



Sanctum

St. Paul's Hospital and Sanctum, Saskatchewan's first HIV transitional care home and hospice, is "a match made in heaven," according to one St. Paul's board member. Sanctum, a 10-bed facility, provides a transition service for people in need of stable housing while suffering from HIV. — page 3

New cabinet at work

Canada's new Liberal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is moving ahead on its promises, including its promise of bringing in 25,000 Syrian refugees by Christmas. — page 5

Engaged Encounter

Catholic Engaged Encounter is offered annually at St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster, but organizers would be delighted to present the weekend of inspiration and preparation more often to couples preparing for marriage. — page 6

Celebrity dinner

The community came together to raise funds for the Children's Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan at the second annual Knights of Columbus Celebrity Dinner, held at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon Oct. 16. — page 7

Remember

A new film by Canadian director Atom Egoyan and starring Christopher Plummer deals with war crimes, justice and forgiveness, writes Gerald Schmitz. — page 9



Transformation

As we prepare for the Nativity, the celebration of Christ entering the world in human form, it is worthwhile to re-examine that moment when he first revealed his divine nature, the feast of the Transfiguration, writes Brent Kostyniuk. — page 10

Church leaders have wish list for new gov't

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Canada's Catholic bishops and the Canadian Council of Churches sent congratulations and a wish list to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Nov. 4, highlighting climate

change and poverty.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops also reiterated its call for Parliament to invoke the notwithstanding clause to suspend the Supreme Court of Canada's assisted suicide decision that will come into effect in three months.

CCCB president Hamilton Bishop Douglas Crosby urged the Canadian government to "take responsible action on the urgent climatic, environmental and social challenges facing the world, as outlined so forcefully by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato*

Si', issued this past May 24."

"The whole of society needs to be involved, including industry, if there are to be fair, binding and truly transformational climate agreements both nationally and internationally," Crosby wrote.

Crosby also appealed to the new prime minister to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action and the bishops' concerns regarding "improved access to education, the epidemic of murdered and missing indigenous women, the need for environments supportive of indigenous families and communities, and the importance of strengthening the ability of Canadian justice and correctional systems to respond to Aboriginal realities."

The CCCB president also reminded the prime minister of earlier calls by the bishops and other religious leaders to expand and speed up private refugee sponsorship programs to respond to the refugee crisis.

He also urged the government to work with the international community to bring peace through diplomatic efforts in world conflicts that are forcing people to flee their homelands.

"An effective and enduring solution to the global crisis of refugees and displaced persons requires a determined international effort to resolve the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, as well as Ukraine," Crosby said. "Each of these not only involves immense human

— CANADA, page 4



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REMEMBRANCE DAY — The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is blanketed with poppies, wreaths, flags and images at the National War Memorial following the Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa on Nov. 11, 2013.

Homeless man bags interview with pope

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Inundated with requests from major media outlets around the world, Pope Francis chose to sit down for an interview with a homeless man who makes his living selling newspapers in the Netherlands.

The pope met with 51-year-old Marc, who was accompanied by Frank Dries, the *Straatnieuws* newspaper's editor; Stijn Fen, a journalist; and Jan-Willem Wits, the former spokesman of the Dutch bishops' conference. The interview, which took place at the Vatican Oct. 27, was published Nov. 6.

The interview began with a question about the pope's early days in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where the young Jorge Mario Bergoglio would often sneak out of his home to play soccer with his classmates. The pope admitted that although he loved to play, he wasn't exactly a star athlete.

"In Buenos Aires, those who played soccer like me were called *pata dura*, which means 'having two left feet.' I played; I was the goalie many times," he said.

The pope's personal commitment to those in need was also rooted in his childhood, he said, recalling the poor Italian woman who worked as his family's

housekeeper. Her poverty, he said, "struck me" and his mother often gave her necessities that she lacked for her own family.

The woman eventually went back to Italy and returned to Ar-

— CHURCH, page 15

Beyond smudging workshop held

By Judy Gatin

SASKATOON — The Western Conference on Liturgy held their annual meeting and workshop in Saskatoon Oct. 23 - 34, exploring the theme Beyond Smudging and Sweetgrass: Understanding Indi-

genous Spirituality and Faith Traditions.

Delegates held a business meeting during Friday and the workshop began that evening at Sts-Martyrs-Canadiens church hall. The workshop was attended by diocesan representatives from

across western Canada seeking to discover more about integration of Aboriginal spiritual practices and Catholic liturgy.

The workshop opened with a greeting and prayer by Jake Sanderson, an elder affiliated with Wanuskewin Heritage Park. He welcomed delegates to Treaty 6 territory and offered a prayer for open minds and hearts to receive the gifts the Creator intended for the session, saying, "We all have the same language when we talk about the Creator."

Marian Grady, chair of the Western Conference on Liturgy executive, welcomed participants from the dioceses of Victoria, Nelson, Grouard-McLennan, Keewatin-Le Pas, St. Boniface, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon.

Archbishop Gérard Pettipas of the Grouard-McLennan archdiocese, introduced the workshop topic and the guest speaker, reminding the gathering that Pope

— FIRST NATIONS, page 11



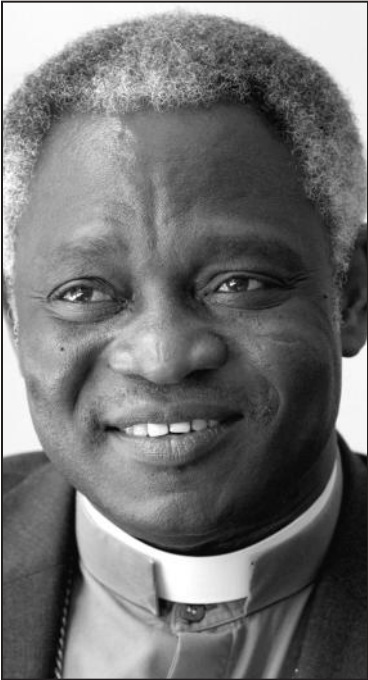
Yaworski

BEYOND SMUDGING — Guest speaker Sister Eva Solomon, CSJ, listens as Elder Jake Sanderson leads a prayer and reflection to open a Western Conference for Liturgy workshop Oct. 23 in Saskatoon.

Cardinal addresses climate change in Silicon Valley

By Gus Hardy

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (CNS) — Ghanaian Cardinal Peter Turkson, the lead consultant on Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, issued a call to action in the heart of the world’s technology and communications industries — Silicon Valley.



CNS/Bob Roller

Cardinal Peter Turkson

The president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace visited Santa Clara University Nov. 3 - 4. He specifically wished to come to the Jesuit university because of its location.

He headlined a two-day conference on climate change titled Our Future on a Shared Planet: Silicon Valley in Conversation

With the Environmental Teachings of Pope Francis. On the first day, he delivered several messages reflecting a common theme.

The cardinal began the day with opening remarks to university staff in which he immediately set out to ground the encyclical in the church’s traditions. He quoted Blessed Paul VI’s idea of “peace as development,” St. John Paul II’s “development in terms of the human person,” and Pope Benedict XVI’s “ecology of peace” — reminding the audience of the church’s dual history of calling for an integrated and healthy ecology as well as protection of the poor.

Turkson emphasized dialogue throughout the day Nov. 3. Early on, he referred to dialogue as “honest and transparent conversation” without the interference of particular interests, and elaborated further on that theme over the course of the conference.

“The encyclical,” he said, “is addressed to all of us, not just university leaders and business-people.”

He also put emphasis on the points of ecological conversion in the encyclical, saying that the world “must have a new concern about not how much people make, but what they do.” Subsequently, he made reference to the university’s Silicon Valley location, saying that the technology hub was called to be an icon for new kinds of development for the common benefit.

During his homily at mass later that day, he remarked on how the Gospel calls those blessed who “open themselves to

the word of God and receive it,” implicitly reminded the audience of the encyclical’s call to conversion and dialogue.

Before Turkson delivered his keynote speech in the afternoon, the university’s president, Jesuit Father Michael Engh, surprised the audience by bestowing the St. Clare medal on the cardinal.

Because the award is rarely given and is the highest honour the university can bestow — previous recipients include Mother Teresa and Jesuit Father Jon Sobrino — presenting it to Turkson was seen as solidifying the university’s desire to be a force for ecological change.

“Real change only comes from dialogue and mobilization from below,” said Turkson as he opened his speech before a packed audience of students, faculty and local business leaders.

“Climate acceleration is undeniable, but amenable to intervention,” he continued. “This is why we are in need of *Laudato Si*’, a full social encyclical in the tradition of *Rerum Novarum* to apply the church’s teachings to this day and age.”

Rerum Novarum, the 1891 encyclical on capital and labour by Pope Leo XIII, is considered the starting point of modern social teaching.

Turkson wove church teaching and scientific issues together — blending the two in ways that his audience would be able to understand. He pointed to a prevailing “naive confidence that technological advances and a free market will automatically solve all of our problems,” tying that to the “tragedy of

the commons,” where our common goods of climate and atmosphere are shared by all and abused by a few at the expense of all.

Turkson did not dismiss all technological advances, however. Instead, he remarked that both he and Pope Francis wished that technology could be “guided ethically” with consideration of the implications of development. To back this claim up, he cited paragraphs 102 - 105 of the encyclical, which highlight the promises

and dangers of technological progress.

Pope Francis in the document says that with technological development must come development in human responsibility, values and conscience; he calls for sound ethics and self-restraint.

The need to think critically about technological advances is necessary, the cardinal warned, given that “we are acting like a technological giant and an ethical child.”



CNS/Mario Guzman, EPA

MEXICO ALLOWS MARIJUANA FOR RECREATIONAL USE — A man smokes pot during a demonstration in front of the Supreme Court in Mexico City Oct. 28. Catholic officials have condemned a Mexican Supreme Court ruling on recreational marijuana use, which they say could put the country on the path to legalization.

Families must not end the day ‘in war’

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The secret to healing wounds among family members is to “not end the day in war” and to forgive one another, Pope Francis said.

“One cannot live without forgiving, or at least one cannot live well, especially in the family,” the

pope said Nov. 4 at his weekly general audience.

Recalling the recent synod of bishops on the family, the pope said that he wanted the final report to be published so that all may take part in the work of the past two years. However, he said, his general audience talk would not examine the conclusions but rather

reflect on the great gift that marriage and the family are for society, especially in a world that “at times becomes barren of life and love.”

The pope told the estimated 15,000 people in St. Peter’s Square that families are like “a great gym where one trains in giving and in mutual forgiveness.” Using the Gospel account of Jesus teaching the Our Father, the pope stressed that forgiveness heals the wounds often caused “by our weaknesses and our selfishness.”

“There is a simple secret in order to heal wounds and dissolve accusations: Do not end the day without asking forgiveness from one another, without

making peace between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law,” he said.

By immediately asking for forgiveness and forgiving others, the pope continued, the family becomes stronger and creates a solid foundation that can withstand any difficulties that may come.

In order to forgive, Pope Francis told the crowd, “you don’t need to make a great speech; a caress is sufficient and it’s all over. But, do not end the day in war. Understood?”

The pope also stressed that the synod emphasized the role that forgiveness plays in the vocation and mission of the family and that it not only saves families from divisions but helps society “become less evil and less cruel” as well.

The church, he assured, “is always near to help you build your house upon the rock of which Jesus spoke.”

Christian families, the pope said, can do much for society and the church and the upcoming Holy Year of Mercy can be an occasion for families “to rediscover the treasure of mutual forgiveness.”

“Let us pray so that families may always be more capable of living and building concrete paths of reconciliation, where no one feels abandoned by the weight of their trespasses,” the pope said.



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE GENERAL AUDIENCE — Pope Francis greets a clown during his general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Nov. 4.

Pro-lifers follow example of Good Samaritan, pope says

By Junno Arocho Esteves

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said that Christians are called to follow the example of the Good Samaritan in helping the defenceless who are attacked by those who steal “not only their possessions but also their dignity.”

“For Christ’s disciples, helping wounded human life means to encounter people who are in need, to stand by their side, take care of their frailty and their pain, so that they can recover,” the pope said Nov. 6.

“These people, wounded in body and spirit, are the icon of that man in the Gospel who, walking on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, was caught by thieves who robbed and beat him.”

The pope made his reflection during an audience with members of Italy’s pro-life movements. He thanked them for their efforts in imitating the Good Samaritan in defending “life from conception to its natural end.”

“In confronting various ways that threaten human life, you have approached the frailty of your neighbour, you have given yourselves so that those who live in precarious conditions are not excluded and cast aside in society,” he said.

Pope Francis stressed the importance of nourishing “personal and social sensitivity” both in accepting new life and toward those who suffer poverty and exploitation. The protection of the unborn, he said, must also go hand-in-hand with caring for the poor as well as defending families and the dignity of women.

“How many families are vulnerable due to poverty, sickness, and lack of work or a home!” he said. “How many elderly people suffer the burden of pain and loneliness! How many young people are lost, threatened by addictions and other slaveries, and are hoping to find confidence in life once again!”

The pope encouraged the Italian pro-life movements to continue on the path of the Good Samaritan and to never tire of defending those “who have the right to be born to life, as well as those searching for a more healthy and dignified existence.” He also praised their work in helping those in need, especially women in need.

The number of women, especially immigrants who come to your centres, shows that — when offered concrete support — in spite of problems and constraints, women, are able to have a sense of love, life and motherhood rise above within them,” he said.

Sanctum opening for HIV patients in Saskatoon

By Ken Roberts

SASKATOON — “A match made in heaven” is how a St. Paul’s Hospital board member described the partnership between the hospital and Sanctum, Saskatchewan’s first HIV transitional

care home and hospice. Bill Edwards, past chair of the hospital’s board of directors, was speaking at the official opening of Sanctum, a 10-bed facility located at Avenue O and 21st Street in Saskatoon. The opening occurred Nov. 2. Sanctum co-founders Dr. Morris Markentin and social worker Katelynn Roberts first approached St. Paul’s board about 18 months ago about using the former Grey Nuns residence as a transitional care home for people with HIV. Saskatoon has one of

the highest rates of HIV-positive individuals in the country, mostly from intravenous drug use. Working out of the Westside Clinic, Markentin and Roberts cared for HIV persons on a daily basis.

