two become one flesh, one sacrament of Christ's

presence. In the sacrament of marriage a home is formed, filled with the Holy Spirit, creating a new space in which children know not the power of sin as the world's strongest force, but rather come to trust in the victory of Jesus, the victory of love.

And, in the celebration of that victory, the children gradually experience the victory of their own personhood, as it emerges as their own supreme good, as the best gift which the God of all power and majesty could with wisdom divine create for them.

Much of this comes to fruition around the kitchen table where families so often gather to eat, to play and to pray — and, at times, to fight and to cry, since these too are part and parcel of becoming an independent person.

Saying this in theological terms, the banquet table of the kingdom in heaven, the liturgical table in our churches and the secular table in our homes take on one and the same meaning.

Only with such an identification can the Christian find the

wherewithal to lead the world in a celebration of its secularity, of its core meaning. Catholics speak of the family as the primary social unit of civilization by calling it a sacrament, the mystery of the very presence of Jesus Christ with all pathos and splendour that was his death and resurrection.

Not without reason do the Easter Vigil readings always begin with the story of creation, with the proclamation of the absolute goodness God has planted in everything created.

We are not prone to find in the eucharist the key to understanding and appreciating sexuality in the Christian home — and this appreciation should form the basis for our evaluation of the world.

No one will deny that human sexuality has often been misused. Pornography, for generation after generation, has been big business. But it doesn't take a church to tell people this is wrong. It does, however, take a church community to insist on human sexuality's unbelievable greatness and true glory.

For the church to have a credible voice in this critical dimension of human existence, it must move beyond a listing of sins. Once the church spontaneously views the marriage bed and its eucharistic expression as parallel sacramental expressions of the kingdom, no one will be tempted to question that it has something vital to say about life in this world.

What dialogue looks like: Jewish-Christian 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/interfaith-dialogue/jewish-christian-relations>). There has 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 10th in the series.

Rabbi Dr. Ruth Langer (1960 -)

One of the important insights that has emerged from more than a half-century of Jewish-Christian dialogue has been how deeply rooted significant elements of traditional Christian liturgy are in their Jewish origins. Whereas Christianity has often tended to try and distance itself from its Jewish pedigree, and stress its newness and distinctiveness, the less tri-



Rabbi Dr. Ruth Langer

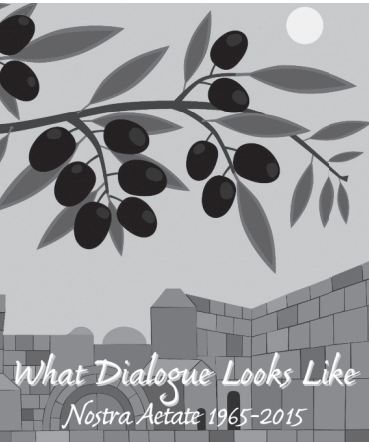
umphalistic tone of Christianity since the Second World War has allowed for a new appreciation of how much Christian prayer-forms owe to their Jewish ancestry — and how *both* Judaism and Christianity have developed from that ancestry since then, although in differing ways. In 1985, a set of official Vatican guidelines on Jewish-Christian relations noted (speaking primarily about Catholic liturgy):

The liturgy of the Word in its own structure originates in Judaism. The prayer of the Hours and other liturgical texts and formularies have their parallels in Judaism, as do the very formulas of our most venerable prayers, among them the Our Father. The eucharistic prayers also draw inspiration from models in the Jewish tradition. As John Paul II said (Allocution of March 6, 1982): “The faith and religious life of the Jewish people as they are professed and practised still today, can greatly help us to understand better certain aspects of the life of the church. Such is the case of liturgy” (Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church, V.1).

One of the most prominent leaders in the field of Jewish-Christian relations today, Rabbi Dr. Ruth Langer is also an expert in the many intersections between Jewish and Christian liturgy. A native of Pittsburgh, Langer did her undergraduate studies at Bryn

Mawr College, and then pursued graduate work at Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, receiving a master of arts in Hebrew Literature in 1985, and being ordained to the rabbinate there the following year for the Reform movement. In 1994, she received her PhD, for her thesis *The Impact of Custom, History, and Mysticism on the Shaping of Jewish Liturgical Law*. Today, she is professor of Jewish Studies in the Theology Department at Boston College, associate director of the college’s centre for Christian-Jewish Learning, and chair of the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR), which unites several dozen centres of scholarly study across North America and around the world.

Langer’s scholarly work often weaves together her two areas of specialty — the history of Jewish liturgy, and Jewish-Christian relations — such as in her 2012 book *Cursing the Christians? A History of the Birkat HaMinim*, in which she explored in depth the origins, historical context and meaning of a longstanding prayer in the synagogue liturgy that has been at the heart of considerable controversy, in terms of its implications for Jewish perceptions of Christianity. Her many published articles and lectures examine a broad range of related topics, including how Jewish liturgy incorporates the Bible; the place of memory in liturgy; the relationship of dialogue to theology; and how Jewish liturgy speaks of God’s presence (a more comprehensive list of her publications can be found at: https://www2.bc.edu/~langer/r/anger_vita.html). She has just recently published a new book, an annotated bibliography written to provide an entry point,



especially for Christians, into the field of Jewish liturgy (*Jewish Liturgy: A Guide to Research*, 2015). This volume describes more than 1,000 published sources for those who wish to delve into this fascinating and important area for themselves.

In a 2009 interview, Langer reflected on the tremendous progress that has been made in many Christian communities

since the Second World War, but she also warned of the temptation today to what she called “superficial reconciliation,” in which Christians say, “I know that I’m not supposed to say nasty things about Jews,” but don’t really understand anything of the bitter history of Jewish suffering at the hands of Christians in many places. Today it is possible to have positive relations with Jews, but without any awareness of some of the negative aspects of the Christian tradition, which can remain problematic if they aren’t addressed honestly and sensitively. In order to build a solid and lasting foundation for the relationship, respect and friendship need to go hand-in-hand with historical awareness, and a commitment to thinking and acting differently.

