



Refugee partnership

Winnipeg's Joie de Vivre Choir and Friends are planning a concert of Christmas music in support of the refugee sponsorship partnership of St. John Brebeuf Church and St. Paul the Apostle Church. — page 3

Environmental leadership

From being the only jurisdiction in North America without an energy efficiency policy to showing more environmental leadership than any other oil-producing region on the globe, Alberta has come a long way in a short time, says Andrew Read of the Pembina Institute. — page 4

Winnipeg synod

A listening session with Archbishop Gagnon and students is one of eight scheduled over the past two months in Winnipeg, forming the first phase of a two-year synod, the first in the archdiocese's history. — page 6

Ecumenical dialogue

Different understandings of Mary and the communion of saints were explored during an Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue public event held at St. Philip Neri Church in Saskatoon. — page 7

Restorative justice

"Re-humanizing relationships and healing hurt are no small tasks, yet that is what restorative justice seeks to do," writes Dianne Woloschuk. "Its underlying principle is that crime is an act against another person and the community, not simply a violation of the law, and that crime has both an individual and a social dimension of responsibility." — page 12

Big step

Since Pope Francis' election in 2013 he has made it his business to heal old wounds rather than dwell on the past, writes Christopher Lamb. Last week he made the bold move to travel to Sweden to take part in events marking 500 years since Martin Luther kickstarted the Protestant Reformation. — page 13

Vatican celebrates Jubilee for Prisoners

By Junno Arocho Esteves

ROME (CNS) — Second chances are hard to come by for people who have served time in prison. They often feel judged and shunned by a society that views them just as former criminals who inevitably will go back to committing crimes.

Nevertheless, for 23 people from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, mercy, forgiveness and compassion are not simply idealistic concepts but a living reality that brings new hope, even in the most hopeless circumstances.

"Society doesn't have the same compassion and forgiveness that a faith-based organization, the church, has. As a returning citizen, it is something that I witnessed and felt," said Dominic Duren, co-ordinator of the St. Vincent De Paul Society's Re-entry Program in Cincinnati.

"The reason why I'm here today is because a faith-based organization believed in me, forgave me and had compassion for me when the rest of society just sees me as a mistake," he told Catholic News Service in Rome Nov. 3.



CNS/Tony Gentile, Reuters

JUBILEE MASS FOR PRISONERS — Pope Francis celebrates a Jubilee Mass for prisoners Nov. 6 in St. Peter's Basilica. Pope Francis called on governments to mark the end of the Year of Mercy by extending clemency to deserving inmates.

Duren was part of a pilgrimage of returning citizens, mentors, volunteers and staff of the Arch-

diocese of Cincinnati's prison ministry who travelled to Rome to celebrate the Jubilee for Pris-

oners Nov. 6 with Pope Francis.

— CITIZEN, page 15

CWL national past president reflects on past two years

By Agnieszka Krawczynski
The B.C. Catholic

VANCOUVER (CCN) — Barbara Dowding is looking back on two years of steering one of the largest women's organizations in Canada.

Her two-year term as national president of the Catholic Women's League came during a big moment in Canada's history.

"What I wanted to really do is to make sure the League was more unified: as one," said Dowding, now the national past president of the CWL. She is also the vice-chancellor of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

When she became president-elect in 2012, Dowding took her time choosing a theme for her

presidency, which would begin in 2014. She settled on "One heart, one voice, one mission."

"It's hard to measure, but the way people reacted to me and to the theme and to the things that we did indicates that they were really happy with the direction we took these last two years."

A CWL president's term is always two years. When Dowding stepped into the big shoes, she was suddenly working with a completely new executive team. Most

women elected with her were in high-level positions for the first time.

"We worked together, we got along really well, and we all had the same vision. Everyone on the executive bought into the theme."

The atmosphere in Canada was changing as Bill C-14 presented a monumental shift in the way many people thought about health care. Assisted suicide was one of the hottest topics in the news for most of Dowding's term.

Before it became legal, the CWL spoke against it on behalf of tens of thousands of women across the country, concerned about the impact it would have on the ill, the disabled, and the depressed.

"We had resolutions against physician-assisted suicide" which Dowding presented to government twice, warning about the dangers of Bill C-14. She encour-

— CWL, page 5

Workshop encourages parish leadership

By Paula Fournier

PRINCE ALBERT — In an effort to encourage parish leadership, the Prince Albert diocese hosted a workshop led by Katherine Coolidge based on the book and study guide entitled "Forming Intentional Disciples" on Oct. 17 and 18 at St. Joseph Parish in Prince Albert.

The book and study guide, written by Sherry Weddell, are explained as an opportunity to reverse current trends in Catholic churches and help leaders, parish staffs and all Catholics transform parish life from within. Working at Catherine of Siena Institute in Colorado Springs in the U.S. as the Called and Gifted co-ordinator, she has developed numerous resources used around the world, trained and led an international

team working with many lay, religious and ordained Catholics in hundreds of parishes.

In the book, Weddell explains how to enter more deeply into a relationship with God using five segments: how to converse about faith and beliefs, how to ask questions and establish an atmosphere of trust, know when to speak about Jesus and how to direct someone who feels called toward a better relationship with God.

Working in collaboration with the Saskatoon diocese who hosted part one of the five-day workshop in 2015, the Prince Albert diocese hosted part one of the workshop for newcomers and those from Saskatoon who missed the workshop. This year, participants wanting to complete parts two and three, took part with the Saskatoon diocese for the rest of

the week.

During the two-day workshop covering material for part one of the series, Coolidge touched on the spiritual climate in the world today detailing statistics regarding Catholics in Canada. In 2008, stats said 46 per cent of people were baptized as Catholic. In 2011, 38 per cent of Canadians identified themselves as Catholic. Currently, the fastest growing religious groups in Canada call themselves "No ones" or "No religious affiliation." In 2001, 17 per cent fell into that category in the Canadian census. In 2011, it was 24 per cent, and in 2015, numbers rose to 26 per cent.

She stated that 44 per cent of the age group millennials, 18 - 34, claimed they were somewhere in-

— MILLENNIALS, page 7



B.C. Catholic

Barbara Dowding

All Souls is a hopeful reminder of the resurrection

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Visiting a cemetery on the feast of All Souls can evoke feelings of loss and sadness, but for Christians marking the feast, it also is an affirmation of hope in the resurrection, Pope Francis said.

Through his death on the cross, Jesus “opened for us the door of hope where we will contemplate God,” the pope said Nov. 2 at an evening mass amid the tombs of Rome’s Prima Porta cemetery.

“The hope of the resurrection never fails us,” the pope said. “The first one who walked this path was Jesus. We will walk the path he has walked.”

As the sun set among scattered grey clouds, hundreds of people attending the mass were seated along the cemetery walkway, surrounded by the burial plots of countless loved ones. Just before beginning the mass, Pope Francis, dressed in a purple chasuble, laid roses in front of a tomb within the walls of the cemetery’s mausoleum.

Reflecting on the feast day’s first reading from the Book of Job, the pope noted that in the midst of suffering and darkness,



POPE CELEBRATES MASS ON ALL SOULS DAY — Pope Francis walks through Rome’s Prima Porta cemetery Nov. 2, the feast of All Souls.

“Job proclaims hope.”

“As for me, I know that my vindicator lives and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust. I will see for myself; my own eyes, not another’s, will behold him,” Job says.

Although visiting the tombs of loved ones who have passed

away and realizing that death will come for each person can bring

feelings of sadness, the pope said that the act of bringing flowers to a cemetery is also a sign of joyful hope in the afterlife.

The feast of All Souls takes on a “dual meaning” where “sadness is mixed with hope,” he said.

“We return home today with this dual memory: the memory of the past, of our loved ones who have gone and the memory of the future, the path we will go on with the certainty and with the assurance that came from Jesus’ lips: ‘I will raise him up on the last day,’ ” the pope said.

Italians, taking advantage of the Nov. 1 public holiday celebrating All Saints, traditionally visit the graves of their loved ones, often tidying up their graves and laying fresh flowers on the eve of the feast of All Souls.

Before concluding the mass, Pope Francis blessed the tombs, while reciting a prayer to God that he would “comfort those in the pain of separation” and that those who have died will “one day participate in the paschal victory of your son.”

Vatican raffle will benefit earthquake victims in Italy

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Along with the Christmas-tree lighting ceremony and the unveiling of the Nativity crèche, Pope Francis’ raffle to benefit those in need is becoming an annual holiday tradition at the Vatican.

For 10 euros — about \$11 — one lucky winner will win the first prize: a red Opel Karl, a German-made, five-door hatchback car.

Announcing the raffle Oct. 20, the Vatican said that for the first time, tickets also will be available for purchase online. Previously, people hoping to nab a prize could purchase tickets only at the Vatican post office or pharmacy.

The proceeds of the raffles go

directly to charitable causes chosen by the pope; this year’s raffle will benefit victims of the devastating earthquake that struck central Italy Aug. 24 and to the homeless.

“To this end, he personally donated some of the prizes,” said a statement from the Vatican City State governor’s office.

Other prizes include a Colnago professional racing bike, an Alassio wristwatch by Italian watchmaker Auxilia, a handmade hammock and a top-of-the line coffee machine by La San Marco.

Tickets are available for purchase on the governor’s office website: www.vaticanstate.va. The winning tickets will be drawn Feb. 2 and published on the website as well.

NEW YORK (CNS) — After what has been a “bruising election campaign,” Americans “need to recoup” and remind themselves of “what wonders God has done in us and through us” for the country, Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick said Oct. 27.

God’s wonders for the nation are ongoing “as we reach out to others,” he added at an awards dinner in New York.

McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, made the comments after he received Catholic Extension’s Spirit of Francis Award at the Metropolitan Club of New York in Manhattan.

He went on to highlight the need for Catholics to reach out to poor, rural and remote areas of the country, “where people do not have the religious opportunities that we had. What a blessing it is that we have a Catholic Extension.”

Now in its third year, the Spirit of Francis Award recognizes an individual or group for their commitment “to reach out to the mar-



CNS/Catholic Extension

CATHOLIC EXTENSION AWARD — Cardinal-designate Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, who is chancellor of Catholic Extension, presents the organization’s Spirit of Francis Award to Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, at an awards dinner Oct. 27 in New York. At right is Rev. Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension.

gins of society” in the spirit of three men named Francis: St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis and Father Francis Clement Kelley, who founded Catholic Extension 111 years ago.

Ever since then, Catholic Extension has been building up the Catholic Church in U.S. “home missions” in under-resourced poor, rural and remote dioceses. The Chicago-based organization helps with church construction, provides funds for ministerial needs and seminary training, and contributes other ways in those areas.

In presenting the award, Cardinal-designate Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, who is Catholic Extension’s chancellor, said of McCarrick that he “not only appreciates the need to reach out to people who are in need, but he understands that when we do so, we ourselves are enriched.”

Cupich added that the 86-year-old cardinal “had his own unique way of making his mark on the church. He’s always cared for

people who are easily forgotten, who are on the margins. Even today, he is involved in efforts to open the doors to the church in China.”

“Wherever I go around the globe, people always ask me, ‘How is Cardinal McCarrick doing?’ ” he continued. “They know this man, and that he cares about them — those who are easily forgotten, those who have no names.”

Accepting the award, McCarrick joked, “Today is a very big day for me,” explaining that his doctor had told him earlier that he no longer needed the walker he had been using after recent surgery.

The New York event, the cardinal said, gave him an opportunity to say thank you “not just for this award, which I do appreciate, but for gathering together to take joy in the fact that we can make our religion come alive in many places where there is nothing to build on except the love of the Lord Jesus and our faith.”

Religious women first to smell trouble

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Women religious are often the first people to discover problems emerging in society because they work directly with so many people in need, an anti-trafficking advocate said.

However, because religious focus more on providing assistance than publicizing their efforts, the rest of the world is often slower to catch on to where there is trouble, said Ivonne van de Kar, the co-ordinator of the Foundation of Religious Against Trafficking of Women in the Netherlands.

Women religious in the Netherlands, for example, “had started to work with women in prostitution when there was absolutely no attention (given to

them,” and they provided a safe space for women to rest and chat, she told Catholic News Service Nov. 4.

Offering coffee and a listening ear, the women religious were finding out as early as 1981 that some women were being forced into the sex trade and that marked the beginning of the sisters’ work against trafficking. The religious quickly involved the police and later some other organizations, including van de Kar’s in the early 1990s.

“Very often it’s the sisters who discover a problem because they work with the people and they see what is happening on the streets and are there for them,” she said.

But speaking up more about their work is “one of the things I always tell them,” so they can widen the scope of awareness and

the response to so many problems, she said.

“We help the sisters do more with PR, to make people aware of the fantastic work that has been done,” she said, adding that the pope recognizing and thanking women religious for their anti-trafficking work was also encouraging and very helpful.

Helping to expand the influence and impact of women religious is the network RENATE — Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation — which was founded in 2009. Network members, including van de Kar, met in Rome Nov. 6 - 12.

The meeting will look at ways everyone in society and the church can do something to prevent and end human trafficking, she said.

Canada must pursue peaceful solution to Syrian crisis

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Canadian government must stress a peaceful solution to the humanitarian crisis in Aleppo, Syria, says a spokesperson for the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace.

“We support Canada being involved in the diplomatic discussions,” said Dominique Godbout, Development and Peace’s Syrian humanitarian program officer. “We’ve asked for this since the new government took office, that they be more involved in the diplomatic efforts. That’s the only way the war is going to end.”

However, Godbout expressed concerns about the limits of these diplomatic efforts. “There doesn’t seem to be much will from the international community,” she said.

On Nov. 1, the House of Commons international human rights subcommittee heard testimony on the plight of Aleppo that focused mostly on the rebel-held eastern part of the city that has



CCN/D. Gyapong

Sébastien Beaulieu

been under siege since July. It has been closed even to humanitarian relief convoys and subject to airstrikes by the Assad regime that have targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure.

“The situation in Syria and in Aleppo in particular has recently

been called ‘our generation’s shame’ and ‘a crime of historic proportions’ at the UN,” Sébastien Beaulieu, executive director, Middle East Relations at Global Affairs Canada told the subcommittee. “‘Srebrenica,’ ‘Grozny’ and ‘Guernica’ have been used to call up images of horror and fear.”

He pointed out 250,000 people in east Aleppo are “besieged, bombed, starved and denied any humanitarian assistance.”

Canada is part of the 26-member International Syria Support Group (ISSG) that has been “pressing all parties to contribute to the necessary goodwill for fighting to stop and for peace talks to get underway,” he said, noting Canada has been providing advice to opposition groups. “We are not providing any lethal assistance,” he stressed. Instead, Canada is training them for peace negotiations.

Godbout said she believed Canada is supporting the official opposition based in Turkey, a political group that has “no control over rebel groups that are actually on the ground.”

“If they talk in Geneva with the opposition that is based in Turkey, I don’t know how much difference it makes on the ground,” she said.

“Most of the Syrians I spoke to that were part of the first revolution, they regret it,” she said. They tell her they would not have done it had they known how it would turn out. “Our revolution was stolen, stolen by external groups and

we lost control over the future of our country,” they say. Syrians have even reported some Chinese involvement, she said.

“We want to put pressure, but we don’t know what Canada can do,” she said. The ISSG committee in Geneva needs to put pressure on for humanitarian aid to reach east Aleppo.

While Canada might not be providing direct support to rebels militarily, it does have military deals with Saudi Arabia and other countries, she said. While on one hand, Canada is supporting diplomatic efforts, on the other, they “do support military action and that we are absolutely against.”