“St. Paul’s Hospital has owned this residence for several years and we have been searching for the right service to be delivered out of this facility,” said Edwards. “Providing a transition service for people in need of stable housing to receive care is a perfect fit with St. Paul’s mission and the Grey Nuns before us.”

Markentin says that people living with HIV can often receive their medication through home IV therapy as an outpatient after their first week in hospital, but those without stable housing, who usually have ongoing addictions and mental health issues cannot. They often discharge themselves against medical advice, leading to complications. They then enter a cycle of emergency care and hospital visits.

“If we can get people on their meds, three meals a day and a roof over their heads, that’s the start of getting healthy,” says Markentin. He said when people living with HIV take their medicines regularly, they reduce the amount of virus in their bloodstream, which virtually eliminates their risk of spreading the disease.

Crystal Dreaver described how hard it is to fight HIV and live on the street. “When I was sick with the disease, I didn’t have a home and moved from place to place.” It would have been nice to have a place where she could have gone

to rest and get better. She has since recovered and is the client representative on the Sanctum’s board.

Two of the beds at Sanctum are for end-of-life care and the rest are for clients who require sub-acute or rehabilitative care.

Corey Miller of the Saskatoon health region said, “It is about getting the right patient, the right care, in the right bed. By treating these patients in a community setting rather than in a hospital, the health care team at Sanctum will provide holistic care to treat the clients’ drug addictions and the root cause of this addiction, in addition to their HIV symptoms.”

The health region will be providing \$836,000 for Sanctum’s first year of operation. Sanctum is expected to reduce health care spending by more than \$800,000 annually after accounting for operational costs, by reducing HIV patient visits to the emergency departments by 40 per cent and reducing inpatient bed utilization by 2,902 days, freeing up an average of eight hospital beds per year.

Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) and the Community Advisory Board on Saskatoon Homelessness provided \$180,000 in federal funds for renovations of the facility.

“We know people with extraordinary health issues and addictions struggle more often with homelessness. Specialized housing programs like Sanctum are a critical part of co-ordinated services to prevent and end homelessness,” says Shaun Dyck, executive director of SHIP.



Art Babych

SUPREME COURT DECISION — Religious leaders from several faith communities urge Canadian lawmakers to “enact and uphold laws that enhance human solidarity by promoting the rights to life and security for all people.” At a joint news conference on Parliament Hill Oct. 29, the leaders, representing over 30 Christian denominations, and Jewish and Muslims leaders from across Canada, released a declaration on physician assisted suicide that also called for accessible good-quality home care and palliative care.

More time needed to define assisted suicide

By Alan Hustak
Catholic Register Special

MONTREAL — As Canada moves toward legalized assisted suicide starting in February, Quebec will jump the gun and become the first province to permit doctors to euthanize patients beginning next month.

When Quebec’s Bill 52 takes

effect, it might have been possible,” he said. “Our concern is what the new law will actually say. The government has to come up with extremely well-defined legislation.

“While the court opens the way for assisted suicide, it provides no tools for Parliament to prevent error or to protect vulnerable people from being induced to commit suicide at a time of weakness. What becomes of this it is hard to know if you can’t define it.”

The new Liberal government is expected to ask the Supreme Court for a six-month extension.

More than 150 people from across Canada attended the one-day seminar in Montreal.

In one keynote speech, Vancouver’s Dr. Margaret Cottle said she wants government to “do the right thing, not the cheap thing.” That includes greater emphasis on palliative care.

Cottle said people should be made aware of the difference between palliative care and assisted suicide.

“If patients were to receive high quality palliative care, requests for physician-hastened death would be reduced.”

The conference heard that a recent poll in Quebec showed that 60 per cent of the province’s doctors oppose assisted suicide. Nationally the figure is as high as 73 per cent.

During the seminar Dr. Balfour Mount, considered the father of palliative care in Canada, was named the first recipient of an annual award that will be presented in his honour.



CCN

Alex Schadenberg

effect on Dec. 10, physician assisted suicide will be deemed an acceptable health care option which doctors may offer to certain terminally ill patients. Still to be resolved, however, is the question of whether Quebec’s law

Hustak is a freelance writer in Montreal.

Youth co-ordinators work together in ministry

ST. BONIFACE — For five years, the Youth Ministry co-ordinators of five Seine River Region parishes have been working together to combat their isolation and ensure a renewal of ideas, a model that could inspire other regions.

The co-ordinators of Lorette, La Salle, Sainte-Anne, Steinbach and La Broquerie have made a habit of meeting once a month.

“Being a youth ministry co-ordinator can be pretty lonely because we are often the only ones in our parish and it’s up to us to find our vision and ideas to lead youth on a spiritual pathway,” confided the youth ministry co-ordinator of Notre-Dame de Lorette, Paula Granger. “We always have to be full of energy, creative, and young at heart. It’s hard sometimes!”

“Being able to meet up as a group allows us to share what we are doing in our parishes, share our ideas, and it gives us energy to go back to our parishes and continue to accomplish our mission,” she explained. “Without these round tables, I would never know what’s going on in other parishes in the area.”

The ideas shared can be applied in other parishes, or may even lead to visits from one parish to another, so that the youth may

benefit from a wider variety of events. Additionally, the five co-ordinators organize three or four rallies a year in their area in order to bring together all the youth of the parishes.

“The youth want to meet up,” explained Granger. “It helps their own faith grow by seeing how widely it is shared by others.”

On Oct. 17, the Annual Diocesan Youth Rally took place in the Seine Region; its theme was hockey as a metaphor for life. “It was the first time the rally was held outside of St. Boniface Cathedral,” said Granger.

Other than gathering the youth together, it’s an opportunity to share the model of co-operation among youth ministry co-ordinators, which at the moment, is unique to the Seine River on a regional level.

“We have met with co-ordinators from the South Urban English Region that will host the 2016 Diocesan Youth Rally; they came to our co-ordinator meetings,” said Granger. “Next year, they will host the co-ordinators from the 2017 rally area, until our model has been shared everywhere.”

The youth ministry co-ordinators also have the opportunity to attend diocesan-wide meetings two or three times a year.

Transgender policy sparks debate on Catholic board

By Ramon Gonzalez
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — After a tense and lengthy meeting, the Edmonton Catholic School Board approved the first reading of a stand-alone policy on sexual orientation and gender identity.

A consultation period will follow before the policy comes up for second reading probably in late November.

This, apparently, was not enough to appease Education Minister David Eggen, who has been concerned about the board's conduct and its ability to make decisions.

On Oct. 14, a day after the policy passed first reading by a six-to-one vote, Eggen appointed adviser Donald Cummings, of the consulting firm National Growth Partners, to work with the school board and produce recommendations to improve its overall efficiency.

"Over the past few weeks, it has become apparent that the board of Edmonton Catholic Schools must improve its practices," Eggen told reporters.

"To ensure this happens, I have appointed a firm with extensive experience in improving board governance to assist Edmonton Catholic with its current issues."

To be sure, several of the board's meetings that have focused on developing a sexual orientation and gender-identity policy have devolved into discordant deliberation.

The board's Sept. 15 meeting, for instance, dissolved into a shouting match between trustees over a draft policy, with trustee Larry Kowalczyk telling the media that he considers being transgender a mental disorder.

After that meeting, Eggen threatened to intervene and dissolve the board if necessary.

At their last public meeting,

trustees deliberated for at least three hours before approving first reading of their stand-alone policy.

Trustee Larry Kowalczyk was the only one to cast a "no" vote on the policy, which underwent several friendly and not so friendly amendments.

At the meeting, Kowalczyk apologized for his earlier comments.

But before he got to his apology, he upset a few people in the room by saying that gender dysphoria has to be diagnosed by a psychiatrist and is listed as a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association.

The debate over the policy started earlier this year after a seven-year-old transgender girl wanted to use the girl's washroom in her school. She was no longer identifying as a boy and didn't want to stand out by having to use a new, gender-neutral washroom.

In May, her school agreed she could use the female facilities.

When the girl's family filed a human rights complaint, the Catholic board started to craft a broader policy that protects gay and transgender students.

The proposed policy, which is modelled after the Edmonton Public Schools' policy, says the board is committed to respecting the sexual orientation and gender identity of students by providing and maintaining a safe, inclusive, equitable, fair and welcoming learning and teaching environment.

It quotes the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, as saying that, "Every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent."

The policy will undergo public

consultations by sector between Nov. 2 and 17. Members of parent school councils and trustees are among those who will be invited to attend the consultations.

The mother of the transgender student said the outcome of the lengthy meeting was not enough.

"Collectively this board time and time again has shown that this board cannot make a sound decision," she told the WCR.

"The policy 'yes' is good; the regulations we'll see. I think the best decision now is for the (education) minister to step in and develop a province-wide policy, which include regulations."

Catholic transgender woman Marni Panas, a parent of a child in the Catholic system, was pleased the board was able to accomplish something.

"I'm certainly glad that we're finally getting somewhere but it has taken nine months to get this far," she commented after the meeting.

"Have we made progress? I guess but there's still a lot of intolerance that we have to work through."

Panas is concerned about the consultation process which will be by invitation only.

"That's quite concerning. Who is going to be invited? What experts are going to be consulted?"

She expects to be involved in the consultation process because her spouse is a member of a parent school council. "Maybe that will be enough to get us invited."

Lori Nagy, spokesperson for Edmonton Catholic Schools, said there is "only a slim chance" that the policy will be passed at the Nov. 24 meeting as it has to go through both second and third reading.

Canada faces a looming deadline on Feb. 6

Continued from page 1

suffering, but threatens international peace and stability."

Last but not least, Crosby pointed out Canada faces a looming deadline on Feb. 6 when the Supreme Court of Canada's Carter decision on doctor assisted death comes into effect.

"Together with other religious leaders — Christians as well as members of other world religions — we consider physician assisted suicide ethically and morally wrong," said Crosby in an open letter Nov. 4. "The court's decision is divisive; polls indicate almost two-thirds of Canadian physicians would refuse to assist in such suicides."

"In contrast, there has been near unanimity in the Canadian Parliament on the need to focus on improving access to palliative care," Crosby wrote. "At the unanimous request of my brother bishops, I request that the Government of Canada invoke the Notwithstanding Clause, in order to protect the interests of the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the socially and economically vulner-

able, as well as those who care for them, including their loved ones and health care professionals."

"We are convinced that our nation and its legislators need to take more time to look closely at the court's decision and the grave social risk of embarking on policies of assisted suicide and euthanasia," Crosby wrote.

Also Nov. 4, the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) president Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan sent the prime minister the recent statement On Climate Justice and Poverty in Canada: Faith Communities Speak Out that the CCCB had signed with a brief letter of congratulations.

"Today we understand the twin challenges of climate and poverty are linked by a spiritual, moral and ethical human crisis: how will Canadians act as a good neighbour in both the natural and human communities since in the long run the health of one depends on the health of the other?" Barnett-Cowan asked.

The CCC asked the new federal government to: provide global leadership on climate, co-ordinating all levels of government; to

develop a national poverty elimination plan; to respond to the TRC's recommendations; and to respond to a report on a recent meeting the CCC co-organized with the church of Sweden on the Future of Life in the Arctic — the Impact of Climate Change, Indigenous and Religious Perspectives.

A total of 25 denominations signed the Climate Justice and Poverty statement, including about 85 per cent of the Christian faith community. Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) executive director Joe Gunn said the letter has also been signed by religious congregations of men and women cross Canada, bringing the total

number of signatories to 65.

"That was a massive undertaking to get all those faith communities on the same page," Gunn said.

CPJ has created Prayers for Paris, a resource for church groups to pray for the upcoming United Nations conference on climate change in Paris in December. Gunn said the initiative is part of the campaign to get the climate justice statement "into the pews." The worship resources, at cpj.ca/ climate, include prayers, liturgies and some suggested homilies, including one by Saskatoon Bishop Don Bolen, that go with the readings for the First Sunday of Advent, one week before the Paris talks begin.



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Trudeau’s cabinet already moving on major promises

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — Canada’s new Liberal government is moving ahead on its promises, including its promise of bringing in 25,000 Syrian refugees by Christmas.

On Nov. 9, the new Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship John McCallum announced the creation of an ad hoc committee on refugees to assist. Chaired by the new Health Minister Jane Philpott, the nine-member committee of high-level cabinet ministers includes the Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale; the Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion; International Development Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau; and National Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan.

“The committee’s function is to make this work, which involves getting things moving very, very fast and very, very competently, but also continuing beyond the immediate weeks to ensure that not only the choosing of the refugees and their transport is done efficiently, but also that when they arrive in this country that their resettlement is carried out in a humane and expeditious way,” McCallum told journalists Nov. 9. “And on that point, I would say the participation of provincial governments, many of whom have expressed great enthusiasm, will be key because provincial governments play a major role in the resettlement and the integration of newcomers coming to Canada.”

Many Catholic dioceses, parishes and groups have been preparing to welcome refugees, but McCallum also promised to bring in 25,000 through “immediate government sponsorship” and



CCN/Gyapong

NEW CABINET — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his wife, Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, and their three children walk to Rideau Hall Nov. 4 for the swearing-in ceremony. Trudeau and his new cabinet took a bus to Rideau Hall and walked up to the Governor General’s residence for their swearing in. Hundreds lined the road to greet the new government.

will work with “private sponsors to accept even more.”

“This is exceptional news,” said Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) Canada national secretary Carl Héту. “In order to be efficient in a time of crisis, this is how the government has to do it.”

Héту said the project to receive the refugees is both necessary and doable. “Already since September, many cities, many provinces many churches and Catholic dioceses have already expressed the desire and are organizing to welcome refugees spread over all the country,” he said. “Twenty-five thousand is not that big.”

The Conservative policy was to bring in refugees predominantly through private sponsorship.

That meant about 75 per cent of refugees have relied on parishes and other groups developing welcoming committees, raising funds, finding apartments, helping the refugees procure health care, he said. “That takes time.” However, many groups started preparing some time ago and are ready to receive families, he said.

In addition, many refugees, including many Syrian Christians, have been cleared. “In Lebanon, I know of at least 1,500 members of the Armenian Catholic and Apostolic Church from Syria. They all have their papers and are ready to come here.”