Both on a scholarly level, and in a more popular vein, Dr. Ruth Langer combines brilliant intellectual analysis with a sensitivity to the realities of Jewish-Christian relations as they are being lived out today. She helps us to better understand aspects of our shared history, while looking to the future with hope and creativity — drawing upon our respective traditions of liturgy and prayer in ways which can foster dialogue and co-operation, and honour the God we pray to.

Pope John Paul II (1920 - 2005)

The man who was arguably the greatest champion of modern Jewish-Christian dialogue was known to the world as John Paul II (or “JP2” to many), but when he was born, on May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, Poland, his birth name was Karol Wojtyla. Wojtyla’s mother died when he was only eight, and he was raised by his devoutly Catholic father. During his youth in Wadowice, the athletic Wojtyla had many friends among the town’s Jewish children, and often played soccer against (or with) them; some of those friendships would be lifelong, and would play an important role in the man he would become.

By the time the Second World War broke out in 1939, Wojtyla and his father had moved to Kraków, where the younger Wojtyla was enrolled in the Jagiellonian University, studying philosophy and languages. The Nazi invasion of Poland closed the university and, from 1940 to 1944, Wojtyla worked as a labourer; he also began clandestine studies for the Catholic priesthood in an underground seminary.

A number of eyewitnesses have spoken of the ways in which Wojtyla actively supported and cared for persecuted Jews during and after the war, including a 14-year-old Jewish girl named Edith Zierer who escaped from a Nazi concentration camp, weakened and unable to walk, who later credited the young Wojtyla with saving her life. On Nov. 1, 1946, Wojtyla was ordained a priest and, after graduate studies in Rome, he returned to Poland, where he com-

bined parish pastoral work and university teaching. In July 1958, he was named auxiliary bishop of Kraków and, in 1964, became its archbishop. In June of 1967, Pope Paul VI named him a cardinal.

ment on the Holocaust (We Remember) — acknowledged as an important step forward (although not without its own controversies at the time).

The jubilee year 2000 was also a



CNS/Reuters

MEMORABLE IMAGE — In one of the most memorable images of his papacy, the 80-year-old Pope John Paul II prayed at Jerusalem’s Western Wall, inserting a copy of his earlier prayer from the Rome liturgy between its stones, a gesture that many Jews and Christians have performed throughout the centuries.

In October 1978, following the death of Pope Paul VI, and the sudden, unexpected death of Pope John Paul I, the world was surprised when Cardinal Wojtyla (whose name was unknown to many) was elected, taking the name John Paul II. From the beginning of his papacy, the new pope signalled that Jewish-Catholic relations would be a priority for him: his first private audience was with a Jewish childhood friend, Jerzy Kluger, and Kluger’s family. In 1979, during his first official visit to his homeland, John Paul II became the first pontiff to visit the Auschwitz concentration camp, where he prayed and called for remembrance of all those murdered by the Nazis.

In 1980, during a speech to West Germany’s Jewish community, he spoke of Jews as “the People of God of the ancient covenant, never revoked by God” — a dramatic statement which continues to inspire theological reflection today.

During his dozens of international journeys, John Paul II regularly sought to meet with local Jewish communities, and he welcomed numerous Jewish groups and leaders to the Vatican. In the spring of 1986, he became the first pope since St. Peter to visit a synagogue, when he was welcomed to Rome’s *Tempio Maggiore* by its Chief Rabbi and community, and he spoke there of the unique and unshakeable bonds which unite Jews and Christians, affectionately calling Jews the specially beloved “elder brothers” of Christianity. It was with Pope John Paul’s active encouragement that diplomatic relations were established between the State of Israel and the Holy See in 1993, after years of delicate negotiations — a major breakthrough, both politically and religiously. In 1997, he oversaw the publication of the first official Vatican docu-

landmark year for Catholic-Jewish relations under John Paul II: in March, he led a “liturgy of repentance” in St. Peter’s Basilica, in which he asked forgiveness of God for sins committed by Christians against the Jewish people, and committed the church to a pathway of respect and co-operation. A few weeks later, he made history by becoming only the second modern pope to visit Israel, meeting with its religious and political leaders, and solemnly recalling the Holocaust at Yad Vashem, where he laid a wreath to honour its victims, and met with a number of Polish survivors. In one of the most memorable images of his papacy, the 80-year-old pope prayed at Jerusalem’s Western Wall, inserting a copy of his earlier prayer from the Rome liturgy between its stones, a gesture that many Jews and Christians have performed throughout the centuries.

Under the pontificate of John Paul II, a number of major Vatican documents were issued which expanded and built upon Vatican II’s 1965 declaration *Nostra Aetate*, and Pope John Paul himself modelled for many Christians an attitude of respect, love and esteem for Jewish people, who had always been an important part of his life, his priesthood and his papacy.

After several years of declining health, he died in April 2005, widely mourned by Jews, both in Israel and around the world, and remembered fondly for his many revolutionary actions to improve Jewish-Christian relations. In 2014, Pope Francis declared him a saint of the Catholic Church. Ten years after his death, his legacy continues to inspire and guide modern Jewish-Christian relations, and his considerable writings on this topic provide a rich source for study, and a springboard for further progress in this 21st century.

Finding the ‘one thing’: embracing, celebrating growth

Barefoot and Preaching

Leah Perrault



One day this summer, some 13 months into full-time stay-at-home-parenting, my oldest daughter, Robyn, turned around, looked me in the eye and said with an exasperated sigh, “Mom, you always want me to be perfect! Nobody’s perfect, you know!”

The worst part about this was that this beautiful child who has been entrusted to me is right, on both counts. She is a prophet and I would do well to hear God speak through her. I do frequently expect an impossible perfection, from her and from myself and from everyone else. If I do not stay aware of such a ridiculous expectation, I hurt the people I love most, especially a beautiful, bold and passionate daughter who is so much like me that it is hard to separate her successes and failings from my own.