Beaulieu told the committee Canada believes the Assad regime bears the greatest responsibility for the humanitarian cri-

sis, but Canada also has concerns about the actions of rebel groups and the radicalization of the civilian population in response to the government’s bombardment.

The subcommittee also heard testimony from Raed Al Saleh, the head of the Syria Civil Defence, the so-called White Helmets who spoke via a teleconference from Istanbul.

The White Helmets are the first responders when there are bomb strikes or mortar attacks, pulling people out of rubble, getting the wounded to hospital and so on. Al Saleh said 147 White Helmets have been killed, often by double airstrikes — a first airstrike that brings a civil defence response, followed by a second that kills the rescuers.

— INTERNATIONAL, page 5

Bennett announces Cardus’ Cabinet of Canadians

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The Cardus Cabinet of Canadians will affirm faith’s central role as Canada marks its 150th anniversary in 2017. The cabinet was presented on Nov. 1 by Andrew Bennett, the former ambassador of religious freedom.

The Cabinet of Canadians is part of the Cardus think-tank’s Faith in Canada 150 project to highlight the importance of faith in the run-up to the 150th anniversary of Confederation next year.



CCN/D. Gyapong

Andrew Bennett

The 40-member cabinet, which includes Toronto Cardinal Thomas Collins, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada president Bruce Clemenger, Catholic Christian Outreach president Jeff Lockert, and National Council of Canadian Muslims executive director Ishaan Gardee, will help lead the conversation regionally and nationally on the importance of religious faith in Canada’s history as well as in her present.

“There is growing discrimination against people of faith in Canada,” Bennett said in a statement. “We must speak out confidently and uphold this fundamental freedom in the face of growing

intolerance of religious belief in our society.”

“Just look at Ontario where doctors could be forced to violate their consciences by referring patients for euthanasia against their deeply held religious beliefs,” he said. “This is mirrored in the case of Catholic hospitals that are being pushed to set aside their prohibition on euthanasia, or law societies denying accreditation to Trinity Western University’s proposed law school over dislike of the private evangelical school’s community covenant.”

The cabinet includes not only religious leaders, but also academics, social entrepreneurs and business leaders who will act as a “vanguard” for the message that faith matters in Canada, he said.

Cardus, a Christian think-tank, hopes to convey the importance of religious faith in building Canada and in creating her diverse and pluralistic fabric today, Bennett said.

Cabinet co-chairs are Shachi Kurl, a public policy analyst with the Angus Reid Institute, and Balpreet Singh Boparai, legal counsel for the World Sikh Organization of Canada.

While about 20 members represent Christian leaders from Catholic, Orthodox and various Protestant backgrounds, the cabinet includes a wide breadth of other faiths, representing the diversity present in Canada.

“This is not diversity for diversity’s sake,” said Bennett. Instead, they are trying to “reflect the true face of Canada now,” and “make sure faith is given a prominent place” in the 150th anniversary celebrations.

Bennett, who is a senior fellow at Cardus since leaving his role as ambassador after a reorganization of the office at Global Affairs Canada, said that while Cardus is a Christian think-tank drawing on 2,000 years of Christian thought, “we seek to be open to other Canadians. We want to engage.”



Art Babych

REMEMBRANCE DAY — A “new generation veteran” places his poppy on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National War Memorial in Ottawa on Remembrance Day in this Nov. 11, 2015, photo.

Concert for refugees planned in Winnipeg

By John Tanner

WINNIPEG — Winnipeg’s Joie de Vivre Choir and Friends will present a concert of Christmas music in support of the refugee sponsorship partnership of St. John Brebeuf Church and St. Paul the Apostle Church.

The churches were expecting their first sponsored family Oct. 21: a Syrian family of five arriving from Lebanon. The sponsorship committee is continuing to work to bring additional refugees to Winnipeg, aided by events such as the concert and a second Sunday collection that the churches started a year ago and has been met with great enthusiasm by parishioners.

The concert is being presented Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. at St. John Brebeuf Church.

Joie de Vivre Choir is a mixed choir of 45 members from all walks of life. They rehearse in the St. John Brebeuf school gym, and perform at St. John’s College Chapel at the University of Manitoba and St. John Brebeuf Church.

Co-conductors are John Tanner and Coralie Bryant. Tanner, a retired physician, obtained his master of music degree in choral conduct-

ing from the Marcel A. Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba. Coralie is a music educator and school administrator, and holds a master of music education from Harvard University.

Joie de Vivre’s repertoire ranges from renaissance to modern, classical to popular.

The concert program includes Tomas Luis de Victoria’s “Ave Maria,” well-loved carols, a sing-along medley of “White Christmas,” “Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire,” and some Hanukkah songs along the way.

In addition to the choir, the concert will feature performances on flute and piccolo by Charmaine Bacon, and on clarinet by Colin Mehmel.

Bacon is a pianist for Joie de Vivre and obtained her bachelor of music and master of music in flute performance from the University of Manitoba and University of Toronto, and pursued further studies on flute and piccolo orchestral performance at The Glenn Gould School in Toronto. She is a flutist and instructor in the Winnipeg area, performing regularly with the Winnipeg Wind Ensemble and instructing at the

Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts. She is co-director of the Wind Chamber Series at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, and organist and music director at St. Peter’s Anglican Church.

Mehmel has a bachelor of music from the University of Manitoba and master of music from Michigan State University. He is a clarinetist, clinician and Feldenkrais practitioner. He teaches in the Preparatory Studies Division of the Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba, and in the Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Art, using his knowledge of music and physiology to provide insights to his students as artists, to enable them to master specific technical challenges. He has performed with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, the Clear Lake Music Festival, as soloist with the Mennonite Community Orchestra and Brandon University’s Clarinet Festival, and is currently principal clarinet with the Winnipeg Wind Ensemble.

Tickets are \$20, children 12 years and under are admitted free. Ushers are being provided by the Knights of Columbus, and a post-concert reception will be hosted by the Catholic Women’s League.

Alberta has progressed on environmental leadership

By Glen Argan

ST. ALBERT, Alta. — Until a year and a half ago, Alberta was “ground zero” for lack of trust in protecting the environment, says Andrew Read of the environmentalist Pembina Institute.



Glen Argan

Shannon Phillips

But then Albertans elected an NDP government, and Pope Francis issued his ground-breaking encyclical *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home).

“It seems like the world has

really changed since *Laudato Si'* was published,” Read told about 60 people at an Oct. 29 symposium at St. Albert Church sponsored by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

From being the only jurisdiction in North America without an energy efficiency policy to showing more environmental leadership than any other oil-producing region on the globe, Alberta has come a long way in a short time, he said.

Read was joined on a panel with provincial Environment Minister Shannon Phillips and Ian Anderson, president of the pipeline-building firm Kinder Morgan. The daylong symposium also featured input from church and Aboriginal leaders and a reflection on the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Oblates.

Phillips noted that the roots of the NDP lie in the social Gospel movement of the first half of the 20th century, and that many of the party's leaders emerged from that movement. Her own social involvement was spurred through her Anglican upbringing.

Pope Francis' ecological philosophy is not alien to the NDP, Phillips said. “In theological terms, this is an issue of our responsibility for creation.”

The minister outlined details of the Alberta government's Climate Change Leadership Plan, including a cap on oilsands emissions, a carbon tax combined with rebates to two-thirds of Albertans, phasing out coal-fired electricity production by 2030, and investments in green infrastructure and energy efficient homes.

While the government has been criticized for its plan, Phillips responded, “There is no ‘do-nothing’ anymore. Climate change changes the rules of the game. There is no no-cost solution.”

However, Phillips maintained the province has a responsibility to continue fossil fuel production so families can put food on the table. Albertans elected the NDP to restore economic stability after a dramatic drop in the price of oil left tens of thousands of people unemployed.

Anderson's Kinder Morgan is proposing to twin its Trans Mountain Pipeline from Edmonton to a marine terminal in Burnaby, B.C.

He paid tribute to the Alberta government's efforts in “threading the needle” by meeting the concerns of a wide variety of interests affecting the development and transport of petroleum. “I greatly applaud the work Premier (Rachel) Notley has done.”

Canada currently has “a spirit of co-operation” which is enabling it to become a global leader in the battle against climate change, he said. “Industry is changing; government is changing.”

Anderson said Kinder Morgan's vision for the pipeline project is “No voice will go unheard.” He estimated he has attended between 300 and 400 meetings on the nearly 1,000-kilometre pipeline route and knows every First Nations chief along the way.

“There is no replacement for being in these communities and understanding how what you

do affects their lives.”

When asked why Canada wants to export oil while simultaneously committing itself to cutting greenhouse gas emissions, Anderson replied that those foreign markets will consume oil whether they get it from Canada or elsewhere.

Oil exports will enable Canadian producers to get the world price for their product which they don't receive on domestic sales, he said. Further, 80 per cent of oil exported from Canada is currently shipped from California.

As well, the move away from fossil fuels will require funding for significant technological development, something only likely to happen in a stable, prosperous country such as Canada, he said.

Bob McKeon, the former long-time director of social justice for the Edmonton archdiocese, said Pope Francis has done much to raise the profile of ecological concerns in the church.

Along with issuing his encyclical, he also added the Sept. 1 World Day of Care for Creation to the liturgical calendar, McKeon said.

That feast is to be a day for a serious examination of conscience of our sins against creation, followed by a confession of those sins, he said. “With Confession comes a firm purpose of amendment, a commitment to change our sinful ways.”



Glen Argan

Ian Anderson

Women's summit aims to close gender gap

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — King's University College is hoping to lead the way in encouraging young women to get more involved in the political system.

On Oct. 27, the school at Western University in London, Ont., hosted its first Women's Political Summit, a day dedicated to discussing the gender gap with in Canada's political system.

More than 80 female mayors, city councillors, First Nations chiefs, school trustees and other community leaders attended the event. Participants spent the day in workshops and breakout sessions to learn about different ways that women are changing the male-dominated political world.

“I don't know if I ever heard so many people saying, ‘We have to do this. We have to do this next year. We have to do this more often,’ ” said Allyson Larkin, King's professor and facilitator of the summit. “I really think the whole day was about mentoring, about building relationships, about realizing that there's no go-to manual that's going to all of a sudden create equal representation in our society.”

The United Nations has said that a critical mass of at least 30 per cent women is needed in order to properly represent women's concerns in public policy. Although Canada has seen record numbers of female candidates elected within the past two federal elections in 2011 and 2015, a little more than 25 per cent of the seats in Parliament are occupied by women.

According to 2013 data from Statistics Canada, female repre-

sentation across all levels of government is even lower. A little more than 25 per cent of provincial and territorial seats are occupied by women. Of the 20,513 municipal council seats, 25 per cent are women councillors. Only 16 per cent of Canada's mayors are women.

One of the main points of discussion at the Women's Political Summit was about the precedent that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau set last year by forming a gender-balanced cabinet.

“I think that (the 50-50 cabinet) definitely brought the debate about gender representation into the mainstream,” said Larkin. “Now, as a scholar, I'm less persuaded by numerical representation. I think that if we are just talking about numbers, we are missing a bigger problem.”

Many women leaders in the summit workshops discussed the need for a culture shift within the political system. For many years, the political sphere has been described as “the old boys' network.”

“It's one thing for us to get along with that network and go out for beers with them or go out and play golf with them, but there was a strong contingent of women who have been in politics for a long time who felt like that is what we've got to crack. There needs to be a change in that culture,” said Larkin.

During the summit, former London mayor Joni Baechler screened her 2014 documentary, 25%, as part of her keynote address. The film examines the barriers Canadian women face at all levels of government.

The summit is an extension of a women's mentorship program that Larkin runs at King's. The

Head Start program gives six female students the opportunity to shadow and work with female mentors, including London city councillors and other municipal and non-profit leaders. The program, first launched in 2013, became an official course credit in 2014 for King's Social Justice and Peace Studies program.

Next year, Larkin hopes to double the mentorship program to include 12 student participants.

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Canada can do more for Syria, says Syriac priest

By Philippe Vaillancourt

MONTREAL (CNS) — Canada and western nations can and must do more to stop the war in Syria, said Rev. Jacques Mourad, a Syriac Catholic priest who was abducted and held captive for nearly five months by the Islamic State group.

Mourad, whose escape last year received worldwide coverage, had a specific message for Canadians during a visit to Montreal and Ottawa, Ontario, Oct. 22 - 25. It was his first trip to Canada.

Shortly after his liberation, Mourad fled Syria, fearing for his life. He now travels in western countries discussing the complexities of the war in his homeland.

"Before my abduction, I was in my monastery totally immersed in my work and spiritual mission. I lost everything: my monastery, my parish. I can't live any longer in such a wartorn country," he said.

Vaillancourt is editor-in-chief of Presence info.

The Monastery of St. Elian was built in the fifth century. It was abandoned in the 18th century but was revived in the 1980s by Jesuit Father Paolo Dall'Oglio, an Italian who founded an ecumenical and inter-religious community in Mar Musa, near Homs, in western Syria. Dall'Oglio was kidnapped by the Islamic State in 2013 and remains missing.

At the time of his abduction in May 2015, Mourad was the superior of the monastery. On Aug. 21, 2015, ISIS destroyed both the monastery and a nearby cemetery.

"Canada could play an active role and help put an end to the war in Syria. It's not enough to open your arms and the borders to the (Syrian and Iraqi) refugees. It's of course a good thing and I'm thankful. Yet the last thing we want to do is to leave our country. We have everything we need to live decently in Syria," he said.

"Canada is an important country in the world today. Canada has an influential voice in diplomatic circles that can build bridges between America, Europe and even Russia, I believe. For

that, I think that if the Canadian government and people truly wish to stop the violence and war they sure can do something about it. They can save the lives of many people," Mourad said.

Citing Canada's diplomatic strength around the world, Mourad suggested that if the government and the Canadian people "are serious in their will to stop violence and war, they can do something. They can save those people (in Syria)."

"It's impossible for (western) countries to look at this evil and do nothing. Welcoming refugees is good, but it's not the solution. The solution is to stop the war," he added.

The Syrian priest was held captive by the Islamic State for four months and 20 days. He was tortured, went through a fake execution and lived in constant fear of being beheaded. His captives gave him rice to eat, twice a day.

The first days of captivity were especially difficult, Mourad recalled.

"Someone who's lived freely for all his life, who's had responsibilities, etc., suddenly finds himself being captive, stuck in a little room, beaten and threatened daily, by people he doesn't even know . . . I felt ashamed, nervous and scared," he said.

Then, on the eighth day, Mourad lived a "rather unique experience" with a stranger. A hooded man, dressed in black, came to meet him in his makeshift cell. The priest thought they were to escort him to his execution. But what happened changed the way he lived his detention thereafter. The hooded man saluted the priest and had a long and thorough conversation with him. When Mourad asked him why he was made captive, the masked man told the priest to see his detention as a

"spiritual retreat." So that's what the priest started doing, diving deep into himself, rediscovering the riches of his own spiritual heritage.

"I really felt God's presence at this meeting. Jihadists are usually quite aggressive. This person, it was exceptional. It felt as if God was speaking through him. When he told me to consider this captivity as a retreat, I think it truly was God speaking to me through him," Mourad said.

He was able to escape the Islamic State on a motorcycle, with the help of a Muslim friend. But for security reasons, he won't say more about how he did it.