Héту is also concerned whether the Liberal government will recognize the additional plight of Christians and other religious

minorities in the conflict. While all religious groups suffer from war and need assistance, Christians, Yazidis and others suffer persecution in addition. “The government would make a mistake to ignore religion in this age,” he said, adding he hopes that at the very least Christians will be brought in at levels at least proportional to their presence in the Syrian population — about 10 per cent.

Meanwhile, ISIS has been moving into areas of Syria where Christians have been living in their traditional areas without too many problems over the four years of the war, “making the lives of Christians hard if not impossible in Northeast Syria, he said. “They are not only victims of war but also of persecution because of their faith.”

In other news regarding refugees, McCallum has promised the Liberal government will restore the full health coverage to refugees and refugee claimants; invest \$100 million to increase refugee processing, sponsorship and settlement services; and immediately provide a new \$100-million contribution to support relief efforts in Syria and surrounding countries.

The Liberal government also faces urgent challenges on climate change, indigenous rights and assisted suicide with little time to get up to speed before Parliament opens Dec. 3.

Deadlines loom on the COP21 United Nations climate change meetings beginning Nov. 30; and on laws regarding euthanasia and assisted suicide because on Feb. 6 the present Criminal Code provisions against assisted suicide will no longer be in force and on Dec. 6 Quebec’s euthanasia law comes into effect.

Only days after the cabinet’s swearing in Nov. 4, rookie MP now Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna was off to Paris to attend pre-climate change meetings Nov. 8 - 10.

“The Government of Canada is determined to deliver real results on climate change and the environment,” McKenna said in a statement. “We will work with our international partners on the adoption of an effective climate change

agreement and in the transformation toward a low-carbon, climate resilient global economy.”

Citizens for Public Justice executive director Joe Gunn noted the name change of the environment portfolio to include Climate Change. “That’s a great thing,” he said. But for Gunn and the CPJ, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) and the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), the issue of climate change is linked inextricably with poverty, as indicated in a recent joint statement by religious leaders and letters from the CCCC president and the CCC president to the new prime minister (see related story, page 1).

McKenna will have help on the environment file. The new Foreign Affairs Minister Dion now heading up the newly named Department of Globalization, has an extensive background in environmental issues, having served as a former environment minister and Liberal leader. He will chair a new cabinet committee on “environment, climate change and energy” that will include the new Science Minister Kirsty Duncan, who is a climatologist.

On indigenous issues, Trudeau as Liberal leader had promised to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Calls to Action.

“I think the whole way of going forward is about a relationship, a relationship that’s respectful and with real partnership with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and a distinctions-based approach,” said the new Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett after her swearing in Nov. 4.

The new Liberal government will also deliver on its promise of an inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women, Bennett said. “We want to make sure we get it right.”

Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde welcomed the appointment. He also welcomed two indigenous cabinet ministers, the new Attorney General and Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould and Fisheries Minister Hunter Tootoo.


“Minister Wilson-Raybould’s appointment is a powerful acknowledgment of First Nations peoples and the skills and abilities of the minister herself,” Bellegarde said.

Gerry Kelly, a consultant who advised the Catholic entities party to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and before that directed the CCCC’s Aboriginal Affairs secretariat, said both appointments were “hopeful signs.”

Bennett “has a long history of being very attentive” to indigenous issues and committed “to the process of reconciliation,” he said.

Kelly said another promising sign is the putting of an indigenous person into a major portfolio in cabinet that does not just concern indigenous issues.

Though the Liberals face an almost impossible deadline of Feb. 6 to craft new legislation governing assisted suicide and



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Engaged Encounter offered in Muenster

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Catholic Engaged Encounter is offered annually at St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster, but organizers would be delighted to present the weekend of inspiration and preparation more often to couples preparing for marriage.

At a recent diocesan Administration Day, Engaged Encounter team members invited parish leaders to encourage couples to consider the program, describing its benefits, and expressing a need for higher numbers to attend the weekend, with the next one scheduled for April 1 - 3, 2016.

“We have many couples who report that they came believing they knew everything about each other and their relationship, but that they left having learned more, and deepened their relationship, feeling more committed to each other, aware of things they need to follow up on, and glad that they took the time to come,” said Lynn Freistadt, who, along with his wife Wanda, serves on the Engaged Encounter team.

Rev. Demetrius Wasyluniuk, OSB, team member and guest master at St. Peter’s Abbey, gave a brief history of Engaged Encounter, which has been in existence for some 40 years. “The concept of the Engaged Encounter came out of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter,” he said.

The international Catholic Engaged Encounter program recently accepted an invitation from the Pontifical Council of the Laity to attend the world congress of ecclesial movements and communities in Rome, Wasyluniuk noted. “It is officially recognized by the Vatican as a movement of the faithful.”

The program has been offered in

St. Peter’s Abbey, in the Diocese of Saskatoon and in the Archdiocese of Regina. The Muenster program is now alone within the diocese since the Saskatoon Engaged Encounter program has ended (the Abbey joined the Diocese of Saskatoon in 1998.) However, in recent years, numbers have declined.

Engaged Encounter at Muenster cannot continue without support from parish leaders in the diocese, stressed Wasyluniuk. “And what we mean by support is the sending of couples to Engaged Encounter.”

Other team members spoke passionately at the diocesan Administration Day, providing information about the format and the quality of Engaged Encounter.

“Couples are given an opportunity to look at their relationship through individual reflections, private sharing and discussion, guided by the presentations given by the team,” said Wanda Freistadt.

“We share our marriages, our relationships, our lives with the couples who are participating. Our priest present is integral, presenting with us, clarifying church teaching, and giving his personal experience and insights into relationships, vocations, marriage, family and life. He also shares his life with the couples.”

Engaged Encounter sessions begin with a presentation by the team, followed by a set of questions given to each of the couples to reflect on, described Lynn Freistadt. At the heart of the Engaged Encounter experience is the engaged couple spending time together, deeply communicating with each other.

“They actually separate and write their answers to the questions. After a time . . . they exchange their writings and read and discuss them. This is the



Yaworski

ENGAGED ENCOUNTER — The Engaged Encounter team spoke at a recent Administration Day in Saskatoon: (from left): Lynn Freistadt, Rev. Demetrius Wasyluniuk, OSB, Lenore Wourms, Barry Wourms, Wanda Freistadt, Angela Yakimoski (with baby) and Kevin Yakimoski.

process that truly encourages couples to encounter each other and God,” he said.

Fifteen talks throughout the weekend fall into five themes: family of origin, sacramental marriage, communication, intimacy, and values, listed Wanda.

“Each of the talks then provides an opportunity to look at the topics in a concrete, practical way, using the examples from the lives of the presenters,” added Lynn. “Our intent and prayer is that the couples will be able to go home with the tools and the desire to continue their encounter in their marriage.”

“Our goal and our purpose is about an encounter,” agreed Angela Yakimoski, who along with husband Kevin is a team member from St. Scholastica Parish in Burr.

“It is an encounter that happens with couples together, it is an encounter that happens with God. We are guides for them to help them start the conversations that are crucial for marriage.”

Both Angela and Kevin stressed the importance of engaged couples carving out time for this vital encounter, to listen, talk and interact — and to really focus on their relationship.

Being single: the Catholic version

ST. BONIFACE — Single people often forget to welcome their state as an opportunity to enjoy the present without worrying about the future. Being Single: The Catholic Version was meant to remind them of this.

The Archdiocese of St. Boniface organized its first evening of this sort a year ago in November 2014. Fifty young adults attended, one of whom was Nicole Richard.

“As a single person, I’m always asking myself what God is calling me to be and this event seemed as if it might be interesting for me,” she recalls.

The evening consisted of sharing personal stories and watching a video of a single woman from Saskatoon, Gertrude Rompré. She explained how she didn’t worry about whether God was calling her to be single forever or not; rather, she concentrated on the present without worrying about “What if . . . ?”

The participants discussed and reflected in small groups on how to live a single life as a disciple of Christ. “It helped me understand that I have a career that I love, a great group of friends; so I don’t have to worry!” said Richard. “I trust that God will help me at each step of the way and I definitely don’t have to find the answer all by myself.

“Consecrated celibacy can be a vocation, but as wonderful as that can be, if you don’t feel called to this life, it’s okay,” she continued. “I now feel that I can follow God in my life just as it is right now, without being obligated to remain single long-term.”

The event also highlighted the advantages of a period of single-ness in life, the ability to go away, the opportunity to get to know yourself better, or the opportunity

to take more time for you without having too many responsibilities. Richard came to understand through her discussions with other singles that she has the right to choose where she would serve and to say no to some requests for help, “even if technically I do have the time to do it,” she said.



Nicole Richard

“Because we are single, we are very often asked to participate in all kinds of committees and groups. And if we never say no, we’ll burn out easily. We have the right to take time for ourselves to pray and relax. It’s actually important in order to serve well.

“I had the grace to understand that the best way for me to discover my vocation was to concentrate on getting to know Jesus,” she concluded. “He knows what will make me whole. Through him, I will find everything I need. I am not worried about the future.”

A similar evening of discussion and reflection will take place Nov. 17 at 6:30 p.m. in Hanley Hall at St. Paul’s College, University of Manitoba. This year’s theme will be What’s my Vocation?

Students scare up support for a cause

By Derrick Kunz

SASKATOON — Chocolate bars and chips may be typical trick-or-treating fare, but not for a group of students at St. Joseph Catholic High School in Saskatoon. Instead, some 200 St. Joseph students spent their All Hallows Eve Halloweening for Hunger — collecting non-perish-

able food items in support of the Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre.

“We would get some comments from people, like, ‘Aren’t you a bit old to be trick-or-treating?’ But when we told them we were collecting food for the Food Bank, people told us they thought it was a great idea,” said Alyssa McCullough, a Grade 11 student

who participated for the third year. She also co-ordinated assignments for the 265 student volunteers along 84 routes.

In the six years students at St. Joseph High School have been Halloweening for Hunger, they have collected an estimated 60,000 pounds of food, including this year.

“We’re proud of our students for taking the initiative to support people in their community,” said Rachelle Kelln, a teacher at St. Joseph High School who helped co-ordinate this year’s effort. “Part of what we want to teach our students is to use your gifts and talents to help others, to serve. Activities like this help students learn that they can make a difference in the lives of others; it’s often little things that make a big difference.”

Merlin Ford Lincoln provided three vehicles and volunteer drivers to help the Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre pick up the food at St. Joseph’s High School Monday morning. According to the Food Bank, 12,408 pounds of food was collected his year — and it was still being collected and dropped off at the school throughout the day.



Derrick Kunz

HALLOWEENING FOR HUNGER — Some 200 students from St. Joseph Catholic High School spent Halloween collecting non-perishable food items in support of the Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre.

Celebrity dinner aids children

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — The community came together to raise funds for the Children’s Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan at the second annual Knights of Columbus Celebrity Dinner, held at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

Local philanthropists, sports guests, families of children with medical needs, parishioners, and community members gathered for the Oct. 16 event organized by Knights of Columbus Council 8215.

The dinner, auctions and draws held throughout the evening raised \$65,000 for the Children’s Hospital, which is under construction adjacent to Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon.

“We brought some special people together for this event,” said Garry Maier, fundraising committee chair, pointing to the featured guests for the evening — local philanthropists Les and Irene Dubé, John Chick of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, and Michael “Pinball” Clemens, vice-chair and former player and head coach of the Toronto Argonauts.

Jana Len of the Saskatchewan Children’s Hospital Foundation thanked the Knights of Columbus for their support for the hospital, expected to open in 2019.

The program’s most poignant moment was a presentation by Holy Family parishioner Brielle Lepp, the mother of a child who has been hospitalized many times.

Brielle is the co-chair of the Children’s Services Patient and Family Advisory Council in the Saskatoon Health Region, which has a key role in providing input into the design of the new Children’s Hospital. Brielle introduced her husband Greg and her three children, describing how the Children’s Hospital is a cause close to their hearts.

“Our oldest son Jacob was born extremely premature,” she said, relating how Jacob weighed one pound, ten ounces at birth and has overcome many obstacles over the past 10 years.

“Jacob spent the first four and a half months of his life in the neonatal intensive care unit and has had many extensive and life-threatening admissions to hospital throughout his life. He has had 16 surgeries so far, and we know he will need more,” said Brielle.

Living with a rare heart arrhythmia, Jacob has an internal defibrillator that has many times saved his life.

“We have travelled out of province to receive specialized care that is not accessible in Saskatchewan,” added Brielle, describing how the entire family is affected when Jacob is in hospital.

“There are so many things that I can’t wait to happen in the new Children’s Hospital of Saskatchewan,” Brielle said, pointing to the specialized care and equipment it will provide, and such features as family spaces on each unit.

Families never know when they will need this kind of support, Brielle noted. “Never would I have ever imagined needing the hospitalized care that we’ve had, and never would I have imagined that this was going to be the path that God would take our family down,” Brielle said.

“But despite the suffering, this has proven to be absolutely beautiful, because of the people that we have met along the way,” she said.

“We are simply one face of the many families that are going to be helped by your generosity,” she concluded. “On behalf of my fami-



Yaworski

CELEBRITY DINNER — Guest speakers at this year’s Celebrity Dinner hosted by Knights of Columbus Council 8215 were (from left): Michael “Pinball” Clemens, vice-chair of the Toronto Argonauts, local philanthropists Les and Irene Dubé, and John Chick of the Saskatchewan Roughriders. Proceeds of the event go to the Children’s Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan.

ly and all the other families that are affected by a sick or injured child, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you and God bless you.”

Master of ceremonies Rev. David Tumback, Holy Family pastor and chaplain to Knights of Columbus Council 8215, said the call to discipleship involves going to the fringes to serve those in need.

During the evening, Tumback joined co-host and radio personality Ray Morrison to welcome guests such as Mayor Don Atchison (grandfather of Jacob Lepp), Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB, and the evening’s featured speakers.

Les and Irene Dubé, Holy Family parishioners who are known throughout the community for their philanthropy, spoke about their life and careers and what brought about their eventual decision to direct the profits of their business ventures toward charity.

“We certainly give credit to our faith,” said Les Dubé. “God has enriched our lives beyond words.”