In the last few days I was reminded of this tendency again, when I returned home from four days away. While I was gone, our (just barely) one-year-old, Charlize, mastered climbing up the stairs. She woke me from a jet-lagged nap to

show me how she could do it, one leg at a time, with a huge grin after each of the stairs. She was radiating joy. When she got to the top, she reached out her arms for me to take her back to the bottom so she could do it again, so I did, two more times.

And then I stopped marvelling at her. I turned her over on her tummy to show her how to scoot down.

Why is it that I cannot let her (or her brother or sister, or anyone else) live in the satisfaction of their own growth? Why do I always look to what remains instead of the stairs that have been successfully climbed? My expectation for perfection destroys my ability to recognize, appreciate and celebrate growth; it blinds me to God’s joy in the small steps I make in choosing to follow God.

Reflecting on my unrealistic expectations led me back to Mary and Martha. I hate that story and the way it is (ab)used to glorify prayer while demonizing housework! But Jesus is not concerned with what each woman has cho-

sen, but with Martha’s expectations — for Mary and for him. Martha has the same freedom as her sister and, like Jesus, she also has a relationship with Mary. Instead of choosing to wipe her hands and go do what she wants to do — maybe even feels called to do — she asks Jesus to correct Mary by trying to orchestrate all of their lives according to Martha’s plan. And Martha’s plan is not even making Martha happy.

Jesus reminds her that Mary has chosen the “one thing” and that it will not be taken from her. Jesus will not take it, and he will not allow Martha to take it either. How often I have neglected the one thing that I need to do, that God offers to me. Then, I have gone on to use my resentment and frustration to rob others of their one thing, by seeking comfort in my misery and control of all the others’ things.

Each moment of my day has room for only one thing. The things I choose will fill the moments, and the moments will fill the days. When I am seduced by the idea that the moments are only worth having if they are perfectly performed, I am frequently disappointed and the moments bleed together in a raging rejection of whatever God might hold for me in folding towels, meeting someone at my office door, or just sitting in the leaves to play.

Perfection is only and ever real in growth, in the ways we discover our own capacity and embrace the courage to try something new. This is the wisdom of the life God gives us, that we learn in time when we are ready. It is adorable

when we watch it happen in a baby, and less adorable when we come face to face with the habits, attitudes and behaviours which are no longer working for us.

As a way of embracing the imperfection of gradual growth these days, I am doing the one thing that lies before me, and trying to do it with gentleness. If I need to sit with a beautiful little redhead and practice spelling, I can do that without wishing it were faster, more efficient. I can do it without expectation. And when the expectation creeps in, I can welcome my old friend perfectionism and invite her to the one thing too.

There are so many places that God has for me to grow into, to discover, when I am ready for the next step. All of these places are growth into the one thing: a trusting willingness to be in the one place I am. God is delighting in that, and when I remember, I am too.

I realized in the moment



Design Pics

GREAT EXPECTATIONS — Children have much to teach their mothers about learning and growing at their own pace rather than performing under expectations of perfection.

Charlize screamed at being turned around that she did not need me to show her how to climb the stairs. She learned to do it with the curiosity and natural ability for growth and discovery that God gave her. She needs me to keep her safe, for now, while she does not know how to go down. And she needs me to meet her grin with mine at the top of the stairs, and pick her up and walk back down to the bottom for another one more time. If I will open myself up to the one thing, we can grow together, she and I.

Little consensus evident

Continued from page 14

are not amused at this rather obvious attempt to pre-emptively discredit the synod’s outcome.”

The synod participant who counts most, of course, is Pope Francis, and he, too, was apparently not happy.

Pell had delivered the protest letter to Francis on Oct. 5, the first day of the synod meetings, and apparently made reference to it in comments on the synod floor.

The next morning, Francis made a brief, unscheduled speech in which he warned the bishops against buying into “the hermeneutic of conspiracy” — basically, conspiracy theories. Such fears, the pope said, are “sociologically weak and spiritually unhelpful.”

The pope’s rebuke, as well as details of the letter, only emerged days later.

But those aren’t the only examples of potential overreach by the right.

Shortly after the synod began, for example, the Polish bishops at the meeting — a solidly conservative bloc that has vocally opposed any suggestion of changes to church practices — began publishing on their website summaries of the speeches of individual participants along with each bishop’s name.

That was a clear violation of synod rules on privacy that Francis expressly wanted to allow the bishops to speak freely. The Polish bishops took down the postings after Vatican officials complained.

At the same time, nearly every day conservative churchmen or their allies are holding press con-

ferences to denounce their opponents or their arguments in the strongest terms, or are delivering hardline speeches in the synod hall that seem to provide little space for compromise.


And those moves follow a year of public lobbying against changes and regular charges that the reformers are manipulating or “rigging” the synod to achieve a desired outcome.

In lectures and interviews, in columns and blog posts, traditionalist churchmen and conservative Catholic pundits have also warned darkly of schisms and heresies if any changes are made, and leading cardinals, some from within Francis’ own Roman Curia, have written books blasting the reformers or rejecting proposals to lighten the off-putting language the church often uses to refer to gay people or cohabiting couples.

Ultimately, it’s unclear whether the irritation over the pressure tactics will lead enough delegates to try to move ahead without the hardliners on-board.

They probably don’t have enough support, or the desire, to go it alone. And as the synod enters its final and decisive week, there appears to be little consensus on reforms and no clear path to a resolution.

In the end, if the bishops cannot agree on opening pathways to change, as may well happen, then the status quo camp can claim victory. And if the reformers do manage to win some victories, then the prebuttal complaints by the right may serve to discredit any compromise — or leave a mess for Francis to sort out.



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For fall diversion, jump onto the baseball bandwagon

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



I hate fall. Or is it, I love fall? The sight of yellow birch leaves outside my bedroom window makes me weep, so I can't actually tell if it's beauty or death that is getting to me. Ruby cotoneaster leaves tighten my heart in exquisite bliss and despair for the loss of them.