Despite the hardships, Mourad holds no bitterness nor vengefulness. "(My abductors) tried to live Islam through the Quran and the Islamic law, but with an extremist and rigid mind. They're using Islam and their political position as a way to react against the dictatorships of the Arabic



CNS/Doreen Abi Raad

CALLING ON CANADA — Rev. Jacques Mourad poses for a photo Nov. 11, 2015, in the reception area at Our Lady of the Annunciation Church in Beirut. The Syriac-Catholic priest, who was held captive by the Islamic State group for nearly five months in 2015, called on Canada to undertake diplomatic steps to end the Syrian civil war.

world," he said.

"I hope that the Muslim world will one day find a way to reconcile Islamic law and human rights. It's only through this path that the Muslim world will be able to adapt itself and find its place in today's world. And to achieve a true democracy in Islamic countries, a democracy that adapts itself and is valid for Islamic culture and religion," Mourad added.

Mourad planned to return to his new ministry: working with refugees in northern Iraq.

International action needed

Continued from page 3

Speaking through a translator, he said the best solution is for Canada to support civil society efforts to provide help and humanitarian aid.

He asked for international action to put an end to the suffering of the people in Aleppo, and stressed the White Helmets provide services to all Syrians. "We are unbiased," he said.

Godbout said Development and Peace has partners on the ground in both east and west Aleppo. One partner in east Aleppo had the foresight to store fuel, food and other supplies prior to the siege that has prevented even humanitarian assistance from reaching the city. It has still been able to operate, though supplies are running out she said.

West Aleppo is also experiencing random mortar attacks from rebel forces, creating terror in the

part of the city held by the regime, she said.

Though the Assad regime has reportedly opened up humanitarian corridors for civilians to flee east Aleppo in advance of an expected widespread assault of the city, Godbout said their partners have reported snipers shooting at those fleeing. There are rumours rebel groups are using civilians as human shields, and rumours the Assad government is charging \$300 per family for those wishing to escape, money few can afford, she said, describing the picture as "murky."

Despite the "very terrible situation" in Aleppo, Development and Peace's partners "still have projects running that are doing great things and are saving lives in Aleppo east," and elsewhere in the city, Godbout said.

Outside Aleppo, Caritas partners have projects helping farmers, training women to sew, read and use computers, she said.

CWL faces many challenges ahead

Continued from page 1

aged CWL members to sign petitions and to write to politicians.

In her second year as president, Dowding decided to reach out also to the dying, and promote an alternative to assisted suicide: palliative care.

"Instead of fighting so much against assisted suicide and euthanasia, because it's already here, we wanted to focus on what we can do about palliative care," she said.

CWL members were encouraged to support local palliative care and hospices, and the organization held its first-ever National Prayer for Palliative Care Day.

The event, May 4, was during National Hospice Palliative Care Week, May 1 - 7. Dowding encouraged CWL members to pray, run educational and awareness events, sign petitions, and visit the sick or dying that day.

"We raised a lot of money," all of which was donated to local hospices.

Other memorable moments for Dowding included a trip to Juno Beach in Normandy in 2014. A plaque she had installed there in

time for Remembrance Day memorializes the CWL's gratitude to Canadian armed forces and veterans.

She also went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with some League members and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. "It was life changing."

The announcement of the Year of Mercy was also an exciting time. Dowding's team decided it was a good idea to ask CWL members across Canada to make lists of corporal and spiritual works of mercy they had performed. When the year ends, they will put it all together and send it as a bouquet to Pope Francis.

Now that her term is up, Dowding said she's happy with what she's accomplished, but there are many challenges ahead for the CWL.

"It's seen as an older ladies' group. Going forward, I don't think it's going to be your mother's CWL. It has to change, and we know that," she said.

"Change takes a long time in the CWL. We're 96 years old. It's like a huge ship, like a big liner, you can only turn it a little at a time."

Margaret Ann Jacobs has succeeded her as national president.

"As a president, she was extremely affirming, extremely encouraging; she was very transparent," Jacobs said of Dowding.

"She's also a visionary. She looked for ways and means to move forward with a better vision of how we can engage and welcome in all of the Catholic community, all women, into our circle."

Jacobs, as all new presidents do, chose a new theme for her two-year term: "Inspired by the Spirit, women respond to God's call." She hopes to continue supporting palliative care, as well as take on some other initiatives.

Dowding's theme, and her courage to stand up for issues like good palliative care, will continue for a long time.

"I think it will be with us forever because it's so powerful, so strong. I hope that we can build on it," she said.

"If we are living with love, care, compassion, gentleness, all of those things, then we are what that 'one heart' is all about."



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Synod allows students to voice their opinions

By Llana Arreza,
Trevena Metias and Shirly Xie

WINNIPEG — It's not every day that youth get an opportunity to partake in a synod, but on Oct. 25 Winnipeg high school students from St. Mary's Academy, St. Paul's High School and St. Maurice School were invited by Archbishop Richard Gagnon to gather together.

The event was a listening session, one of eight scheduled over

the past two months forming the first phase of the two-year Archdiocese of Winnipeg Synod, the first in its history.

Synod, from the Greek word *synodos* means "assembly." The purpose of an archdiocesan synod is to foster the good of the community as a whole by calling together the clergy, religious and laity of the church to discuss the pastoral needs of the archdiocese. It is to come together, to walk together, and to go forward on a path.

As disciples of God, it is our responsibility to be active members of the church. The synod is a great opportunity for youth to voice their opinions on what they feel the archdiocese needs. The synod acknowledges that as young members of the church, we have valid points and perspectives, and that our voices will be heard among the adult members of the archdiocese.

For students from St. Maurice School, it was also great to meet people from other schools and religious backgrounds and discuss topics that concern the archdiocese.

Students were seated randomly so that they could meet other students and share their perspectives on the church. Prior to the listening session, the archdiocese proposed three questions to the participating schools. These questions were thoroughly discussed in religion classes, so those who were not physically present were also able to voice their opinions.

The session began with a presentation by Keith Macpherson, an alumnus of St. Paul's High School. His interactive musical performance as well as positive attitude really set the mood for the

rest of the day, encouraging the youth not only to be honest and not be afraid to speak their minds, but to realize and appreciate that they have been given an opportunity of a lifetime. The questions that were posed in the religion classes were brought to the tables, and were discussed among the students in small groups.

The three questions asked were: What do you appreciate most about the church, especially those things that have changed you as a disciple of the Lord? What do you personally need/want from the church? How do you think the church can more

effectively engage youth going forward?

Students noticed a common need in involving youth in parishes in various ways. They collectively wish to see an archdiocese that involves more modern views in order to engage them and make it easier for them to learn more about their faith. They need more leadership roles for youth to play in the community, and they also need to find a balance between keeping tradition and allowing for change.

With the archbishop present and listening, students were reassured that their opinions were being addressed.



LISTENING SESSION — High school students in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg address Archbishop Richard Gagnon during a synod listening session Oct. 25.

JOY program focuses on refugees

By Kate O'Gorman

SASKATOON — For some newcomers to our increasingly multicultural community, their story begins with being forced to leave their country of origin. Participants in the Diocese of Saskatoon's Justice and Outreach Year (JOY) of Formation immersed themselves in the refugee story Oct. 15, spending the day at the Saskatoon Open Door Society.

Dana Krushel, Migration and Resettlement co-ordinator at the Mennonite Central Committee, led an activity that brought into focus what being a displaced person is like. Participants were asked to visit simulation stations, such as border crossings, where they were presented with the sorts of decisions that many face during times of conflict and migration. Difficult decisions challenged participants with how to maintain resources such as food, money and health while attempting to secure safe passage. This simulation offered a glimpse into life as a refugee and set the foundation for the rest of the day.

Through the Office of Migra-

tion, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon operates as a refugee sponsorship agreement holder, working with parishes and other groups to assist refugees seeking safety in our community. Many dedicated volunteers at the parish level offer their time and talent to undertake and to assist with refugee sponsorships. Volunteer Sheila Flory, co-chair of the Refugee Committee at St. Philip Neri Parish in Saskatoon, facilitated a session for JOY participants, sharing numerous accounts of the partnerships that occur between parishioners and refugee families.

"I find working with the refugee committee very fulfilling work," said Flory. "We are so blessed, living in Canada, and I love giving other people a chance to start a new life."

Learning how to settle and thrive in a new home country is what all newcomers experience once they arrive. The mission of Saskatoon's Open Door Society is to "assist newcomers to Canada to become participating members of an inclusive and diverse community and country."

Facilitators Roberta Desnomie and Farrukh Syeer of the Open

Door Society described various ways people from different countries of origin may communicate (or miscommunicate) given their cultural and behavioural norms. Inclusivity and integration is a large part of the newcomer story, participants learned.

Sharing his own experience as a refugee from Syria, sponsored through the Diocese of Saskatoon and settling into life as a newcomer, Jad Rehan gave JOY participants the gift of his story as the day's final presenter.

Rehan showed pictures of his hometown in Syria before and after the bombing that forced him and his family to flee. He shared what it was like to be uprooted, displaced and in need of a safe place to live. Having arrived only eight months ago, the optimistic young man now leads a full life as a student, employee and community volunteer. Rehan's older brother and sister-in-law have also been sponsored through the diocese and he is anxiously awaiting their arrival.

With hearts and minds moved by the refugee story as it is experienced from various vantage points, JOY participants concluded the day with celebration of the eucharist and a community supper at St. Paul's Parish.

JOY is a diocesan program running from September to June in which participants coming together once a month to focus on issues of social justice, visit local service-based agencies, and work alongside people who experience life on the margins.



Frank Flegel

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI - From left: Rev. John Meehan, SJ, president of Campion College; Dr. Katherine Owens; Senator Denise Batters; and Sandi Ellert Day Cahir, Board of Regents, Campion College.

Campion honours alumni

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A Saskatchewan senator and a clinical psychologist are this year's recipients of the Campion College Alumni of Distinction Award. Senator Denise Batters, a strong advocate for mental health, and Dr. Katherine Owens, director of Clinical Psychology Training for the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, each received the award at a gala held in October at the Hotel Saskatchewan in Regina.

Batters received a BA through Campion College at the University of Regina and her law degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She was in private practice until 2007 when she became Chief of Staff to the then Minister of Justice Don Morgan for five years, then moved to the Crown Investments Corporation as director of Regulatory Affairs until she received an appointment to the Senate in 2013.

Her late husband, member of Parliament David Batters, lost his battle with depression in 2009 and since then, Batters has become a strong advocate for mental health. She organizes an annual fundraising golf tournament which has raised almost \$200,000 to support advocacy for mental health. She was the recipient of the 2015 Champion of Mental Health in the parliamentary category in recognition of her efforts. She organized opposition to the inclusion of psychological suffering in the physician-assisted suicide legislation and was successful in having it removed.

"The most vulnerable in our

society now have some protection," she said in accepting the Alumni of Distinction Award.

Owens received a BA Honours through Campion College, University of Regina, and an MA and PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Regina. Besides her work with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, she is chief psychologist at the Mental Health Clinic, an adjunct professor at the University of Regina and a clinical lecturer at the University of Saskatchewan.

She volunteers at the Regina Food Bank, the United Nations Safer Cities Project in Tanzania, and *Gruppo per Relazioni Transculturali*, a Somali inpatient unit. She spent time in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, helping citizens cope with the disaster.

Owens was the first psychologist to the Canadian-based volunteer organization Humanity First, which helps regions in the world where people struggle getting the basic necessities of life. "I've had a 26-year relationship with Campion," said Owens in her acceptance remarks. She remembered how much spiritual and basic support she received from Campion.

Batters and Owens, in a September ceremony, had been inducted as alumni members of Alpha Sigma Nu, an international honour society or Jesuit institutions of higher learning. Students, alumni and associates of Jesuit institutions who distinguish themselves through scholarship, leadership, loyalty and service to the institutions and community are inducted into the society.



Kate O'Gorman

JOY — JOY participants concluded a day of reflection about the refugee experience with a community supper at St. Paul's Co-Cathedral in Saskatoon.

Ecumenical dialogue focuses on Mary, the saints

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Different understandings about Mary and the communion of saints were explored Oct. 19 during an Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue public event held at St. Philip Neri Church in Saskatoon.

Participants were reflecting on a section of “Called to Common Witness,” a 2015 joint statement by the local Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue, in which the two traditions affirm “the role of Mary as Mother of God and model of discipleship,” before adding that “Catholic devotional language and practices regarding Mary, as well as the saints, have raised concerns for Evangelicals.”

Speakers at the public event included Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue co-chair Harry Strauss, an associate pastor at Forest Grove Community Church, and Rev. Matthew Ramsay, pastor of St. Anne’s Parish in Saskatoon.

Strauss summarized the theological understandings of Catholics and Evangelical Christians about

the meaning of the phrase “the communion of saints,” which is part of the Apostle’s Creed.

“Catholics believe that the communion of saints includes not only those on earth, but those who have already passed away,” he said, noting as well that for Catholics the term “saint” also refers to those who have been recognized by the church as canonized saints for their contribution and lasting legacy.

Fellowship is at the core of the communion of saints, Strauss said. “That fellowship begins with our communion with God, and based on that relationship with God, includes all believers. The key unifying factor is a shared relationship with Jesus Christ. For most Evangelicals, that is the heart of what the communion of saints means.”

Whether that communion also includes believers who have died and are now in the presence of God is one question, he said. Another is whether believers who are with God in heaven are inactive or whether they are engaged

in prayer and intercession for those on earth.

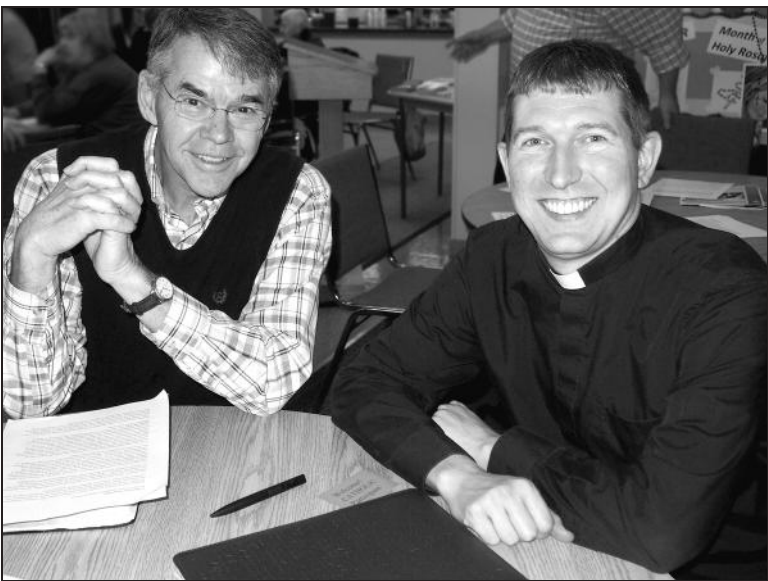
“Catholics believe that there is a lively, dynamic, ongoing exchange between those who are on earth and those who are in heaven,” Strauss summarized. He also cited Scripture that would support this understanding.

However, for most Evangelical Christians, the idea would be new and foreign: “Fellow believers are in heaven, but the line between heaven and earth would be more set and more definite for the Evangelical. The flow between heaven and earth would not have the same measure of fluidity that one sees in the Catholic realm.”

The Catholic understanding is that those who are in heaven have the time and spiritual focus to intercede for those on earth, Strauss added.

“Because of this understanding, Catholics will ask their fellow believers in heaven to pray for them. Though we as Evangelicals might see this as praying to the dead, such would not be the case for Catholics. From their perspective they are simply asking their fellow believers, now in heaven, and very much alive in spirit, to intercede for them.”