Irene added: “Faith is something that guides us. The Holy Spirit is there for us, and this is why we do what we do. God put us on this earth for a reason, and we found the reason.”

The dinner continued with another special guest, John Chick, defensive end for the Saskatchewan Roughriders, who talked about football, faith and family.

Named the CFL’s most outstanding defensive player after the 2009 season, Chick has helped the Roughriders capture the Grey Cup twice. He was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes when he was 14, and wears an insulin pump at all times. He and his wife are expecting their eighth

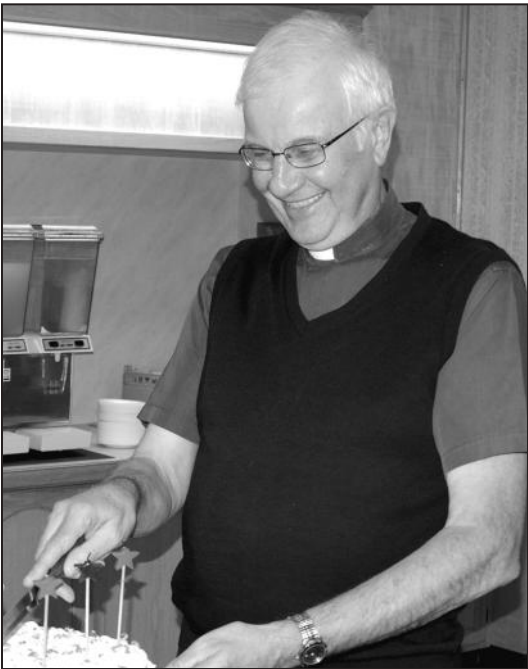
child in December, and are active in their Catholic parish in Regina.

Chick admitted the 2015 football season has been a frustrating one for the team and for fans. “Saskatchewan knows about tough years . . . it really makes you appreciate the good years,” he said. “We are looking forward to a better season next year.”

The final speaker of the evening was Michael “Pinball” Clemens, the vice-chair for the CFL’s Toronto Argonauts. He played with the team for 12 seasons and twice served as head coach.

“If you want to show me a truly great person, don’t tell me about their records or awards, their money or power. If you want to show me a truly great person, show me what that person has done for someone else,” said Clemens. “Service is nothing more than love in work clothes.”

Clemens commended the Knights of Columbus and all those who have found the “sweet spot” of community by “gathering like this, to benefit others.”



Yaworski

ANNIVERSARY — A combined 70th birthday and 45th anniversary of ordination celebration was held Oct. 18 for Rev. Nestor Gregoire, OMI, at Queen’s House in Saskatoon. Presently serving as pastor of St. Joseph and priest moderator of St. Francis Xavier parishes in Saskatoon, Gregoire attended school in North Battleford before joining the novitiate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1963. He was ordained in 1970 by Bishop Laurent Morin. He taught at St. Thomas College in North Battleford, was editor of Our Family Magazine, and served as pastor in a number of parishes in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Cathedral Series looks at *Laudato Si’*

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Pope Francis’ Vision on Care for Our Common Home was explored during a recent Cathedral Series presented at St. Paul Co-Cathedral in Saskatoon by Sister Judy Schachtel, SMS, and Dr. Chris Hrynkow.

Released earlier this year, the

Francis uses the term ‘our common home,’ ” said Schachtel, a facilitator with a background in culture and spirituality. “He helps us to realize that we are kin, and every part is necessary to the whole.”

As with a family home, there are some rules needed in living within our common home the earth, she added — rules such as “take only your share,” “clean up after yourself” and “keep your home in good repair for future generations.”

Schachtel noted that the document highlights the intricacy of ecosystems that are profoundly connected to human beings in God’s creation.

“The earth is not a collection of objects to be exploited, but a community to be communed with.”

Readable, invitational and situated within Catholic Social Teaching, the encyclical is a call to conversion and practical action in caring for the environment and for the poor, said Hrynkow, an assistant professor in

poor,” who are neglected in a global system of overconsumption by some at the expense of others, he added.

“As Catholics we are called to wrestle with this document with an informed conscience,” said Hrynkow, noting the document’s authoritative nature. *Laudato Si’* repeats teachings that were also highlighted by Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, but Pope Francis’ style provides “amplification” of the call to care for the earth, he said. The pope’s earlier apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* also previewed these concerns, stating: “The earth is our common home and all of us are brothers and sisters” (EG #183).

Hrynkow noted, “Sin has a social and ecological dimension, in these broken relationships” with God, with each other and with creation.

The series included time for discussion about the challenges of the document, and a look at the practical implications of Pope Francis’ call to care for the earth and for our brothers and sisters who share this common home.

Topics addressed during the sessions Sept. 21, Sept. 28 and Oct. 3 included Integral Ecology and Our Common Home, as well as contemporary crises, ecological education, and eco-spirituality, and the Gospel of creation and green action.

Foundations: Exploring Our Faith Together is funded by the Bishop’s Annual Appeal. The diocesan program, co-ordinated by Sharon Powell of the Catholic Pastoral Centre in Saskatoon, provides topics and speakers to parishes and other groups interested in offering faith enrichment, in addition to offering multi-evening sessions, such as the Cathedral Series on *Laudato Si’*.



Yaworski

LAUDATO SI’ — Dr. Chris Hrynkow and Sister Judy Schachtel, SMS, recently presented a three-series diocesan Foundations session on Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si’*.

papal encyclical *Laudato Si’* (Praise be) presents a clear social teaching on the environment, participants heard during the introductory session of the three-evening series, organized through the diocesan Foundations: Exploring Our Faith Together program.

Schachtel and Hrynkow outlined how Pope Francis’ encyclical is challenging human beings to see themselves in an intertwined relationship involving self, neighbour, creation and God.

“I love the fact that Pope

the Department of Religion and Culture at St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan.

“These are issues which affect us all,” Hrynkow said, noting the document is addressed to everyone.

“It is a strong wake-up call to bear witness to all the negative effects of social and ecological degradation adversely affecting people and the planet.” It is also a call to justice, identifying a “grave social debt toward the

Election result gives Canadians reason to hope

Around the Kitchen Table

Donald Ward



I was wrong. In my last column I wrote that I had never seen the secular press so blatantly biased as they were during the British election campaign in May 2015. That was before the Canadian election campaign of October 2015, when every major paper in the country endorsed Steven Harper and his Conservatives. I had never seen so many published voices trying to hijack public opinion before. Of course, they were wrong, too — indicating how seriously out of step our newspapers are with their readers.

I was wrong again in suggesting that only dogs had the proper perspective on poles. Canadian pollsters were largely unhelpful throughout the campaign, but in the end they predicted a Liberal win — not quite on the scale that it happened, of course, but they were close enough to feel smug about it after the fact.

I felt fairly smug about it, too. When the polls closed in Atlantic Canada and the entire region went Liberal red, I had a feeling we were looking at a major Liberal majority. I didn't say anything at the time for fear of being contradicted later, and I didn't say anything later for fear of being contradicted again.

"Sure, Don, you predicted a Liberal majority when every major newspaper in Canada supported the Conservatives."

All I can say is that every major newspaper in Canada was wrong.

My view throughout the campaign was A-B-C: Anything But Conservative. In my view, Steven Harper was a republican, and the further he took us from fundamental Canadian values the happier he was.

He sent us not on peacekeeping missions but on war-making missions, and young Canadians were coming home in body bags

— either that or with PTSD and other wounds a suddenly ungrateful nation was unwilling to treat.

During the Harper administration Veterans Affairs offices were closed across the country, leaving uncountable veterans no recourse but to navigate the user-unfriendly bureaucracy that had been set up in their place. Whereas before a simple phone call to the local Veterans Affairs office would clear up any difficulty, now the veteran has to access a central bureaucracy via the Internet. Never mind if you don't own a computer. That's your problem.

To his credit, Steven Harper apologized to First Nations for their treatment at the hands of the residential schools that played so large and destructive a part in Indian policy in Canada over the years, but he consistently refused to launch a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women — a situation that any civilized country would call an epidemic. Harper's view was that the criminal law was sufficient to deal with such cases, but as Police Chief Clive Weighill of Saskatoon recently remarked, "Prime Minister Harper wants to say this is a criminal matter. . . . But when you see the socio-economic factors, the poverty, the racism, it's

also systemic. We need to get to the root cause of this."

Getting to the root cause of things was not Harper's forte. He refused to address the root causes of crime, preferring to build larger penitentiaries instead. He refused to address the root causes of global warming, preferring to encourage the oilsands to carry on polluting and producing to feed an energy-greedy world. He refused to address the root causes of poverty, which is social injustice, preferring to allow the free market to steamroller its way through the lives of the poor and the dispossessed. He watched the poor

get poorer and the rich get richer, and he did not raise a hand to help.

Will things be different now? With a new cabinet that is reflective of the demographics of the nation it serves, we are perhaps allowed to hope that Justin Trudeau will give back to Canadians a country they can be proud of.



CCN/D. Gyapong

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE — With a new cabinet that is reflective of the demographics of the nation it serves, we are perhaps allowed to hope that Justin Trudeau will give back to Canadians a country they can be proud of, writes Don Ward.

Wartime collaborations reveal we are capable of so much more

By Caitlin Ward

Last Christmas, I got my sister an enamel mug emblazoned with the words, Dig For Victory. I gave her then-fiancé (now husband) a matching enamel mug printed with a replica of an emergency tea ration tin. I felt very clever. On a practical level, there are certain members of my family who have a tenuous grasp of spatial relationships, and many favoured mugs have found themselves at the mercy of said family members. Having a couple of tin mugs means that these ones, at least, shall survive the treacherous journey from dishwasher to cupboard.

Corns for my Country
The Andrews Sisters

On a slightly less practical note, though, I felt doubly clever because of how reminiscent these mugs are of the Second World War. Both my sister and brother-in-law are military historians of one sort or another, and my sister in particular studies the after-effects of the Second World War. The phrase Dig For Victory is a callback to contemporary campaigns that encouraged English citizens to grow vegetable gardens as a means of relying less on rationed goods and imports

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

during the war. The idea of having an emergency tea ration — well, I'm not sure how accurate the mug is to the time period, but it's reminiscent of the Second World War, and very English, as well. My sister is a keen gardener, and my brother-in-law is a keen tea drinker, so all of this seemed most excellent.

Don't worry; I realize we're a ways off from Christmas still, even if most chain stores don't. I bring these particular presents up because I've been thinking about digging for victory this past week. It occurred to me again this morning when I walked into work and saw that there were still thriving green ferns in the flowerbeds outside at the beginning of November. I had these two thoughts in quick succession: "oh, that's lovely," and then, "OH GOD GLOBAL WARMING."

There is a connection between these two things, I promise, and not just because they both involve plants. There was this thing in England during the Second World War called the "Dunkirk spirit," named for the Dunkirk evacuation in May and June of 1940. With naval ships too big to get close enough to shore, the Little Ships of Dunkirk — private boats requisitioned by the government, or freely given by their owners, and in some cases even sailed by their owners — made roundtrips from England to Dunkirk on the French coast to evacuate hundreds of thousands of Allied soldiers trapped on the beaches. It wasn't a victory, per se, but nor was it a defeat, and it galvanized a people. The Dunkirk spirit, analogous to the Blitz spirit or a stiff upper lip, refers to a kind of

communal stoicism in which the peoples of Britain banded together to face a dangerous and frightening situation. By God, they were going to make it through. Bomb our cities? We'll build shelters. Set fire to our homes? We'll have volunteer fire brigades. Block our imports? We'll make our own food. We will not be broken. We will dig for victory. We'll make it. We'll survive. We'll win.

Of course, reality is never

quite as straightforward as that. It's hard to believe that every member of an entire nation bore up under pressure without ever cracking for six years' hard slog of an all-consuming war. There was a thriving black market for rationed goods throughout, and bombing raids were an excellent time for the less savoury to commit crimes. But even with that caveat, the fact of the matter is there were victory gardens, and rationing, and people moving into

atypical jobs, and a whole society changing itself to move toward a single goal. Even though it was likely never so universal as the mythologies surrounding the war would have us believe, there's something inspiring about it.

It's an American context, but Corns for my Country by the Andrews Sisters captures a similar sort of spirit: this idea that we'll all do what we can, whether it's jitterbugging with GIs or growing vegetables on the front lawn. The song comes from the 1944 film Hollywood Canteen, a spiritual sequel to Stage Door Canteen, both of which are star-studded variety shows with paper-thin plots and thinly veiled propaganda speeches designed to inspire the war effort.

In the lead-up to Remembrance Day, I've been thinking about the Dunkirk spirit. I've been thinking about the civilians who made the war effort possible, and the sacrifices they must have all made for it. I've been thinking about working together and holding firm in the face of frightening realities and difficult odds.

I've also been thinking about the ferns outside my workplace that are still green when it probably should have snowed by now if not for human-made climate change. I've been thinking about the people who go to bed hungry every night. I've been thinking about the gross inequalities in this country. And I've been wondering why it is that we can all band together to fight a war but we can't seem to stay in a room long enough to agree that something needs to be done about all of those things. We are clearly capable of so much more.

I'm gettin' corns for my country
At the Hollywood Canteen
The hardest workin' junior hostess
You've ever seen
I'm doin' my bit down here for Uncle Sam
I'm a patriotic jitterbug
Yeah, yeah, that's what I am

I'm gettin' corns for my country, you should see the pounds fly
I'm gettin' down the waistline and I don't even try
I don't need a DuBarry or a Westmore course
Cause my weight's been taken over by the Army Air Force

We're not petite as sweet Joan Leslie, but then we never mind
When those GIs knock the South, we're glad that we're the healthy kind
The way those cowboys from the prairie expect us to sashay
I think I'd rather two-step with their horses any day

We're gettin' corns for our country, though the goin' is tough
When we think we can't go on, we find we can't get enough
So if you hear of a soldier, sailor or marine
Tell him to look us up at the Hollywood Canteen

I used to be aesthetic, they say, oh yes I was, really I was
I served the drama, arts, and the ballet
But the theatre guild came over and said, "Forget about Pavlova"
Learn to cut a rug, so now we're jitterbugs

I'm gettin' corns for my country, so I'm really all in
In a week from now we'll be here with our usual vim
So if you hail from the Bronx, Des Moines or Aberdeen
Come down and ask for us at the Hollywood Canteen

When the act of remembering brings only revenge

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



Today is Remembrance Day when we honour the sacrifices of our soldiers who have fallen in foreign conflicts and pray “never again.” In a way it is also a test of our capacity for forgiveness. The Germany that was on the wrong side of two world wars has transformed into a trusted ally that is opening its doors to hundreds of thousands of refugees. The country that was a savage oppressor has become a sought-after safe haven. If any historical act qualifies as unforgiveable, Hitler’s Holocaust, which a majority of Germans allowed to happen, surely qualifies. Apart from bringing the worst war criminals to justice, there has been a lot to forgive.

Remember
(Canada/Germany, 2015)

But what would you do if you were a Holocaust survivor whose family was murdered, and nearing life’s end with memory fading you were nonetheless able to find the man you held responsible? What could bring you peace? Those questions form the premise behind Canadian director Atom Egoyan’s latest film that is now in theatres. Unusually, Egoyan is not the writer, working instead from a script by Benjamin August.

Remember begins in a New

York City nursing home with the elderly Zev Gutman (Christopher Plummer) calling for his wife Ruth. Suffering from the onset of dementia and frequently confused, he has to be gently reminded that Ruth recently passed away. As the Jewish mourning period for her comes to a close, he is consoled by his son Charles (Henry Czerny) and another resident, Max Rosenbaum (Martin Landau), who was also at Auschwitz. Zev has only to look at the number branded on his left arm to be reminded.

Max may be frail, wheelchair-bound and on oxygen, but he has a steely determination to find the SS concentration camp officer he tells Zev is responsible for murdering their families. That man, Otto Walisch, escaped justice and immigrated to North America under the assumed name of Rudy Kurlander. Aided by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Max’s research has turned up four Rudy Kurlanders on the continent. Speaking privately to Zev, Max says he promised that after Ruth died he would seek out and kill the guilty one whom only he will be able to recognize. Max has already made travel and other arrangements for this vengeful mission. He hands Zev a long letter of detailed instructions to follow along with a wad of cash and a train ticket to Cleveland where the first Kurlander sus-

pect on the list lives.

Zev accepts the assignment and manages to leave the home without attracting attention. On the train he dozes off and wakes up confused but the letter in his jacket pocket is there to remind him. In Cleveland he buys an expensive Austrian Glock handgun before going to the address of the first Rudy Kurlander (played by the great German actor Bruno Ganz). Zev pulls the gun on him, demanding a closer inspection of his profile. This Kurlander admits he was a German soldier during the war but has convincing proof he served with Rommel in North Africa and was never in Auschwitz.

Zev must go on to the second address, this time a nursing home in Ontario. Although his passport has expired he is improbably allowed to cross the border at Sault St. Marie on the strength of a drivers’ licence, with the gun simply covered by his jacket left on the seat. This too is a dead end as the Kurlander in question, a bedridden invalid, turns out to be a former Auschwitz prisoner for the crime of homosexuality. So Zev is quickly back stateside (very unlikely with an expired passport), resuming a quest that takes him to a rundown rural residence in Idaho. He waits for the owner, a state trooper (Dean Norris), to arrive only to learn that the old man Kurlander had died months earlier. Although frightened by the son’s snarling German shepherd named Eva (tip-off), he gets himself trapped inside a neo-Nazi den of mementos and has to shoot his way out.

Zev has been checking in occasionally with Max by telephone. Meanwhile worried son Charles

has had the police trying to locate him, eventually tracking him down (though too late). Zev is obviously rattled but can’t give up with just one Rudy Kurlander left. That resolve brings him to Nevada and a beautiful log-style house near Tahoe where he aims to complete his mission. He’s welcomed in by a daughter who thinks he may be a wartime friend but warns him not to bring up Auschwitz. Zev (Hebrew for “wolf”) will not be deterred. When this grandfatherly Rudy (Jürgen Prochnow) appears the two go outside and begin speaking German as Zev recognizes his voice. “I remember” are the last words in a gobs-

macking twist that’s a shocking tragedy to everyone except Max.

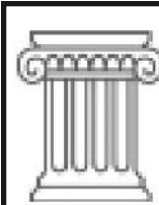
Egoyan has taken a lot of critical heat in recent years and Remember piles on a few too many implausibilities en route to a surprise ending. Still, as the mentally challenged avenging instrument of fatal justice, 85-year-old Plummer proves once again that he is Canada’s finest actor of stage and screen. Kudos as well to 87-year-old Martin Landau as Max, whose vengeance can only be satisfied by Zev.

This is a war remembrance story with no room for forgiveness. I wish it had left me with more than an incredulous shudder.



Entertainment One

REMEMBER — In Atom Egoyan’s film Remember, Academy Award winner Christopher Plummer stars as a retiree who flees his nursing home to complete a secret mission some 70 years in the making — so long as he can remember his goal.



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Do we need to see heaven to believe?

By Gerald Schmitz

Films trumpeting their Christianity can certainly draw an audience of believers — for example this year’s War Room which celebrates prayer as a “powerful weapon” — but tend to get short shrift from skeptical critics. While some are slickly produced, most are light on artistic merit and heavy on proselytizing and preaching to the choir. Which brings me to Michael Polish’s two-hour **90 Minutes in Heaven** and what to make of it.

There’s no mistaking the inspirational religious message. The movie was made by Giving Films “of hope and faith” and promises that 100 per cent of profits will be donated to charities. The good news is that 90 Minutes is a decently made drama based on actual events (deserving better than its 25 per cent rating on rottentomatoes.com, which is even lower than War Room’s 37 per cent). Writer-director Polish is a well-regarded filmmaker and the cast features prominent actors, including Polish’s wife Kate Bosworth in the role of Eva, the wife of Don Piper (Hayden Christensen), an evangelical Christian Texas pastor almost killed in a 1989 automobile crash. The aftermath is obviously traumatic for her and their small chil-

dren, a daughter and twin boys.

Piper was initially pronounced dead at the scene but, after another passing clergyman prayed over him, showed vital signs and was rushed to hospital in Huntsville, then to Houston where he underwent major surgeries (one leg had to be reconstructed) and endured months of difficult recuperation but was eventually able to walk again. At one point medical bills become too much for the family’s private insurance and accident claims against the truck driver that hit Piper, so he has to make a painful move to a cheaper public hospital. (No comment on how “Christian” such a health care system is.)

Piper narrates the story which includes self-pitying lows to the point of being suicidal. There’s a lot of earnest praying for him during these hospital stays but he never utters a word about heaven. The only hint is a voiceover warning that “survival was going to be difficult because heaven was so glorious,” which sets us up for the big reveal after he comes home. Even before telling his wife, it’s a concerned fellow pastor who finally gets him to speak about how he had died, gone to heaven and wanted to stay there. Piper recounts images of a paradise beyond the pearly gates and blissful reunion with

departed relatives and friends. The movie conjures these and ends with a clip of the real-life Piper, who has since travelled the world, giving his stump “heaven is real” sermon.

There are lots of tales of people having near-death experiences and visions of the afterlife. But if Piper had actually died, gone to heaven and been brought back by God, would he not be the

90 Minutes in Heaven
(U.S., 2015)

first human being to do so since Jesus of Nazareth? Why him? Clearly saintliness isn’t enough. No Catholic saint has ever claimed to be resurrected from the dead.

Piper sincerely believes he has been sent by God to bear witness to heaven. But are we such doubting Thomases that faith in Jesus’ promise of eternal life would require the testimony of a recovered accident victim from Texas? That’s essentially what this movie comes down to. Moreover, as Rev. Ron Rolheiser points out, in Christian theology heaven and hell begin in how we act in this life. One might say, blessed are they who follow his teachings and believe in him without having to see their reward.

Feast of Christ the King puts everything right

Liturgy and Life

Gertrude Rompré



One of my favourite prayers during the Roman Catholic liturgy is tucked away in a corner where we risk praying right on by without noticing it. It's the doxology that we pray after the Our Father, "for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, now and forever." That short prayer is one of my favourites because it feels like it puts everything to rights, it sorts us out as humans and puts God back in the centre of everything. I think the feast we celebrate this week, the Feast of Christ the King, does much the same thing. It reminds us that the kingdom, the power and the glory belong to God and God alone. It puts things right.

For thine is the kingdom. . . . This short phrase reminds us, first and foremost, that everything belongs to God, us included. The flip side of this is that God is also ultimately responsible for all of creation. That's hard for me, an oldest child, to admit. I'm used to thinking that I'm the one who's ultimately responsible for everything! But remembering that the kingdom belongs to God and God alone reminds me that we all rest in God's providence. God is in

Rompré is the director of Mission and Ministry at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon.

charge and I can take the weight of the world off my shoulders.

Trusting in God's providence is a challenging and radical act. It means claiming that God is in charge, that God-is-with-us, in all of our human experiences, even those that include pain and suffering. It's counter-intuitive and demands that we take a deeper look at reality than what is present at face value. It is such an act of faith, however, that we are making when we proclaim that Christ is king.

Once we make the claims that everything belongs to God and that God is in charge, then we can assert that God also has a plan. It's just that plan that Jesus refers to when he proclaims the kingdom of God in our midst (something he does about 119 times in the New Testament!). When we celebrate Christ the King, we are also suggesting that we agree with God's plan for humanity and that we also might be willing to participate in it.

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Feast of Christ the King | Daniel 7:13-14 |
| | Psalm 93 |
| | Revelation 1:5-8 |
| November 22, 2015 | John 18:33b-37 |

In 2006, Bono, the lead singer of U2 and a social justice activist, spoke at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. He shared the story of how he always prayed for God to bless his projects but that a fundamental shift occurred when he finally realized that he was asking the wrong question. The right question is to ask God what God's projects are and then take part in those because they are blessed already! Recognizing that the kingdom belongs to God means that we can ask God what projects we should be part of to ensure that God's vision for humanity comes into its full expression.

The power . . . belongs to God as well. This feast day reminds us of that. So much of the world's pain comes from people seeking to amass power for themselves and forgetting that the true authority belongs to God. Actually, the word authority is an interesting one. It comes from the Latin word *auctoritas*, which can best be understood as authoring life in others. The power belongs to God and God chooses to use it in a specific way, to author life in us and in all of creation. (Thanks to Bishop Weisner who shared that insight with me many years ago.) When we pray that the power belongs to God we commit ourselves to using our own authority in the way God intends it to be used, to author life in others.

And the glory . . . is God's alone. This short phrase reminds me to stop and contemplate God's glory reflected in creation. The first snowflake falling, the subtle colours of the sunrise, the intricacy of the human body, the oceans teeming with life . . . each of these remind of God's glory and, in turn, remind me to give praise. Again, it's about putting things right and giving praise where praise is due.

This week's readings and the feast we celebrate call us to contemplate God's reign made manifest in Christ the King. We are asked to imagine what the world would be like if we truly committed ourselves to recognizing God at the centre of things, and to putting our words into action when we pray, "for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen." This feast calls us to conversion, to step out of the limelight and shine that same light on our Creator. Perhaps it's no accident that these reading and this feast day comes to us on the last Sunday of the liturgical year. What better time to stop and ask ourselves, how can I give God back the "kingdom, the power and the glory" this coming year?

Having a party in Galilee with the communion of saints

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



At any given time, most of the world believes that death isn't final, that some form of immortality exists. Most people believe that those who have died still exist in some state, in some modality, in some place, in some heaven or hell, however that might be conceived. In some conceptions, immortality is seen as a state wherein a person is still conscious and relational; while in other concepts, existence after death is understood as real but impersonal, like a drop of water that has flowed back into the oceans.

As Christians, this is our belief: We believe that the dead are still alive, still themselves and, very importantly, still in a living, conscious, and loving relationship with us and with each other. That's our common concept of heaven and, however simplistic its popular expression at times, it is wonderfully correct. That's exactly what Christian faith and Christian dogma, not to mention deep intuitive experience, invite us to. After death we live on, conscious, self-conscious, in communication with

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

others who have died before us, in communion with those we left behind on earth, and in communion with the divine itself. That's the Christian doctrine of *the communion of saints*.

But how is this to be understood? Not least, how do we connect to our loved ones after they have died? Two interpenetrating biblical images can help serve as an entry point for our understanding of this. Both come from the gospels.

The gospels say that at the instant of Jesus' death, *the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised* (Mt 27, 50-52). The gospels then go on to tell us that on the morning of the resurrection several women came to Jesus' grave to anoint his dead body with embalming spices, but rather than finding his dead body, they meet instead an empty grave and two angels who challenge them with words to this effect: *Why are you looking for a live person in a cemetery? He isn't here. He's alive and you can find him in Galilee* (Lk 24, 5). What's contained in these images?

As Christians, we believe that we are given eternal life through Jesus' death. Among other images, the Gospels express that in this metaphor: Jesus' death, they tell us, "opened the tombs" and emptied graveyards. For this reason,

Christians have never had a huge cult around cemeteries. As Christians, we don't do much in the way of spiritual practices around our cemeteries. Why? Because we believe all those graves are empty. Our loved ones aren't there and aren't to be found there. They're with Jesus, in "Galilee."

What's "Galilee," in terms of a biblical image? In the gospels, Galilee is more than a place on a map; it's also a place inside the Spirit, God's Spirit and our own. In the gospels, Galilee is the place where, for the most part, the good things happen. It's the place where the disciples first meet Jesus, where they fall in love with him, where they commit themselves to him, and where miracles happen. Galilee is the place where Jesus invites us to walk on water. Galilee is the place where the disciples' souls enlarge and thrive.

And that is also a place for each of our deceased loved ones. In each of their lives, there was a Galilee, a place where their persons and souls were most alive, where their lives radiated the energy and exuberance of the divine. When we look at the life of a loved one who has died we need to ask: Where was she most alive? What qualities did she most uniquely embody and bring into a room? Where did she lift my spirit and make me want to be a better person?

Name those things, and you will have named your loved one's Galilee. And you will also have named the Galilee of the gospels, namely, that place in the heart where Jesus invites you to meet him. And that is too where you will meet your loved ones in the communion of saints. Don't look for a live person in a cemetery. She's not there. She's in Galilee. Meet her there.

Elizabeth Johnson, leaning on Karl Rahner, adds this thought:

"Hoping against hope, we affirm that they (our loved ones who have died) have fallen not into nothingness but into the embrace of the living God. And that is where we can find them again. When we open our hearts to the silent calmness of God's own life in which we dwell, not by selfishly calling them back

to where we are, but by descending into the depth of our own hearts where God also abides."

And the "Galilee" of our loved ones can also be found inside our own "Galilee." There's a deep place inside the heart, inside faith, hope, and charity, where everyone, living or deceased, is met.

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Chair Announcement

St. Paul's Hospital (SPH) is pleased to announce the appointment of Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick as the new Chair of the Volunteer Board of Directors. Mr. Kirkpatrick has been a member of the SPH Board of Directors since 2011, serving as Vice-Chair from 2013-15.

Born and raised in Saskatoon, Bob holds Commerce and Law Degrees from the University of Saskatchewan. Bob is Vice President, Deputy General Counsel and Assistant Corporate Secretary at Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc., and has taught Securities Regulation in the U of S College of Law. Bob is an engaged and active community leader and has been involved in tennis administration at the local, provincial and national levels. Welcome Bob.

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Transformation, or *theosis*, is the purpose of life

Both Lungs

Brent Kostyniuk



As a writer, some of the most interesting columns to do are the ones that respond to questions from readers. This is one of them.

Marie approached me regarding confusion about the Transfiguration. Was Christ's divinity truly revealed? The question is a timely one. Now, as we prepare for the Nativity, the celebration of Christ entering the world in human form, it is worthwhile to re-examine that moment when he first revealed his divine nature.

Celebrated on Aug. 6, The Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ is documented in all three synoptic gospels. Accompanied by Peter, John and James, Jesus went up a mountain to pray. Then, as we read in Luke 9, "... the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus." Luke records that the apostles were very sleepy, but awoke and "saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' " A cloud then appeared and enveloped

Kostyniuk, who lives in Edmonton, has a bachelor of theology from Newman and is a freelance writer. He and his wife Bev have been married for 37 years and have eight grandchildren.

them. At that moment a voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."

The Transfiguration was clearly intended to reveal the divinity of Christ to Peter, James, and John so they would understand who it was that would be crucified for them and that his Passion was voluntary. Transfiguration comes 40 days before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The two feasts are thus connected to remind us of Christ's voluntary suffering. Eastern theology also tells us that the Transfiguration shows the possibility of our own *theosis*, or transformative process whose goal is likeness to or union with God. We accomplish this through the effects of *katharsis*, the purification of mind and body. Moreover, we are taught that *theosis* is the purpose of human life.

Interestingly, the Transfiguration was witnessed by three disciples and three heavenly witnesses, Moses, Elijah, and the voice of God from heaven. This was in keeping with the Old Testament law of three witnesses required to attest to any fact. "A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offence that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established" (Dt 19:15). Thus, Jesus' divinity was authenticated both in earth and in heaven.

The Greek word for transfigured is *metamorpho*. It is a verb

that means to change into another form, also to change the outside to match the inward reality. Until the Transfiguration, Jesus' divine nature had been "veiled" (Hebrews 10:20) in human. At the Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John were shown a unique display of Jesus' divine character and a glimpse of the glory, which Jesus had before all time.

How was this possible? How could human eyes gaze upon God? What form did Jesus take to reveal his divinity?

One explanation came from Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), a monk who lived at Mount Athos in Greece, later becoming Archbishop of Thessaloniki. While some theologians believed the light shining from Jesus was created light, Gregory had a different explanation which explained how the apostles were able to actually see God.

Gregory maintained Peter, James, and John were given the grace to perceive the uncreated light of God. This theology is in keeping with a further argument of Gregory's that although we cannot know God in his *essence*, we can know God in his *energies*, as he reveals himself. Moreover, Gregory held that the prophets in fact had greater knowledge of God, because they had actually seen or heard God himself. Moses and the burning bush is a case in point.

In the divine liturgy, shortly before the consecration, the priest prays, "... for you are God — ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, always existing and ever the same." Yet for the three apostles and, according to Palamas, the unknowable was made known. In keeping with Eastern theology he maintained it remains impossible to know God in his essence — God in himself. However it is possible to know God in his energies (to know what God does, and who God is in relation to the creation

and to humanity), as God reveals himself to humanity.

At the Transfiguration, the three apostles experienced the uncreated light of God as Jesus revealed his true divine nature. It was an experience so powerful Peter wanted to set up camp and never leave the spot. The theology of *theosis* calls us all to transform ourselves and seek to be god-like. Ultimately, according to Palamas, it is possible to see that same uncreated light of God with the help of repentance, spiritual discipline and contemplative prayer, and according to God's will.

During this season of preparation for the Nativity, it is worthwhile to reflect on the Transfiguration and our own transformation, our own *theosis*.



B. Kostyniuk
TRANSFIGURATION — This stained glass window of the Transfiguration is located in St. Basil the Great Church in Edmonton.

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First Nations spirituality integrated into liturgy

Continued from page 1

Francis is a frequent promoter of the need for dialogue. Pettipas urged everyone to enter into the weekend and learn from each other.

Guest speaker for the workshop was Sister Eva Solomon, CSJ, a longtime presenter on First Nations spiritual practices and liturgy.

Solomon offered an analogy between faith traditions and sunlight shining through a crystal. It is the same light, but it is refracted into different colours; it is the same with God: we worship the same God, but in different ways.

She also pointed out that interculturalization of religious belief goes all the way back to the beginning of Christianity, to the dream Peter had in which "God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean" (Acts 10:28). Solomon made many connections for the participants and explained ways in which First Nations spirituality can be integrated into liturgy.

A second session was led by Rev. Gary Kuntz of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina.

He chronicled his experiences of learning about the Anishnabe culture by being immersed in it to learn the language and participate in ceremonies. That changed his way of understanding God, faith and Scripture.

"Until we are able to recognize and tell history as it actually happened and develop authentic relationships with each other, how can we worship together?" Kuntz emphasized the need to honour knowledge-keepers in every culture in order to create relationship and facilitate truth and reconciliation between communities.

The Western Conference for Liturgy (WCL) is the association of diocesan liturgical commissions, diocesan directors of liturgy, and others interested in liturgy in Western Canada. Its members are drawn from both the English and French sectors of the church in Western Canada, under the wing of the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops (AWCB). Archbishop Gérard Pettipas, CSsR, currently serves as the liaison between the AWCB and the WCL.

Secret ‘Catacombs Pact’ emerges after 50 years

By David Gibson

ROME (RNS) — On the evening of Nov. 16, 1965, quietly alerted to the event by word-of-mouth, some 40 Roman Catholic bishops made their way to celebrate mass in an ancient underground basilica in the Catacombs of Domitilla on the outskirts of the Eternal City.

Both the place, and the timing, of the liturgy had a profound resonance: the church marked the spot where tradition said two Roman soldiers were executed for converting to Christianity. And beneath the feet of the bishops, and extending through more than 10 miles of tunnels, were the tombs of more than 100,000 Christians from the earliest centuries of the church.

In addition, the mass was celebrated shortly before the end of the Second Vatican Council, the historic gathering of all the world’s bishops that over three years set the church on the path of reform and an unprecedented engagement with the modern world — launching dialogue with other Christians and other religions, endorsing religious freedom and moving the mass from Latin to the vernacular, among other things.

But another concern among many of the 2,200 churchmen at Vatican II was to truly make Catholicism a “church of the poor,” as Pope John XXIII put it shortly before convening the council. The bishops who gathered for mass at the catacombs that November evening were devoted to seeing that commitment become a reality.

So as the liturgy concluded in the dim light of the vaulted fourth-century chamber, each of the prelates came up to the altar and affixed his name to a brief but passionate manifesto that pledged them all to “try to live according to the ordinary manner of our people in all that concerns housing, food, means of transport, and related matters.”

The signatories vowed to renounce personal possessions, fancy vestments and “names and titles that express prominence and power,” and they said they would make advocating for the poor and powerless the focus of their ministry.

In all this, they said, “we will seek collaborators in ministry so that we can be animators according to the Spirit rather than dominators according to the world; we will try to make ourselves as humanly present and welcoming as possible; and we will show ourselves to be open to all, no matter what their beliefs.”

The document would become known as the Pact of the Catacombs, and the signers hoped it would mark a turning point in church history.

Instead, the Pact of the Catacombs disappeared, for all intents and purposes.

It is barely mentioned in the extensive histories of Vatican II, and while copies of the text are in circulation, no one knows what happened to the original document. In addition, the exact number and names of the original signers is in dispute, though it is

believed that only one still survives: Luigi Bettazzi, nearly 92 years old now, bishop emeritus of the Italian diocese of Ivrea.

With its Dan Brown setting and murky evidence, the pact seemed fated to become another Vatican mystery — an urban legend to those who had heard rumours about it, or at best a curious footnote to church history rather than a new chapter.

Yet in the last few years, as the 50th anniversary of both the Catacombs Pact and Vatican II approached, this remarkable episode has finally begun to emerge from the shadows.

That’s thanks in part to a circle of theologians and historians, especially in Germany, who began talking and writing more publicly about the pact — an effort that will take a major step forward later this month when the Pontifical Urban University, overlooking the Vatican, hosts a daylong seminar on the document’s legacy.

But perhaps nothing has revived and legitimated the Pact of the Catacombs as much as the surprise election, in March 2013, of Argentine Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio — Pope Francis.

While never citing the Catacombs Pact specifically, Francis has evoked its language and principles, telling journalists within days of his election that he wished for a “poor church, for the poor,” and from the start shunning the finery and perks of his office, preferring to live in the Vatican guesthouse rather than the apostolic palace. He stressed that all bishops should also live simply and humbly, and the pontiff has continually exhorted pastors to “have the smell of the sheep,” staying close to those most in need and being welcoming and inclusive at every turn.

“His program is to a high degree what the Catacomb Pact was,” Cardinal Walter Kasper, a retired German theologian who is close to the pope, said in an interview earlier this year at his apartment next to the Vatican.

The Pact of the Catacombs “was forgotten,” said Kasper, who mentioned the document in his recent book on the thought and theology of Francis. “But now he (Francis) brings it back.”

For a while there was even talk in Rome that Francis would travel to the Domitilla Catacombs to mark the anniversary. While that’s apparently not in the cards, “the Catacomb Pact is everywhere now in discussion,” as Kasper put it.

“With Pope Francis, you cannot ignore the Catacomb Pact,” agreed Massimo Faggioli, a professor of church history at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn. “It’s a key to understanding him, so it’s no mystery that it has come back to us today.”

But why did the Pact of the Catacombs disappear in the first place?

In reality it didn’t, at least for the church in Latin America.

The chief presider at the catacombs mass 50 years ago was a Belgian bishop, Charles-Marie Himmer, and a number of other progressive Europeans took part as well. But the bulk of the celebrants were Latin American prelates,



RNS/Grant Gallicho

CATACOMBS PACT — The Basilica of Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, an underground altar where the Catacombs Pact was signed at a mass on Nov. 16, 1965.

such as the famous Brazilian archbishop and champion of the poor, Dom Helder Camara, who kept the spirit of the Catacombs Pact alive — as best they could.

The problem was that the social upheavals of 1968, plus the drama of the Cold War against communism and the rise of liberation theology — which stressed the gospel’s priority on the poor, but was seen as too close too Marxism by its conservative foes — made a document such as the Catacombs Pact radioactive.

“It had the odour of communism,” said Brother Uwe Heisterhoff, a member of the Society of the Divine Word, the missionary community that is in charge of the Domitilla Catacombs.

Even in Latin America the pact wasn’t publicized too widely, lest it poison other efforts to promote justice for the poor. Heisterhoff noted that he worked with the indigenous peoples of Bolivia for 15 years but only learned about the Catacombs Pact when he came to Rome to oversee the Domitilla Catacombs four years ago.

“This stuff was a bit dangerous until Francis came along,” said Faggioli.

Indeed, some reports say that up to 500 bishops, mainly Latin Americans, eventually added their names to the pact, and one of them, Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, was gunned down by military-backed assassins for speaking out against human rights abuses and on behalf of the poor — in the view of many, for preaching the message of the Catacombs Pact.

Francis, too, seems to have imbibed the spirit of the Catacombs Pact, though there’s no evidence he ever signed it.

As a Jesuit priest and then bishop in Argentina during the turbulent decades of the 1970s and ’80s, Francis became increasingly devoted to the cause of the poor, as did much of the Latin American church. It was no great surprise, then, that this year he pushed ahead with the beatification of

Romero, which had been stalled for decades; just recently Francis used remarkably sharp language to denounce those who had “slandered” Romero’s reputation.

Francis was also familiar with the case of his fellow Argentine churchman Bishop Enrique Angelelli, an outspoken advocate for the poor who was killed in 1976 in what appeared to be a traffic accident but which was later shown to be an assassination by the military dictatorship that ruled the country at the time.

Angelelli was also a signer of the Catacombs Pact, and Francis last April approved a process that could lead to sainthood for the slain bishop.

For many in the U.S., on the other hand, the catacombs have chiefly been deployed as a symbol of persecution, and often by conservative apologists who argue that secularizing trends are heralding a return to the days when Christians huddled in the tunnels for fear of the Romans.

Heisterhoff smiles at that notion. “Here in the catacombs, it was not a place to hide,” he explained. “It was a place to pray, not so much a refuge.”

That’s a point Francis himself has made — the Roman authorities knew where the catacombs, and the Christians, were. It was no secret hideaway. The catacombs even grew as a place to bury the

dead after the empire legalized Christianity in 313, as believers came to honour and pray for them in the hope of the resurrection.


What the catacombs really represented, Heisterhoff said, was “a church without power,” a church that featured what Francis has praised as a “convincing witness” — a radical vision of simplicity and service that the pope says is needed for today’s church.

So has the Pact of the Catacombs — and the true message of the catacombs themselves — re-emerged for good?

Much may depend on how long Francis, who turns 79 in December, remains pope and can promote his vision of a “church for the poor.”

Moreover, the economic message at the heart of the Catacombs Pact is just as controversial today as it was when it was signed 50 years ago. Capitalism may have won the Cold War over communism, but income inequality and economic injustice remain, or are worse than before.

“We cannot absolutize our western system,” Kasper said in explaining the theme of the Catacombs Pact. “It’s a system that creates so much poverty, that’s not just. The resources of the world belong to everyone. To all mankind. That is what it is saying.”

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Lest we forget: in honour of our war dead

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

“Patriotism is not dying for one’s country, it is living for one’s country — and for humanity. Perhaps that is not as romantic, but it’s better.”

Agnes McPhail, the first woman elected to Canada’s House of Commons, said those words. She was a young teacher just out of the normal school in Owen Sound, Ont., when the First World War broke out and all the boys left. She was still a young woman when just

a few of them came home.

The war formed McPhail even as she taught farm boys and girls arithmetic and English composition. She went on to represent Canada at the League of Nations on the disarmament committee.

The war formed her generation — a generation that gave Canada its sense of itself. We were then a young nation mourning a lost generation.

The wounded country that remembered its 66,665 dead and cared for its 172,950 wounded is still with us in every town and vil-

lage where the war’s toll is memorialized in cenotaphs, which were almost always erected near the centre of town.

There are at least 220 war memorials in Ontario alone. Throughout Saskatchewan and Manitoba many towns and villages have memorials. They vary from simple stone tablets to elaborate sculptures. But it would be difficult to find a single cenotaph that celebrates war, or proudly proclaims a triumph.

It may have been Pope John Paul II who first said, “War is always a defeat for humanity.” And Pope Francis has repeated those words again more recently. But it’s a truth McPhail and her generation — the ones who lived through the Great War — would have recognized at once.

For this Remembrance Day The Catholic Register decided to take a look at how the Canadians who lost their brothers and fathers a century ago chose to remember. Pictured here are just several of the numberless cenotaphs across Canada.

In addition to the names of the dead, almost every cenotaph mentions God. “Dedicated to the Glory of God and to those who served their Country. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them,” reads the Macdowall, Sask., Branch #241 cenotaph, constructed in 1979.

The cenotaph in Humboldt,



Design Pics

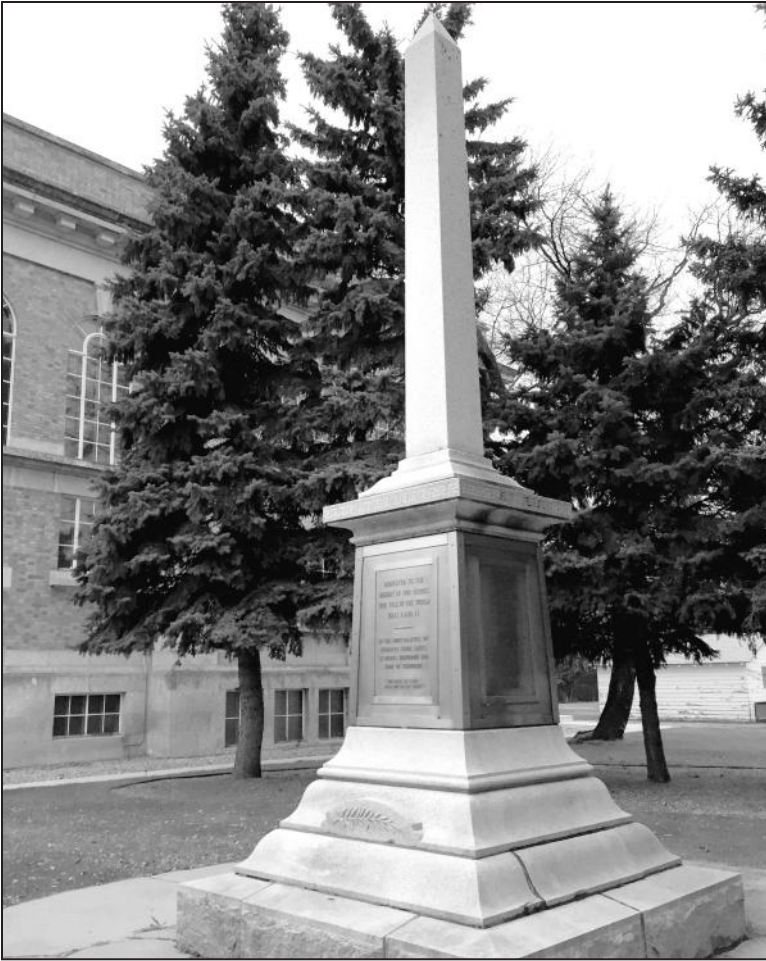
NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL — The National War Memorial (titled *The Response*) is a tall granite memorial arch with accreted bronze sculptures in Ottawa, designed by Vernon March and first dedicated by King George VI in 1939. Originally built to commemorate the Canadians who died in the First World War, it was in 1982 rededicated to also include those killed in the Second World War and Korean War and again in 2014 to add the dead from the Second Boer War and the war in Afghanistan, as well as all Canadians killed in all conflicts past and future.

Sask., is “Dedicated to the memory of our heroes who fell in the World Wars I and II.” Whether it’s the cross atop the war memorial in North Portal, Sask., or the inscription in the Goderich, Ont., memorial, Canada’s cenotaphs do not celebrate war. They mourn the dead.

“All that this Earth can give

they thrust aside. They crowded all their youth into an hour and for one fleeting dream of right they died,” reads the Goderich memorial.

We must now remember not just the dead but the generation they were taken from. We must remember, and honour, how they remembered.



M. Weber

HUMBOLDT CENOTAPH — Located by the Court House on the northwest corner of Main Street and Eighth Avenue, the cenotaph in Humboldt, Sask., was dedicated on July 1, 1921.



J. Weber

SASKATOON CENOTAPH — A part of City Hall Square, the cenotaph in Saskatoon was designed by Francis Henry Portnall (1928). It is a tall granite plinth incorporating a public clock face. There are currently 6,293 war memorials in Canada that are registered with the National Inventory of Military Memorials, which is under the Canadian Department of Veterans Affairs.



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Government faces pressure on euthanasia

Continued from page 5

euthanasia, the Liberals are more vague on this urgent issue and face pressures from those for and against doctor assisted death.

“It’s definitely a priority that we’re moving forward on, and I look forward to talking about that in the days and weeks ahead,” said Wilson-Raybould Nov. 4. She would not respond to a question on whether the government would ask for a delay from the Supreme Court of Canada before its Carter decision, striking down the Criminal Code provisions against euthanasia, goes into effect.

The new Health Minister Jane Philpott also faced questions on assisted suicide.

“Many of these issues of course that affect health like physician assisted suicide also cross other portfolios,” she said. “Certainly I will be collaborating with all the relevant stakeholders in those kinds of issues.”

An even more immediate chal-

lenge comes from the province of Quebec, which will implement its euthanasia law Dec. 6. Quebec is proceeding to implement “doctor assisted dying” as health care, challenging the jurisdiction of the federal government over Criminal Code matters.

The Conservatives had launched an external panel to examine legislative options on the Supreme Court’s Carter decision that continues its consultation under the new Trudeau government.

Vatican access to information

In most democratic countries, governments have legislated Access to Information laws which allow members of the public — via the media, mainly — to peek inside some of the decisions their administrations have made. This is not always appreciated by officials who prefer to keep things secret.

The Vatican is known for being one of the most secretive organizations in the world. A major rift in that culture was created by the Vatileaks scandal in 2012. Ironically, it was triggered by Pope Benedict XVI's decision in 2010 to introduce anti-money laundering regulations in the Vatican. This was meant to update the Vatican's financial practices to comply with international transparency standards. This introduced a momentous change for the Vatican and it was opposed by some Vatican insiders.

In May 2012 Italian journalist Gianluigi Nuzzi published a book entitled *His Holiness: The Secret Papers of Benedict XVI*. It revealed confidential letters and memos between Pope Benedict and his personal secretary. The book portrays the Vatican as a hotbed of jealousy, intrigue and underhanded factional fighting.

In early November this year there was a sequel to the first Vatileaks. Nuzzi released his new book

Merchants in the Temple: Inside Pope Francis' Secret Battle Against Corruption in the Vatican (Via Crucis). His book is based largely on confidential documents and reports from members of a temporary commission Pope Francis established in July 2013 to clean up the Vatican's financial chaos, control costs and eliminate the possibilities for misusing funds. Another book, Emiliano Fittipaldi's *Avarizia* (Greed), was published the same day in Italian.

In an unusual move, Pope Francis addressed the issue in his Sunday Angelus talk Nov. 8. "Stealing those documents was a crime," he said, but "both I and my advisers" were "well acquainted with" the contents of the documents. He denied the claims of the two authors and their anonymous sources, who said their intention was to inform him of what was really going on in the Vatican. He emphasized that his reform project of the Roman Curia will continue.

What is revealed in the two books?

Respected Vatican commentator John Allen Jr., writes in his blog *Crux*: Nuzzi's book describes how cardinals live in elegant and spacious quarters, often at zero cost, and that Vatican-owned apartments often bring in substantially below-market rents because residents have been cut sweetheart deals.

The *Tablet* blogger Christopher Lamb lists further details:

- In 2011-12 the majority of Peter's Pence worth 378 million euros was used to pay for the Vatican bureaucracy.
 - In 2014 there was a theft of documents from the archive of Cosea, a commission that was conducting an overhaul of Vatican administration and finances.
 - A lay postulator for a saint's cause asked for 40,000 euros in order to make preliminary investigations.
 - In 2013, 80 per cent of 204 million euros deposits held by Apsa — the body which looks after money that funds the work of the Roman Curia — were with one investment at the *Banca Prossima*.
 - Vatican departments were keeping unaccounted money in their safes.
- Meanwhile, Emiliano Fittipaldi's book *Avarizia* (Greed) details how commercial operations inside the Vatican walls — a gas station, pharmacy, tobacco shop, and supermarket — generate tens of millions of euros in income by selling products at discounted prices due to tax exemptions. In theory, those services are reserved to Vatican personnel, but they often lend their employee cards to friends who are not Vatican employees.
- Pope Francis was elected on a reform ticket. May God give him the strength and time to finish his mission. — PWN

Doctors face danger of 'medical martyrdom' on euthanasia, abortion

By Wesley J. Smith

Will Catholic doctors who subscribe to the church's moral teaching against assisted suicide and abortion ever be forced to take human life? Until recently, such a prospect was unthinkable.

If trends continue, Catholic and other sanctity-of-life-believing doctors will be forced to choose between violating the Sixth Commandment and continuing in good stead in their chosen profession. I call this threat "medical martyrdom" — a potential authoritarian-

ism that looms darkly in the coming decade because of two fundamental mutations in the ethics of medicine.

First, doctors don't take the Hippocratic Oath anymore and haven't for decades. The Oath's ethical proscriptions against participating in abortion and assisted suicide cut against the contemporary moral grain, leading medical schools to dumb it down or dispose of it altogether.

Second, "patients' rights" have become the new mantra in health care where physicians are "service providers" and patients are, in essence, consumers. As such, many among the medical intelligentsia and in bioethics believe that the competent customer is entitled to virtually any legal procedure from "service providers."

As a consequence, Hippocratic-believing professionals are pressured to practise medicine without

regard to their personal faith or conscience beliefs. This moral intolerance is slowly being imbedded into law. In the U.S., such legal controversies have mostly swirled around. Elsewhere, the force of law has — or threatens to — force doctors to be complicit in abortion and euthanasia.

The first such law was passed

several years ago in Victoria, Australia, where the local law requires all doctors to perform — or be complicit in — abortion. If a patient requests a legal termination and the doctor has moral qualms, the dissenting physician is *required* to find a doctor on behalf of the patient known to be willing to do the deed.

Canada is heading rapidly in the same direction regarding euthanasia. Quebec legalized doctor-administered death last year and allows no conscience exemptions. When palliative care centres and hospices balked, the minister of health called such resistance

— SUPREME COURT, page 15

Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute's Centre on Human Exceptionalism and a consultant to the Patients Rights Council. This article is reprinted with permission from *Legatus* magazine, November 2015 issue.

Canadian railroad 130 years old Nov. 7

By Pat Murphy, Toronto
Troy Media

The public mood was optimistic when I first came to Canada, what with the impending Centennial

Murphy worked in the Canadian financial services industry for over 30 years. www.troymedia.com

year celebrations and the overall sense that things were good and could only get better. And part of that feeling was an emerging pride in past nation-building, particularly the transcontinental railroad linking the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was 130 years ago this month — on Nov. 7, 1885 — that the railroad's ceremonial last spike was driven in Craigellachie, B.C.

You'd expect historians and writers of weighty magazine pieces to be dutifully enthusiastic about the transcontinental railroad. And they were. But in the mid-60s, that enthusiasm also extended into the popular culture.

For instance, on Jan. 1, 1967, the CBC broadcast a specially commissioned song from Gordon Lightfoot, then a rising folk singer. Called the Canadian Railroad Trilogy, it was an epic running over six minutes and deploying an unusual structure that alternated fast and slow tempos. And while it had its sombre moments, the overall narrative was heroic.

Then, a few years later, writer Pierre Berton told the story in a pair of well-received and very popular books — 1970's *The National Dream* and 1972's *The Last Spike*. A skilful storyteller rather than an academic historian, Berton, like Lightfoot, caught the uplifting, patriotic mood.

And it really was a heroic story, one illuminated with large personalities and monumental challenges. Building what was then the longest railroad in the world across 5,000 kilometres of sparsely populated, intensely rugged and often downright inhospitable terrain, it was an

undertaking initially described by the Liberal opposition as "an act of insane recklessness." But Canada's first prime minister, the Tory John A. Macdonald, was for it, and it had been a condition British Columbia insisted on when joining Confederation.

The western section of the line, linking Ontario with the Pacific, was by far the most difficult part, so much so that actual construction didn't begin until May 1881. And the vehicle for building was the newly formed Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), a syndicate headed by two Scottish-born cousins, Donald Smith and George Stephen. Smith was, among other things, chief commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Stephen was president of the Bank of Montreal.

Although the CPR was a private venture, its scope was sufficiently large and its prospects sufficiently risky that substantial government assistance was required. There was \$25 million in cash, 25 million acres of public land, millions of dollars' worth of existing publicly owned rail lines and completed survey costs, and a guaranteed monopoly on western traffic — all followed by a further \$22.5-million loan. Even then, Stephen was forced to go to London in 1885 to secure additional financing to finish the job.

Of all the personalities involved, perhaps the most spectacular was an American, William Cornelius Van Horne from Illinois. As a vastly experienced railway man who'd left school at the

— VAN HORNE, page 15



CNS/Victor Aleman

ALL SOULS' DAY CELEBRATION — Aztec dancers participate in the *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) celebration at Calvary Cemetery in Los Angeles Nov. 1. More than 3,000 people attended the event that began with an outdoor mass celebrated in honour of All Souls' Day by Auxiliary Bishop David G. O'Connell. He urged massgoers to follow the good examples of their departed loved ones being remembered with a tradition started in Mexico during the pre-Hispanic era.

Church is ‘witness of poverty’

Continued from page 1

gentina many years later when the pope was archbishop of Buenos Aires.

“I accompanied her until she died at 93 years old. One day she gave me a Sacred Heart of Jesus medal that I carry with me every day,” the pope said, adding that it serves as a daily reminder of how she and many others suffer due to poverty.

When asked if he fears that people will grow tired of his defence of the poor and of refugees, the pope noted that while he does feel that some may be tired of it, “it does not scare me. I must continue to speak the truth and how things are.”

“It is my duty, I feel it inside me. It is not a commandment,

but as people, we all must do it,” he said.

Pope Francis stressed that the church must also be “a witness of poverty,” but there are also temptations to lead by words alone and not by deeds. “If a believer speaks about poverty or the homeless and lives the life of a pharaoh: this cannot be done,” he said.

He also warned against the dangers of corruption in both political and religious life, recalling that during the Falklands War with Great Britain, many people, including Catholics, would take home the food and supplies they had been tasked with distributing to others.

“It is corruption: a piece for me and another piece for me,” he said.

Regarding the fact that, as pon-

tiff, he is confined “like a prisoner in the Vatican,” the pope was asked if he had a desire to switch places with a homeless person.

The pope compared his life to the Mark Twain classic, *The Prince and the Pauper*, saying that while the prince lacks nothing and even has friends, he still lives in a “gilded cage.”

Asked if he ever dreamed of becoming pope, Pope Francis replied with a categorical “no,” adding that as a child, he had very different aspirations.

He said, “I would go grocery shopping with my mother and grandmother. I was very small, I was four years old. And once they asked me, ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ I answered, ‘A butcher!’”

Supreme Court legalized euthanasia

Continued from page 14

“inappropriate and unfortunate” because doctors must “adapt to the patient,” warning darkly that euthanasia “will be offered.”

Meanwhile, Canada’s Supreme Court just legalized euthanasia for those with a diagnosable medical condition that causes “irremediable suffering,” including “psychological pain.” Recognizing that some doctors will have moral qualms about “terminating life,” the Court gave Parliament 12 months to pass enabling legislation, stating that “the rights of patients and physicians will need to be reconciled” by law or left “in the hands of physicians’ colleges.”

That doesn’t bode well for medical conscience rights. Canada’s medical associations have low regard for conscientious objectors. Saskatchewan’s College of Physicians and Surgeons recently published a draft ethics policy that

would force doctors to provide “legally permissible and publicly funded health services” — which now include euthanasia as well as abortion — to “make a timely referral to another health provider who is willing and able to . . . provide the service.” If no other doctor can be found, the dissenting physician will have to do the deed personally, “even in circumstances where the provision of health services conflicts with physicians’ deeply held and considered moral or religious beliefs.”

Meanwhile, 79 per cent of Canadian Medical Association delegates at a recent convention voted against a motion that would have supported conscience exemptions from participating in euthanasia.

U.S. doctors cannot be forced to participate in abortion and assisted suicide (in the jurisdictions where it is legal). But these professional safeguards are generally opposed

by the medical establishment — at least as they apply to abortion. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) published an ethics-committee opinion in 2007 strikingly similar to the Saskatchewan College’s: “Conscientious refusals should be limited if they constitute an imposition of religious and moral beliefs on patients. Physicians and other health care providers have the duty to refer patients in a timely manner to other providers if they do not feel they can in conscience provide the standard reproductive services that patients request.”

If these trends continue, 20 years from now, those who feel called to a career in health care will face an agonizing dilemma: Either participate in acts of killing or stay out of medicine. Those who stay true to their consciences will be forced into the painful sacrifice of embracing martyrdom for their faith.



A. Barkman

Cenotaph Scene

Booming guns salute his fallen comrades,
triggering vivid scenes long laid to rest.
Outnumbered by enemy emotions,
a hardened old soldier
deployed in mental combat
engages in a battle all his own.
Wounded in spirit,
overwhelmed by memories,
he painfully unfurls
white handkerchief from pocket
and surrenders to a tear.

By Alma Barkman

Van Horne saw himself as boss of everybody, everything

Continued from page 14

age of 14, Van Horne’s particular forte was getting difficult stuff done, in which capacity he was brought in as the CPR’s general manager in 1882.

Theodore Regehr’s biographical sketch describes him as a physically imposing man who liked big things, had a keen eye for detail and was gifted with exceptional energy. And Van Horne apparently saw himself as the “boss of everybody and everything,” which was perhaps a necessary requirement for the situation. In any event, he did what he was hired to do.

Of course, building the transcontinental railroad also required the efforts of many people whose names are lost to us now. If you like, the little guys — the navvies — who swung the hammers and

endured the blazing sun and the numbing cold, not to mention the risks to life and limb. And prominent among these were the imported Chinese labourers who did some of the most dangerous work, blasting through the mountains of British Columbia.

Lightfoot, to his credit, succinctly catches the navvy spirit: “A dollar a day and a place for my head/A drink to the living, a toast to the dead.” It was indeed a different world.

Canadian history is often described as bland and boring, particularly when compared to the tumultuous events elsewhere. While others were defined in the crucible of revolution or civil war, our transforming events were as mundane as building a railroad. I don’t know about you, but I’m cool with the contrast.



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Journalist describes three ‘mega trends’ in church

By Marnie McAllister

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (CNS) — Catholic journalist John L. Allen Jr., a CNN analyst and an associate editor of the Boston Globe, discussed the future of the Catholic Church — describing what he called three “mega trends” in the church today — during a gathering Nov. 3 in Louisville.

As the keynote speaker for the Archdiocese of Louisville’s Archdiocesan Leadership Institute, Allen shared his analysis of the church with archdiocesan agency staff, clergy, religious and parish staff and volunteers.

Allen, who also is an associate editor of the Globe’s Catholic news website, Crux, began by cautioning his listeners: Trying to predict the future of the church with Pope Francis at the helm is a “fool’s errand.” He suggested, instead, that Catholics “step back” and examine “the big picture.”

In thinking about Catholic life, Allen said he sees three “mega trends” that may shape the church’s future:

- The rise of a world church.
- The rise of a church of martyrs.
- “Tribalism,” a sort of multi-faceted polarization, in the U.S. church.

On his first point, that the church has become global, Allen said, “We’ve lived through a demographic inversion.”

He cited a slate of statistics that show a major shift in the Catholic population. In the early 20th century, around 1900, he

said, there were about 270 million Catholics in the world and most — about 160 million — lived in Europe or North America.

In the year 2000, there were about 1.2 billion Catholics in the world and more than half — 780 million — lived outside the West, in such places as Latin America, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific Islands.

“Within our lifetimes, three out of every four Catholics . . . will be living in the developing world,” he said. With this shift, “Everything is transformed; nothing is left untouched.”

And it demands a new perspective in the church, he said. As an example, he noted that the recent synod of bishops on the family struggled with how to best care for divorced and civilly remarried Catholics.

Bishops in Africa, where the church is growing rapidly, were opposed to changes that would apparently weaken the church’s teaching on marriage, Allen noted, because they are dealing with another pastoral challenge, one few Americans consider: polygamy.

“American Catholics represent exactly six per cent of the global Catholic population,” Allen said. “Ninety-four per cent ain’t necessarily like us. It’s a bigger and more complicated picture than we can imagine.”

“Fixes to problems that seem obvious to us . . . are not going to play that way in the rest of the world,” he added.

Catholics in some parts of the world are facing very different

problems, he said.

Depending on which statistics you hear, a Christian is dying for his or her faith every five minutes or every hour. Regardless, Allen said, it’s a “human rights scourge of dumbfounding proportions.”

Allen said he has interviewed persecuted Christians around the globe and recounted horrific stories of violent killings, gang rape and displacement that have been used against Christians in India, Colombia and Egypt. It’s happening, he said, “on a vast scale all over the world,” yet it’s a story of martyrdom “that struggles to be told.”

“We face a serious call to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering,” he said. Noting that the notion of solidarity sounds abstract, Allen recommended Americans take action when it comes to persecution in Iraq and Syria, “where Christians are being slaughtered wholesale.”

“We have both an opportunity and an obligation to make sure our suffering brothers and sisters in faith, particularly in Iraq and Syria . . . know we are with them,” both in responding to the immediate humanitarian crisis and in the future, he said.

Turning to the domestic church, Allen said, “We are a group of people clustered into different tribes.” He likened the separations within the church to polarization in American politics, but said differences in the church are not just left and right, they are more complex.

He noted that a comparison of statistics from the 1968 and 2004 presidential elections shows that today’s voters know fewer people who voted for a different candi-

date. People with various leanings have their own media outlets, their own churches, their own heroes; people have fewer friends with differing opinions and perspectives, he said.

And that’s a problem, Allen said, because it’s easier to demonize a stranger. “Too often we are looking for victory rather than understanding,” he said.

The solution lies in friendship, he said. Allen encouraged his listeners, who represented the Archdiocese of Louisville’s

parishes and agencies, to consider how their programs and projects can help bring people together, with a focus on building friendship.



CNS/Yara Nardi, Reuters

BOOKS ON VATICAN FINANCES — Italian journalist Gianluigi Nuzzi is surrounded by the media after a Nov. 4 news conference for his new book **Merchants in the Temple: Inside Pope Francis’ Secret Battle Against Corruption in the Vatican**. Nuzzi’s book is based largely on confidential documents given to and reports written by members of a temporary commission Pope Francis established in July 2013 to clean up the Vatican’s financial chaos, control costs and eliminate the possibilities for misusing funds. Another book, Emiliano Fittipaldi’s **Avarizia (Greed)**, also focuses on Vatican finances and was published the same day in Italian.

Brazilian bishop visits area where two dams burst

By Lise Alves

SÃO PAULO (CNS) — Rescuers were still looking for at least 18 people who disappeared in the town of Bento Rodrigues Nov. 6, the day after two dams from a nearby iron ore processing plant gave way.

Officials had only confirmed two deaths by that afternoon, but residents and volunteers feared the number would rise. Water and mud swept over the rural area of one of Brazil’s most famous historic cities, Mariana, leaving a trail of destruction.

Archbishop Geraldo Lyrio Rocha of Mariana was expected to visit a sports centre in the area, set up as a temporary shelter for those who lost their homes in the accident.

“There were people coming in all morning long; most of them were pretty shaken up,” Carol Vieira of the archdiocese’s communications department told CNS after visiting the centre.

Vieira said several priests from nearby parishes were at the shelter

aiding residents and distributing donations, which had begun to arrive. The information has been sketchy since cellphone signals are not stable in the area. Rocha was expected to attend a news conference given by Samarco, the mining company responsible for building the dams.

“At the moment the sports centre has been large enough to house those displaced, but if additional shelters are needed, the church will be here to help,” Vieira said, adding that a strategy was expected to be drawn up by state and municipal officials as well as non-governmental and religious groups.

Local media reported authorities were concerned that the water from the dam, which is contaminated with waste residues from the iron ore processing plant, will enter one of the region’s rivers, threatening the area’s water supply.

Brazil’s National Department of Mineral Production confirmed that a magnitude-2.5 earthquake was felt in the region an hour before the dams broke.

Churches will not allow new ivory images

By Simone Orendain

MANILA, Philippines (CNS) — The Philippine bishops’ conference has urged church leaders to keep new ivory out of churches around the country.

“I appeal to my brother bishops of the Philippines to prohibit the clerics from blessing any new statue, image or object of devotion made or crafted from such material as ivory or similar body parts of endangered or protected (species), nor shall such new statues or images be used as objects

of veneration in any of our churches,” Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, conference president, said in the pastoral letter signed on behalf of the bishops.

A 2012 National Geographic investigation found that the Philippines was one of the entry points for the illegal African ivory trade. The journalist interviewed a priest from the central city of Cebu, who gave him pointers on how to smuggle ivory into the country.

The bishops’ Nov. 4 letter made a push for the spiritual

aspect of respecting God’s creations and the roles they play in the scheme of nature. It lamented that, in the Philippines, endangered species are “hardly cared for,” and expressed concern that, worldwide, more and more species are going extinct.

“No matter the beauty of a work of art, it cannot justify the slaughter of wildlife, the use of endangered organic forms and lending a seal of approval to the threat posed to biodiversity by poachers and traffickers,” the letter said. It added, however, that ivory images that had existed for centuries or had been in use since before the letter was released should be “safeguarded, and may remain in use for purposes of devotion and in recognition of their historical value.”

Villegas told Catholic News Service that the pastoral letter was part of a program of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines to highlight sections of the pope’s encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si’*.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, African elephants numbered about three million-five million in the past century, but rampant killings for ivory in the 1980s decreased their numbers by 100,000 per year. Today there are 470,000 African elephants and, despite an international ban on ivory poaching, the animal advocacy group said thousands continue to be poached.



CNS/Dennis M. Sabangan, EPA

PHILIPPINES FIGHT IVORY TRADE — Workers gather elephant tusks seized from illegal shipments at the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau-Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Manila, Philippines, in 2013. The Philippine bishops’ conference has urged church leaders to keep new ivory out of churches around the country.

May God grant you always...
A sunbeam to warm you,
a moonbeam to charm you,
a sheltering Angel so nothing can harm you,
Laughter to cheer you.
Faithful friends near you.
And whenever you pray,
Heaven to hear you.

— An Irish Blessing