The one thing I like about fall is the way the sky is often an overcast grey/blue wash — like someone threw an unstirred pot of paint — and makes the trees pop neon gold against it.

That sky reminds me of Saturday afternoons when I was a teen. I'd sometimes make pizza

out of a Kraft pizza kit that came in a yellow box. A slim silver tin of sauce, packet of dough (just add water and good luck trying to stretch it over the pan), meagre parmesan sprinkles and flavour from green things in a waxed paper envelope.

I never knew what the big deal was about pizza until I got to university. College Inn was down the street from our apartment and their pizza was an inch thick. Spicy, red, cheesy, steaming. *Oh, now I get it.* Pizza will always remind me of the deep fall days of my student years.

At this time of year you have to find distractions from the sadness. This fall, after a few years of dormancy, I have developed a relapse of baseball fever, but before you accuse me of jumping onto the Blue Jays bandwagon, or even the baseball wagon (and if you're a newcomer and finding joy, who cares?), I should mention that I come from a family of brothers, and a father, who were passionate about baseball. The feel of the stitching on a cowhide ball is familiar to my hands and I enjoyed playing catch when I was a kid. Sports days and watching baseball were part of my youth.

Fall is baseball. The Boys of October. In high school in the 1970s each of my notebooks had listed on the inside cover the batting lineup of the Cincinnati Reds. It was the era of the Big Red Machine, probably the most outstanding field of players to ever play the game.

It was then I learned to love the quiet rhythm of the game, the way it unfolds in its own time, not clock time, pitch by pitch, sometimes in silence while the commentators hold their tongues as the batter swings. Silence just before the thunk of the ball in the catcher's thick leather mitt. Silence after the pop of a well-hit ball as it soars high over the outfield wall. And then the deafening roar of the crowd.

The players were in the prime of their lives, and my young heart was captivated as much by their beauty as by their athletic prowess.

When the Reds won the World Series in 1975, my Grade 12 year, I was grateful for teachers who would sneak a transistor radio into the classroom and allow us to listen. The teachers might have gotten into trouble had it been widely known, but attuning one's ear to the poetry of baseball fired the imagination even more than that of Shakespeare.

Thinking about baseball and



BASEBALL FEVER — Maureen Weber grew up with an appreciation for baseball because of the passion her father and brothers had for the game. Tony Saretsky, her father, is seen here, in his teens in the 1940s, playing the sport he so loved (he is front row, second from left).

that Reds team prompted me to look them up online. For one thing, I couldn't remember the name of the player who pumped his arm when he batted (Joe Morgan).

I discovered video footage of a 2013 reunion of that team. The "Great Eight" were introduced and they took to the field during a home game. These 60-something men looked like most of that age: sort of unremarkable, grey-haired, a few pounds heavier and moving a bit more slowly. But there was something beautiful about them too, a bright twinkle of enthusiasm on their faces and something

else: they seemed relaxed, not tense. I believe it is one of the benefits of getting older.

This fall we have been treated to the fresh intensity of the Toronto Blue Jays in their exciting playoff run — and they *are* beautiful to behold. But life is beautiful, no matter what one's season. Like those old Boys of October, some things even improve with age. Pizza, for example. Homemade tomato sauce, fresh mushrooms, some hot peppers, maybe even artichokes, the smell of dough rising in the bowl, mountains of cheese. And a little poetry. Let's play ball!

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Creating a ‘synodal church’

Pope Francis has changed the way the synod of bishops operates. He’s making it more open, encouraging the delegates to express their opinions freely and he has ended some of the long speeches in favour of small group discussions.

He has repeatedly referred to wanting a more “synodal church,” a church which encourages dialogue and listening.

And when the bishops in Rome marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the synod of bishops by Pope Paul VI on Oct. 17, Pope Francis kept pushing his vision of a synodal church “at every level.”

His view of a synodal church is one in which everyone listens to one another, learns from one another and takes responsibility for proclaiming the Gospel. “The journey of synodality is the journey that God wants from his church in the third millennium,” he

said. “A synodal church is a listening church, aware that listening is more than hearing. It is a reciprocal listening in which each one has something to learn.”

The pope must have disturbed some synodal delegates when he said: “The *sensus fidei* (sense of faith) makes it impossible to rigidly separate the *ecclesia docens* (teaching church) and the *ecclesia discens* (learning church) because even the flock has a ‘nose’ for discerning the new paths that the Lord is opening up to the church.” This certainly expands the teaching of the First Vatican Council on infallibility.

The Second Vatican Council was a watershed moment in encouraging more participation from the laity in the mission of the church. It taught that through baptism and confirmation all members of the church have been anointed by the Holy Spirit and that the entire Christian community is infallible when its members discern together and speak with one voice on matters of faith and morals, Pope Francis said in

his anniversary address.

A synodal spirit must be at work in dioceses as well as in the universal church, he said. This applies to priests’ councils, pastoral councils and other consultative bodies in a diocese.

Not all priests and bishops are “synodally minded,” as is Pope Francis. It will take time for this to become standard practice. And not all the faithful are synodally minded. Some parishes have difficulty getting parishioners to serve on parish councils or join parish groups where their voices could be heard.

Pope Francis is strongly pushing a new vision of how a community of faith should interact and operate. He is strongly pushing us to promote an adult faith. He is strongly pushing us to become servants as Jesus taught by word and deed. He is strongly pushing us to have a heart as generous as God’s.

If we take the next step with him, what a legacy he will leave with us. — PWN

Diocesan synods involving all people a new development in church



Canon Law
For Today

Rev. Frank Morrissey

Among the various institutions found in the church to provide for better governance, the diocesan synod should have pride of place. A synod is a council of the church, sometimes called to clarify points of doctrine or discipline. A general synod for the entire church is now known as an ecumenical council. Many of the Eastern Catholic churches have an elaborate system of synods, with meetings held even every year. In the Latin church, synods are presently identified with the diocese.