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is one of those fellow believers, Strauss continued, saying he has come to understand that Catholics



Kiply Yaworski

MARY AND THE SAINTS — Pastor Harry Strauss and Rev. Matthew Ramsay were guest speakers at an Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue public event about Mary and the saints held Oct. 19 in Saskatoon.

do not worship Mary, but ask her to pray for them.

“Evangelicals value the humility and obedience of Mary, and would look to her, as well as other Biblical figures, as role models for the life of faith. But Evangelicals would not accord the same level of veneration that would be found within Catholicism. Nor would Evangelicals think in terms of asking Mary to intercede for them,” he said.

Strauss added that Evangelicals

would also critique Catholics for embracing beliefs about Mary which from their perspective go beyond Scripture — such as the immaculate conception (that Mary was born without sin) and the bodily assumption (that Mary went directly to heaven).

In the midst of continuing division, Catholics and Evangelicals can look to the description of the wedding supper of the

— JESUS, page 15

St. John Paul II statue unveiled in Regina

By Frank Flegel

REGINA — A statue of St. John Paul II was unveiled at an Oct. 22 special mass and ceremony at St. Anthony’s Church. The statue was unveiled on the saint’s feast date which is also the day he was elected Bishop of Rome. St. Anthony’s Church ministers to the city’s Polish community.

The statue was commissioned by the Marytan Foundation, a private family foundation. Alex Banga, a parishioner of St. Anthony’s, on behalf of the foundation, approached St. Anthony’s Parish Council in 2015 and proposed the foundation’s offer to commission a statue of St. John Paul II.

“The foundation wanted to give praise to one of the great saints of our time,” said Banga in his opening remarks prior to the unveiling. Banga spoke of St. John Paul’s accomplishments as pope, noting particularly his role in eventually ending communist rule in his homeland and in Europe. He was also the most travelled pope in history.

Winnipeg Archbishop Emeritus James Weisgerber in his homily mentioned that it was Pope John Paul II who appointed him bishop. “He was a wonderful man to be with,” said Weisgerber. “He had a great mind.” His election as Bishop of Rome in 1978 came as a big surprise to many as he was the first non-Italian pope in a long time.

“He had a very difficult life living under the communist regime,” said the archbishop. He along with other Polish bishops played a role in Vatican II, said Weisgerber, and he chose the name John Paul II because he wanted to be faithful to John XXIII who established Vatican II and to Paul VI who elevated him to the College of Cardinals. “He was a strong influence on the church and we have to be very, very grateful for that.”

The ceremony was followed

by a reception and banquet in the church hall, with Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen speaking about St. John Paul II’s life.

The statue was produced by Ferdinand Stuflesser, Val Gardena Valley, Italy. Banga would only say the foundation paid for it and would not reveal the cost. Banga and his wife Mary unveiled the statue which was then blessed by Weisgerber. The pedestal was crafted by Krzysztof Bolesta, a St. Anthony’s parishioner.

The Marytan Foundation is based on the values of respect, dignity and compassion with support for the poor, marginalized and disadvantaged. It also supports religious and charitable organizations that share those common values.



Frank Flegel

St. John Paul II, a statue commissioned in Regina by the Marytan Foundation.

Millennials ‘somewhere in-between’

Continued from page 1

between as a religion status. One study named “A New Day” in 2012 by Reginald Bibby, a well-known statistician, stated, “Large numbers of people are open to greater involvement. But they are not in the market for churches. They want much more, actually, something quite different.”

She spoke on the journey to intentional discipleship and the three common stages of adult Christian development or conversion, similar to stages of human life: seeker, disciple and apostle.

Baptism, she read, is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion.

“God’s desire that we be present with him, that’s what sparks our desire to be close with God. He’s already looking for us to be in a relationship with him. Some people are not seeking at all, they’re not aware. There are stages to the seeker. As someone moves forward in a relationship with Christ and they make that a decision and a goal, we call that a disciple.

From the moment Simon dropped his nets to follow Jesus, he was a disciple, but it would take the rest of his life to become a saint. This stage is also referred to as active. It is a full catechesis, forming basic habits of discipleship, being fruit-bearing, going public, being a witness in the marketplace.

The second conversion is an uninterrupted task for the whole church. This part of the conversion is not just a human work, it is the movement of a “contrite heart,” drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first.

“The learner, within the stage of becoming a disciple, there are definite marked transitions for one who is learning the habits of discipleship. One who begins to practise and begins to recognize that this is more than just following Jesus and that he has a plan and a mission and now I need to know what he wants me to do. That’s the third stage that we call apostle, in the sense of one who is sent.”

“People who are unique . . . we have to be creative and figure out how to respond to them. The old paradigm pointed to ‘churched’ and ‘unchurched,’ we need to move to a new paradigm such as actives, marginal, inactives and disaffiliates.”

Bibby states there are “Three concrete features of effective ministry to Canadians — ministering well to insiders, locating the rest of your people, and ministering well to your outsiders.”

As evangelizers, we must attend to three concurrent spiritual journeys in adults: personal interior journey, the sacramental/ecclesial exterior journey, “active” or “inactive” journey.

The first journey is the personal interior journey, the act of faith resulting in intentional discipleship and friendship with Jesus. The second journey is the reception into the church through reception of the sacraments of initiation. Last is the active or inactive journey, the participating and belonging, friendship with other friends in the Christian community.

“This is where their relational bridge can be a helpful, good place for a sponsor to have a conversation.”

When someone is telling their stories, the person listening is in a role of clarifying questions.

Events such as RCIA inquiries can occur during the talk, returning Catholics, parish registration, pastoral counselling, spiritual direction, marriage preparation, and many other actions.

She quoted Rev. Michael Sweeney from the same institute, who said, “The parish has a mission beyond itself, and is situated in relationship to its neighbourhood. What a parish is cannot be adequately discussed without a consideration of the society in which it is found and to which it is sent. It has a mission to the world. It can’t just exist for itself. There’s a larger conversation we need to have. What does that mean? How can we be the parishes we are called to be in 2016?”

She spoke on the role of priest as primary caregiver and catechist. She said the essence of the priest munus of governance does not lie primarily in the administration of the parish. Governance is much more than that.

Rev. Greg Elder, chancellor for the Prince Albert diocese, shared that his boundaries make him responsible for all people in his area, not solely Catholics.

“Something to remember is that a pastor is responsible for all the souls, proclaiming the gospel to everyone in his boundaries, it is the rare circumstance where he can have a personal conversation with every one of them. We have a responsibility to co-work with our pastor in order to support him in this important task of proclaiming. His primary responsibility is for his church. Foster unity with the church so that we are a prophetic witness to our neighbours, in our actions through word or witness in the community.”

Whatever we are called, ‘grandma’ means love

Around the Kitchen Table

Maureen Weber



In the year I turned 49 I quit colouring my hair. Notwithstanding how white my hair turned out to be, I believed I looked somewhat youthful and so my new appearance did not make me feel any older. Until a lovely June day that year when I was accosted by an inebriated older man on a city street who stumbled into me saying, “Hey *Grrramma*, how about a coffee” (I was holding a Starbucks).

The near assault was one thing, but what I found offensive was his use of the word “Grandma,” and how it came out as an insult. I’ve never felt the same since about the sound of that word, and earlier this year when we found out we would be grandparents, I thought about how I felt about being called *Grrramma*.

Beyond what I wanted to be called, though, was another uncertainty — whether or not I would be a *good* grandmother. People have told me, and I appreciate it, that I will be a good grandmother. But what does that mean?

It depends on where you look. On Facebook or Pinterest one can

see grandmothers baking exceptional seasonal creations with their grandchildren, teaching them how to sew, knit, quilt, crochet. How to plant a garden, pick berries, paint a playhouse. There are grandparents who take their grandchildren on camping trips, fishing, skiing, on holidays to exotic locations. I can’t really do any of those things.

It’s not uncommon to doubt yourself, but never in the history of humanity have there been so many ways one can compare oneself with others and be found wanting.

Expressing my concern to someone I trust, I was asked to write down my own ideas of what it means to be a good grandmother. It came with the stern admonition to stay away from Facebook. *Never* look on Facebook, she said.

To fulfil this task I looked to my own grandmother. Grandma Winnifred knew me before I was born and hardly a day went by in my childhood that I did not see her. She visited our place frequently, but her home was my favourite place to be. My grandmother was safe refuge from the anxieties of my uncertain world.

She was calm. Soft-spoken. Even. She never raised her voice. When I was small she would read stories to me, and when I was older I would disappear into one of her cozy chairs to read on my own, content in her constant reassuring presence.

Grandma was bone-thin, tiny. She was not the kind of pillowy grandmother who would take you into her arms. Grandma was reserved — not given to emotional or physical displays of affection. But there was no other place in my world where I felt as safe, as accepted and as loved as when I was with her.

We did nothing special, and yet time spent with her was, to me, extraordinary. Walking over for weekday lunches — she lived only two blocks from my school. Friday-night sleepovers and buttered popcorn. Saturday cartoons, maybe some homework, and buns rising on the counter. Or chocolate chip cookies — no cut-out shapes or coloured icings or fancy decorations. Tea with milk and sugar. Sunday roast beef. Mashed potatoes. Apple pie. Cinnamon was the most exotic spice in her cupboard.

It wasn’t what we did that I remember so much as Grandma’s

gift of loving presence. It wouldn’t be Facebook-worthy today, but then ours has become a performance-enhanced world. Parents and grandparents worry they are not stimulating their newborns with enough black-and-white hanging chimes, in-your-face flash cards, bracelets that jingle, and shoes that rattle when they kick. Constant comparison and resulting dissatisfaction isn’t good for us, and research is starting to confirm

about, but now that I have a grandchild it calls from within to be rediscovered.

So what about *Grrramma*? I have decided to break with my family’s tradition and settle on *Nana*. It sounds pleasing, is easy for a little one to pronounce and feels inviting. Naturally I have found a tiny T-shirt with a kitten that says, “I love my Nana.”

This nana is going to be sanctuary from artificial, unreason-



Leigh Weber

ANOTHER NAME FOR LOVE — Grandmother, Nana, Granny, Oma — there are many names we go by, but they all begin and end with love.

my suspicions about the link between deteriorating mental health and social media.

Grandma would be puzzled by our slavish attention to what others are doing. She was content to just *be*, and when I was with her, I was content with being myself too. It’s a gift I had forgotten

able expectations, where unconditional love is assured. If I can manage that, my list of what it means to be a good grandmother will be fulfilled. If we also manage to bake edible chocolate chip cookies, it will be a bonus, but I probably won’t post them on Facebook.

Costumes that reflect cultural stereotypes are always in poor taste

By Caitlin Ward

I am writing this at the tail end of *Dia de Muertos* — the Mexican holiday better known in English as the Day of the Dead, or re-translated into Spanish as *Dia de los Muertos*. I mention this not because I observe *Dia de Muertos*, as I am not a Chicana Catholic, but because it’s got me thinking. Like Halloween, *Dia*

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de Muertos is a mash-up of pre-Christian and Christian traditions. Unlike Halloween, though, it’s a holy day commemorating the dead that is specific to a particular faith expression embedded in a particular culture.

Like Halloween, though, it’s more than a little fraught, culturally speaking. How and if people participate in *Dia de Muertos* has become something of an issue as people paint their faces as sugar skulls for Halloween and use the aesthetics of the holiday for non-spiritual reasons.

This particular tension is new in the last year or two, but it’s not without precedent. For the last 10 or 15 years, the lead-up to Halloween has been punctuated by arti-

cles, conversations, and arguments about what is and what isn’t an appropriate costume. I’m thinking specifically of how members of ethnic minorities ask people not to dress up as some stereotypical version of their culture, and people who aren’t of that ethnic minority receive this request with varying degrees of grace. Unfortunately, many people receive this request with no grace at all. They demand to know why they can’t dress up as an Indian brave, or a geisha, or wear blackface.

Of course, there are compelling historical and cultural reasons not to do so on every one of those counts, but I’m just going to take one, here, and it comes from a recent experience of my

own. I was lucky enough to go to the installation of Archbishop

My Country ’Tis of Thy People You’re Dying
Buffy Sainte-Marie

Donald Bolen in Regina. I went as the guest of a good friend of mine who was once his student at Campion College. The night, which was beautiful and life-affirming in so many ways, for me was punctuated by the manner in which members of the First Nations of Treaty Four territory welcomed Archbishop Bolen to his new position: three men smudged, sang, and drummed.

Drumming always brings

tears to my eyes, the same way that listening to certain hymns and spirituals makes me cry. I cry easily, I know — a trait I inherited from my father — and in the case of hymns, spirituals, and drumming, the tears come from recognizing the intensity of emotion behind the sound, and the spiritual power of that sort of invocation. There is a profound solemnity in it, and it was a profound respect conferred onto Archbishop Bolen through the offering of that blessing.

I mention this particularly because for this prayer, one of the men donned a war bonnet — the many-feathered headdress worn

— SACRED, page 9

This is an excerpt from *My Country ’Tis of Thy People You’re Dying* by Buffy Sainte-Marie. For the full set of lyrics visit <http://buffysainte-marie.com/>

Now that your big eyes have finally opened
Now that you’re wondering how must they feel
Meaning them that you’ve chased across America’s movie screens
Now that you’re wondering “how can it be real?”
That the ones you’ve called colourful, noble and proud
In your school propaganda
They starve in their splendour?
You’ve asked for my comment I simply will render

My country ’tis of thy people you’re dying.

Now that the longhouses breed superstition
You force us to send our toddlers away
To your schools where they’re taught to despise their traditions.
Forbid them their languages, then further say
That American history really began

When Columbus set sail out of Europe, then stress
That the nation of leeches that conquered this land
Are the biggest and bravest and boldest and best.
And yet where in your history books is the tale
Of the genocide basic to this country’s birth,
Of the preachers who lied, how the Bill of Rights failed,
How a nation of patriots returned to their earth?
And where will it tell of the Liberty Bell
As it rang with a thud
O’er Kinzua mud
And of brave Uncle Sam in Alaska this year?

My country ’tis of thy people you’re dying

Hear how the bargain was made for the West:
With her shivering children in zero degrees,
Blankets for your land, so the treaties attest,
Oh well, blankets for land is a bargain indeed,
And the blankets were those Uncle Sam had collected
From smallpox-diseased dying soldiers that day.
And the tribes were wiped out and the history books censored,

A hundred years of your statesmen have felt it’s better this way.
And yet a few of the conquered have somehow survived,
Their blood runs the redder though genes have paled.
From the Grand Canyon’s caverns to craven sad hills
The wounded, the losers, the robbed sing their tale.
From Los Angeles County to upstate New York
The white nation fattens while others grow lean;
Oh the tricked and evicted they know what I mean.

My country ’tis of thy people you’re dying.

The past it just crumbled, the future just threatens;
Our life blood shut up in your chemical tanks.
And now here you come, bill of sale in your hands
And surprise in your eyes that we’re lacking in thanks
For the blessings of civilization you’ve brought us,
The lessons you’ve taught us, the ruin you’ve wrought us
Oh see what our trust in America’s brought us.

My country ’tis of thy people you’re dying.

Duty of remembrance when ‘post-truth’ threatens

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Today is the morning after the U.S. elections following what may be the most vile deceitful campaign in the history of the world’s most powerful democracy. This Friday is Remembrance Day when we honour the memory of those who sacrificed in wars, some fought in the name of freedom and democracy. Remembering how the world has needed the strength of American democracy in the past, and still does, I hope that when Americans wake up it isn’t in a state of shock or denial.

Denial
(U.K./U.S.)
The Accountant
(U.S.)
American Honey
(U.K./U.S.)

History offers plentiful examples of denials and “big lies,” not only in the totalitarian regimes which required them to survive. The insidious danger of our times is when a free society loses its moorings to the point of disregarding factual truths. Absent a truth-telling moral centre, empirical evidence (e.g. the science of climate change) can be denied and anything, including absurd fabrications, can be believed. That was the warning in the Sept. 10 - 16 cover feature of *The Economist* magazine, “Art of the Lie: Post-truth politics in the age of social media.” In America it pointed to the troubling phenomenon of Donald Trump, a pathological liar, serial sexual predator and shameless denier, who has poisoned political discourse while seducing millions of followers.

Director Mick Jackson’s *Denial* tackles a particular episode in the most odious denial of the past century — namely that the Holocaust in which six million Jews perished never happened. The first image is of the self-proclaimed historian David Irving (Timothy Spall), a notorious anti-Semite and admirer of Hitler, making such claims to the applause of a Calgary audience (which should remind Canadians of our Ed Keegstras and Ernst Zundels). The scene shifts to a lecture hall at Atlanta’s Emory University where Irving interrupts Jewish history professor Deborah Lipstadt (Rachel Weisz) who refuses to debate Holocaust deniers. He makes a show of offering \$1,000 to anyone who can prove there were gas chambers at Auschwitz. Subsequently Irving brought a libel suit against Lipstadt and the publisher of her 1993 book *Denying the Holocaust*. She refused any settlement so the protracted case was held in the arch bewigged atmosphere of a British high court, in which the burden of proof falls on the accused not the accuser, to be decided by judge alone. David Hare’s screenplay

draws on Lipstadt’s own 2005 account *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier*.

Much of the movie concerns the complex legal stratagems for the defence. While Irving played to the cameras, acting as his own legal counsel, the crack team supporting Lipstadt restrained her impulses. It was led by hotshot solicitor Anthony Julius (Andrew Scott) who represented Princess Diana in her divorce, and veteran barrister Richard Rampton (Tom Wilkinson) in the courtroom. To deny Irving any chance to play games in court, neither Lipstadt nor any Holocaust survivors were allowed to testify. As hard as her “act of self-denial” was to accept, winning the case was more important.

Whatever qualms she may have had about putting historical truth in the hands of a single judge, the verdict could not be allowed to give comfort to deniers. However much Irving believed in his own lies, it had to be shown that he engaged in a deliberate pattern of mendacity in order to falsify the historical record. During a sombre pre-trial visit to the Auschwitz site — the film’s most affecting scene — Lipstadt came to realize that Rampton had not been unmoved but was intent on meticulous research to counter Irving’s specious claims in court.

While the case was certainly sensational, Jackson and Hare keep the drama low-key for the most part. Such a sober subject should not be given to theatrics, though we get glimpses of the passions it inflamed. Weisz is effective as the spirited academic who must control her emotions in a foreign court. Spall, the supreme character actor (*Mr. Turner, I, Daniel Blake*), reduces Irving’s self-confident zealotry to a rather pathetic “banality of evil.”

This is perhaps not the strongest film that could have been made, but it is powerfully timely. Lipstadt herself sees the relevance in the prevalence of malignant conspiracies (e.g., 9/11 was an inside job, Obama is a Muslim imposter) and in the rise of Trump whose denials are legion and whose admiration for authoritarian strongmen, coupled with a threat not to accept the election result, is the closest a major party presidential candidate has come to proto-fascism.

Trump has frequently described America in dystopian terms, a country on the road to perdition in dire need of saving. While this is self-serving nonsense, the America depicted in several recent movies isn’t a pretty picture.

The world of director Gavin O’Connor’s *The Accountant* is, notwithstanding the title, a vicious one of obsession, blackmail, malfeasance and murder. Ben Affleck stars as Christian Wolff,

one of multiple aliases, an obsessive-compulsive sociopath and numbers genius whose accounting skills have been in demand by all manner of bad guys (mafia families, arms smugglers, terrorist networks). An expert marksman, he’s also an efficient killer when required. Wolff operates in the shadows out of a super-secure trailer, but his movements are being tracked by the soon-to-retire head of the Treasury’s financial crimes unit, Ray King (J.K. Simmons), who blackmails a young black recruit, Marybeth Medina (Cynthia Addai-Robinson), into pursuing his man.

Through flashback snippets we learn that the autistic Christian and his little brother Brax have been trained in violent ways by their psychopathic military father. Christian has also learned his trade in military prison from a black money artist played by Jeffrey Tambor. Christian’s sole human contact seems to be an anonymous encrypted female voice on his smartphone. But when called in to investigate suspicions of missing money at a company named Living Robotics, founded by billionaire Lamar Black (John Lithgow), he develops a soft spot for junior company accountant Dana Cummings (Anna Kendrick) whom he tries to protect from the deadly whirlwind of corporate corruption and betrayal that ensues.

The movie’s messy tangle of storylines — a basket of improbables if not deplorables — leads up to a strange brotherly reunion and an even stranger reveal about that digital voice. Forget Muslims and migrants, this America must be an awful place if even accountants are to be feared.

British director Andrea Arnold’s *American Honey*, which snagged a



CNS/Bleecker Street

DENIAL — Rachel Weisz stars in *Denial*. In this film director Mick Jackson tackles a particular episode in the most odious denial of the past century — namely that the Holocaust in which six million Jews perished never happened, writes Gerald Schmitz.

jury prize at Cannes, is anything but sweet. Southern girl 18-year-old Star (Sasha Lane) is the “honey” of the title, which is also the name of a closing song sung by a ragtag band of young pierced and tattooed magazine sellers that she joins after a chance encounter. Star, who we first see dumpster diving with a couple of kids in tow, is a wild child with an untidy mop of dreadlocks. Falling for the siren song of the pack’s top seller Jake (Shia LaBeouf), even if he “looks a little Donald Trumpish,” she splits from her macho man, dumps the kids (apparently not hers), and climbs aboard the group’s white van headed for Kansas City. Riding separately with Jake at the wheel is the gang’s boss and alpha female Krystal (Riley Keough). Jake will be Star’s mentor and partner, though Krystal makes it tough-as-nails clear he belongs to her. Any animalistic attraction between Star

and Jake is bound to have consequences.

The movie at over 160 minutes turns into a long freakish road trip through Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas — a class-divided downwardly mobile landscape almost as depressing as the not-great America of Trumpland. The magazine thing is a door-to-door scheme to make money any way that works. When not selling, the motley crew smoke, drink, do drugs, and horse around (the camerawork as dizzy as their antics). They may be harmless, though Jake, a master in the art of lying and stealing, carries a gun. In giving a middle finger to middle America, these young people could be satirizing the American dream if their anti-social path wasn’t so sad. If they are the future, it’s a deeply troubled one.

Sacred garment is not a costume

Continued from page 8

traditionally by male leaders of First Nations tribes. The war bonnet holds a place of special significance and power for many First Nations. Simultaneously, a war bonnet is something that lots of white people wear to music festivals because they think they look cool. Which, let’s face it, they totally do. War bonnets are beautiful.

But that’s not really the point, is it? The point is that a war bonnet is a sacred and culturally significant thing that is neither a costume nor a fashion accessory. It’s not meant to be worn to a music festival or a ball game, and it’s not meant to be part of a Halloween costume.

At this point, someone will usually point out that lots of people dress up in costumes that others find offensive, but freedom of expression! You don’t hear Catholics complaining that people dress up as demonic priests and sexy nuns for Halloween. You don’t see Catholics whining that people wear rosaries as necklaces and holy medals on bracelets.

Well, first of all, you definitely do hear Catholics complaining about those things. I am one of the Catholics who does complain

about those things. But in the second place, let’s not pretend these things are the same. In one sense they are quite similar: people donning spiritually significant symbols in order to make a superficial fashion statement.

In another sense, they’re entirely different. Anyone who pays attention to alternative media sources will know that a huge stand-off between police and protesters has been going on in North Dakota for quite some time. Energy Transfer, a Texas-based company, is trying to build an oil pipeline through a sacred burial ground at Standing Rock. The land, by many accounts, is treaty land, and those trying to build the pipeline have no rights to it. Indigenous peoples from across North America have converged on this spot to peacefully protest. Tribes who traditionally war with one another are working together for the first time in human memory to preserve these burial grounds. A wild eagle perched in the camp and let protesters come up to it. A herd of wild buffalo showed up at the site. It’s a stand-off of epic proportions with profoundly mystical elements shadowing it. These peaceful protesters have been consistently assaulted by a militarized police force.

Now tell me. When was the last time your church was in danger of being bulldozed so that crude oil could be pumped through the property? Oh, right. It wasn’t. Most likely, no one’s questioning the ownership of the land on which your church sits. Your worship might not be universally liked and respected, but you’re pretty much allowed to practise in peace. Your high holy days are national holidays.

And you know what? There is nothing wrong with that. It’s fantastic that we are allowed to do that. But we have to acknowledge that not everyone is afforded the same rights and respect, and we need to hold ourselves accountable within that. In this case, wearing a war bonnet as a fashion accessory is a small and individual disrespect that is part of the larger historical disrespect an entire people suffer at the hands of an unfeeling society and a self-interested corporate world. Is choosing not to dress as Pocahontas for Halloween going to prevent a pipeline from being built? Probably not. But it’s a small stand against a culture that allows it; it’s cultivating a small piece of respect in our hearts. And how else do things ever change?

'To believe in love's story does not end the pain'



Questioning Faith

Mary Marrocco

Toward the end of the summer, I met my friend John for coffee. A recurring event, not nearly frequent enough, but invariably enriching to heart and mind. We meet many people in life, but a true connection is a rare and precious thing. I knew in advance that precious rarity was awaiting me at the coffee shop.

As in every conversation between us, John told me: "I pray for Bobby every day." Neither of us took these words lightly. He was one of the people I turned to after the November night when my nephew Robert took his life, three days after his 25th birthday. John never met Bobby in life. Still he held him in his heart, a heart of great depth and beauty, the kind that can get carved out by immense suffering.

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Whatever depths Bobby went to, those who loved him went also, and can never really come back from. Either those dark depths are the end of all things, or they themselves can be transformed and transcended. This is where faith is born.

The faith of the Christian church is built on this: that Christ descended from the cross into death, and was raised up, to raise up Adam and Eve, woman and man. On this truth rests all we are and believe. "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Cor 15:19). But if Christ raised is the "first fruits of those who are asleep" (v. 20), then Christ's story is also Bobby's story. His family members have continually, in the endless months, hours, minutes since that November night, echoed this back to me.

The "story" Christianity tells is, as John said once, not a cure for anything but health itself. Like health and sickness, it penetrates to our marrow, touching all aspects of us. It can't be "mere" words. It



Paul Paproski, OSB

STAYING IN RELATIONSHIP — "To pray for those who have died, to love the dead, means to be in communion with them. It means staying in relationship with them, even in things that are unresolved, at least for now," writes Mary Marrocco. "It also means continuing to receive from them: the gift of their unique being, the personal presence in Christ of their love for us, the depth of relationship."

can't be just a perspective. It's "not a sudden illumination but a path through the darkness of the world," to quote John again.

The word *through* is key. A lifelong sufferer from depression, John knew that thoughts of suicide are never far from the mind of a depressed person. He spoke of depression as a seductive narrative, the story that tells us our lives are worthless and the most we can expect is "a little pleasure

and a lot of suffering." Suicide becomes a logical conclusion — rather than the horrendous tearing in the fabric of the universe we have experienced it to be. Can there be a path *through* such darkness? For Bobby, for his family, for any of us? The response to this question becomes the creative work of our lives; not a theoretical response, but a daily one, that costs everything.

A few short weeks after that cof-

fee date, I learned with astonishment that John had died. Instantly I glimpsed a meeting, an embrace, between Bobby and John.

John Mays' death was sudden and unlooked-for, in the midst of an engaged life, having just completed the book he'd been working on, and while out walking with a friend. The last thing he said to me (just before "I'm sorry I have to go") was this: "I find all my ambitions, my projects, falling away. All I really want to do is pray, and love."

He always struck me as a person who knew how to do both. His love of prayer, especially the office (the liturgy of the hours — the daily morning, evening and night prayers of the church), led to his establishing a group that regularly prays the office and has talks and fellowship. His love of people was, in my observation, concrete and simple. I recall him listening to a mutual friend who was lamenting the endangerment of a little Ontario wildflower known as the "bashful bulrush." John encouraged our friend to speak and write about the little native plant, and let his passion be heard, almost as though he himself were a bashful bulrush John was nurturing.

To pray for those who have died, to love the dead, means to be in communion with them. It means staying in relationship with them, even in things that are unresolved, at least for now — the prematurity of John's death, the heart-rending anguish of Bobby's. It also means continuing to receive from them: the gift of their unique being, the personal presence in Christ of their love for us, the depth of relationship.

It's risky, staying in relationship with those who have died. It comes not without pain, for we live also their absence, separated from them by a bewildering and painful abyss that at times seems relentless and cruel. To quote John yet again: "believing love's story does not end the pain." As his own life witnessed (and in keeping with his work as a writer on art and architecture), pain doesn't trump love. It somehow gets woven into love and becomes part of the beauty.

Where two or three are gathered in my name

The following is reprinted from Catholic Missions In Canada, Fall 2016 (www.cmic.info).

By Rev. Damian MacPherson, SA

Few Canadian priests will ever have an opportunity compared to my recent experience.

Early this March, my schedule in the Archdiocesan Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs was interrupted by a call from Bishop Hector Vila, the newly ordained bishop of the Diocese of Whitehorse in the Yukon.

Bishop Vila, whom I have known for some time, called to

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ask if I had any local commitments for the celebration of the Easter Triduum. Since at this point I had not been asked to assist in any of the local parishes, he put the question to me: Would you consider coming to the Diocese of Whitehorse to serve some mission stations for Easter?

In saying yes, I had some sense of what was ahead of me because several years previously, the former bishop, Gary Gordon, now in Victoria, made the same request reminding me that if I did not go, the people would have no celebrations.

On Tuesday of Holy Week I flew five hours from Toronto to Vancouver and then flew another two hours north to Whitehorse.

On Holy Thursday I drove five hours on the Alaskan Highway to arrive at two mission stations which I was to serve during the Holy Week celebrations.

Cooking for myself, I lived from Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday without telephone, radio or television. Late Easter Sunday afternoon, following a return five-hour drive, I arrived back in Whitehorse.

Needless to say, both of these small communities, Watson Lake (St. Ann) and Lower Post (Holy Family), are small and remote settlements, which ordinarily are serviced by a priest once a month, weather permitting. If the congregation in Lower Post exceeded more than 40 people, it would require standing room only. It is extraordinarily satisfying to find a living, even vibrant practice, of the Catholic faith under such extreme circumstances.

What strikes me most is the demonstration of faith and the degree of appreciation expressed by the people on having the opportunity to celebrate Easter services. This is not something these parishioners ever take for granted. News spread by word of mouth that a priest would be available for Easter services. Their anticipation was real and accompanied by a measure of joy.

One can only be deeply impressed by the utter simplicity of their faith practice.