One of the principal advantages of a diocesan synod is that it groups not only representatives of the clergy with the bishop, but also selected religious and lay members of the Christian faithful. In this way, a more complete gathering of insights is possible.

Canon 460 tells us that its purpose is to foster the good of the entire diocesan community. While, in former times, it was prescribed to hold a synod every three years, the time frame was moved in 1917 to every 10 years. Since 1983, however, the frequency of the synod has been left to the judgment of the diocesan bishop. Unfortunately, in a number of instances, synods have rarely, if ever, been held. This is a missed opportunity.

The canonical rules governing the holding of a synod were revised significantly on March 19, 1997, providing more clarity as to the working of the institution and its sphere of competence.

These new Vatican norms tell us that, in the process of the synod, the bishop exercises the office of governing the church entrusted to his care. He determines its convocation, proposes the questions to

be discussed, and presides at the synodal sessions. Moreover, it is he who, as sole legislator, signs the synodal declarations and decrees and orders their publication.

Similarly, art. 2 of the new norms tells us that those who participate in the synod assist the diocesan bishop by freely and sincerely expressing their opinion with regard to the questions which have been proposed by him. This opinion is defined as “consultative,” to indicate that the bishop remains free to accept or not the recommendations made to him by the members of the Synod.

However, this does not imply that such an opinion is of little importance or merely an external consultation involving persons with no responsibility for the final outcome. Indeed, in virtue of their experience and their counsel, those who participate in the synod also collaborate actively in drawing up

the declarations and decrees by which the governance of the diocese is inspired for the future.

When the church was first established in Canada, the synods were held religiously every three years. In the beginning, the participants, who were all clerics at the time, focused primarily on the content of the faith and clerical discipline; but, as time went on, they began to address moral issues more directly.

Thus we find not only numerous decrees relating to the life and ministry of the clergy, but also frequent references to the abuse of alcohol, the running of taverns, sharing liquor with the local inhabitants, and the like. This was becoming a significant social problem at the time.

However, after new dioceses were established, the bishops decided that it would be preferable for them to meet together in provincial councils, rather than in synods, so as to promote a unified vision and approach. These councils thus addressed issues relating to Catholic education, relations with the governments, the stability of the clergy, and so forth. We have to keep in mind the immense distances involved and the relatively small number of Catholics living in such a vast territory.

Some diocesan bishops, in-

stead of applying the various canonical rules relating to synods, have preferred to hold a diocesan assembly, which allows for great-

Sex-ed is challenging for many faith communities

Mary Deutscher

er participation of the faithful. Although such gatherings are not

— FAITHFUL, page 19



Building a Culture of Life

Following the rollout of its new sex-ed curriculum, the Ontario government finds itself in a bit of a situation. Parents from across the province are unhappy with the curriculum and have launched protests, with many of them removing their children from school.

Unfortunately for these Ontario parents, they haven’t had the best of luck with PR. Many people think that parents are protesting the mere idea of educating their children about the birds and the bees. However, the situation in Ontario runs much deeper. It is not

about whether or not children should be taught about human sexuality, but rather about who should be teaching them, and when, what and how they should be taught.

Catholic teaching on these questions is pretty clear and is articulated in the aptly titled Pontifical Council for the Families document, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family*. Parents have a “duty and a right” to educate their children about human sexuality, and the best thing for children is to be educated on these matters within their own family, where chastity can be modelled for them in real relationships.

I am willing to admit that my readiness to embrace this teaching stems from its success in my own life. My sex-ed was predominantly handled at home, where I felt very comfortable talking with my mother about pretty much everything. I believe my mother’s one-on-one approach was successful for me because my education was carried out within the context of our relationship. Sex-ed wasn’t a two-hour timeslot at the end of the day; it was ongoing throughout my adolescence and into my adulthood. We addressed the topics I needed to discuss when I needed to discuss them, and it has taken me a long time to realize what a tremendous gift that was. (Thanks, Mom!)

As I was researching this column, I thought it would be prudent to look into whether or not my situation was unique, so I asked a number of people about their experiences with sex-ed. As it turns out, not everyone’s mom

— SEX TALK, page 19



CNS/Gleb Garanich, Reuters

Morrissey is a professor emeritus of canon law at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, and has been very active over the years in the field of canon law, especially as it applies to dioceses and religious institutes. This is his 36th article in a series.

RALLY ON DEFENDERS DAY IN UKRAINE — People take part in a rally near a church in Kiev, Ukraine, to mark Defenders Day Oct. 14. In a pastoral message read in all churches Oct. 18, the bishops said Ukrainians had shown a readiness to work for justice and the common good during the 2004 Orange Revolution, and again during the 2014 Revolution of Dignity, which led to the flight of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich. They said the Oct. 25 local elections would mark a key stage toward “positive and irreversible social change,” which depended “on the personal transformation of every citizen, a change of thinking and a decisive, radical choice for goodness.”

Pope calls for ‘synodal church’

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Marking the 50th anniversary of the synod of bishops, Pope Francis outlined his vision for a church that is “synodal” at every level, with everyone listening to one another, learning from one another and taking responsibility for proclaiming the Gospel.

“The journey of synodality is the journey that God wants from his church in the third millennium,” the pope said Oct. 17. “A synodal church is a listening church, aware that listening is more than hearing. It is a reciprocal listening in which each one has something to learn.”

Pope Francis, members of the synod of bishops on the family, theologians and other guests dedicated a morning to marking the anniversary of Blessed Paul VI’s institution in 1965 of the synod as a forum for sharing the faith and concerns of the world’s Catholics, reflecting together and offering counsel to the pope.

Referring to the Greek roots of the word “synod,” Pope Francis said, “walking together — laity, pastors, the bishop of Rome — is an easy concept to express in words, but is not so easy to put into practice.”

In fact, before Pope Francis spoke, five cardinals, an archbishop and the patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church spoke about the blessings and challenges of the synod process over the past 50 years. They agreed that while the synod’s methodology has improved over the past five decades, there still is work to do.

“We must continue on this path,” Pope Francis told them. “The world in which we live and which we are called to love and serve, even with its contradictions, requires from the church the strengthening of synergies in all areas of its mission.”

Using the synod on the family as an example, the pope said it would have been impossible for the 270 bishops and priests who

are voting members of the assembly to speak to real needs and concerns without listening to and trying to learn from Catholic families.

“It was that conviction that led me when I asked that the people of God be consulted” before the synod, the pope said. “How would it have been possible to speak of the family without calling upon families, listening to their joys and their hopes, their pains and their suffering?”

The need for everyone in the church — from the pope on down — to listen and to learn from others is based on the conviction, clearly explained by the Second Vatican Council, that through bap-



CNS/Paul Haring

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SYNOD OF BISHOPS — Pope Francis speaks at an event marking the 50th anniversary of the synod of bishops in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Oct. 17.

tism and confirmation all members of the church have been anointed by the Holy Spirit and that the entire Christian community is infallible when its members discern together and speak with one voice on matters of faith and morals, Pope Francis said.

“The *sensus fidei* (sense of faith) makes it impossible to rigidly separate the *ecclesia docens* (teaching church) and the *ecclesia discens* (learning church) because even the flock has a ‘nose’ for discerning the new paths that the Lord is opening up to the church,” the pope said.

But ensuring the synodality of the whole church will be impossible, he said, if people misunderstand the church’s hierarchy and see it as a structure in which some people are placed above others.

The church’s structure, the pope said, “is like an upside down pyramid” with the top on the bottom, which is why the ordained are called “ministers” — they serve the others.

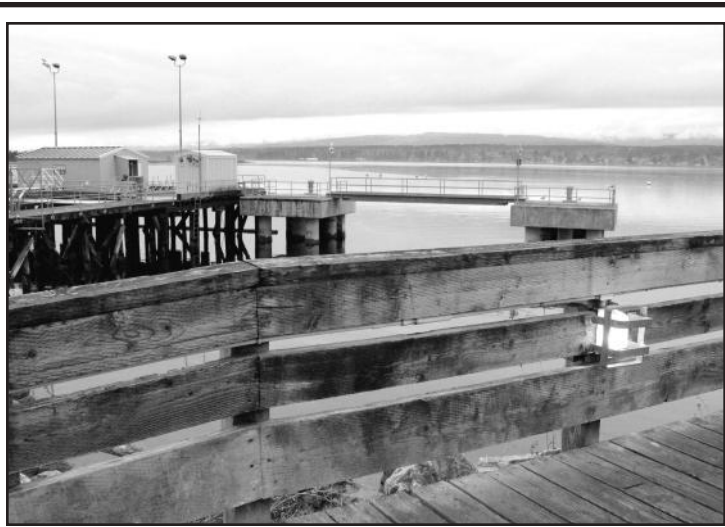
In a diocese, he said, the bishop is the “vicar of that Jesus who, at the Last Supper, knelt to wash the feet of the apostles,” and the pope is called to truly be “the servant of the servants of God.”

“We must never forget: for the disciples of Jesus — yesterday, today and forever — the only authority is the authority of service; the only power is the power of the cross,” he said.

The world needs the Catholic Church to witness to that Christian vision of community, participation, solidarity and joint responsibility, he said. In too many countries power is in the hands of just a few people, the dignity of many is denied and authority is abused.

Pope Francis told the gathering that “the pope does not stand alone above the church,” but he is “within it as a baptized person among the baptized and in the episcopal collage as a bishop among bishops, called at the same time — as the successor of the Apostle Peter — to guide the church of Rome, which presides in love over all the churches.”

A synodal spirit must be at work in dioceses as well as in the universal church, Pope Francis said. Priests’ councils, pastoral councils and other consultative bodies in a diocese must “remain connected to the base,” to the grassroots, if they are to help a bishop respond to the real needs and concerns of the Catholic people.



J. Weber

Eventide

The afternoon throbs with casual words,
Clear and honest summons, and records
The presence of isolated clouds.

Awed, or better still enticed, by soft,
Mysterious language that stays aloft,
The opposite of arbitrary shrouds,
The heart delights with old, abandoned boats

And concedes with burst of flames and colours
The sure inclusion of sheep and goats
To the ritual of the evening hours.

By Conrado B. Beloso

Faithful need to express their views

Continued from page 18

formal legal institutions, they also serve the purposes of providing a mechanism for the faithful to express their mind and to become better informed of issues facing the diocesan church.

In other dioceses, bishops have relied on advice from the presbyteral council and the diocesan pastoral council. When these institutions are functioning well, they can, in many instances, provide the information that is needed for informed decisions.

Among the matters that might be considered by a diocesan synod

or assembly, we could mention the following, based on the threefold function of the diocesan bishop to teach, sanctify, and govern.

In regard to teaching, the synod could address questions relating to preaching, catechetics, ecumenism, missionary activity, and social communications.

As for the mission of sanctifying, issues being considered could touch on Sunday assemblies in the absence of a priest, the reservation and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the admission of other Christians to some of the sacraments.

The office of governing en-

compasses the establishment of various pastoral and finance councils, the administration of temporal goods, and provisions for the support of the clergy and other pastoral workers.

Of course, a diocesan bishop would be free to legislate on his own, without the intervention of a synod or diocesan assembly, but such an approach would not be consistent with the spirit of the current legislation, since the governance and direction of the diocese calls for the active involvement of the entire People of God living in the territory, and is not just the prerogative of the clergy.

Sex talk is uncomfortable

Continued from page 18

used puberty to evangelize the wonders of natural family planning. There also seems to be a lot of people out there who do not feel comfortable talking about sex with their parents. Who knew?

While I support the duty and the right of parents to teach their children, I also see that there are many children whose parents are not rising to the challenge. This creates a conundrum: We know the best thing for a child is to receive their sex education from someone with whom they have an ongoing relationship (ideally a parent). However, we also know that for whatever reason a good number of children do not have access to this type of relationship in their lives. So what do we do for these children?

This is extremely challenging for many faith communities. How do we offer children something that is second best in the best way possible? Can we do more to engage parents and encourage them to be involved in guiding their children, particularly in our technological age? Can adults outside a child’s home take on more of a mentorship role? Can our schools develop programs that present Catholic sexual teachings positively, stressing the personal responsibility that each of us has to cherish our own sexuality and that of others? How can we show our children that human sexuality is beautiful and meant to be shared in healthy, committed relationships when so much of the world is intent on clouding this message?

ships when so much of the world is intent on clouding this message?

If there is one thing we can be certain of, it is that when it comes to human sexuality, there are a wide variety of opinions about what is good and healthy. So whose opinion will take precedence? The protests in Ontario have been widespread not because parents are in denial about the realities of sex in the modern world. Rather it is because the Ontario government has oversimplified these realities, neglected the role of parents, and overstepped its bounds in trying to answer questions that the government has no business trying to answer.

I have avoided going into specifics about the parts of the Ontario curriculum that I like and the parts I would change because I think the real challenges are much bigger than these specifics would suggest. Sex-ed cannot be taught in an unbiased way. More importantly, even if it could be taught without a moral lens, it shouldn’t be. Human sexuality has a moral dimension, and children deserve to have support from someone they trust as they navigate the increasing number of challenges awaiting them in adolescence and adulthood.

This is a call for parents and communities to step up to the challenge of being positive role models for children not only in matters regarding human sexuality, but also in all aspects of human relationships. Human sexuality is more than a physical act; it is a calling to deeper relationships.



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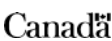
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Violence in Jerusalem goes against city's vocation

By Judith Sudilovsky

JERUSALEM (CNS) — It has been painful to watch as violence has taken over Jerusalem once again, especially along the Via Dolorosa, where Jesus suffered in order to dissuade the use of violence, said Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali, Latin Patriarchate chancellor.

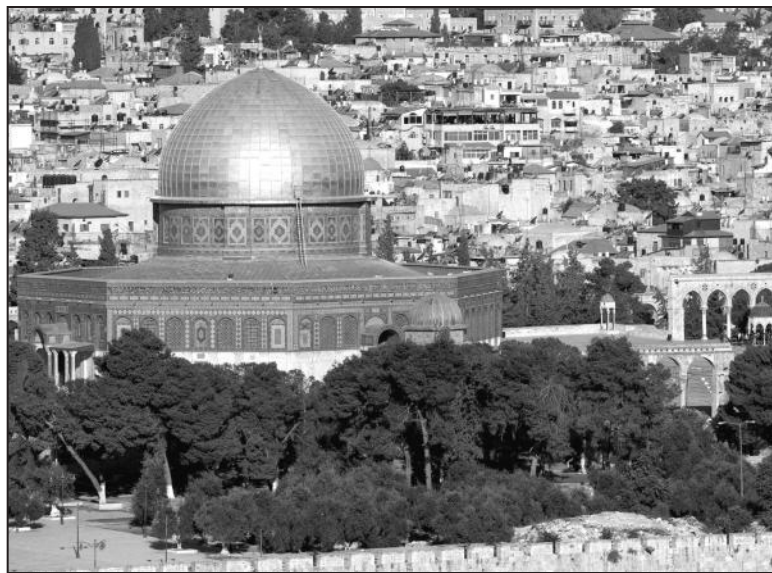
This violence goes against Jerusalem's vocation as a holy city, which should be open to all people of faith, he said.

"We are shocked at what is happening," Shomali told Catholic News Service in mid-October, after two weeks of unrest. "Violence does not help. We do not accept violence by any side."

"We need the Lord's help, He is the strong one in this situation," added Shomali. "Our human efforts are not enough. We are for prayer."

The fighting began following the late-September visit of Israeli Agricultural Minister Uri Ariel to one of the smallest contested spots on earth — a 36-acre compound known by Muslims as the Haram al-Sharif and by Jews as the Temple Mount. The Israeli minister's visit stirred controversy after he used the opportunity to say a blessing for the Jewish new year.

Today, the Al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock stand on the spot, which is the third-holiest site for Muslims, who believe their Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven on a white stallion from this spot.



CNS/Atef Safadi, EPA

DOMES OF THE ROCK SEEN IN OVERVIEW OF JERUSALEM — The gold-covered Dome of the Rock at the Temple Mount complex is seen in this overview of Jerusalem. For Muslims, the entire 36-acre compound is considered to be the Al-Aqsa mosque. In a mosque, no Christian or Jewish prayers are allowed. This has sparked the current round of violence in Jerusalem.

However, this site is also revered as the holiest site in Judaism, as the place where the two Jewish biblical temples stood. Here Jews believe Abraham was called upon by God to sacrifice his son Isaac; Muslims believe it was his son with Hagar, Ishmael, whom Ibrahim — as Abraham is known by Muslims — was asked to sacrifice.

Christians also believe the site to be holy as the place where Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus for the traditional Jewish ceremonial redemption of the firstborn and where Jesus returned numer-

ous times to teach and preach.

A tenuous status quo agreement has been in place since 1967, when Israel gained control of the site from Jordan. The Islamic Waqf Authority, under the Jordanian king, controls the area, while Israeli security forces have control over

the entrances to the compound. Neither Christian nor Jewish prayer is allowed on the site, though members of both faiths are permitted to visit during visiting hours reserved for non-Muslims. Jewish worshippers pray below at the Western Wall, which was a retaining wall for Herod's Second Temple on the platform above.

The new wave of violence is taking place in the wake of rumours that Israel plans to change the established status quo and take over the compound — a charge the Israeli government denies. The tensions have been fuelled by continuing visits of ultra-religious Jews who attempt to pray at the site. A group of Palestinian women have been harassing Jews visiting the compound and were banned from entering it in September.

Holy Cross Father Russ McDougall, rector of Tantur Ecumenical Institute, noted that, unlike Christian theology, both Judaism and Islam share the concept of having sovereignty over a holy place. Still, he added, though the spark that ignited this round of violence was the conflict over the holy site, it is also the result of pent-up Palestinian frustration at both Israeli policies and Palestinian corruption.

"In a perfect world it would be wonderful if Jews, Christians and Muslims were to pray alongside one another," said McDougall, quoting the book of Isaiah, in which God says his house will become a house of prayer for all people. "Unfortunately, we are not quite ready for that. It is a very fraught issue, while the vision is beautiful."

Mustafa Abu Sway, associate professor of philosophy and Islamic studies at Al-Quds University and a lecturer on Islam at the Tantur institute, said Israel began changing the status quo after the second intifada by allowing large groups of Israeli settlers into the compound. He said that, before that time, there were no problems with visitors to the site.

"There are no prayers there — whether Christian or Jewish," he said. For Muslims, the entire compound is considered to be the Al-Aqsa mosque, he said. "It is a mosque there for 1,400 years. When you go visit any place you are expected to behave according to the rules. I have the utmost respect for anyone as long as they recognize it is a mosque and will continue to be a mosque. There is no partnership, no sharing."

Archbishop Cupich urges nation to back gun control

CHICAGO (CNS) — Archbishop Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, saying it is time to "take meaningful and swift action to address violence in our society," called for stricter gun control laws in Illinois.

"Recently, the city of Chicago adopted a tough ordinance to tightly regulate gun stores here. I applaud Chicago's leadership for taking this important step to protect our children and families," Cupich said in a commentary published Oct. 9 in the Chicago Tribune.

"For this measure to truly be effective, however, the General Assembly must pass a similar law, especially considering how many guns are sold in gun shops located outside of Chicago," he added.

"Let's be honest. The Second Amendment was passed in an era when organized police forces were few and citizen militias were useful in maintaining the peace. Its original authors could not have anticipated a time when the weapons we have a right to bear now include military-grade assault weapons that have turned our streets into battlefields," Cupich said.

"The Second Amendment's original intent has been perverted by those who, as Pope Francis

recently commented, have profited mightily. Surely there is a middle ground between the original intent of the amendment and the carnage we see today," he added, noting that during the pope's address Sept. 24 to Congress, many "stood . . . to applaud Pope Francis' call for an end to the weapons industry that is motivated by 'money that is drenched in blood.'"

Cupich called the combination of a ready supply of firearms, the glamorization of crime, "a society where life is cheap" and untreated mental illness "a recipe for tragedy."

He cited the Oct. 1 massacre at Umpqua Community College in Oregon, where nine people were murdered and another nine wounded because the victims had "the misfortune of simply being at school," as well as "nearly a dozen" who had died from gun violence in the Archdiocese of Chicago in a recent two-week stretch, as well as "those injured, maimed and traumatized . . . simply too many to count."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has called for "reasonable regulation and controls for guns, especially handguns," as well as a ban on assault weapons.

Many persons have a wrong idea about what constitutes real happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

— Helen Keller

Synod urged to support struggling families

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Couples attending the synod of bishops called for empathy and support from the church to families suffering difficult circumstances.

Several lay couples and a missionary sister addressed the synod Oct. 15 - 16, highlighting various issues facing families in their countries and abroad.

Anthony and Catherine Witczak, the international ecclesial team of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter, stressed the need for better programs for engaged and married couples in the church. They also said couples should not be separated when taking part in parish ministry, "but rather let their sacrament shine by allowing them to work as a team."

Anthony Witczak also called for a priestly formation that is geared to living a closer relationship with families in their parishes.

"If a church is meant to be a family of families, then we should encourage our seminarians to be priests in love with their people, not merely priests in charge of a parish," he said. "Our faith is based on relationship with God, but it is learned and lived out in relationship with others."

The president of Parents Centres New Zealand, Sharron Cole, said that while the church's teaching on conjugal love and responsible parenthood in *Humanae Vitae* has "great beauty and depth," couples who struggle with either low-income, mental health problems or other difficulties find it hard to abide by those tenets.

"As an ex-board member of Natural Family Planning, I know that this method of contraception permitted by *Humanae Vitae* is an effective method for motivated couples," she said.

"Every family has difficulties

which might lead them for a period of time to use artificial contraception in the interests of responsible parenting. Marriage naturally leads to a desire for children, which is a biological imperative and a great grace of the sacrament. In my experience, very few couples suppress this desire, with its constraints tending to be the couple's resources to cope, not selfishness."

"Many laypeople believe the church does not understand the realities of their lives. Laypeople are not trusted to make good decisions in conscience, and they often feel subjected to exacting rules which take no account of context or of stages of spiritual development," she said. She also said that "too many in authority responded to clergy sexual abuse in a way which demonstrated that they lacked the expertise in sexuality and psychology to make good decisions, with the result they became complicit in perpetuating enormous harm, harm done to laypeople."

Cole called on the church to listen "with deep empathy" to laypeople and to "re-examine its teaching on marriage and sexuality, and its understanding of responsible parenthood, in a dialogue of laity and bishops together."

Moirra McQueen, director of the

Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, noted that elderly people are seldom mentioned in the synod's working document.

"This perhaps reflects what the



CNS/Paul Haring

WORKERS PREPARE BANNER OF MARRIED COUPLE — Workers prepare a banner of Louis and Marie Zélie Guerin Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, on the facade of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Oct. 16, in advance of a canonization. On Oct. 18 Pope Francis canonized the Martins, Italian Father Vincenzo Grossi, founder of the Institute of the Daughters of the Oratory, and Spanish Sister Maria of the Immaculate Conception, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Company of the Cross.

elderly report: They are not seen as important; society tends to ignore them; they do not seem to matter," she said.

McQueen said that while the elderly not only deserve proper medical care, they also deserve spiritual programs that help them in the final states of life.