When they extend their rugged and wrinkled hands to receive the eucharist and profess their Amen, one senses a deep and abiding

devotional presence because of their awareness of what they are saying and doing and who it is that they are receiving. I made my best effort to make the Easter liturgy all that it could be, including fresh flowers, the lighting of candles, and sprinkling of the Easter water and the renewal of baptismal vows. In some cases, it will be many weeks before the next opportunity arises for them.

I even brought chocolate bars, coloured pencils and balloons for the children who will not soon forget our time together. All were filled with delight, especially the children.

We could not possibly have succeeded in our efforts without the meticulous care and co-operation offered by of the schoolteacher who was sacristan at St. Ann's Mission. Her faith and dedicated efforts were and continue to be admirable.

Following the Easter celebration at Lower Post, I stood at the door and said goodbye to my congregation of 12 participants.

I do not suppose I will ever forget one elderly couple. He literally shuffled along arm-in-arm with his wife. I watched as they made their way from the church door, down a slippery entrance way, which I earlier shovelled and salted, and across the road they want only to help one another mount their snowmobile. Off they went into the deep woods nourished by the Easter eucharist. Spiritually, it was and will remain a nourishing moment for me.

On such a mission, one receives much more than one gives.



Photo courtesy of Rev. Damian MacPherson, SA

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP — All the community gather for Easter worship at St. Ann's Mission Church in Watson Lake, Yukon.

Trappings of power obscure true King’s message



Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

“It is you who will be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.” A thousand years before Jesus, Samuel, the prophet, records the scene in the first reading when Daniel is anointed “king over Israel.” Though flawed and imperfect, we remember David as the greatest of Israel’s kings. Was he a great shepherd of his people as well?

On this final Sunday of the ecclesiastical year, we hear Paul tell us, “The Father has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.” The language of the first two readings uses the rich imagery of kings and kingdoms. This resonated with listeners of past centuries in a way that it just may not today.

Paul tells us unequivocally that Jesus “is the head of the body, the church.” A tension exists between the proper interpretation of the leadership role of the shepherd and king. The tension within this dichotomous leadership model comes most vividly to light when over the ages we see the church interpreting its role in a more earthly than spiritual context. Did the church slowly moving away from a primary emphasis on the shepherd after 380 with the Edict of Thessalonica? At that time Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the sole authorized religion of a decaying western Roman Empire. The church took on the trappings of the power that came with this powerful new role. Pontifex Maximus or Supreme Pontiff

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had been the title of the head priest of Rome’s polytheistic state religion prior to 380. It now became a title for the Christian pope.

The trappings of royalty proliferated. A papal tiara, that diadem or half a metre high triple crown, would be placed on a new pope’s head at his coronation by the beginning of the second millennium. It resembled Persian royal headgear from antiquity. Ancient symbols of authority attempted to imbue their contemporary holder with legitimacy. Similarly the Jewish headdress worn by priests dating back to the time of Moses became the mitre now worn by today’s bishops.

Those of us who are old enough can remember Pope Pius XII wearing the papal tiara and being carried in the *Sedia gestatoria* or portable throne held aloft by 12 uniformed footmen. Two attendants holding large ceremonial fans called *flabella* made out of white ostrich feathers followed it.

Other papal clothing dictates included the famous red velvet or silk slippers at times decorated by gold braid or

Feast of Christ the King November 20, 2016	2 Samuel 5:1-3 Psalm 122 Colossians 1:12-20 Luke 23:35-43
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buckles. Noble men of the Renaissance had worn these, so too did the pope whose rule had become more temporal as papal authority over a wide swath of land and peoples in what is now central Italy grew through the Middle Ages and onward.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) offered an early articulation of the “divine right of kings.” All authority spiritual and temporal flowed from on high through the papacy. Only the pope could depose a king. Later kings would usurp this papal authority and see divine power and consequently their authority flowing directly from God to them bypassing the papal intermediary.

Popes like the famous “Warrior Pope” Julius II in the early 1500s vigorously defended their royal prerogatives in asserting church control over the Papal States. Armies

rallied to the papal banners over and over again. This continued late into the 19th century when papal armies attempted to block the unification of Italy under Victor Emmanuel. Some 500 Canadian volunteers joined the fight in the late 1860s. The famous Zouaves attempted to halt the march toward modernity by backing the ultramontane struggle against such “liberal” ideals as freedom of speech and conscience, democratic governance and the separation of church authority over the state. The fall of Rome in September of 1870 ended this phase of church history. The only remnant of those papal armies remaining is the Swiss Guard.

The trappings of the royalty so long attached to the papacy have slowly fallen away over the last half-century. The solemn coronation of Pope Paul VI in 1963 saw the papal tiara used for the last time. The papal tiara, though, continues to be seen as a symbol of the papacy.

Pope John Paul I was the last pope to be carried in the *Sedia gestatoria* back in 1978.

The red slippers are gone too. Pope Francis has chosen to wear simple black shoes, forgoing that tradition for his papacy.

The British historian and 19th-century Catholic philosopher Lord Acton famously remarked, “Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely.” This quote is found in a letter he wrote to Anglican Bishop Mandell Creighton in 1887. His observation emphasizes that a person’s sense of morality lessens as his or her power increases. Does that hold true for institutions as well?

Pope Francis challenged priests around the world to turn this around during the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday, March 28, 2013. “Shepherd must have the smell of the sheep. This is precisely the reason why some priests grow dissatisfied, lose heart and become in a sense collectors of antiquities or novelties — instead of being shepherds living with ‘the smell of the sheep.’ This is what I am asking you — be shepherds with the smell of sheep.”

The image of a compassionate Lord that Luke models in today’s Gospel shows even in Jesus’ final agony what it is to be the shepherd and king. Jesus, remember me too.

We hunger for intimacy, yet are often resistant to receiving it

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



There’s nothing simple about being a human being. We’re a mystery to ourselves and often our own worst enemies. Our inner complexity befuddles us and, not infrequently, stymies us. Nowhere is this truer than in our struggle with love and intimacy.

More than anything else, we hunger for intimacy, to be touched where we are most ten-

der, where we are most ourselves, where all that’s most precious in us lies, vulnerable and yearning. Yet, in the actual face of intimacy, sensitive people often become disquieted and resistant.

We see two powerful instances of this in the Gospels. The first is in a story, recorded in all four Gospels, where a woman enters a room where Jesus is dining and, in

a series of lavish gestures, breaks an expensive bottle of perfume, pours the perfume onto his feet, washes his feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, and then begins to kiss his feet. What’s the response of those in the room, save for Jesus? Discomfort and resistance. This shouldn’t be happening! Everyone shifts uncomfortably in their chairs in the face of this raw expression of love and Jesus, himself, has to challenge them to look at the source of their discomfort.

Among other things, he points out that, ironically, what they are uncomfortable with is what lies at the very centre of life and at the very centre of their deepest desires, namely, the pure giving and receiving of love and affection. It’s this, Jesus affirms, for which we are alive and it’s this experience which prepares us for death. It’s what we are alive for. It’s also what we most yearn for. So why our discomfort and resistance when we actually face it in life?

The second instance occurs in John’s Gospel where, at the Last Supper, Jesus tries to wash his disciples’ feet. As John records it, Jesus got up from the table, stripped off his outer robe, took a basin and towel, and began to wash his disciples’ feet. But he meets discomfort and resistance, clearly voiced by Peter who simply tells Jesus: “Never! You will never wash my feet!”

Why? Why the resistance? Why resistance in the face of the fact that, no doubt, more than anything else, what Peter most deeply desired was exactly that Jesus should wash his feet, that he would enjoy this kind of intimacy with Jesus?

Answering the question of our struggle with intimacy in this context provides one clue for why we sometimes become uncomfortable and resistant when we are in the actual face of what we desire so deeply. Our feet are too intimate; they’re a part of our bodies where we worry about dirt and smell, not a part of ourselves that we feel comfortable having others touch. There’s an innate vulnerability, a discomfort, an inchoate shame, attached to having someone else touch and wash so intimate a part of us. Intimacy demands an ease that our vulnerability sometimes renders impossible. And so this text speaks to one kind of resistance to intimacy, to a particular unease within certain circumstances.

But Peter’s resistance here speaks too of something else, something more salient: If we are healthy and sensitive, we all will naturally experience a certain discomfort and resistance in the face of raw gift, before raw intimacy, before raw gratuity. And, while this is something to be overcome, it’s not a fault, a moral or psychological flaw on our part. On the contrary, in its normal expression, it’s a sign of moral and psychological sensitivity. Why do I say this?

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

Why is something that seems to block us from moving toward the very essence of life not a sign that there’s something fundamentally wrong inside of us? I suggest that it’s not a flaw but rather a healthy mechanism inside us because narcissistic, boorish and insensitive persons are often immune to this discomfort and resistance. Their narcissism shields them from shame and their callousness allows them an easy and brute ease with intimacy, like someone who is sexually jaded enough to be comfortable with pornography or like someone who takes intimacy as something to be had by right, casually or even aggressively. In this case, there’s no shame or discomfort because there’s no real intimacy.

Sensitive people, on the other hand, struggle with the rawness of intimacy because genuine intimacy, like heaven, is not something that can be glibly or easily achieved. It’s a lifelong struggle, a give and take with many setbacks, a revealing and a hiding, a giving over and a resistance, an ecstasy and a feeling of unworthiness, an acceptance that struggles with real surrender, an altruism that still contains selfishness, a warmth that sometimes turns cold, a commitment that still has some conditions, and a hope that struggles to sustain itself.

Intimacy isn’t like heaven. It is salvation. It is the kingdom. Thus, like the kingdom, both the road and the gate toward it are narrow, not easily found. So be gentle, patient, and forgiving toward others and self in that struggle.

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Restorative justice creates opportunity for healing

By Dianne Woloschuk

After a long weekend away at a November family wedding some years ago, my family and I came home to find our back door slightly ajar and our aluminum-slider kitchen windows lying unbroken on the lawn. A cursory look through the house revealed that the closets and some kitchen cupboards had been searched and the master bedroom thoroughly turned over, closets and dresser drawers emptied on the floor. Still, it seemed that nothing was missing, except a few Nintendo games and four dollars from our two boys' smashed piggybank.

We called the police. The responding officer told us that

Woloschuk is a member of the Board of the Micah Mission and lives in Saskatoon.

those responsible for the break-in were probably young, looking for cash, alcohol and drugs. He spoke patiently and seriously with our sons about their losses. Afterward, the officer explained to us that he would follow up with us if anything came to light.

For the next while our sons seemed unsettled and anxious, especially when they were going to bed. It bothered me that people had gone through my house like it was a store, looking to pick and choose what they wanted. A few years later, after another break-in, we installed a home security system.

This is a very small story about a day or two in the life of my family, about experiences that have been left largely unresolved, though they have not played a significant part in our lives. Every once in a while I still wonder about the people who came unbidden into our home. I would wish to bring

resolution and healing into that story and to mend damaged trust.

Justice and good order have long been considered hallmarks of a well-functioning society, in Canada and elsewhere. As citizens we place trust in the courts to uphold the law, to protect both society at large and individual citizens, and to ensure fair processes for the accused in criminal proceedings. We also know the limitations of that system — wrongful convictions and unresolved cases, for example. Nevertheless, being “tough on crime” and pursuing a “law and order” agenda have been major planks in various political parties’ election campaigns, here and elsewhere. TV networks are replete with crime dramas focused on the adversarial relationship between victim and offender, the pivotal role of prosecution and defence lawyers, and the workings of the criminal justice system, as achieving some degree of justice

resulting in a conviction and sentencing.

This concept of justice rests on the understanding that crime is an act against the law. The focus is on establishing blame or guilt, an offender’s past behaviour often playing a significant role in that process. Achieving justice involves gaining retribution against the offender and exacting a penalty for wrongful acts, so that offenders are held accountable through punishment.

Retributive justice imposes pain to punish; it is viewed as effective in deterring crime and changing offender behaviour. Crime is understood as an individual act with individual responsibility, and the criminal justice system as the chief agent in controlling crime. Victims are peripheral to the process. The community is also left on the sideline, represented by the state. Though retribution against the offender may be achieved, the process does little to heal the hurt done to the victim, re-humanize the damaged relationship between the victim and the offender, or rebuild trust within the community.

Re-humanizing relationships and healing hurt are no small tasks, yet that is what restorative justice seeks to do. Its underlying principle is that crime is an act against another person and the community, not simply a violation of the law, and that crime has both an individual and a social dimension of responsibility. Thus, restorative justice acknowledges that crime harms, not just individuals, but the community, which then has an important responsibility

ity in controlling crime.

Victims are central to resolving crime, and accountability for offenders involves assuming responsibility for and taking action to repair harm they have caused. Punishment alone is not effective in changing behaviour, and it disrupts community harmony and good relationships. So the focus is on problem-solving and on what should be done in the future to make reparation. Restitution becomes the means by which both parties are restored through reconciliation.

The community has an important role as facilitator in the restorative process. Where in retributive justice processes victims and offenders are dependent upon lawyers to act on their behalf, restorative processes invite their direct involvement, focusing on the harm done by the offender’s behaviour and how it can be remediated, for both their sakes, and for the well-being of the community as a whole.

An interest in restorative justice is what prompted me, along with my husband, to begin volunteering at the Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre a little over a year ago. It is what motivated me to become a member of the board of the Micah Mission, an ecumenical Christian organization whose mission is to bring restorative justice processes and healing to victims, offenders and the community. Through this work I have become convinced that simply returning offenders to society when they have completed their sentences and allowing the wounds in victims’ lives to remain open does a great disservice to them and to their communities.



Prince Albert Catholic School Division
OPENING CELEBRATION — Ecole St. Anne School students at Sacred Heart Cathedral for their opening mass and celebration of the school division’s 130th anniversary.

Prince Albert celebrates 130 years of Catholic education



Catholic Connections

Deacon Harrold Salahub

It was a blessed start to our school year. On Aug. 26, the Prince Albert Catholic School Division staff and trustees gathered at Sacred Heart Cathedral for a eucharistic celebration to begin our 130th year of providing quality Catholic education to our students. The mass began with exceptional music provided by members of our school staffs.

The music selections and readings followed our spiritual theme for the year: “Faith, Proclaim it!” In delivering his homily, Bishop Albert Thévenot made many references to the Gospel reading of Luke 24:13-34 (the road to Emmaus). Bishop Albert explained that, like Jesus walking with the disciples, school staff members also walk with students as they provide educational experiences. In addition to providing instruction, staff members also witness their faith by their words and

Salahub is the Religious Coordinator for Prince Albert Catholic Schools.

actions. Bishop Albert challenged us to proclaim our faith in new and exciting ways this year, as we journey together with our students.

After mass the staff gathered at St. Mary High School where we were honoured with the presence of the Honourable Don Morgan, Deputy-Premier and Minister of Education. He brought greetings from the province and congratulated the Prince Albert Catholic School Division on 130 years of quality Catholic Education. It was an exciting first day.

On the Monday of the next week, the staff gathered again for our Faith Development speaker. This year we were happy to have Mike Patin, an international Catholic speaker, provide some humour and a great message. He shared with us his message that we are to be intentional witnesses of our faith, for this is the most powerful way to show Jesus to others. Words alone are not enough. Rather, we must demonstrate our beliefs in our decisions and actions. This is the way we

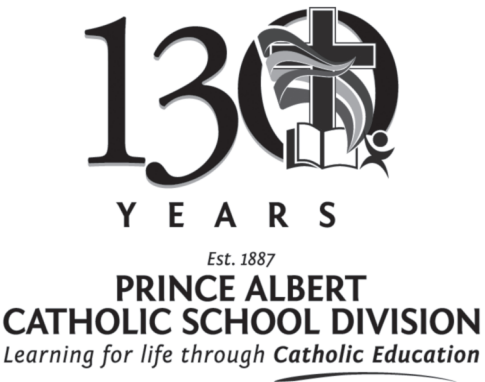
proclaim our faith.

Later that day the staffs also gathered in their schools for staff meetings. The staff was pleased when our learning improvement plans were reviewed. The learning improvement plans are aligned goals that focus on faith, reading/writing and math, student engagement, and First Nation/Métis/Inuit achievement.

Upon examining the data collected, we were pleased with the results, which celebrates the dedicated work of all staff and reinforces our desire for a quality education for all our students. Briefly, in our faith goal, we were pleased that over 2,300 social justice actions were reported by our schools over the year. In reading, writing, and math, we tracked student achievement rates and our data demonstrated a positive trend. In terms of graduation rates, especially for First Nation/Métis students, we surpassed the provincial average. In our engagement sector, data tracked at all our schools indicated that there were tremendous opportunities for our students, and the vast majority of students are engaged. Finally, the First Nation/Métis goal allows the school division to continue to focus upon First Nation achieve-

ment, addressing themes presented in the Truth and Reconciliation report.

With all these good news items, it was a great sign that this would be an exciting and blessed school year. Our dedicated Board of Education trustees, who provide tremendous Catholic leadership, are also planning a banquet in May 2017 to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the Queen’s proclamation of the Prince Albert Catholic School Division. In addition, the board hosted the local clergy for an appreciation meal in



the middle of October. The schools are also planning additional special masses and celebrations to recognize the 130th anniversary.

Great things are happening in the Prince Albert Catholic School division and we are blessed to be the oldest Catholic school division in the province.

Short trip to Sweden a big step on a longer journey

By Christopher Lamb
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ROME (RNS) — Even by this pope’s standards it was a bold move.

Francis, the spiritual leader of more than a billion Roman Catholics across the globe, last week travelled to Sweden, one of the most secularized countries in Europe, to take part in events marking 500 years since Martin Luther kickstarted the Protestant Reformation.

Luther was excommunicated by Pope Leo X but Luther’s ideas became a lightning rod for change in Europe and around the world, sparking brutal wars and leaving a long, lasting rift in western Christianity.

But since Francis’ election in 2013 he has made it his business to heal old wounds rather than dwell on the past — be it helping the U.S. and Cuba re-establish diplomatic relations, opening up new channels with China or making overtures to Orthodox Christians, whose split with Rome is even older than the schism with Protestants.

His trip to Sweden was another piece in this radical reconciliation strategy, and it was rooted in a fervently held belief that Christians must overcome the “scandal” of their own divisions if they are to have any chance of presenting a convincing witness to others.

The Catholic Church has been formally engaged in discussions to bring about unity within Christianity since the reforms of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s; the difference today is that it has a pope willing to speak to Protestant churches on equal terms.

In the past Rome acted a bit like the head teacher of ecumenical dialogue, suggesting other churches weren’t really churches and hoping to bring everyone over to its point of view.

Under Francis, however, Christian leaders are treated more like colleagues talking to each other on a level playing field.

During a joint Lutheran-

Lamb is the Vatican correspondent for The Tablet of London, a Catholic weekly journal. He travelled to Sweden to cover the papal visit.



CNS/Paul Haring

WAITING FOR THE POPE — Archbishop Antje Jackelen, primate of the Lutheran Church in Sweden, and Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, are seen as Pope Francis arrives Oct. 31 in Malmo, Sweden.

Catholic ceremony in Lutheran Cathedral in Lund, the pontiff demonstrated this by going further than any of his predecessors in praising Luther, citing the former Augustinian friar’s once disputed idea that Christians achieve salvation through faith alone.

“The spiritual experience of Martin Luther challenges us to remember that apart from God we can do nothing,” Francis said on Oct. 31, the first day of his overnight visit, which began a year to the day before the official 500th anniversary of Luther nailing his 95 Theses denouncing Rome to the door of a German cathedral.

Francis also gave thanks to the Reformation for making Scripture a more central part of the Catholic Church’s life.

Today, after a long and patient theological dialogue, Catholics and Lutherans no longer officially disagree on the core issues that originally split them. Indeed, there were hopes that the pope’s visit to Sweden might herald a breakthrough in Catholics and Lutherans being able to receive communion in each other’s churches.

While some progress was made, and a path ahead seems clearer than ever on that crucial question, there is still a long way to go.

In the meantime, however, the two churches have found new

divisions, mainly over homosexuality and the ordination of women.

While Lutheran churches worldwide have a diversity of approaches, the church in Sweden is one of the most progressive: it has openly gay pastors, it recognizes same-sex marriage and its leader is a woman, Archbishop Antje Jackelen.

And to show how intractable the female ordination question is, on the flight back to Rome the pope ruled out women ever being ordained as priests in the Catholic Church.

“St. Pope John Paul II had the last clear word on this and it stands, this stands,” he said when asked about the issue during his in-flight news conference.

“But forever, forever? Never, never?” the Swedish reporter asked in a followup question.

Francis, referring to a 1994

document published by the late pope stating that female ordination was out of the question, replied: “If we read carefully the declaration by St. John Paul II, it is going in that direction.”

Aware of the difficulty these disagreements present, the pope used his trip to Sweden to emphasize instead the work Catholics and Lutherans can do together in helping refugees and saving the planet.

In front of a 10,000-strong crowd in an arena in Malmo, Francis heard from Rose Lokonyen, a refugee from South Sudan living in Kenya, who spoke about helping displaced people; from Pranita Biswasi, a Lutheran woman from Orissa, India, on the effects of climate change; and from the bishop of Aleppo, Antoine Audo, on the plight of Syrians.

But this focus on ecumenism as shared service left open the question over whether Catholics and Lutherans are pursuing what’s been called an “NGO-style ecumenism,” where they in effect act like non-governmental organizations working to try to save the planet while putting the doctrinal problems to one side.

Rev. Martin Junge, secretary general of the Lutheran World Federation, responded to these concerns by stressing that ecumenism has different strands, and they feed off one another.

Archbishop Jackelen added that it was refreshing to see the churches move away from condemning sexual transgressions and focus on sins against economic justice and the environment. These, she explained, had far “greater consequences.”

A pro-migrant and pro-environment stance can also be a successful strategy in a highly secular

country such as Sweden, where polls show people have more faith in their country’s tax office than in the Church of Sweden.

Many Swedes praise the pope’s openness to refugees and his efforts to reform the Vatican. Francis has also received good press for his friendship with Carlos Luna, an Argentinian living in Sweden whom the pope — when he was a Jesuit in his native Argentina back in the 1970s — disguised as a priest so he could escape the country’s military dictatorship.

Today, Luna helps refugees and other displaced people, and Francis donated one of his white skullcaps to be sold at an auction to raise money supporting Luna’s work.

These are the sort of stories and gestures that endeared Francis to Swedes: While a majority say they are non-believers, there is anecdotal evidence of an increasing interest in faith, if not organized religion. It is perhaps a nascent case of believing rather than belonging.

Furthermore, while most of the nine million strong population are nominally members of the Lutheran Church of Sweden — founded after the Reformation by King Gustav Vasa and still closely tied to the state — immigration is changing the religious landscape.

Numbers of Catholics are growing slowly and in some places are making use of underused Lutheran churches. Meanwhile, five per cent of the population is Muslim, making Islam the second-largest religion in the country.

For Pope Francis, unity can’t be put on hold while debates about theology go on. Instead, he wants Christians to find an ecumenism that bypasses divisions and recognizes a simple truth he articulated in Sweden: “We realize that much more unites us than separates us.”

Air we breathe connects us across time



Figure of Speech

Dr. Gerry Turcotte

“In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being” (Job 12:10).

Famed astronomer the late Harlow Shapley once ruminated on a remarkable notion. He explained that some components of our air, and especially the argon atoms that comprise one per cent of our atmosphere, recirculate indefinitely. Unlike ozone gases, these components of the air that we breathe never really disappear. They pass through the body virtually untouched and then re-enter the atmosphere. As Shapley put it, “Your next breath will contain more than 400,000 of the argon atoms that Gandhi breathed in his long life. Argon atoms are here from the conversa-

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


tions at the Last Supper, from the arguments of diplomats at Yalta, and from the recitations of the classic poets.”

We think of ourselves as removed from the distant past, and perhaps only tangentially connected to Jesus. So this theory is especially wonderful because it reminds us that we carry within us the breath of those who sat at the Last Supper. That we are not only symbolically a part of that ancient event, but also that we are actually participants at the table of our Lord. It changes how we might think of holy communion, reminding us of a shared and sacred feast, not just of bread and wine . . . but breath!

I remember once discussing historical events with one of my classes, and a somewhat jaded student saying, “What does it matter? It’s all ancient history and it has nothing to do with us!” I

forget what class it was, but I will never forget the question. It’s relevant and legitimate, even if it is misinformed. The reality is that we are all connected, always and everywhere. We always implore leaders to learn from, and not repeat the mistakes of, the past. The reality, however, is that we seem unable to learn. We continue to repeat the same injuries, trigger new wars, and turn our backs on our fellow human beings. Is it possible that we do this because we fail to understand how deeply we are all connected, and how an injury to one is an injury to all?

Shapley’s theory puts all this into remarkable perspective. We are breathing air that passed through the lungs of dinosaurs and prehistoric beings; Anthony and Cleopatra; Shakespeare; and yes, we are breathing the words of Jesus. We exhale them into the lives and spirit of our children. We share a breath that all of our brothers and sisters, the world over, have had a part in shaping. It’s a sobering thought that reminds us we are not alone, and that we bear the responsibility to remain connected to our neighbours near and far. Frankly, the thought of it takes my breath away.





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A divided world needs hope

I write this editorial the day before the American election. This election has dominated news in the U.S. and around the world. It will leave a legacy of division, unprecedented personal attacks and one of the worst examples of “democracy” at work.

Everyone is relieved the electioneering is over.

I have no foresight into what will happen after the election, but I want to draw attention to an unrelated, but coincidental, church event sponsored by the Vatican.

On Nov. 6 Pope Francis celebrated a jubilee mass for prisoners at the Vatican. Prisoners are often a forgotten group in our society. We don’t accord them much dignity.

Pope Francis wants to offer them hope, and a second chance. Celebrating mass with Pope Francis were 1,000 current and former prisoners from 12 countries. Priests, religious men and women and laypeople who work in prison ministry also took part. The choir was made up of prisoners and volunteers from the Dozza prison in Bologna. Inmates from Italian prisons in Brescia, Busto Arsizio and Palermo were altar servers.

“Hope” was the message of the pope’s homily. “Hope is a gift of God. We must ask for it,” he told the inmates and former inmates. “It is placed deep within each human heart in order to shed light on this life, so often troubled and clouded by so many situations that bring sadness and pain.”

The gift of hope, he added, is especially present “whenever someone makes a mistake” but feels the awakening of repentance and forgiveness through God’s mercy.

Speaking spontaneously on this theme, the pope said, “I want to tell you, every time I visit a prison, I ask myself: ‘Why them and not me?’ We can all make mistakes; all of us. And in one way or another, we have made mistakes.”

Switching gears again, he spoke about those who are not in prison.

Those behind bars are not the only ones who are imprisoned, the pope warned. People can also fall into “a certain hypocrisy” that judges current and formerly incarcerated “as wrongdoers for whom prison is the sole answer,” he said.

Hypocrisy can lead Christians to overlook the fact that people can change their lives, he said, but it also

makes it impossible for them to see that they, too, are prisoners, locked up within walls of prejudice, ideology and the idols of “a false sense of well-being” and money.

Prisoners and formerly incarcerated people should resist being held back by their past mistakes and instead look toward the future with hope, knowing that God’s mercy and forgiveness is greater, he said.

While the past cannot be rewritten, he said, learning from one’s mistakes “can open a new chapter of your lives.”

Meanwhile, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati’s St. Vincent de Paul Society’s sponsors a Re-entry Program that gives hope to prisoners returning to society. While society often looks on prisoners as “mistakes,” said the director of the archdiocese’s Social Action Office, he prefers the term “returning citizens.” It better defines those who were formerly incarcerated rather than the judgmental “ex-con.”

Words and epitaphs we use are important. They form, or change, our perceptions and attitudes. Americans can learn a valuable lesson from the pope. — PWN

Ending poverty can be possible with the help of private investments

Investing in People

Eugene Ellmen



In the fall of 2015, the nations of the Earth came together to do something remarkable in human history. The 193 member states of the United Nations agreed last September to commit to ending poverty and to build a sustainable future by 2030.

Called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the pact calls for 17 ambitious objectives including an end to poverty and hunger, action on climate change and stopping all forms of discrimination against women and girls.



The SDGs call for the creation of new forms of infrastructure including clean energy, clean water and sanitation, decent jobs, expanded health and education and economic growth that is sustainable for the climate, land, air and water.

Of all the goals, the elimination of poverty is the most striking. The commitment to end poverty in all its forms is a stunning project, full of ambition and complexity. It also comes with a big price tag.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development has estimated that the cost of implementing the goals worldwide is \$5 to \$7 trillion per year until 2030, or about \$90 trillion in total. For the developing world alone the gap between what is being spent now and what is required is about \$2.5 trillion a year.

Ellmen is the Canadian director of Oikocredit. For information on how to invest in Oikocredit, visit its website at www.oikocredit.ca

Capital needed

So this is clearly beyond the reach of governments alone, even if the populations in the Global North and West could pressure their governments to massively increase development assistance. It’s also beyond the capacity of charitable institutions.

What’s required is an effort by the world’s investors — private, philanthropic and public — to commit a portion of their capital to this historic project.

The key to achieving the goals is not charity or aid, although charity and aid could be helpful in meeting some of the goals like health and education. Rather, the key is unlocking capital. We have to figure out how capital can be committed to the goals and investors can be repaid for the risk that they will take. The idea is that sustainable development projects will produce income that can be used to repay investors and produce sustainable infrastructure years into the future.

Renewable energy

Clean energy is an example of what could be done. The organization I work for, Oikocredit, is a global development fund and social investor that makes loans and investments in microfinance, sustainable agriculture and renewable energy. Renewable energy is a relatively new focus for us, but it is presenting some exciting possibilities.

One of Oikocredit’s latest investments involves PEG Solar, a company that provides off-grid solar units for poor and rural people in West Africa. Oikocredit recently teamed up with two other social investors to provide \$1.5 million in capital to the company to expand its operations in Ghana, where their customers typically earn between \$1 and \$6



Oiko Photo

LOW-COST ELECTRICITY — Cheap off-grid solar units can bring light and electricity to poor families in the developing world. Social investors helped fund the project in Ghana.

a day. Without access to electricity, children of these poor families are unable to study at night, and recharging cellphones and computers is out of the question. This means that these poor families are shut out of the opportunities in the emerging digital economy.

Yet even with such small incomes, it is still possible for poor people to pay small amounts for off-grid solar units. Through its recent investment, Oikocredit and the other investors are taking a risk that these poor families will

want to expand their access to low-cost electricity and will be able to pay small amounts for it into the future. PEG Solar expects this to be the case and plans to provide electricity to half a million homes in West Africa by 2020.

End poverty

Such concepts are providing exciting new ideas about how to end poverty. Off-grid solar is a low-cost, low-impact solution to this problem. Microfinance is another response to poverty by providing

small loans and financial services to the poor. And sustainable agriculture is yet another route out of poverty by expanding co-ops and services to smallholder farmers.

Such solutions can pave the way to eliminating poverty by 2030, meeting the commitment set out in the SDGs. But these solutions require private capital, capital that can be provided — in large part — by investors who believe in the dream of the sustainable goals and want to make them a reality.

Alberta school shut down mid-semester

By John Carpay, Calgary Troy Media

If a public school appeared to have mismanaged some money but was providing a good education for its students, would Alberta Education Minister David Eggen shut the school down? Without warning? In the middle of the semester?

Not likely.

Even if the school had only 300 students, or fewer, Eggen

would not inconvenience those parents, students and teachers.

Yet this is exactly what Eggen has done to Trinity Christian School, which has more than 3,500 students. Without warning, in the middle of the semester, Eggen informed Trinity on Oct. 25 that its accreditation and funding were withdrawn, effective immediately. The parents of these 3,500 Trinity kids are suddenly without a school for their children.

Trinity is not a regular public school. Rather, it supervises homeschooling for more than 3,500 students across Alberta, through the Wisdom Home Schooling Society. This non-profit society has been providing resources to parents for

more than 20 years, with the full knowledge and approval of Alberta Education. There is no secrecy here.

The society serves parents who educate their children at home, at a fraction of what it costs taxpayers for public schools. Public schools in Alberta cost taxpayers about \$10,000 per student per year, in contrast to a homeschooling grant of less than \$1,700 per student per year.

The minister claims to shut down Trinity “out of respect for taxpayers.” This is rather laughable: if these 3,500 students go to public schools, it will cost tax

— HOME, page 15

‘Returning citizen,’ not ‘ex-con’

Continued from page 1

Tony Stieritz, director of the archdiocese’s Catholic Social Action Office, explained that the term “returning citizens” better defines those who were formerly incarcerated rather than the judgmental “ex-con.”

In celebrating the jubilee for prisoners, Pope Francis is “trying to bring us back to the fundamental understanding of the Catholic faith,” he said. Meeting with prisoners and returning citizens “to me is the ultimate message to say that this is how serious we are about this concept of mercy.”

Christine Shimrock, director of the archdiocese’s prison ministries, told CNS her office spent the entire year in prisons focusing on the theme of mercy and was grateful that returning citizens and prison ministers could conclude the year in Rome with the pope.

“This to me was an amazing capstone to what was already just a blessed year watching men and women come to terms with what mercy means, why do I deserve it and why should I give it away,” Shimrock said.

After celebrating mass with

detainees and people who had been in prison, Pope Francis called on governments to mark the end of the Year of Mercy by extending clemency to deserving inmates.

The pope also called for renewed efforts to ensure justice systems not only punish crimes but also work to give prisoners hope for the future.

Civil authorities must work to improve living conditions for those serving time “so that the human dignity of prisoners may be fully respected,” the pope said Nov. 6 during his Sunday Angelus address in St. Peter’s Square.

The pope’s appeal for “an act of clemency toward those imprisoned who are considered eligible to benefit from this measure” came after his celebration of a jubilee mass for prisoners. Some 1,000 current and former prisoners from 12 countries, as well as priests, religious men and women and laypeople who work in prison ministry, attended the mass.

Detainees from several prisons in Italy and Spain were given special permission to attend the mass for the Year of Mercy. Inmates from Italian prisons in Brescia,

Busto Arsizio and Palermo served as altar servers, while a choir composed of prisoners and volunteers from the Dozza prison in Bologna provided the music for the celebration.

In his homily, the pope reflected on the Sunday readings, which he said acknowledged “God as the source” of hope.

“Hope is a gift of God. We must ask for it,” he told the inmates and former inmates. “It is placed deep within each human heart in order to shed light on this life, so often troubled and clouded by so many situations that bring sadness and pain.”

The gift of hope, he added, is especially present “whenever someone makes a mistake” but feels the awakening of repentance and forgiveness through God’s mercy.

The jubilee celebration is a time for prisoners and those who have served time to remember that while a price is paid for breaking the law, “hope must not falter,” he said.

“Paying for the wrong we have done is one thing,” the pope said, “but another thing entirely is the ‘breath’ of hope, which cannot be stifled by anyone or anything.”



Design Pics

The Flood

It was as if I was methodically going about my business — time was flowing over me and around me as I prepared to leave my home at the coming of the flood.

When I arrived at the front door with my things, time was already there, waiting for me.

We left together.

By Regina Magdalena Brenner Thomas

Home-schooling considered a good option

Continued from page 14

payers an extra \$29 million per year.

Money aside, home-schooling is a good option for many parents and children for many reasons. Alberta and other provinces have generally respected the freedom of parents to choose home schooling as the kind of education they think is best for their children. This accords with both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Canada’s obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Alberta Education accuses Trinity of not meeting accountability standards, including financial accountability. In the absence of problems with kids learning what they are supposed to learn, why address financial accountability issues by shutting down the school entirely? Why not put

Trinity and the society on probation? Why not appoint an auditor as interim manager for the remainder of the school year, so 3,500 children can continue learning without interruption?

Since the government’s announcement, parents are discovering that other boards are not able to take on new students. Budgets were set, teachers were hired, and decisions were made in August and September. Yet Alberta Education now states that it “feels” that other school authorities “should” be able to absorb all 3,500 home-educated students.

Last summer, Alberta Education was fully aware that the society provided the home-schooling services to parents, rather than Trinity doing so itself. If this was truly a problem (as is now claimed), the government could have shut down Trinity and the society in July. Instead, the gov-

ernment told Trinity to continue with business as usual.

Shutting down a school in late October, based on issues the government was aware of in July, is a shocking abuse of power.

Eggen loves to trumpet his commitment to a “welcoming, caring, respectful and safe” learning environment. But closing Trinity’s doors is not welcoming. Abruptly terminating students’ education is not caring. Imposing an extreme measure when reasonable alternatives are available is not respectful. And sending 3,500 students to look for placements that don’t exist isn’t safe.

Unless this decision to shut down Trinity is actually a stealth attack on home-schooling, it makes no sense for Eggen to proceed further with this aggressive and unnecessary decision. He has the power to reverse it and should do so.

Jesus the author of faith

Continued from page 7

Lamb in Revelation 19:9, when full communion of the saints will be realized, Strauss added. “The heart of that experience will be fixing our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith, but a related dynamic will be the sense of fellowship and communion with fellow Christ believers and followers, regardless of tradition, be it Catholic, Evangelical or otherwise.”

Ramsay spoke about canonized saints as examples of love and holiness. “These are men and women the church has identified as someone who is in heaven. There is a long process to go through, they examine their life, writings and ministry, and we also go through prayer as well, and we need to have some miracles that can be attributed to the prayers of these saints.”

Ramsay told stories of saints who have inspired him in his own life, including St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish priest sent to Auschwitz by the Nazis, who took the place of a man condemned to death by starvation; and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, whose “little way” expresses deep love for Jesus in every action, no matter how small or ordinary.

He explored the biblical roots of the Catholic understanding of the communion of saints, including “love is stronger than death” from the Song of Songs, and Paul’s teaching about the Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12. “All

those in Christ, living and dead, make up this one body, united in a love that is stronger than death. . . . It is all centred on Jesus, who draws us together, who makes us one, who keeps us one,” said Ramsay.

He also clarified the use of the word prayer, which for Evangelical Christians is reserved for God alone. He pointed to an older English use of the words “I pray you will” as a request to another human being, not only an address to God. This would be the Catholic understanding of praying to saints, asking them “to pray for us, and to pray with us,” he said.

“If we are in fact one body, if this communion is real and there is love that is stronger than death, then why not pray with St. Anthony? Why not ask him to pray for us, the same as I would a person on earth? It is that conviction too that death is not the end of life, and we would say it is not the end of love for people on earth. If anything, we would say heaven ought to be a place of greater love than it is here, and not less.”

During the event, Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue co-chair Nicholas Jesson, ecumenical officer for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, presented discussion questions for Catholic and Evangelical participants to tackle at their tables, including a reflection on Hebrews 12:1, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses. . . .” as well as discussion about the Hail Mary.

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All people long for mercy, pope tells religious leaders

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Authentic religions help people understand that they are, in fact, loved and can be forgiven and are called to love and forgive others, Pope Francis said.

“We thirst for mercy, and no technology can quench that thirst,” the pope told Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh and other religious leaders.

“We seek a love that endures beyond momentary pleasures, a safe harbour where we can end our restless wanderings, an infinite embrace that forgives and reconciles,” the pope told the leaders Nov. 3 during an audience at the Vatican.

The leaders were in Rome for a conference on religions and mercy organized by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the International Dialogue Center, which was founded in 2012 by Saudi Arabia, Austria and Spain with the support of the Holy See.

“Sadly,” the pope said, “not a day passes that we do not hear of acts of violence, conflict, kidnapping, terrorist attacks, killings and

destruction. It is horrible that at times, to justify such barbarism, the name of a religion or the name of God himself is invoked.”

May there be clear condemnations of these iniquitous attitudes that profane the name of God and sully the religious quest of mankind,” he said.

Religions are called to bear “the merciful love of God to a wounded and needy humanity,” he said, and to be “doors of hope helping to penetrate the walls erected by pride and fear.”

Mercy, Pope Francis told the group, is the foundation of every authentic religion. It is the truest revelation of who God is, but also “the key to understanding the mystery of man, of that humanity which, today too, is in great need of forgiveness and peace.”

While many people seem to prefer living as if God does not exist, the pope said he believes that underneath human bravado, there is a “widespread fear that it is impossible to be forgiven, rehabilitated and redeemed from our weaknesses.”

The Catholic Church’s Year of Mercy, which will close Nov. 20, was meant to help people under-



CNS/L'Osservatore Romano

POPE FRANCIS GREETES RELIGIOUS LEADERS — Pope Francis greets religious leaders during a Nov. 3 audience at the Vatican. He told the leaders that religions are called to bear “the merciful love of God to a wounded and needy humanity,” and to be “doors of hope helping to penetrate the walls erected by pride and fear.”

stand that God’s mercy and forgiveness are accessible to all and that, experiencing God’s mercy, they are called in turn to forgive

and show mercy to others, he said.

Professing faith in God’s mercy, he said, means very little unless one backs up that profession with actions of love, service and sharing.

Engaging in interreligious dialogue and encouraging one’s

faithful to meet and get to know their neighbours of other religions are part of preaching mercy, he said. Dialogue helps eliminate “closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drives out every form of violence and discrimination.”

Papal encyclical on gender theory needed

By Simon Caldwell

OXFORD, England (CNS) — The spread of gender theory is



CNS/Paul Haring

TOBIN REPLACES MYERS — Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin of Indianapolis was appointed Archbishop of Newark, N.J., on Nov. 7. He replaces Archbishop John J. Myers who is 75, the age of retirement. The 64-year-old cardinal-designate, who is a member of the Redemptorist order, has been the archbishop of Indianapolis since 2012 and was named a new cardinal by Pope Francis Oct. 9. As archbishop-secretary of the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, he was credited with helping change the tone of a Vatican-ordered apostolic visitation of U.S. women’s religious communities from an investigation into a dialogue.

misleading so many Catholics that a high-level document may be required to correct the errors of the ideology, a Dutch cardinal said.

Cardinal Willem Eijk of Utrecht, Netherlands, said a papal encyclical or other magisterial document “might appear to be necessary” to counter the spread of the new theory that gender can be determined by personal choice rather than by biology.

He said even Catholic parents were beginning to accept that their own children can choose their genders partly because “they don’t hear anything else.”

The church, he said, now had an urgent duty to remind them of the truth of its teaching about the human body.

He told Catholic News Service in a Nov. 7 interview in Oxford that Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have addressed the subject within the past five years as each noted that the theory was taking root in western societies.

“Perhaps a document only on this problem might be an urgent question,” Eijk said.

“It (gender theory) is spreading and spreading everywhere in the western world, and we have to warn people,” he said.

“From the point of moral theology, it’s clear — you are not allowed to change your sex in this way,” he added.

“It is like euthanasia and assisted suicide,” Eijk continued. “When people first began to discuss them they were unsure,” but many people have now become so acquainted with such practices they are now deemed ordinary.

He said many Catholics were now accepting gender theory “in a very easy way, even parents, because they don’t hear anything else.”

The cardinal’s remarks came ahead of the Anscombe Memorial Lecture, which he was scheduled

to give in Blackfriars, a Dominican monastery in Oxford, on the theme, “Is Medicine Losing its Way?”

A moral theologian and a former medical doctor who worked at the Amsterdam university hospital before he became a priest, Eijk, 63, said he would be addressing the rise of non-therapeutic medical practices, including gender reassignment and euthanasia and assisted suicide.

He explained that medical advances were driving a culture in which, he said, individualism thrived and gender theory was finding fertile ground.

But he warned CNS that one of the consequences of the changing mores was the emergence of intolerance toward people who did not accept the new ideas.

“We are living in a quite intolerant society,” he said. “People are talking about tolerance and they say the individual is free to think what he likes but in practice . . . people have to accept this certain view of man, this dualistic view of man and this view of the body as something that is moldable.”

“And when you say perhaps that is not a morally good way, you are excluded,” he said. “You have to think according to these modern theories or you are excluded — it’s (permeating) the university world, parliament, the mass media.”

In 2012, Pope Benedict, in an address to the Roman Curia, referred to gender theory when he spoke about the profound falsehoods underpinning an anthropological revolution.

Pope Francis implicitly criticized gender theory in *Laudato Si’*, his 2015 papal encyclical on the environment, and condemned “indoctrination of gender theory” as part of a “global war on the family” during a visit to Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Pontifical Academy for Life issued new statutes by pope

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After expressing his hope for renewed energy and a broader scope of study and activity at the Pontifical Academy for Life, Pope Francis has issued new statutes for the research and advisory body.

The main goal of the academy, as founded in 1994 by St. John Paul II, is still “the defence and promotion of the value of human life and the dignity of the person,” according to the new statutes, which were published Nov. 5 at the Vatican.

The new statutes add, however, that achieving the goal includes studying ways to promote “the care of the dignity of the human person at the different ages of existence, mutual respect between genders and generations, defence of the dignity of each human being, promotion of a quality of human life that integrates its material and spiritual value with a view to an authentic ‘human ecology’ that helps recover the original balance of creation between the human person and the entire universe.”

The biggest change in the rules governing the academy is that members no longer will be appointed for life. Instead, they will be nominated for five-year terms, which can be renewed. However, once an academy member turns 80, the term expires.

The academy will continue to have a nine-member governing council — led by its new presi-

dent, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia — which will determine specific topics of focus. The council also is responsible for naming “young-researcher members” of the academy. People under the age of 35 doing research in areas related to the academy’s brief may be appointed to five-year terms.

The new statutes are to take effect Jan. 1.

They repeat the previous norms’ statement that members “are chosen, without any religious discrimination, from among ecclesiastical, religious and lay personalities of various nationalities who are experts in the disciplines pertaining to human life — medicine, the biological sciences, theology, philosophy, anthropology, law, sociology, etc.”

The new rules also repeated the requirement that members “undertake to promote and defend the principles regarding the value of life and the dignity of the human person interpreted in conformity with the magisterium of the church.”

However, the new rules remove a request that members sign the “Declaration of the Servants of Life,” a statement geared particularly to members who are physicians and medical researchers. The statement provided explicit, concrete consequences of church teaching on the sacredness of human life, including an obligation not to perform “destructive research on the embryo or fetus, elective abortion, or euthanasia.”

Correction does much, but encouragement does more.

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe