



Laudato Si'

An ecumenical workshop in Saskatoon opened with an overview of Pope Francis' encyclical on care of the earth and a look at Saskatchewan's role in global climate change.

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Mining concerns

At the "Mining: We must talk" symposium in Ottawa recently, Saskatoon Bishop Don Bolen stressed the importance of dialogue in addressing problems Canadian companies cause in the Global South.

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Hearts on Fire

The Apostleship of Prayer Hearts on Fire retreat is coming to the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Jan. 30 - 31, 2016, for young adults aged 18 - 35.

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Out of the cold

The Out of the Cold program in Toronto has been helping the homeless for 30 years. A new book by Michael Swan recounts the success of the program.

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Rough roads

In light of the readings for the Second Sunday of



Advent, how do we, in our homes, parishes and country, see "the rough ways

made smooth"? asks Michael Dougherty.

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What a change will bring

Will the new Liberal government boost social justice causes? Will Braun look at what might be in store for the issues some faith groups have pushed.

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World catching up to pope on climate change

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

Pope Francis has been getting ready for Paris for more than a year. In May of 2014 the Patriarch of Rome sat down in Jerusalem with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and issued a joint declaration as a challenge to the world's Christians.

"Together, we pledge our commitment to raising awareness about the stewardship of creation," they wrote. "We appeal to all people of goodwill to consider ways of living less wastefully and more frugally, manifesting less greed and more generosity for the protection of God's world and the benefit of his people."

As they signed the declaration, the spiritual heads of more than one billion Catholics and more than 300 million Orthodox Christians were already thinking about COP21, the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference coming up Nov. 30 to Dec. 11 in Paris. Work was then already underway at the Vatican to prepare a major statement on the environment. That statement turned out to be Francis' environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

So the pope is ready — ready for 196 world leaders to get down to work on meaningful, measurable action to limit global warming

to less than two degrees by mid-century. But are Catholics ready? Is the world ready?

A Pew Research Centre study of popular opinion in over 40 countries shows Catholic and world opinion catching up with the pope.

Across all nations a global median of 54 per cent of us believe climate change is a very serious problem. Canadians fall a little short of the world standard with 51 per cent claiming the problem is very serious, but another 33 per cent grant it is somewhat serious. Canadians however, are more concerned than Americans. Only 45 per cent of U.S. residents believe climate change is very serious, with another 29 per cent saying it's somewhat serious.

The real concern over climate change is in Latin America, where 74 per cent call the problem "very serious," and Africa, where on average 61 per cent of Africans told Pew researchers the problem is "very serious."

Religiously, Catholics seem to have more personal concern about climate change. Among Canadian Catholics, 26 per cent said they were "very concerned that climate change will harm me personally." That compares to just 16 per cent of Canadian Protestants. But Catholics still lag behind the religiously unaffiliated in this country. Thirty per cent of religiously

unaffiliated Canadians expressed grave concern about how climate change will harm them personally.

On that personal sense of foreboding, Canadian Catholics trail their American coreligionists. Thirty-nine per cent of American Catholics (half of them Hispanic with ties to Latin America) claim to be very concerned with how climate change will affect them personally, compared with 27 per cent of the religiously unaffiliated Americans and 26 per cent of Protestants.

Results showing Canadian Catholics more concerned about climate change than Protestants were surprising to Dennis Patrick O'Hara, a theologian at Toronto's University of St. Michael's College.



Design Pics

CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS — COP21, the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, is coming up Nov. 30 to Dec. 11 in Paris. While Pope Francis has been getting ready for Paris for more than a year, Catholics, and the world, are starting to catch up.

"The Protestants have been doing better," says O'Hara. — BISHOPS, page 4

Pope's Holy Year focuses on interfaith 'fervent dialogue'

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Opening the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica and the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis also hopes to open a year of "fervent dialogue"

among Christians, Muslims and Jews, so that all who profess faith in a merciful God may be stronger in showing mercy toward one another.

The opening of the special jubilee year just a month after the

terrorist attacks in Paris and at a time of continuing strife in the Holy Land and around the Middle East shows the size of the challenge facing those committed to inter-religious dialogue, but it equally shows the need.

In his official proclamation of the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis noted that the Christian profession of faith in God's mercy "relates us to Judaism and Islam, both of which consider mercy to be one of God's most important attributes."

He prayed that the jubilee would "open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; may it eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination."

"This jubilee of mercy is an inspiration," said Shahrzad Houshmand, a Muslim scholar who teaches at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University. "At this difficult moment in history, it is time to return to the original name of God who, for all three of us, is mercy. We have lost so much on the way because of pride, because we have not recognized each other as brothers and sisters and some have even gone so far astray that they see each other as enemies. This jubilee can help us return to the roots of our religious existence which is based on the name of God, the merciful."

For Rabbi Naftali Brawer, CEO of the Spiritual Capital

Gaudium et Spes a living document

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

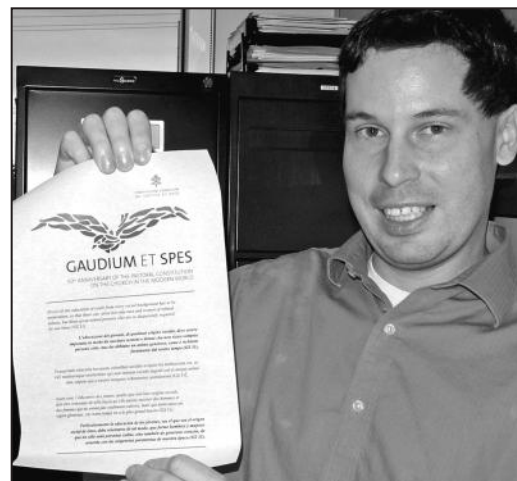
SASKATOON — Justice and peace co-ordinator Myron Rogal of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon was the Canadian delegate to a recent Vatican symposium held on the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*.

Rogal was selected by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) in response to an invitation from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace for a delegate from the Church of Canada to attend the Nov. 5 - 6 event in Rome, held to mark the anniversary of *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope).

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* was one of the Second Vatican Council's key documents. It expresses the call and the desire of the Catholic

Church to engage with the entire human family in understanding

and addressing the needs of the world in our time.



Yaworski

GAUDIUM ET SPES — Myron Rogal, CCCB delegate to a symposium in Rome to mark the anniversary of *Gaudium et Spes*, holds the parchment delegates were given to take back to their home countries, tied with a ribbon, and a flash drive with the document on it.

"Young generations in the service of mankind" was the theme of the two-day symposium — reflecting words from Paragraph 31 of *Gaudium et Spes*: "Above all the education of youth from every social background has to be undertaken, so that there can be produced not only men and women of refined talents, but those great-souled persons who are so desperately required by our times."

Justice and peace

— SPEAKS, p. 5

— PEOPLE, page 19

U.S. bishops approve priorities, new strategic plan

BALTIMORE (CNS) — The U.S. bishops approved a formal statement on pornography and additions to their quadrennial statement on political responsibility at their Nov. 16 - 19 fall general meeting in Baltimore.

The votes were made during the public portion of the meeting, which ran Nov. 16 - 17. The bishops met in executive session Nov. 18 - 19.

The 2015 version of political responsibility document, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, passed 210 - 21 with five abstentions, and a separate vote on the statement's introductory note passed 217 - 16 with two abstentions; two-thirds of diocesan bishops, or 181 votes, were needed for passage.

Additions to the document were made to reflect the teachings of Pope Francis and the later encyclicals of Pope Benedict XVI. But some bishops said the document does not adequately address poverty, as Pope Francis has

asked the church to do.

The most vocal critic was Bishop Robert W. McElroy of San Diego, who said he was concerned that because poverty and the environment did not receive the same priority as abortion and euthanasia, that some people "outside of this room" would "misuse" the document and claim other issues did not carry the same moral weight.

The pornography statement, Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography, says that "producing or using pornography is gravely wrong" and is a "mortal sin" if committed with deliberate consent and urges Catholics to turn away from it. Approval of the statement came on a vote of 230 - 4 with one abstention, with 181 votes needed for passage.

Bishop Richard J. Malone, of Buffalo, New York, chair of the bishops' Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, described pornography as a "dark

shadow in our world today." He added pornography is a "particularly sinister instance of consumption" where men, women and children are "consumed for the pleasure of others."

The bishops approved a budget for the work of their national conference in 2016, but their vote was inconclusive on a proposed three per cent increase in 2017 to the assessment on dioceses that funds the conference.

The bishops approved priorities and strategic plans for 2017 - 20 in a 233 - 4 vote Nov. 17. The document emphasizes five major areas: evangelization; family and marriage; human life and dignity; religious freedom; and vocations and ongoing formation.

As part of a series of elections, the bishops chose Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati as treasurer-elect. They also elected Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield as the new general secretary; he has been associate general secretary for five years. His term starts at

the beginning of 2016. He will succeed Msgr. Ronny Jenkins.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops met in the shadow of the Nov. 13 terror attacks in Paris. Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo of Seattle, chair of the USCCB Committee on Migration, issued a statement Nov. 17 from the floor of the meeting.

"I am disturbed," Elizondo said, "by calls from both federal and state officials for an end to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the United States" in the wake of the attacks. "These refugees are fleeing terror themselves — violence like we have witnessed in Paris."

He added, "Moreover, refugees to this country must pass security checks and multiple interviews before entering the United States — more than any arrival to the United States. It can take up to two years for a refugee to pass through the whole vetting process. We can look at strengthening the already stringent screening program, but we should continue to welcome those in desperate need."

Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, told the bishops Nov. 17 that Catholic Charities has been sent "disturbing mail from people angry that we are trying to help these people. It's tragic." She added of the Syrian



CNS/Bob Roller

U.S. BISHOPS MEET IN BALTIMORE — Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., USCCB president, and Msgr. Ronny E. Jenkins, USCCB general secretary, listen to a speaker Nov. 16 during the opening of the 2015 bishops' fall general assembly in Baltimore. Jenkins' term ends at the end of this year.

God never closes door of mercy: pope

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Because God always keeps open the door of his mercy and offer of salvation to everyone, the doors of every church and every Christian heart must never be closed to others, Pope Francis said.

mercy" and are generously opened to receive people's repentance and offer the grace of God's forgiveness, he said.

The recent synod of bishops on the family was an occasion to encourage the church and all Catholics to meet God at this open door and to open their own doors to

life, he said.

"It would be terrible. An inhospitable church — just like a family closed inside itself — mortifies the Gospel and parches dry the world. No bolted doors in the church. None. Everything open," he said to applause.

The symbolism of how a door is opened, how Jesus always knocks and asks permission to come in, "he never forces open the door" of one's heart, is crucial, the pope said. The door is watched over and safeguarded by a custodian, but it is never slammed shut on anyone.

"The door is opened frequently in order to see if there is anyone outside waiting and perhaps doesn't have the courage, perhaps not even the strength, to knock," he said.

"These people have lost trust, they don't have the courage to knock on the doors of our Christian hearts, the doors of our churches, and there they are — they don't have the courage, we took away their trust," Pope Francis said. "Please, this must never happen anymore."

How people watch over this door says a lot about the church and the community, he said, so how one cares for "the doorway" calls for great discernment and must inspire confidence and trust in people on the outside.

Pope Francis said people can learn from concierges, porters and doormen around the world, who always smile and make people feel welcome and at home. Thanking them for their work, he said the astuteness and politeness they display right at the entrance set the tone for the whole building.

Jesus is the door and the good shepherd whose sheep hear, recognize and follow him, the pope said referring to chapter 10 of the Gospel of St. John.

Like the sheepfold, where God's people are gathered, the pope said, "the house of God is a shelter, not a prison." Jesus is the gate that lets people go in "without fear and go out without danger."

others — "to go out with the Lord" to encounter his children who are journeying, who are perhaps uncertain, perhaps lost, "in these difficult times," he said.

"If the door of God's mercy is always open, the doors of our churches, our love, our communities, our parishes, our institutions, our dioceses also must be open so that we all can go out to bring God's mercy" to others, he said.

The jubilee year also represents the need to open the many small doors in everyone's life so that "the Lord can come in or, many times, to let out the Lord imprisoned by our structures, our selfishness," the pope said. "The jubilee means to let the Lord come in and go out."

Don't let the fact that so many homes and businesses deadbolt their doors for security reasons influence one's personal approach to life, he said.

"We must not succumb to the idea of having to apply this system to our whole life, to family life," to life in the city and community and much less to church



Paproski

OPEN THE DOORS OF MERCY — Pope Francis' call to open the door of God's mercy and offer his salvation to everyone reflects the theme of the 2000 Jubilee Year proclaimed by Pope John Paul II. The theme is above the doors of Sts. Peter and Paul Abbey Church in Muenster.

All over the world, individual Christians and the whole church must be seen as "the hospitality of a God who never shuts the door in your face with the excuse that you're not part of the family," he said during his weekly general audience Nov. 18.

The pope dedicated his catechesis to the symbol of the Holy Door, which will be opened at St. Peter's Basilica Dec. 8 to mark the start of the extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy.

Holy doors around the world represent the "great door of God's

refugees, "We're ready to help — if we can get them here."

In his USCCB presidential address Nov. 16, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, called on his fellow bishops Nov. 16 to imitate the "pastor's presence" exhibited by Pope Francis during his recent U.S. visit, "touching the hearts of the most influential, the forgotten and all of us in-between."

Noting the upcoming Year of Mercy that begins Dec. 8, Archbishop Kurtz said a ministry of "presence means making time and never letting administration come between me and the person. It's seeing the person first."

Pope stresses need to address impact pollution has on sick

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis encouraged greater attention to those whose health is affected by environmental degradation and pollution.

He said he meets so many sick people, especially children, during his weekly general audience or on a parish visit, who are afflicted with a rare disease that doctors can't explain.

"These rare diseases are the consequences of the illnesses we inflict on the environment. This is serious," he said Nov. 19.

The pope was speaking to hundreds of scientists, health care professionals, theologians, diplomats and other experts taking part in an international conference sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry. The conference, Nov. 19 - 21, discussed the culture of "health and welcoming" in serving humanity and the planet.

He encouraged participants to make sure their work considers those who "suffer harm — serious and often permanent harm — to their health caused by environmental degradation."

Protecting and caring for one's neighbour and environment reflect the human responsibility to care for all of God's creation, he said.

Respecting and loving life find fulfilment in drawing close to those who need physical and spiritual healing, he said.

This "drawing near," he said, was exactly what Jesus did every day when he met with the ill, "public sinners, the possessed, the marginalized, the poor, foreigners. . . ."

Today, the kind of people Jesus attended to "are set aside, they don't count. It's strange. What does it mean? The throwaway culture is not from Jesus. It isn't Christian."

This throwaway culture accepts or rejects life based on whether it can be "useful" or "efficient" in society or the economy, he said. People who don't measure up are seen as "a burden, a disturbance."

This mentality, he said, is related to the way medicine is being pushed to respond to every personal desire — the quest "for physical perfection at whatever cost, under the illusion of eternal youth."

Bolen stresses dialogue in addressing mining concerns

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — At the “Mining: We must talk” symposium here, Saskatoon Bishop Don Bolen stressed the importance of dialogue in addressing problems Canadian companies cause in the Global South.

Bolen told the gathering at Saint Paul University of activist groups such as Mining Watch, several NGOs, indigenous rights activists and representatives of the Mining and Extractive industry that Pope Francis called for a “culture of encounter” in his encyclical on the environment *Laudato Si’*.

“I think we have work to do in determining how that dialogue best moves forward and discerning our respective roles are in that conversation,” Bolen said.

As chair of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops’ justice and peace commission and an ecumenist, Bolen said he has no expertise in mining, or on the economy and many specifics that need to be discussed.

He said he came empowered by the words the Canadian bishops have received from bishops in

the developing world from places “negatively impacted by Canadian mining practices.”

Last March 19 bishops from Brazil, Guatemala, Peru, Honduras and Mexico appeared before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in Washington, D.C., to detail human rights violations and abuses of indigenous and non-indigenous populations by mining and extractive industries in Latin America, he said.

“They noted the church recognizes the importance of the mining industry and its benefits to local communities and the economy as a whole and expressed appreciation for those, including entrepreneurs, state officials, professional engineers and technicians, who strive to go beyond simply complying with legal standards to ensure the physical safety of workers, local communities, and indigenous peoples, and to protect the environment,” Bolen said.

The Latin American bishops said Canada was viewed as a “mining superpower,” in an environment where multinational corporations were becoming so strong as to subordinate local economies, Bolen said.

One of the main impacts concerned water resources, already under stress from climate change, he said.

The bishops reported human rights abuses; damage to quality of life for humans, animals and livelihoods; spread of diseases; water problems forcing local populations to become environmental migrants to cities; and social problems such as a rise in alcoholism, violence, drug addiction and prostitution, including human trafficking, he said.

“I say all of this not to paint a broad brush of condemnation,” Bolen said. “I have read enough to know that many corporations have respectful and healthy relationships with local communities; many work to build up the local society.”

“I know, and these bishops who appeal to us also know, that a significant part of the problem is in their own homelands, in a lack of regulatory procedures and in corruption and in various forms of injustice that also involve their own people,” the bishop said.

Bishops from other parts of the world have also appealed to the Canadian bishops to stand with them against abuses by Canadian

mining companies, he said.

The “situation is tremendously complex,” said the bishop, noting, “when things go wrong, the fault can often be distributed in multiple directions.”

Bolen also spoke on international meetings that took place in the Vatican in 2013 and at Lambeth Palace in Canterbury, England, in 2014 on the theme Mining in Partnership: an Empowerment Agenda.

However, the meetings’ text received a “strongly negative” response from a Latin American network supported by various bishops and church structures called Churches and Mining, Bolen said. “The companies, instead of providing money to repair the damage reported by the communities, invest in publicity campaigns or in activities that provide economic support for leaders of communities, unions or pastoral activity, with the evident objective of reducing criticism not by change, but by co-opting those who raise the problems,” the group said.

Bolen posed several questions regarding the role of faith communities in the dialogue. “How do we stand in solidarity with those

in other countries impacted by us?” he asked.

He pointed out the need for an ombudsman in Canada that people



CCN/D. Gyapong

Bishop Don Bolen

in other countries could contact if Canadian mining companies were causing problems. This ombudsman would need to have “real authority to act against offending companies.”

Laudato Si’ inspires climate change conference in Saskatoon

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — An ecumenical workshop held recently in Saskatoon opened with a public lecture providing an overview of Pope Francis’ encyclical on care of the earth and a look at Saskatchewan’s role in global climate change.

Entitled Changing to Care for Our Common Home, the Oct. 23 - 24 workshop offered “a look at the practical, scientific, and theological callings of *Laudato Si’* for all people,” said organizer Myron Rogal of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon’s Justice and Peace Office. The event was also supported by Churches for Environmental Action, St. Thomas More College, Development and Peace, Queen’s House Retreat and Renewal Centre and Knights of Columbus Council 10580.

Bishop Donald Bolen began the public event Oct. 23 at St. Thomas More College by providing an overview of *Laudato Si’*, the papal document released earlier this year that calls for conversion and practical action to care for the earth as “our common home.”

Pope Francis highlights the beauty of the natural world, and how important it is to be attentive to God’s creation, said Bolen. “The earth is home for us — and the word home is dense with meaning. We are alienated when we lose that sense of having a home.”

The earth is also wounded, said Bolen. “In his Encyclical *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis noted that our world is ‘falling into serious disrepair’ (61). For two centuries ‘we have hurt and mistreated our common home like never before’ (53) and are engulfed in ‘a spiral of self-destruction’ (163). Our way of living is contaminating the earth’s waters, its land and its air; we are losing forests and woodlands, and stripping the world of its natural

resources; each year thousands of plant and animal species disappear, while we generate millions of tons of waste, much of it non-biodegradable, toxic or radioactive.”

The encyclical points to the human dimension of the crisis, including increasing economic inequality that leaves billions of people in poverty. “It highlights the structurally perverse way in which



Yaworski

Peter Prebble

the resources of developing nations enhance the quality of life in wealthy nations, while the vital needs of their own citizens go unaddressed; and the fact that environmental degradation has a particularly negative impact on those who are poorest and most vulnerable,” said Bolen.

In *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis calls for a clear look at the environmental crisis and problems of global inequality and poverty, Bolen added. “He speaks of obstructionist attitudes, the masking of problems and manipulation of information, the sweeping of difficult questions under the carpet, the prioritizing of short-term gain and private or national interests above the global common good, and

treating issues of environmental concern or global poverty as an afterthought.”

What is needed is a universal solidarity, recognizing our shared responsibility for others and for the world, said Bolen. “This includes a responsibility toward future generations, as the environment ‘is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next’ (*Laudato Si’*, 159). Do we love our children and grandchildren, and their descendants, enough to value their future over our dysfunctional global systems and current ways of relating with the environment?”

Caring about the earth is a key aspect of Christian faith, added Bolen. “The God revealed in Jesus Christ also speaks to us through the natural world. Furthermore, written into creation and the created order is the challenge to live meaningfully together on this planet; God has given us this challenge,” he said, before again quoting *Laudato Si’*: “Everything is interconnected, and . . . genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others (70).”

Speaker Peter Prebble then provided an overview of global climate change, using *Laudato Si’* as the framework for walking through a litany of research, statistics and scientific reports showing the severity of the problem and the need for urgent action, before examining Saskatchewan’s role in the issue.

Presently serving as Director of Environmental Policy for the Saskatchewan Environmental Society, Prebble was an MLA in Saskatchewan for 16 years, serving as legislative secretary to Premier Lorne Calvert for Renewable Energy Development and Conservation. He has been involved in a variety of initiatives addressing ecological concerns, wind power,

solar energy and energy conservation.

Prebble began by presenting some of the scientific consensus about the global warming trend caused by human activity, in particular the release of greenhouse gases through the burning of fossil fuels. The impact is already being seen in severe weather events throughout the world as the water cycle is affected, as well as in the rising acidity of the oceans and a decline in marine ecosystems, and the loss of species and biodiversity occurring at an alarming rate across the globe, Prebble said.

Laudato Si’ describes how the impact of climate change is greatest on vulnerable peoples of the world — that was evident in Saskatchewan this summer as some 13,000 northerners were forced to flee their homes as a result of forest fires, Prebble noted.

“One of the things about climate change is that in warmer atmospheres, the atmosphere is able to absorb more moisture, and is able then to drop that moisture in a much more intensive fashion. So we are getting heavier rainfall events, and we are witnessing this in many parts of the world, including our own,” Prebble said, noting the dramatic increase in disaster assistance spending in Saskatchewan, from \$1.5 million in 2002 to some \$157 million in 2012, \$72 million in 2013 and \$46 million in 2014.

The impact of climate change on crop production and food security is also affecting the most vulnerable, he added.

“There has been a tragic increase in the number of migrants seeking to flee the enormous poverty caused by environmental difficulties and degradation, (who are) not recognized by international convention as refugees, who bear the loss of lives left behind, without enjoying any legal protection.”

Prebble stressed the need for

immediate action. “To have a 66 per cent chance of staying below an average global temperature increase of two degrees centigrade, which is the UN’s official objective, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommends that humanity’s total global carbon release must not exceed 790 billion tonnes. As of 2011 — it was at 515 billion tonnes, and rising at 10.4 billion tonnes a year. Do the math. We have about 20 or 25 years at our current rate of fossil fuel use to use up our entire budget for carbon for hundreds of years into the future.”

Saskatchewan average greenhouse gas emissions are 74.8 million tonnes per year — three times the Canadian per capita average, and some 10 times the world per capita average, reported Prebble. “Obviously, one has to take into effect our climate, but given that all parts of the world are going to need to phase out fossil fuels, it is urgent that we sharply reduce our emissions as quickly as possible.”

Oil, gas and mining industries account for 34 per cent of that emissions total in this province, while electricity is 21 per cent and business and personal transportation combined account for 30 per cent. “My estimate based on very conservative U.S. data is that the cost of our annual damage to the world from our own greenhouse gasses in Saskatchewan is annually \$2.67 billion,” he said.

Prebble pointed to the Saskatchewan Environmental Society’s Climate Friendly Zone campaign encouraging individuals to take personal steps to increase energy efficiency and reduce the use of fossil fuels. However, public policy also matters hugely on this issue.

“The very conservative Inter-Government Panel on Climate Change issued a statement in 2011

— EIGHTY, page 6

Edmonton restaurant to sponsor Syrian refugees

By Thandiwe Konguavi
Western Catholic Reporter

EDMONTON (CCN) — Running a popular Edmonton diner, Kim Franklin sees a lot of faces and knows a lot of people in the city.

But community to Franklin stretches well beyond the city limits.

“I think of the community as more than just the people that I can see with my own eyes,” she said.

That’s why, eight months ago, news footage of a group of Syrians stuck on the side of a mountain after being driven away from their own homes, caught her attention.

Franklin felt she had to do something to help them. But at that time, she could not find anybody working on the issue.

Then she saw a picture of the body of a little boy, swept ashore as his family, in an attempt to escape wartorn Syria, tried to cross the Mediterranean Sea.

Tortured by the image, Franklin and one of her partners at the diner decided to start a group to help refugees.

It was like divine providence followed.

The next day, a neighbour came to ask Franklin if she would put up a poster for an upcoming event at St. Joseph’s College. A



WCR/T. Konguavi

RESTAURANT TO SPONSOR REFUGEES — Highlevel Diner server Jessica Bulger and owner Kim Franklin are helping to raise money to sponsor Syrian refugees in Edmonton.

refugee sponsorship group had already been started there.

“It kind of answered my question of where to go next,” said Franklin.

At the event, Franklin met Rev. Glenn McDonald of St. Joseph’s College Chapel — one of several communities in the Edmonton

archdiocese sponsoring Syrian refugees.

Franklin’s group, called *Bayt Al’ Amal*, Arabic for House of Hope, is now one of three committees, each seeking to sponsor a family through the college chapel.

It has already raised \$20,000 of the \$35-40,000 that could be

needed to support a refugee family for a year.

Much of that was raised through a one-day fundraiser at Highlevel Diner in October, when the staff donated their tips to help sponsor the Syrian family.

Jessica Bulger, a waiter at the diner, said she was on-board right

away when Franklin approached the staff with her idea for the fundraiser. Customers that day tipped and donated graciously.

Despite debate about welcoming Syrian refugees into the country, Bulger said she is glad she is part of the effort to get at least one family to a safe place. “To me, it kind of goes against what it is to be Canadian to refuse them help.”

The diner’s involvement has not been without some backlash.

“Today a guy said he was boycotting the restaurant unless we were going to feed the 2,300 homeless people in Edmonton first,” said Franklin. “I get this, but I don’t let it really bother me. We do a lot of things for Edmonton as well.”

Franklin encourages others to think of the world as one. “We all breathe the same air, the water flows, the air blows and, in my mind, we’re all connected.”

Staff at the diner have been involved in refugee initiatives in the past, but Franklin believes the backlash this time is rooted in fear.

“There’s this whole fear of ISIS, that there’s a potential of terrorists (coming in) and I had to wrestle with that too,” she said. “But you have to let your humanity supersede your fear.”

McDonald said working with the group has been inspiring.

“They’re very organized, they’re very enthusiastic and it’s a wonderful project of goodwill and outreach that shows the Catholic Church at its best,” he said.

McDonald said the refugee sponsorship process is what will eventually keep Canada and other countries safe, because it gives people a future and hope for their lives, keeping them from radicalization.

“One of the best ways we can prevent the radicalization of people is to show them dignity, respect and give them a new home,” he said.

The refugees sponsored through the archdiocese are selected from a federal government list of refugees.

Paulette Johnson, refugee sponsorship co-ordinator for Catholic Social Services, said it is wonderful to see how many Canadians want to help. But trying to secure a family from the government lists has been frustrating.

“There’s such an incredible interest across the country that these just get snatched up so fast,” Johnson said.

Until the new government came in, there was a lack of sufficient resources overseas to do the processing, she said.

The new government, however, has assured groups such as churches that have agreements under the private sponsorship of refugees program, that it will focus on bringing in up to 25,000 refugees in 2015, said Johnson.

This year, 112 refugee sponsorship cases involving 267 people have been submitted through the archdiocese.

Bayt Al’ Amal is still accepting donations toward its refugee sponsorship efforts at Highlevel Diner, St. Joseph’s College Chapel and online.

Canadian bishops have spoken frequently on environment

Continued from page 1

ing a lot of work on climate change. It’s not as if they’ve been bystanders in all of this,” said O’Hara, the director of the Elliott Allen Institute for Theology and Ecology. “What could be the difference? The only thing I could come up with is Pope Francis. And it’s not just *Laudato Si’*, because he’s been pushing this since as soon as his pontificate began.”

The Canadian bishops have spoken up on the environment frequently, beginning with a 2003 pastoral letter on The Christian Ecological Imperative and most recently signing on to a September statement organized by the Canadian Council of Churches On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada.

But the CCCB and the CCC will never have the clout or rhetorical oomph of a pope who last November said, “This is what we do — destroy creation, destroy lives, destroy cultures, destroy values, destroy hope. How greatly we need the Lord’s strength to seal us with his love and his power to stop this mad race of destruction! Destroying what he has given us, the most beautiful things that he has done for us, so that we may carry them forward, nurture them to bear fruit.”

The pope has not been satisfied to pontificate on climate change and the environment. He encouraged the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences to organize a Vatican workshop for global leaders in April. The workshop, titled Protect the Earth, Dignify

Humanity: The Moral Dimensions of Climate Change and Sustainable Humanity, concluded with a statement that, “In the face of the emergencies of human-induced climate change, social exclusion and extreme poverty, we join together to declare that human-induced climate change is a scientific reality, and its decisive mitigation is a moral and religious imperative for humanity.”

As an observer state at the United Nations, the Vatican will send an official delegation to the Paris meetings, but the cardinals and Vatican officials in the official delegation won’t be alone. Catholic development organizations, including the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, will have representatives out on the Paris streets and in the convention halls urging world leaders to do better than they have so far.

While the Development and Peace delegation will be a small, self-financed group of just eight to 10, the European CIDSE group of agencies will have large contingents of their members who can make it to Paris by bus or train.

Those Catholic development agencies will run a Dec. 9 to 13 program in Paris that promises to reorient and concentrate Catholic development efforts on behalf of poor people in Africa, Latin America and Asia based on the principles of *Laudato Si’*.

Jesuit Father John McCarthy doesn’t underestimate the effect of Pope Francis speaking clearly, plainly and forcefully. But the scientist, author of *Do Monkeys Go to Heaven?* and winner of the Canadian Environment Award

Gold Prize for his work on boreal forest conservation from the Royal Geographic Society of Canada, believes it goes deeper than one pope’s pronouncements.

“There’s definitely no doubt that *Laudato Si’* has really captured people’s imaginations, more so than any other Catholic encyclical that I can remember,” he said.

But there’s more to it. Catholics, with their sacramental understanding of the incarnation, have a religious instinct that tells them creation is sacred, McCarthy said.

“I’ve focused a lot on the creed that we profess each Sunday,” he told The Catholic Register. “Just the idea of God as creator of all that is seen and unseen — so there’s the whole world. And then Jesus Christ in and through whom all things were made. And then the Spirit, the giver of life. For me, that’s all life.”

Catholics will also be a big part of the 100% Possible marches across Canada planned for the eve of the COP21 meetings in Paris. Some 20,000 are expected on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, including a Development and Peace delegation. Ottawa Archbishop Terrence Prendergast and Gatineau Archbishop Paul André Durocher are expected in the Ottawa crowd urging Canada’s new government to do more at the Paris showdown.

The UN conferences on climate change have been bubbling along every year since the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a framework which eventually produced the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. COP, as in COP21, stands for Conference of the Parties — meaning the parties

which participated in the 1992 framework. Paris will be the 21st such meeting.

In Canada, COP conventions were big news when Kyoto was signed and again when Canada withdrew from Kyoto in 2011. But this time the news is even bigger.

For the first time ever, the Canadian prime minister will be accompanied at an international conference by all of Canada’s provincial premiers. Added to the premiers will be federal opposition leaders. If the new Liberal government is signalling a new and deeper commitment on the issue, they too are just catching up with Pope Francis.

“Our time cannot ignore the issue of ecology,” Pope Francis told us last November. “Which is vital to man’s survival. Nor (can we) reduce it to merely a political question. Indeed, it has a moral dimension that affects everyone, such that no one can ignore it. As disciples of Christ, we have a further reason to join with all men and women of goodwill to protect and defend nature and the environment. Creation is, in fact, a gift entrusted to us from the hands of the Creator. All of nature that surrounds us is created like us, created together with us. And in a common destiny it tends to find its fulfillment and ultimate end in God himself. The Bible says ‘new heavens and a new earth.’ This doctrine of our faith is an even stronger stimulus for us to have a responsible and respectful relationship with Creation. In inanimate nature, in plants and in animals, we recognize the imprint of the Creator, and in our fellow kind, his very image.”

Assyrian students in solidarity with homelands

By Jean Ko Din
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Many members of the Assyrian Chaldean Syriac Student Union (ACSSU) have grown up in Canada watching from a distance as civil wars tear apart their homelands and force their relatives and friends to flee. As tensions rise and more people are displaced, ACSSU members believe they can make a difference.

From Nov. 16 to 19, ACSSU chapters at Toronto's Ryerson and York Universities and the University of Toronto, McMaster in Hamilton, Ont., and Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., set up camp in front of their school's student centres to raise awareness and money in support of refugees in Iraq and Syria.

For three nights and four days, ACSSU members are experiencing the "Life of a Mesopotamian Refugee."

"We're here to raise awareness and money for people who are not here," said Rosemary Yachouh, president of ACSSU Canada. "I'm just hoping to get the word out . . . I want to make myself feel what people back home are feeling for the extent that I'm able to."

About 12 students slept in tents for three nights without electronics and other conveniences. The students only ate food brought to them by others.

During the day, students handed out flyers and talked with passersby about the plight of displaced peoples in former Mesopotamia (Iraq and Syria). They also visited classrooms to talk to different student groups about donating money to send much needed food, shelter and clothing overseas. ACSSU hopes to raise at least \$25,000 for the Catholic

Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA).

Generally, Yachouh said people have been open to being engaged in conversation. Students want to know more about what's going on in the world. Many have passed by their tables and tents to share their thoughts and feelings about the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut.

"We're not just about raising money. We want to also get people's time. We want to tell them what's happening," said Yachouh. "So by having a physical presence and actually giving ourselves that experience of living like refugees, I think it shows the Canadian community that there is a bigger thing happening outside of this country."

ACSSU has organized similar sit-in events at McMaster in past years, but this is the first time the event is also being held at other campuses. Nina Moshy is president of ACSSU Ryerson chapter. It was her idea to bring the sit-in to the downtown campus.

"(People) are very shocked and proud because it's like 'wow, you guys are actually doing this,'" said Moshy. "We tell them that we take away their electronics, except for when they leave for their classes



Catholic Register/J. Ko Din

SOLIDARITY — Nina Moshy, left, and Rosemary Yachouh stand in front of the Ryerson Student Centre in Toronto to spread awareness about the plight of Syrian refugees.

. . . Now it's all technology and you don't appreciate what your ancestors have gone through."

Yachouh said that these events are important to the student members because it gives them an outlet to respond to the news that they

hear everyday. In fact, ACSSU has seen an influx of new members just this year, including a new chapter at the University of Toronto.

"I think with what's happening back home . . . I think that the youth are now realizing that their

culture is basically dying out in Iraq and Syria and they want to do something about it," said Yachouh. "Being involved in ACSSU we definitely give people that outlet. I think people are just trying to get in touch with their roots again."

Document speaks of church's position on justice

Continued from page 1

workers from around the globe, along with representatives of ecclesial movements in the church and from several Catholic academic institutions, gathered with cardinals and lay people for the opening, which served to show how *Gaudium et Spes* is truly a living document, described Rogal.

"*Gaudium et Spes* is the pastoral constitution coming out of Vatican II that speaks to many of the church's positions on life, labour and justice issues," Rogal noted. "The opening was given by Cardinal Peter Turkson of Ghana (president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace since 2009)."

Another speaker was Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria, who participated in the Second Vatican Council, and is the former Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and former president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Other speakers addressed what developed out of the Second Vatican Council document.

"*Gaudium et Spes* is not a museum piece, but a living document," Rogal said, quoting presenter Rev. Andrew Small, OMI, who serves as director of Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States.

Professor Henri-Paul Hude spoke about how the document brought alive the relationship with people and things of the world, "and had a sense of moving from individual spirituality, to a spirituality of action," Rogal summarized.

Rogal was one of two Canadians at the symposium. The other was Rev. Bill Ryan, SJ, a former director of social affairs for the CCCB, who was representing the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice out of Toronto.

"I gained a greater realization of what the church is doing internationally," said Rogal of the experience. He also gleaned insights into long-standing international movements in the church — movements such as the International Co-ordination of Young Christian Workers (ICYCW) with their methodology of "Do for. Do with. Let Do", and the Jesuit

Research Centres that are prominent in many parts of the world, engaging youth in justice issues.

"We broke into groups and talked about peacebuilding in local churches, hearing the contrast between the developed world and some of the countries where there is war and violence," said Rogal.

A delegate from Iraq described how "for her entire childhood, her memories are of death, and bombs, and shells," he said. "Presenter Dr. Kevin Ahern from the United States said that the church experiences global trauma, and we need to be in solidarity with each other to heal that trauma."

The strong ecclesiology that comes out of *Gaudium et Spes* includes the need to connect with those who are most vulnerable, Rogal described.

"I was reminded of Pope Francis, when he speaks of 'dialogue, dialogue, dialogue.' We always need that dialogue in order to know the intention of the other, to build that trust, and to look at the circumstances around us and to respond to those circumstances," Rogal said. "Having the info is only step one in responding to justice issues, the rest of it is pastoral and process. . . . It is about establishing a set of pastoral tools and responding with those tools."

There is a need to listen, and then to respond together, rather than imposing something from the top down, he said. "Looking at our own Diocesan Council of Truth and Reconciliation, for instance, I think one of the best ways to build peace is to work together."

Professor Stefano Zamagni, Consulor of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, spoke about two models of education — one grounded in "what we can take away," and another based on "what we can put in." It is a concept that

also applies to our navigation between individualism and the collective, common good, Rogal related.

"It ties into our whole view sometimes, including what Pope Francis calls our throwaway culture, or the idea of surplus people."

Delegates were invited to reflect on two different forms of power in the world — potency and influence — and to observe how in the Scriptures Jesus never uses the power of potency, but always uses influence.

"It is really the 'power of influence' of Christ which is part of each of us: we have that ability to evangelize and evoke social change," Rogal said. Rather than revolution or mere reform, the goal is always transformation, to bring about long-lasting, true justice and peace, he said.

Other presentations during the symposium addressed the prudent use of technology and social media, marriage and family life, and the vocation of political leadership, including the Eight Beatitudes of a Politician, written by Cardinal François Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan.

In one session, Archbishop Silvano Maria Tomasi of Italy, founder of the Centre for Migration Studies and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, identified this as a "year of migration, where one in seven global citizens are currently refugees or migrants in the world," noted Rogal. "It was one of the most powerful and concrete presentations . . . it was a call to unity, and a reminder that this is part of our own story: that we are all global citizens."

The symposium brought home the continuity of the church to Rogal, who noted that the group met in the room where the Synod on the Family had just finished.

Food bank use up, especially in Alberta

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — This year's HungerCount 2015 report reveals food bank use in Canada has risen for the second consecutive year and remains at near record levels.

More than 800,000 people used food banks in the month of March 2015 alone and about 300,000 were children, said Food Banks Canada executive director Katharine Schmidt at a Nov. 17 news conference.

While food bank use is 1.3 per cent higher this year than last, it is "a troubling" 26 per cent higher than in 2008, the year of the global economic downturn, she said.

Alberta has been especially hard hit with the drop in oil prices leading to the loss of 35,000 jobs, she said. Unemployment has gone up 10 per cent, but food bank use has risen "a shocking" 23 per cent last year.

Food Banks Canada made three recommendations that can help alleviate the need for Food Banks:

- Invest in affordable housing so people do not have to pay 70 to 80 per cent of their income for accommodation
- Invest in education and skills

training to help people find well-paying jobs

- Increase access in the North to traditional foods and store bought foods at lower prices

"We are pleased to see that Prime Minister Trudeau has a plan that closely mirrors the recommendations we have made in successive HungerCount reports," Schmidt said. "This gives us hope and a belief that there will be action at the federal level."

"We are excited at the prospect of moving forward in a positive and constructive way with the new federal government to significantly reduce the need for food banks in Canada," she said.

Food Banks Canada represents 550 food banks across Canada running about 3,000 programs to feed the hungry.

In the Letter of Mandate to the new Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Trudeau instructed Minister Jean-Yves Duclos to "lead the development of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy that would set targets to reduce poverty and measure and publicly report on our progress."

Trudeau also asked him to prioritize infrastructure spending on affordable housing.

Study days held for parish leaders in Saskatoon

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

SASKATOON — Forming Intentional Disciples was the theme of diocesan Study Days held Oct. 21 - 22 for parish and ministry leaders in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Katherine Coolidge of the Catherine of Siena Institute was the facilitator, presenting a vision for evangelization and faith outreach grounded in an encounter with Jesus Christ and nurtured in community.

Beginning with the account in Acts, 9:10-19 about Saul and Ananias, presented in the *Lectio Divina* style of Scripture reflection, Coolidge asked participants to envision a model of church in which parishioners would act like Ananias, going out to walk as companions to those who are seeking to follow Jesus.

“What would happen if parishes became places where people could encounter Jesus and become intentional disciples?” she challenged. “What would happen if parishes became places where maturing disciples could discern their gifts and their call from God to participate in the mission of the church?”

Coolidge presented an analysis of today’s spiritual climate before engaging participants in under-

standing and entering into “the journey to intentional discipleship.” She encouraged her listeners to think concretely about how they can help others become disciples, and consider how parishes could foster such a vision.

Surveys and analyses show that a majority of Catholics are still living without an explicit personal attachment to Jesus Christ, she said.

“Many Catholics don’t know it is possible to have a personal relationship with God,” she said, describing the stages of adult Christian development, and what is needed to help parishioners deepen their faith and move from being seekers to disciples, who are intentional followers of Jesus Christ, and eventually to being apostles, who take personal responsibility for the mission of the church.

Coolidge admitted she had no easy formula, but said the transformation required in parish culture takes time and effort.

She introduced the idea of “thresholds of conversion” along an individual’s faith journey – a movement from initial trust to spiritual curiosity, that continues through spiritual openness, spiritual seeking and finally intentional discipleship.

“The majority of Catholics,

practising or non-practising, are in one of the earlier, essentially passive, stages of spiritual development.”

Coolidge described initiating conversations that will assist others to “cross the threshold” to a deeper faith and a deeper commitment. It is necessary to learn to ask questions, to actively listen, and then to discern what stage an individual is at and respond accordingly, she said.

“Can you describe your relationship with God to this point in your life?” is a question that can start a threshold conversation, she suggested, stressing that this is not the time for catechesis or spiritual direction, interrogation or judgment.

Such “threshold conversations” require trust, and are supportive, inviting, respectful and open-ended, she stressed. “And it’s a great way to change the culture” of a parish, she added, suggesting these conversations can take place wherever trust has been



Yaworski
Katherine Coolidge

established.

Coolidge observed that curiosity is not the same as seeking, and stressed that seeking is active. “We may need to challenge a person to become a seeker,” she said. Encouraging seekers to try to follow Jesus by “doing” — serving

others and praying — can help people move forward, she said. It is also helpful to let them hear about the journeys of other new disciples, while modelling and sharing the search for Christ in your own life.

Adding that people can’t seek forever, she described the importance of a decision to “drop the net” and follow Jesus as a disciple. This takes a “different set of muscles” than seeking does. Accompanying someone spiritually at this point might include actually asking them to make a choice to turn their life over to God, or finding a setting or space, such as a retreat or time of eucharistic adoration, to experience a deeper conversion.

Using examples of personal conversion, of parish transformation, and historical moments of renewal, Coolidge shared stories and encouraged discussion to help participants visualize steps to be taken in their own particular ministry or parish.

Eighty per cent renewable possible

Continued from page 3

that said that close to 80 per cent of the world’s energy supply could be met by renewables by mid-century. But this is the key: ‘if backed by the right, enabling public policy,’” Prebble said.

“Pope Francis says, ‘We know that technology based on electricity — especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas — needs to be progressively replaced without delay’ (*Laudato Si’*, 165). So what does that mean in Saskatchewan, where we get 47 per cent of our electricity from coal? It means that we need to get on with phasing out coal. We shouldn’t be waiting for the federal government to set rules. We should get busy and follow the lead of Ontario, which has already phased out its 19 coal-fired generating units.”

Burning coal for electricity can be replaced with a wide mix of energy resources, said Prebble, listing options for generating electricity through wind, solar, biomass and hydro.

“We are at three per cent wind now. Places like South Dakota are getting 25 per cent of their electricity from wind. I think we are just as well positioned to get to that percentage of wind power,” he said. “Why is it now that Ontario has 2,000 megawatts of solar and we don’t even have one, and we have a better sunlight resource than Ontario does?”

There should also be investment in energy conservation, and incentives to encourage energy conservation by industry, he added. Regulations that would restrict methane release during oil extraction are another important strategy cited by Prebble. Public policy decisions are also needed to reduce fossil fuel use — including an end to fossil fuel subsidies, he said. A carbon tax is another possible public policy strategy, as is making public transportation a priority, and other steps such as reducing speed limits.

“We could reinstate passenger rail service. . . . It has been more

than 25 years since there was passenger train service between Saskatoon and Regina. We could be going down to watch the Riders play on the train instead of driving down.”

One example of how to reduce emissions in agriculture would be to stop overgrazing and to restore community pastures, Prebble added.

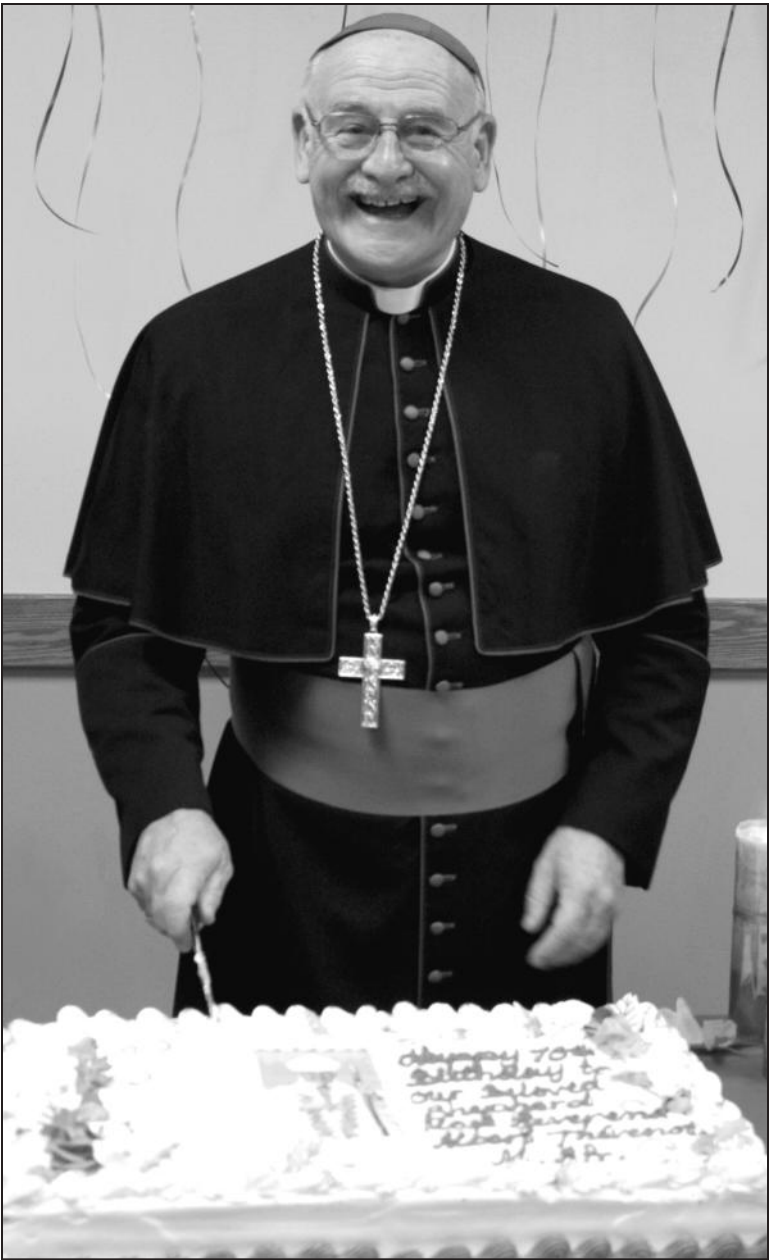
Encouraging energy efficient buildings and construction could be done on a large scale, he said, calling for changes to building codes and creative programs to encourage conservation retrofits on the part of crown corporation SaskEnergy.

“This is an amazing encyclical and I think that the pope has inspired many people around the world with it. We clearly have many, many practical things that we can do to act on his inspirational message right here at home,” said Prebble.

“We should keep in mind his message about our obligations to the poor as we debate in our own communities about how deeply we are prepared to cut our own greenhouse gas emissions. We should keep in mind his words about inter-generational responsibility. And we should keep in mind his words about our obligations to indigenous peoples as we are doing our planning.”

Sacrifices — both personal and collective — are going to be necessary in the journey to address climate change, Prebble said, particularly in a province like Saskatchewan, which is heavily reliant on coal, oil and natural gas.

The workshop continued Oct. 24 at Queen’s House, with presentations by Dr. Cristina Vanin of St. Jerome’s College, Hugh Wood, a University of Saskatchewan physicist, and Armella Sonntag, provincial animator of Development and Peace.



SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY — “This evening, I’m glad you are all here together as I transition to my seventies,” said Bishop Albert Thévenot, M. Afr., in gratitude to all who celebrated his special birthday Nov. 6 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince Albert. He was born Nov. 6 at 5:15 p.m. on a snowy day, he said, the 11th child in the family. He gave thanks to the Lord for his many years and for all those who have helped him on his journey of becoming who he is today. A wine and cheese social followed in the elegantly decorated basement. Happy birthday was sung as Thévenot cut his birthday cake.

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Salary in accordance with diocesan salary grid

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- Some pastoral care experience and training in spiritual pastoral care
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Submit letter of application, resumé and references (including priest reference) by **December 14, 2015**, to:

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Phone: (306) 659-5834
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Hearts on Fire retreat coming to Winnipeg in 2016

By James Buchok

WINNIPEG — The Apostleship of Prayer Hearts on Fire retreat is coming to the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Jan. 30 - 31, bringing a day and a half of prayer, faith formation and spiritual renewal for young adults aged 18 - 35.



Buchok

Rev. Len Altília, SJ, and Michael Radcliffe

“It’s about a deeper relationship with Christ that is possible through prayer, rooted in the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola,” says Rev. Len Altília, SJ. “It’s about encouraging young people to pray.”

The retreat takes place at St. Paul’s College at the University of Manitoba on the Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to noon, concluding with mass at the college’s Christ the King Chapel. The event is sponsored by the Jesuits of English Canada, the

Jesuits of Winnipeg and St. Ignatius Church in Winnipeg.

Sessions such as Hearts Looking for More; Paying Attention to the Movements of the Heart; and Vigilant Hearts: Discernment of Spirits, will be led by Jesuit scholastics John O’Brien, SJ, and Edmund Lo, SJ, who have led a number of Apostleship of Prayer events in the U.S. and Canada over the past four years. Both are currently working toward a master’s of divinity at Regis College in Toronto and anticipating priestly ordination in three years.

Based in Milwaukee, Wis., the Apostleship of Prayer website describes the Hearts on Fire experience as a spiritual renewal for young adults providing insights into “how the deepest desires of our hearts lead us to the Heart of Jesus Christ” with practical ways to connect faith and daily life.

Altília, president of St. Paul’s High School in Winnipeg, said the retreat “invites young people to pray about the issues of the world in union with the Sacred Heart.” All young adults are welcome and Altília expects about 100 participants.

The cost is \$20 to cover refreshments and a lunch on

Saturday provided by Immaculate Conception Church. There will also be time for socializing over coffee with live music.

According to Apostleship of Prayer, its mission since 1844 “has been to help Christians live out their desire to serve God with their whole lives and their whole selves. God asks us all to pray for ourselves and for others. To make ourselves a living sacrifice and to pray

Pangman parish celebrates 100 years

By Frank Flegel, with notes from Connie Lozinsky

PANGMAN, Sask. — The faithful gathered October 11 from as far away as Minnesota to celebrate the centennial of Holy Angels Parish.

The weekend began on Oct. 9 with a lighthearted tribute to pastor Rev. Anthony Pangman and former pastors Revs. Louis Abello, Stephen Bill, Pat Murphy and Peter Nijssen. What each brought and what each left was highlighted with some good humour thrown in. The evening also celebrated a mass, Benediction and the program was accompanied by an evening meal.

Sunday was the main event, with Archbishop Daniel Bohan celebrating mass with Pangman. One of the highlights of the mass was a hymn sung in Tagalog, the Philippine language. It was written by Jean Wagner for the parish’s 60th anniversary and adapted by the Wadel family for the Centennial. It was sung to the

without ceasing for all the needs of the church and for the whole world. Since the 19th century, popes have asked the Apostleship of Prayer to pray for specific intentions. We receive two prayer intentions each month from the Holy Father, pledging ourselves to pray for them every day.”

The stated mission of the Apostleship of Prayer is “to encourage Christians to make a daily

tune of the hymn Day is Done.

Pangman is from the Philippines, as are about half the parish numbers, according to Pangman. “Our Filipino families have had a positive impact on our church,” said Connie Lozinsky one of the organizers of the event, “both in numbers and youthful vitality.”

Parish Council chair Lorraine Eckert made two presentations following the Sunday mass; a special thank you gift was presented to Bohan and a bouquet of roses was presented to 97-year-old Edith Bernard in appreciation for her years of service to the church. She is a 50-year member of the Catholic Womens’ League.

Like most small-town churches, everything happens with volunteers. Parish council chair Lorraine Eckert headed up an organizing committee of 12 with many more in supporting roles to put the weekend together. Pangman was also very involved with the committee in the planning and success of the weekend.

Pangman is a village of about

offering of themselves to the Lord for the coming of God’s kingdom and for the Holy Father’s monthly intentions. This habit of prayer encourages a eucharistic spirituality of solidarity with the Body of Christ and loving service to others. Nourishing this spiritual program is the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”

Registration information is on the Archdiocese of Winnipeg website under weekly bulletin.

260 people some 100 kilometres straight south of Regina on the west side of No. 6 highway. The first mass was celebrated in 1906 in the school, then in private homes until the church was built; it was blessed by Archbishop Mathieu on Oct. 15, 1915.

Following the mass emcee Sheila Wadel thanked everyone for coming and summed up the reason a small rural church like Holy Angels continues to thrive:

“So many faithful parish members have lived and loved and served God and neighbour here at Holy Angels. They are the backbone of Holy Angels, serving week in and week out, seen and unseen, mowing and shovelling, cleaning and painting, reading and playing music and fixing and organizing and praying — showing us all the face of Christ here in this little church. We honour you all here today, along with each one of our priests, our archbishops, and Holy Fathers who have served Holy Angels so well, in the love of God, this past 100 years.”

English-speaking sisters meet

By Lise Paquette, PM

SASKATOON — Sisters of the Presentation of Mary from Italy, Gambia, the United States, Japan, the Philippines and Western Canada gathered Oct. 7 - 14 at Queen’s House in Saskatoon.

The English-speaking intercontinental meeting of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary was held for the preparation of the General Chapter of 2017.

The meeting involved intense work and reflection, with the 37 participants giving thanks to God for the enriching experience of internationality, of dialogue, of prayer based on the charism and mission of the order’s foundress, Blessed Marie Rivier.

Participants experienced the richness of cultures, languages, customs and challenges.

They gathered for a day with Sister Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, to ponder the Transitions in Society and in the Church, and the Calls/Invitations to Religious Life Rooted in the Transitions Explored.

They also shared as council groups; as well as holding workshops, discussion groups, prayer and eucharistic celebrations.

As the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary prepare for the 2017 General Chapter to be held in Rome, they continue carrying the flame of education of the faith, of making Jesus Christ known and loved in all parts of the world.

Fall liturgy workshops held around P.A.

By Peggy Looby

NIPAWIN, Sask. — The fall liturgy workshop on marriage and funerals was held Oct. 22 at St. Eugene Parish in Nipawin attended by members from the surrounding area. Presenters for the event were liturgy director Rev. D. J. Vu Liturgy and liturgy co-ordinator Heidi Epp, from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert.

The event opened with a prayer for the synod on the family which took place Oct. 4 - 25. Beginning with the topic of marriage, a number of areas were discussed, including the definition of mar-

riage. It was emphasized that it is a sacrament celebrated by two baptized persons or a mixed marriage celebrated with a baptized Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic. It is a sacred contract when one party is a baptized Catholic and the other a non-baptized person. When two unbaptized persons marry or when there is a civil marriage, these are considered holy contracts.

Time and location policies were discussed and it was noted that all priests and permanent deacons performing marriages in the Prince Albert Diocese must be licensed by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Music should be liturgically appropriate, keeping in mind that because marriage is holy it should be celebrated with reverence, and couples should plan the liturgy. Couples wishing to write their own vows are reminded that these should include the elements required for valid marriage vows and the vows should stay close to the traditional by being simple and meaningful. Marriage is a community celebration, being an act of public worship. There are special circumstances where a private ceremony would take place, such as a hospital or penitentiary.

Consideration was given to the challenges of today and how to use these as opportunities for evangelization. Challenges today include those not practising, and many who do not look upon marriage as

a lifelong commitment. Often their lifestyles overshadow the importance of the marriage contract. This is seen as an opportunity to welcome them and help them regulate the marriage with the church. When a couple wishes to use videos, TV screens or iPods during the celebration, one should be aware of copyright laws. Above all, emphasis should be put on the principle that “a wedding lasts for one day, a marriage is forever.”

Following a brief refreshment break, the group turned to the topic of funerals. A funeral helps support families and loved ones in accepting the reality of death. Listening to grief in families is key, emphasizing the need for a welcoming and understanding attitude.

Vigil prayers are a time for prayer and grieving. Here, too, the family needs to be consulted. The loved ones can be helped assisted in selecting the time of the service, the readings, intentions and music. Eulogies are accepted. They are an opportunity to share something of the life of the deceased. They should be delivered with respect and kept within a reasonable time frame. If not delivered orally, they can be written on a funeral card.

The topic of cremation was discussed. Cremation has become an accepted practice. The distribution of the cremains should also be done with dignity and reverence. An urn is the centre of the funeral celebration, the same as a casket.



Yaworski

SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION — An English-speaking intercontinental meeting of the Sisters of the Presentation was held at Queen’s House in Saskatoon Oct. 7 - 14, in preparation for a General Chapter meeting in 2017. The 37 participants were from Castel Gandolfo, Italy; the Gambia, Africa; the United States; Japan; the Philippines; and Western Canada.

Respond to terrorist attacks with mercy, not fear

By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register

Catholics should be guided by mercy, not fear, in the wake of the Paris terror attack, said Hamilton Bishop Douglas Crosby three days after co-ordinated terrorist attacks killed at least 129 and sent 415 people to hospital.

Crosby, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, understands the initial reaction of uncertainty and even fear when faced by news of another devastating terror attack. But that gut reaction can't define us, he said.

"If we're trying to build a culture of life, we can't let fear control us," he said.

Crosby chose not to weigh in on debates over whether Canada should reconsider its decision to withdraw from U.S.-led bombing of ISIS targets in Syria and Iraq, or whether to slow down the acceptance of 25,000 Syrian refugees because there might be terrorists hiding among them.

"I'm not in the political realm around this," he said.

But he emphasized that his Hamilton diocese is proceeding as planned with refugee sponsorships.

"(Immigration Minister John) McCallum has tried to reassure Canadians that they are working with the security personnel to assure that the necessary checks are in place," said Crosby. "We have confidence in that. We take him at his word."

As other nations increase the air war against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has confirmed he will keep an election promise and withdraw Canada's CF-18 warplanes from the conflict before next March. Instead, Canada will send more armed forces personnel to the region to help train local troops.

Despite growing security concerns following the Paris attacks, Trudeau also pledged to stand firm on a government commitment to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada by the end of the year.

Those positions were supported by Canadian Jesuits International, which engages in relief work inside Syria and surrounding countries.

"The war cannot be won by foreign jets," said CJI executive director Jenny Cafiso. "Local players need to be engaged."

The Jesuit agency also supports continued refugee sponsorship, and believes a greater humanitarian role for Canada is more likely to lead to peace.

"There are 4.2 million registered UNHCR refugees in neighbouring countries," Cafiso said. "Most refugees don't want to leave the region, because they want to return to their country once there is peace. One of the reasons people are leaving the places they have escaped to is because of insufficient humanitarian aid, both inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries."



©2015 DND-MDN Canada, Canadian Forces Combat Camera

RESPONSE TO THE CONFLICT — A Royal Canadian Air Force CF-188 Hornet refuels from a CC-150 Polaris over Iraq during Operation IMPACT on Nov. 7, 2015. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has confirmed he will keep an election promise and withdraw Canada's CF-18 warplanes from the conflict before next March. Instead, Canada will send more armed forces personnel to the region to help train local troops.

Crosby was speaking two days after an arson attack on the lone mosque in Peterborough, Ont., did an estimated \$80,000 in damage. "It's the wrong response," he said.

Peterborough Bishop William McGrattan expressed shock when he heard that the Masjid Al-Salaam ("The Mosque of Peace") had been torched.

"It's devastating not only for the Muslim community but for all

of the Peterborough community that such places of worship should become places of violence and expressions of hatred," McGrattan told The Catholic Register.

A day after the arson attack, an online fundraising campaign for the mosque was launched and, in just 43 hours, it raised \$110,548 from 2,098 donors. Currently 25 per cent of Peterborough's parishes have committed to sponsor

refugees, said McGrattan.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops responded officially to the Paris attacks with a letter to Paris Archbishop Cardinal André Vingt-Trois.

"We join our voices with those of other religious leaders who remind the world that peace, respect for the human person and integral human development remain essential criteria for all religions and their faithful," said the letter signed by Crosby. "With God's grace and the goodwill of all people, peace and justice will endure and be more appealing and effective than violence and hatred."

Crosby recommends that Catholics look at paragraph 23 of Pope Francis' bull declaring the Year of Mercy starting Dec. 8.

"Among the privileged names that Islam attributes to the Creator are 'Merciful and Kind.' This invocation is often on the lips of faithful Muslims who feel themselves accompanied and sustained by mercy in their daily weakness," wrote the pope. "They too believe that no one can place a limit on divine mercy because its doors are always open."

The pope goes on to call for a renewed and deeper interfaith dialogue among Catholics, Jews and Muslims during the Year of Mercy.

In Toronto, efforts to bring in more Syrian refugees continue, said Archdiocese of Toronto spokesperson Neil MacCarthy. Project Hope in support of Syrian refugees has raised \$2.5 million, 83 per cent of its \$3-million goal.

"We are moving forward with our plan to bring 100 refugee families through Project Hope to the Archdiocese of Toronto," MacCarthy said.

In Istanbul for a faith leader's meeting running parallel with G20 meetings, Canadian Council of Churches executive director Karen Hamilton rejected calls for a slowdown to bring in Syrian refugees by Jan. 1.

"Go slow on bringing in Syrian refugees? No! Go faster," said Hamilton.

Regehr: peace cannot be won on the battlefield



Pulpit & Politics

Dennis Gruending

Ernie Regehr has been studying war and promoting peace since the 1960s. A tireless researcher, he has just produced another book called *Disarming Conflict: Why Peace Cannot Be Won on the Battlefield*. It would make good reading for new ministers as Canada's recently elected government contemplates changes to our defence and foreign policy.

Regehr was a co-founder in 1976 of Project Ploughshares, the ecumenical peace research group based in Waterloo, Ont., and he served as its executive director for 30 years. He says the organization tracked armed conflicts since prior to 1989 and he has used that research to review almost 100 of

them. "The lesson from 25 years of research is that conflicts aren't settled on the battlefield but they rely on addressing the economic and governance issues that give rise to conflict," he told me in a recent interview.

He added, "I am not just making a moral, ideological argument against trying to settle arguments by dint of force. I am saying that the evidence shows that it is virtually impossible to do it."

Regehr insists that resources devoured by the military would be invested more wisely in what he calls the four Ds: development, democracy, disarmament, and diplomacy.

"We underfund those things and focus way too much attention on military responses to conflict," he says.

Military forces spend \$14 billion every three days, which is more than the entire annual budget of the United Nations for all of its activities, including peacekeeping. In 2014 - 15, Canada spent \$20 billion on defence, close to one per cent of GDP.

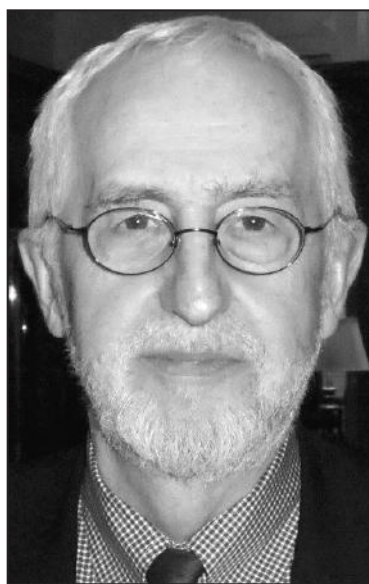
Regehr does not rule out the

use of "coercive enforcement" to protect vulnerable populations and restore stability. These should be multilateral interventions, usually under the auspices of the United Nations, and to succeed they must be "in support of the full range of peace and security efforts." In the Syrian conflict, for example, safe havens for civilians could be created within the country but near the border with Turkey, and protected by a multinational military force.

He admits that groups such as ISIS in Syria and Iraq and Boko Haram in Nigeria are outliers who challenge the existing "paradigm of conflict" — an important observation given the recent deadly attacks in Beirut, Paris and elsewhere. Those groups, he says, are driven mainly by religious extremism. Their primary goal is not linked to settling political or economic grievances but rather to establishing a Caliphate.

"We must say with humility that we do not know how to solve some of these conflicts but, nevertheless, we are neglecting any attempts at negotiation and reconciliation. We can also say with pretty strong conviction that the bombing campaign is not going to prove effective. There is this extraordinary humanitarian catastrophe there for which there is very inadequate humanitarian response. That's where the effort ought to be."

What is Regehr's advice as a new Canadian government revis-



D. Gruending

Ernie Regehr

its foreign and defence policies?

"If you want to engage and to promote international peace and security," he says, "then you have got to engage in developing a means to respond to economic development, good governance and diplomatic capacity, and to control the arms with which wars are fought. Those are the means by which political conflicts are going to be resolved."

He points to the Nordic countries as examples of what can be done and includes the Netherlands and Denmark on his list. He says they spend as much on development and diplomacy as they do on the military, while in Canada the ratio is four or five to one in favour of military spending.

Gruending is an Ottawa-based writer and a former member of Parliament. His blog can be found at <http://www.dennisgruending.ca>. A shorter version of this piece was published as a blog entry with the United Church Observer (www.ucobserver.org) on Nov. 16, 2015.

Success of outreach program celebrated in new book

Launched almost 30 years ago as a project at Toronto's St. Michael's College School, the Out of the Cold program is a remarkable story of Christian outreach that last winter provided food and shelter to more than 12,000 homeless men and women. That success is celebrated in a just-released book by Catholic Register associate editor Michael Swan. In this excerpt from *Out of the Cold: A history of caring*, Swan recounts how the program found a home in one downtown Toronto church.

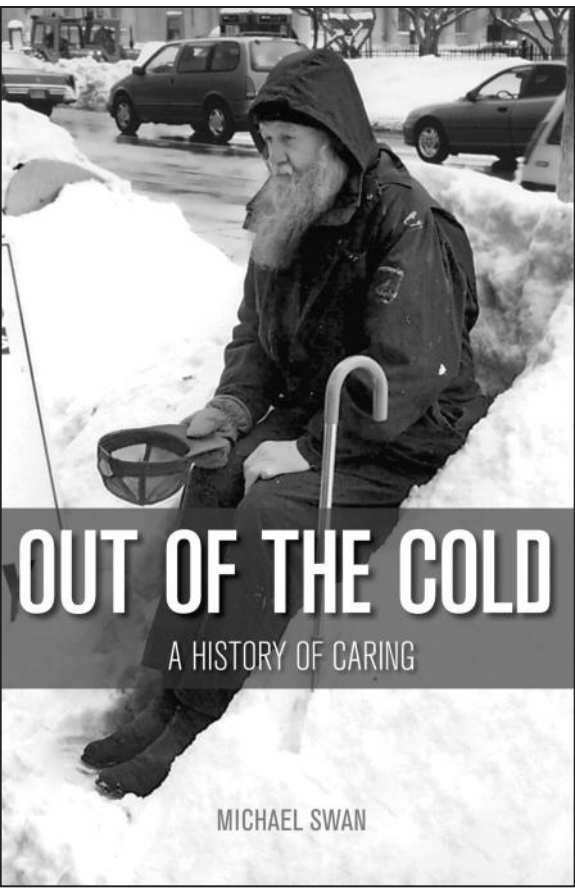
It's odd that Stevie Cameron is afraid of Sister Sue Moran. The veteran journalist has tangled with prime ministers, governors general, the RCMP, the editorial board of the Globe and Mail. She's been subpoenaed by a Royal Commission and called to testify before the Canadian House of Commons' ethics committee. She's written books and feature articles about political corruption, grisly murders, drug culture, shadowy business deals, racism in the justice system, racism in our prisons, suicide and sexual affairs among Canada's rich and powerful. The list of people who have threatened to sue and silence Cameron is longer than this book.

There is no documented evidence of her ever backing down. But the sight of five-foot-two, grey-haired, blue-eyed, smiling Sister Sue padding across a crowded room in rubber-soled shoes makes Cameron quake. "I run when I see her," Cameron told me. "I think, 'Oh my God, she's going to change my life.'" It's not that Cameron doesn't love and admire Sister Sue. "She's so ferocious," said Cameron. "I don't believe the Out of the Cold program in Toronto and the Out of the Cold programs

we fostered all over the country after that would have happened without her push. I have a huge admiration for her." But a good deal of Out of the Cold wouldn't have happened without Cameron either. In 1992 Cameron was on the Session — a kind of governing council in the Presbyterian world — which oversaw St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on King Street, next door to Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto's downtown core. The senior minister, Rev. Cameron Brett, had proposed the church take part in this novel response to increasing numbers of homeless men visible around downtown Toronto. At that point in her career Cameron was a formidable presence — a successful writer who appeared regularly on CBC, whose picture appeared with her columns in the Globe and Mail. So when she backed her minister's call for St. Andrew's to open up for Out of the Cold, one might have expected nods and bright-eyed agreement all around the table. But that's not what happened. St. Andrew's is an historic church — as pretty and perfect an example of Victorian romanesque revival architecture as exists anywhere. It is not a church with a history of embracing change or innovation. In 1925 it was the bulwark of opposition to melding Methodists and Presbyterians to form the United Church of Canada. St. Andrew's exists to preserve a heritage and a tradition. Brett's proposal seemed to put their beautiful, historic building at risk to join in with Anglicans and Catholics inviting drunks, addicts and paranoid schizophrenics to take over their social space, until now reserved for kindly grandmothers who served tea and Scottish biscuits on Sunday afternoons. The church was not built as a hostel or an asylum and neither the congregation nor the Session nor the senior minister are qualified social workers.

What about insurance? It's already near impossible and ruinously expensive to insure a building put together with irreplaceable materials by long-dead craftsmen. If the Session was going to be so cavalier with its heritage building, the insurance company would be quite justified in withdrawing coverage. "A lot of people didn't want it," Cameron recalled. "Every possible roadblock was put there." It didn't seem to matter that the homeless were already sleeping on the steps leading up to the grand, hand-carved wooden doors of the church. At a certain point in those meetings, as she had to respond to objection after objection, Cameron did something that even today, 25 years later, deeply embarrasses her. She cried. Feminine tears are not a weapon with any effect or advantage in newsroom battles. But the Session was a little more soft-hearted than the over-caffeinated, know-it-all editors. The Session eventually said yes, sort of — on a temporary, trial basis.

"Because we embarrassed them into it," said Cameron. "They could come in and sleep but there was to be no food," was the first deal. Cameron kept wheedling. "Then they could come in and sleep and they could have a cup of coffee and a cookie, but there was to be no food — just a cup of coffee." Cameron negotiated to expand the menu to include tea. "Just grinding it out," is how she recalled the fight. And then she was worried. What if nobody came? "Everybody was very nervous," she said. "It was like giving a party and wondering whether anybody would come. We were terribly nervous." But word was out and that mid-fall Monday afternoon the homeless were lined up outside the side doors of the church well before the 7 p.m. opening. Cameron and her team had clandestinely expanded the menu beyond the conceded cookie with a couple of bags of muffins and so on from Tim Hortons. This meagre fare was twinned with the



Catholic Register

cause what was given was resentfully given out of duty. It was the gracelessness of treating the poor as a danger and an alien presence. Sister Sue showed up that first night with another of the sisters from Our Lady's Missionaries. The sisters did not regard themselves as bound by the decisions of the St. Andrew's Church Session. Sister Sue wasn't going to allow the homeless to choose between their fear of institutions and

their fear of sleeping somewhere outside where the cops, property owners or gangs of dangerous young men might object. "I saw her over in the corner with the other nun and they were going through their purses," said Cameron. "I thought, 'What are they doing?' Then I saw Sister Susan go to our phone in the kitchen. Then about 15 minutes later we had Pizza Pizza at the door." The cash in two nuns' purses doesn't add up to much. Sister Sue and her co-conspirator were not able to pay for very many pizzas or any toppings. When the delivery guy was gone, Sister Sue went at the thin disks of pizza with a knife to produce miniature triangles that were more symbol than sustenance. "I'll never forget it, these guys sitting on mattresses eating their little triangle," said Cameron. "We all looked at each other. We were so embarrassed, so ashamed. We defied the Session and we started feeding them the next week. After that, food became a whole thing. The Session was grouchy about it." maximum output of the Scottish grandmothers' coffee urn. To make it all seem just a little more niggardly, the room had been set up with mattresses but no chairs. Men who had spent their day tramping the streets in the cold and the wet were given the opportunity to sit on a mattress on the floor with a cup of watery coffee and wait for lights out. And then Cameron discovered the kindness that exists among poor and desperate people. Deeply embarrassed, she walked among the men on their vinyl-covered, foam mattresses. "One of them said, 'Is this all? Is this it?'" she recalled. "He said this to me and I said, 'I'm sorry.' I said, 'I'm so sorry.' I said, 'We had such a fight to get this open and this is all they are going to let us do.' He jumped to his feet and put his arms around me and said, 'It's OK. Don't worry about it. It's OK. We really appreciate this.'" But it wasn't OK. Cameron was certain of that. Not because there weren't enough calories offered to hungry men or because the quality of the coffee was so poor, but be-

Out of the Cold is published by Catholic Register Books. Copies are available online at www.catholicregister.org/crbooks or by calling 416-947-3410.

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Books

Recognizing everyday miracles

CRACKS IN THE SIDEWALK by Tony Magliano. Eastern Christian Publications (Fairfax, Va., 2015). 28 pp., \$9.95. Reviewed by Loretta Nemeth.

Tony Magliano, best known as an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist, enters the children's book genre with *Cracks in the Sidewalk*. In it, Magliano stays true to his vocation by instilling the seeds of social justice, "sharing, fairness and love for life," into the minds and hearts of young readers, inviting them to "deepen their awareness of the many wonders that surround them." Magliano says the book will "help young children better appreciate the goodness of God, who showers us with wonderful blessings every day!" The book leads the child from recognizing the work of God in nature to recognizing it in the caring people in the child's life. A great gift book, when shared between adult and child, *Cracks in the Sidewalk* can be a reminder to the adult to stop and see God's

Nemeth is director of communications for the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Ohio, and editor of *Horizons*, the eparchy's newspaper.

everyday miracles around us, too.

The delightful childlike crayon illustrations by Lynn Armstrong give young readers a sense of familiarity and comfort.

The book can be ordered under the New tab, or the Children category, of the online catalogue of Eastern Christian Publications, www.ecpubs.com; (703) 691-8862 for US \$9.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

Cracks in the Sidewalk
Tony Magliano
Illustrations by Lynn Armstrong

Toronto piano virtuoso, only 16, hits right notes

By Evan Boudreau
The Catholic Register

TORONTO (CCN) — Tony Yang thought so little of his chances at the world’s most prestigious piano contest that he arrived in Poland with an early ticket home already in hand.

The Toronto high school student hoped just to make it to the second round of the International Chopin Piano Competition, enjoy the experience and then hop a flight home. Instead, he made history — and almost \$35,000 — by

becoming the youngest prize winner in the history of the renowned event.

“I actually bought a plane ticket for the end of the second round which was (for) the 14th” of October, said Yang, 16. “I didn’t expect anything like this. For me this was a very big honour and surprise too.”

Yang, a Grade 12 student at Toronto’s Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, placed fifth out of the 78 who competed in the four-round competition last month in Warsaw.

It was a lucrative trip for Yang. The fifth-place finish garnered him €10,000, about \$14,500, and almost \$20,000 in another cash prize for being the youngest person ever to place in the competition.

And it nearly didn’t happen at all. When the preliminaries to get to the final stage took place in April, Yang contemplated not taking part.

“But then I thought, oh well I’m at the bottom of the age limit so I might as well apply just to get some experience. But I wouldn’t take it seriously,” he said. “I thought I’d go for fun. Just enjoy the moment.”

The Chopin competition, named in honour of the famous 19th-century composer and virtuoso pianist Frederic Chopin, was first held in 1927. It takes place every five years (the competition was interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War but resumed in 1945 at the war’s end and the five-year cycle began again).

Over the years the event has provided pianists such as Yundi Li, Maurizio Pollini and Mika Sato with their big break.

“It is probably the most prestigious com-

petition in the piano world,” said Yang. “It was nerve racking.”

That’s because Yang was surprised to make the finals, he hadn’t really prepared, at least not by his high standards.

“I had another junior competition back in June right after exams so really it wasn’t until July that I started preparing,” he said. “That was pretty late. My teacher calls this kind of preparation cooking instant noodles.”

And that’s not typical of Yang, who first took to the ivories when he was five years old.

“My mom actually studied piano in university and voice so she plays a lot of piano at home,” he said. “When I was a kid I would, out of curiosity, go to the piano and then she started teaching me. I was very hard on myself. Apparently I would hit myself, my hands, if I didn’t play well.”

By age nine, Yang had successfully completed Grade 10 piano, although he has yet to attempt the ARCT teaching certificate.

At Cardinal Carter, this all came as a surprise as few were aware of Yang’s talent.

“Tony is a violin student here at Carter,” said Anne Bellissimo, the school principal. “We don’t offer piano as an instrument. So we were really surprised to learn just how talented he is.”

She went on to say that when the school has such an elite performer, a relatively rare case, the school does everything possible to accommodate them in terms of

time away from school.

“When we do have an exceptionally talented student we will obviously try to support them the best we can on the academic side,” she said. “We realize the time commitment that that requires as well.”

This school year alone Yang was absent from the second week of school until returning from the Chopin competition on Oct. 27. He will again be away from the classroom for about a month starting in mid-January when he travels to Japan and Korea to perform.

“The teachers and the staff are working to try to reorganize the curriculum for me so I think that is something that is very special,” he said, noting that he’ll have to make up his winter exams.

Juggling two instruments, academics and a series of performances abroad has come with a cost to Yang’s social life.

“I miss out on a lot of social activities,” he said. “During the summer I didn’t really go anywhere. I was alone and I practised all day.”

“Sometimes I do find some time to do some other things but never is there enough time to enjoy, just the music.”

Yang plans to make a living off the art now that he’s become internationally recognized as one of today’s best in the piano world.

“I don’t see myself doing a lot of textbook work in the future,” he said. “I enjoy music and things from the art industry much more than I do academics.”



Photo courtesy Tony Yang

AWARD-WINNING PIANIST — Tony Yang, a Grade 12 student at Toronto’s Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, placed fifth out of the 78 who competed in the four-round competition of the International Chopin Piano Competition last month in Warsaw. He was the youngest person to ever place in the competition.

Demonizing does nothing to help cope with complex situations

By Caitlin Ward

I don’t know if it would be possible to write about anything other than terrorist bombings this week. To speak about anything else would seem cavalier, I think, and it would feel dishonest. It’s the thing that’s been occupying just about every adult I’ve come into contact with since Paris was bombed late on Friday night. It’s been occupying me, too.

I was in transit when it happened, just returning home from visiting a friend, when I checked Facebook on my phone at the airport in Calgary and noticed a friend of mine who lives in Paris had marked herself “safe.” It seemed odd that people would

The New Pollution

By Beck

need to mark themselves safe, so I started looking to see what had happened. It was a few hours on at that point, so there was a better sense of what was happening, though still not much idea of why. There were many suppositions, and farfetched comments that this was happening in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo shootings — far-

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

etched to say it was in the wake of the shootings, I mean, given that they took place 10 months previous. It’s a way to imply a thing without actually saying it. It was extremists, CTV implied. It was Muslims, they did and didn’t say. As it turns out, it was Daesh (a terrorist group formerly known as ISIL, and before that, ISIS), and the more information that came out, the more bloody and terrifying it became. My heart caught in my throat when I read that the hostage standoff had taken place at the Bataclan, a music venue I once went to in order to see one of my favourite bands play one of their last shows.

Some of you may have thought, “but what about Beirut?” after reading that first paragraph. And it’s true, Beirut had been bombed the day before, on the Thursday, and the same group claimed responsibility for the deaths. Regardless of the chronology, though, I think for many of us the conversation started when parts of Paris were attacked. I’m not going to claim that I knew about the bombing in Lebanon before people started asking why no one was paying it so much mind as we were paying Paris. Then other questions emerged — what about Kenya in April, or the ongoing violence in Syria and Iraq? And apparently, for the first time, people noticed that we live in a broken world.

At the end of that second paragraph when I mentioned the Bataclan, you may have thought,

“that’s her connection to Paris,” or, alternatively, “I too have a connection to Paris.” There does seem to be a need to connect ourselves physically to what has become something of a mental trauma. When an attack like this happens in a western European country, and not a more commonly wounded patch of the world, it makes those of us who generally live in more secure circumstances feel less safe in our homes, and in our lives.

And at the end of that third paragraph, some of you may have thought about the reason why the Paris attacks garnered so much more attention than any of the others mentioned: prejudice against Arabs, prejudice against Muslims, empathy fatigue for warzones, the news media’s tendency toward eurocentrism, short attention spans, a seeming unconscious obsession with Paris that has emerged in the wake of these attacks.

Now, at the beginning of this paragraph, many of you may be wondering why this line of thought is meandering so widely and unevenly, and what any of this has to do with Beck, or The New Pollution, a single off his 1996 album Odelay. The answer to both of these wonderings is the same.

I’ve been thinking about how things happen, and why. More specifically, I’ve been thinking about how we think about how things happen, and why. You might have to read that last line a few times. I had to rewrite it a few times, actually.

And now, we’ve lost the plot. But actually, that’s sort of the point. In all the discourse and the arguments, the articles and the social media commentary, the pun-dits and the news anchors, there’s been a need to understand why this happened, and who’s to blame. On one level, there’s nothing inherently wrong with that, but on another, the side-effect is predominantly that we find a single cause, a single factor: a single thing at fault. It’s either Middle Eastern extremists, or American foreign policy. It’s all of Islam, or all of western culture. It’s Syrian refugees, or it’s French godlessness. I’m not too sure how anyone justifies those last two, but it seems to be working for them.

There’s this need to form a narrative around what’s happened these past weeks in Paris and Beirut and Syria and Iraq, and by extension the past years in some of these places, as well. It’s a very common, and very human practice: to take a series of events and turn them into a story we can understand. It’s how we explain the news, and how we talk about our lives.

It’s also how we write novels, though, and conceive of films. And overwhelmingly, those *tend* to be fiction. Real life is more complicated, and makes less sense. Things don’t hap-

pen for single reasons, and people rarely have singular motivations. I’d go so far as to say people only sometimes even have well-thought-out motivations. The world is a collage of stutters and broken pieces that cobble together. When you take it as a whole, be it the world or this particular song by Beck, there’s some coherence in its cacophony. If you just try to pull out threads, though, it’s a series of strange lines about cigarettes and mangling strangers and drunken rivers. You can’t make easy sense out of complex situations. It’s when we try that we make angels and demons out of ordinary people, and that does none of us any favours.

She’s got a cigarette on each arm
She’s got the lily-white cavity crazes
She’s got a carburetor tied to the moon
Pink eyes looking to the food of the ages

She’s alone in the new pollution
She’s alone in the new pollution

She’s got a hand on a wheel of pain
She can talk to the mangling strangers
She can sleep in a fiery bog
Throwing troubles to the dying embers

She’s alone in the new pollution (x4)

She’s got a paradise camouflage
Like a whip-crack sending me shivers
She’s the boat in a strip mine ocean
Riding low on the drunken rivers

She’s alone in the new pollution
She’s alone in the new pollution

More good news for moviegoers seeking choice

Screenings & Meanings

Gerald Schmitz



It's been a crowded month for new releases, good news for moviegoers seeking choice. Here are three very different features that merit at least one thumb up.

Spectre (U.K./U.S.)

Impossible to ignore is the season's biggest and flashiest blockbuster, the 24th episode of the long-running James Bond franchise that looks to surpass the take of 2012's Skyfall. It will need to. With a staggering \$US350-million production and marketing cost, the break-even point is said to be \$650 million in worldwide gross.

Helmed by Sam Mendes, veteran Brit director of stage and screen, Spectre has style and entertaining action to burn. Of course at the centre of it all is chiseled blue-eyed blonde Daniel Craig as the world's sexiest and suavest spy who likes his martinis shaken not stirred, his women close, and his enemies dead. Indeed this Bond is something of a one-man killing machine when not enjoying other delights.

The movie begins amid the exotica of Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexico City where Bond, as usual working on his own, causes an explosive international incident to avert a worse disaster. Bond's exploits and escape via aerial acrobatics make for an opening sequence as spectacular as that of Skyfall. Back in London the loose-cannon 007 is called on the carpet by MI6 boss "M" (Ralph Fiennes, successor to the dearly departed Judy Dench who makes a cameo appearance). Fat chance of Bond obeying his suspension, especially as the agency itself is menaced by arrogant new national security chief Max Denbigh (Andrew Scott), called "C," who aims to shut down the double-o program as part of his plan to become czar of a consolidated surveillance empire.

While Bond's movements will be tracked, he doesn't let that stop

him, enlisting the help of computer wizard "Q" (Ben Wishaw) and loyal assistant Money Penny (Naomie Harris). The first mission takes him to Rome where, after promptly seducing the middle-aged widow (Italian beauty Monica Bellucci) of a renowned assassin post-funeral, he infiltrates the clandestine assembly choosing a successor, ruled over by the shadowy head of Spectre (Christoph Waltz at his most villainous), a vast chaos-causing criminal conspiracy in cahoots with other nefarious ambitions of global control. This master of evil, who recognizes Bond, turns out to be Ernst Blofeld, a.k.a. Franz Oberhauser, supposedly killed in an avalanche decades earlier but who has all along been his principal nemesis — "the author of all (Bond's) pain," as he puts it.

To unravel and foil Spectre Bond heads to the Austrian Alps to locate "the pale king," a.k.a. "Mr. White," whose daughter Dr. Madeleine Swann (Léa Seydoux) will be key to finding Spectre's headquarters, a complex built into a meteorite crater in the North African desert. There's a stop in Tangiers for clues, then a train ride to the middle of nowhere. Throughout, the irresistible pair of Bond and Swann — they do look smashing together — are pursued by Spectre's baddest, always emerging from deathtraps with nary a scratch or hair out of place. Frantic scenes later we're back in London for a grand finale, racing against the clock of a dastardly global surveillance scheme.

In Fleming's original Bond novels Spectre stood for "Special Executive for Counter-Intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion." But I wouldn't read any special meaning into the movie's amoral universe in which, as always, Bond saves the day and gets the girl. This movie makes as

little sense as it is sensational.

The Peanuts Movie (U.S.)

Opening the same day as Spectre, the innocent, sweetly melancholic world of the late Charles M Schulz's much-loved comic character Charlie Brown could hardly be more different. Directed by Steve Martino, with screenwriting contributions from Schulz's son Craig and grandson Bryan, this big-budget (\$100 million) 3D version tries not to stray too far from what has made the original hand-drawn classics such a family favourite for 65 years.

Besides the hapless "blockhead" Charlie — perfectly voiced by 11-year-old Montrealer Noah Schnapp — are the familiar cast of characters: little sister Sally who dotes on her big brother, bossy Lucy with her five-cent "psychiatric help" stand, her brother Linus (though relegated to a minor role and mostly without his blanket), Snoopy of the red doghouse and twenty-bird sidekick Woodstock, Schroeder on the piano, tomboy Peppermint Patty and myopic Marcie, Pig-Pen, and above all, the Little Red-Haired Girl, the new classmate with whom the eternally bashful Charlie is smitten.

The movie's main storyline, which jumps around between winter and school's out summer seasons, follows Charlie's painfully shy efforts to be noticed by the little red-haired girl. (Sequences of Snoopy's aerial contests with the "Red Baron" while wooing a French female poodle flyer "Fifi" seem incidental, as if included to show off special effects.) After Charlie becomes the class celebrity by mistake, the moral of the story becomes that kindness and honesty, not fame or fortune, are the best ways to a girl's heart.

The computer-generated animation is by Blue Sky, the studio associated with the Ice Age series, and while not excessive, it lacks the poignant warmth and charming simplicity of such loved shows as A Charlie Brown Christmas, made 50 years ago. Call me nostalgic, but this new gaudier version isn't an improvement.

Still I give The Peanuts Movie a modest recommendation. Several reviews have been unduly harsh. For example, writing in The Globe and Mail John Semley exclaimed "Good grief, they've ruined Charlie Brown." They haven't, not really. Kids of all ages will probably enjoy it while at least introducing a new generation to classic characters who never grow old.

Suffragette (U.K.)

Set in London in 1912, several



20th Century Fox

THE SPIRIT OF PEANUTS — Some have found the ending of The Peanuts Movie to go against the "endless failures" of many of Charles Schulz's characters, especially Charlie Brown. But many, like Dan Kois of Slate, were not as concerned. In his review he speaks of the ending, and "... how happy it made not only my kids but pretty much all the kids in the theatre. Charlie Brown isn't rewarded on the baseball field or in the classroom or in the eyes of any of the wah-wahing adults whose opinions, in this world, truly don't matter; instead, the movie remedies, for a moment, the greatest injustice readers of the comic have always known: that Charlie Brown is a good man unappreciated by those he wishes were his true friends. To see his worth acknowledged, no matter how unfamiliar the scene was, felt, in the end, lovely. Charles Schulz famously justified the endless failures of his most beloved character by observing that 'winning is great, but it isn't funny.' Most of The Peanuts Movie is very funny indeed. Its ending, however, isn't funny — but it is pretty great."

years before the cataclysm of the First World War, director Sarah Gavron's stirring drama delves into the lives of some of the women involved in the struggle to get the vote, a polarizing issue that was a principal source of domestic disturbances.

The main figure is Maud Watts (Carey Mulligan), a working-class woman who toils long hard hours in a laundry where her husband Sonny (Ben Wishaw) also works. At home she is a dutiful wife and dotes on her little boy George. She is introduced to the women's movement by strong-willed co-worker Violet Miller (Anne-Marie Duff), who suffers from an abusive husband and whose daughter also works in the laundry. At first Maud remains apolitical and very reluctant but in a watershed moment she is thrust into testifying about workplace conditions before a parliamentary inquiry led by Lloyd George. She explains how she was born in the laundry, starting working part time at age seven and full time since age 12.

Despite a sympathetic hearing it becomes clear that the bastions of male power and privilege will do nothing to advance the franchise for women. At a peaceful demonstration against this betrayal protesters including Maud are attacked by police. She is manhandled, arrested and imprisoned. She claims not to be a suffragette when confronted by the chief inspector, Arthur Steed (Brendan Gleeson), in charge of the state's crackdown and surveillance. However, events keep pushing Maud in the direction of militancy. She even gets to meet the fugitive suffragette leader Emeline Pankhurst (Meryl Streep in a brief appearance), inciting her followers to deeds of civil disobedience with the rallying cry, "I'd rather be a rebel than a slave."

Maud is drawn into a small circle of committed activists led by pharmacist Edith Ellyn (Helena Bonham Carter) whose supportive husband contrasts with the uncomprehending Sonny. After a longer incarceration he banishes her from their home. Unable to care for George, he puts the boy up for adoption against her tearful pleas. Such sacrifices, including being cast out from the laundry, are not enough to deter Maud. She also spurns the efforts of Inspector Steed to turn her into an informer on a movement decried by the authorities as dangerously subversive. Instead she becomes devoted to a campaign that entails attention-grabbing acts of violence against property — breaking windows, setting off explosives, cutting telegraph lines. That builds to a harrowing climax based on actual events in which one of the group, Emily Wilding Davison, is killed, becoming a galvanizing martyr for the suffragette cause. Archival footage of her mass public funeral underscores the extent of its impact.

Suffragette tells an important story aided by strong performances, especially by Mulligan in the lead role for which she has received a Hollywood film award as "actress of the year." The movie ends with a series of dates indicating how long it has taken for women to get the vote in various countries — as yet far from achieved in places like Saudi Arabia. It's worth being reminded how hard women have had to fight for basic rights. Equality for women, not to mention violence against women, remain significant issues in the most advanced societies. That includes in Hollywood. While a new Canadian prime minister can argue for gender parity in cabinet "because it's 2015," there's still a long way to go.



Pathé Films

SUFFRAGETTE — Carey Mulligan stars as Maud Watts in the film Suffragette, a stirring drama set in London in 1912 that delves into the lives of some of the women involved in the struggle to get the vote.

We are called to patience, as individuals and as church

Breaking Open the Ordinary

Sandy Prather



I recently spent the better part of a morning sitting in the reception area of a dentist's office. My daughter was having a root canal done and, as her designated driver, I brought a good book with me and was prepared to wait. Instead of reading, however, I found myself caught up in the activities around me. It was a busy office and, over the course of the several hours, with increasing admiration, I watched the receptionist as she went about her job.

With ease, good humour and professionalism, she handled her tasks: welcoming patients; fielding phone calls; making appointments; discussing treatment plans. What especially impressed me, however, was her manner with people. Obviously aware that visits to the dentist's office can be fraught with anxiety for many, she spoke to each one with gentleness and compassion. She was patient in answering questions, calming anxieties, and reassuring people about procedures and treatments. Never once did she rush or in any way imply that she had other things to do.

I appreciated that. It reminded me of something a friend of mine had said about her oncologist. She and her husband were meeting him for a consult about some test results. The results were not good and the news was grim. But the oncologist, my friend reported, had been wonderful. While she and her husband sat in shock trying to assimilate the news, the doctor simply sat in silence with them. Then, slowly, gently and with infinite patience, he answered all their questions, telling

them to take their time and never once appearing rushed. It was, she noted, a real experience of compassion.

Such experiences highlight the connection between compassion and patience. In a very concrete way, patience is an essential component of compassion, so much so that when we lack patience with people, we lack compassion for them. How so?

The very words themselves give us a clue. Etymologically, compassion and patience/impatience derive from the same Latin root: *pati*, meaning "to suffer." The prefix *com* means "with," while the prefix *im*, tellingly, means, "not." Literally, compassion means, "to suffer with," while impatience means, "not suffer."

Impatience, then, is an inability to "suffer" something. With regard to events, it manifests itself as dissatisfaction with the present moment, the way things actually are. When we are waiting for something to happen or for something or someone to arrive, we exist in an in-between time. This difference between the now and the not-yet produces a tension in us, one that can be endured patiently or impatiently. We can "suffer" with equanimity, accepting the moment and appreciating the time things take, or we feel frustrated and try to hurry things along, unable to sit with the tension of the moment.

The same dynamic occurs when we are impatient with people: we are unable to sit with them in their reality. How often have we made a judgment that a change is needed in someone's life and we are anxious for it to happen? We see clearly what needs to be done and in our eagerness for them to take the next step, or, conversely, our frustration that they seem to be "stuck," we end up impatient, trying to hurry them along. We literally are unable to sit with them in their current reality. We want change, we want it now, and our compassion goes out the window.



Design Pics

HAVE PATIENCE — "Scripture tells us God is compassionate and patient: steadfast and enduring is the way they put it. God, we are told, is willing to wait for us for many an hour and many a day, willing to sit with us in our suffering, struggle with us in our turmoil and wait patiently while we grow, fail and grow again," writes Sandy Prather. "We have a God who is willing to wait with and for us, but the question is, are we willing to wait for each other?"

Compassionate people are the most patient ones in that they are able to sit with us in our reality. I think of a priest in our diocese known for his compassion. People flock to him with their troubles, sorrows and struggles. They come because he always has time for them and he listens with kindness. But there is another aspect to his listening: he doesn't try to fix or change them. He doesn't get exasperated when they continue to make the same mistakes or fail to follow their own best instincts. Instead, he accepts them as they are and walks with them for as long as it takes. He is patient and, for this, he is known for his compassion.

It is the way of our God. Scripture tells us God is compassionate and patient: steadfast and enduring is the way they put it.

God, we are told, is willing to wait for us for many an hour and many a day, willing to sit with us in our suffering, struggle with us in our turmoil and wait patiently while we grow, fail and grow again. It is the way of Jesus, who walks with people, hears their stories and engages them in relationship even as he waits patiently for conversion. We have a God who is willing to wait with and for us, but the question is, are we willing to wait for each other?

We are asked to be patient not only as individuals but as a church. We speak of being a compassionate church, but can we say that we are a patient church? As a church, do we accept people as they are and are we willing to accompany them in their reality? Are we not more likely to demand that they

change in order to fit our reality?

It is something to consider. Pope Francis has pointed out that the church, in being with people, needs to, "accompany with mercy and patience the eventual stages of personal growth as they progressively occur," (*Evangelii Gaudium* 44). Such patience is, he says, a necessary component part of evangelizing: "Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregard for constraints of time," he writes (EG 24).

A dental receptionist listens to and responds to her clients' needs and fears; an oncologist takes the time to sit with his patient and answer their questions; a church goes out and walks with men and women in their brokenness and suffering. In their patience is their compassion.

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

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‘Crooked made straight’: a hope-filled road ahead



Liturgy and Life

Michael Dougherty

“Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill made low,
and the crooked made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth.”

The prophets Isaiah and Baruch lived two or more centuries apart. Yet they shared a hope that we can also share some two-and-a-half millennia later. Facing apparently insurmountable obstacles and darkening future vistas they had and we have reason to believe that change is not only possible but heralds a joy-filled future, if only we repent and believe.

The image of a road comes to mind while reading the Second Sunday of Advent scriptures. Not any road inspired me, though, but a very particular one running through Whitehorse, Yukon. The Alaska Highway or ALCAN stretches from Dawson Creek, B.C., to Delta Junction,

Second Sunday in Advent December 6, 2015	Baruch 5:1-9 Psalm 126 Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11 Luke 3:1-6
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Alaska. It was built in 1942, one of the darkest years of the Second World War. A sense of urgency inspired action. It would take less than eight months for well over 10,000 U.S. soldiers and thousands of Canadian civilians and military to hack out the initial pioneer road from the forests and mountains. It would run over 2,700 kilometres through some of the roughest terrain in North America.

War provided the impetus for this effort. Demands of commerce continued the process of change along the route. Once remembered as a tire-chewing, dirt-cloud marathon of a road trip, the whole route is now paved. Continued construction has literally seen mountains levelled and valleys filled to ease the highway journey. With many curves straightened the Alaska Highway now has become some

Dougherty is co-chair of the Social Justice Committee at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Whitehorse, Yukon.

500 kilometres shorter than the original Second World War route.

This remarkable construction effort exemplifies our collective capacity to overcome enormous problems if we have the will to do so. Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’* (“Praise be”) challenges us to act collectively on the mountainous threats facing our global family today. If we don’t face head-on the gross and ever widening worldwide gap between rich and poor, climate change, and the staggering loss of biodiversity, the next generations of our common offspring will be confronted with the most fundamental survival challenges ever faced by humanity.

Two months ago, delegates gathered at the United Nations in New York City to agree on Sustainable Development Goals running for the next decade and a half. These will build on the partially met Millennium Development Goals. We truly have a very long road ahead of us. Imagine what an economic and social system based on gospel values would really look like?

We now are in the midst of the COP21 gathering in Paris, France. World governments including the world’s biggest polluters and greenhouse gas producers must negotiate a new international agreement on climate change that really has teeth. What will it mean if yet again, only half measures are adopted?

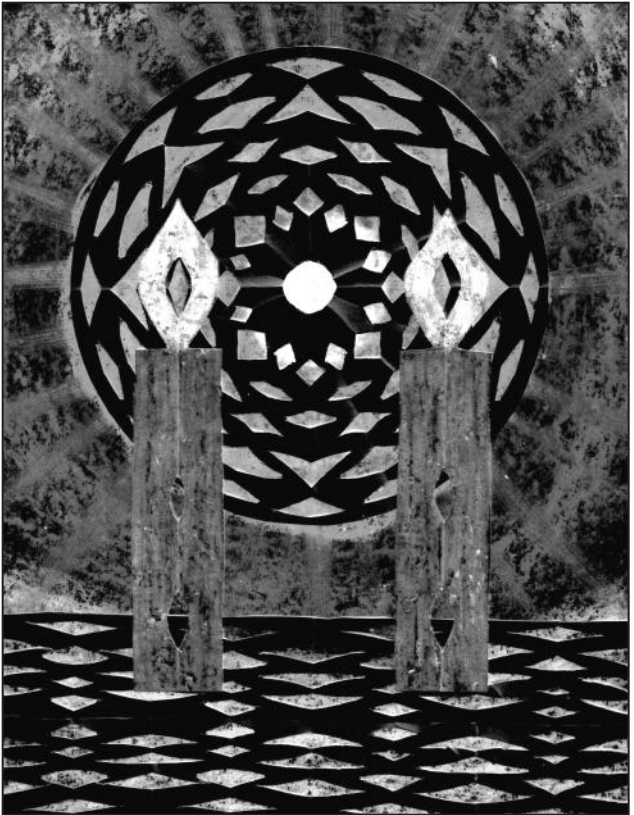
Our political and corporate leaders must know that climate change presents us with “a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods,” which Pope Francis states will hit the poorest hardest. “Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades.”

The trek over the Alaska Highway through the vast forests of British Columbia north of Fort St. John, B.C., has changed dramatically over the passing decades. A vast web-work of roads has spread out on both sides of it. Drill sites have sought to tap the natural gas deep within the earth’s folds. Fracking earthquakes, water pollution and sour gas come in train with these developments along with the other larger carbon release impacts on the environment. Can we envision an environmentally sustainable economy to base our society on?

Laudato Si’ puts it plainly before us. “A true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” Delegates at the Development and Peace Orientation Assembly in Manitoba last summer heard, as well, that if you want peace, protect the environment.

How do we, in our homes, parishes and country, see “the rough ways made smooth”? First of all, we don’t have to do

everything at once. Maybe the response of our parishes and communities will initially be to the Syrian refugee crisis or to our local Christmas hamper drive. It could be setting up a local Interfaith Power and Light calling us to faithful stewardship of Creation by encouraging energy conservation, efficiency, and renewability (<http://www.interfaith->



Stushie Art

powerandlight.org.). Many different steps can be taken along the same path.

Sometimes, though, the macro issues force us to open our eyes to the transformative call of the gospel. Once we clearly see and understand the underlying causes of the crisis, then how can we fail to recognize the same forces at work in domestic troubles, which we have been blinded or deafened to for some reason? Lend a hand, “make the crooked straight.”

Most Junes for the last couple of decades I have found myself on a Greyhound bus heading down the Alaska Highway. My spirit always soars with the magnificent vistas along the route, like those over Muncho Lake or up the McDonald Creek Valley at Stone Mountain.

“The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy” (Ps 126).

Common denominator among those who are great is self-confidence

In Exile

Ron Rolheiser, OMI



We all have our own images of greatness as these pertain to virtue and saintliness. We picture, for instance, St. Francis of Assisi kissing a leper; or Mother Teresa publicly hugging a dying beggar; or John Paul II standing before a crowd of millions and telling them how much he loves them; or Thérèse of Lisieux telling a fellow community member who has been deliberately cruel to her how much she loves her; or even of the iconic Veronica in the crucifixion

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

scene, who amidst all the fear and brutality of the crucifixion rushes forward and wipes the face of Jesus.

There are a number of common features within these pictures that speak of exceptional character, but there’s another common denominator here that speaks of exceptionality in a different way, that is, each of these people had an exceptionally strong self-image and an exceptionally strong self-confidence.

It takes more than just a big heart to reach across what separates you from a leper; it also takes a strong self-confidence. It takes more than an empathic heart to publicly hug a dying beggar; it also takes a very robust self-image. It takes more than mere compassion to stand before millions of people and announce that you love them

and that it’s important for them to hear this from you; it also takes the rare inner confidence. It takes more than a saintly soul to meet deliberate cruelty with warm affection; it also requires that first you yourself have experienced deep love in your life. And it takes more than simple courage to ignore the threat and hysteria of a lynch mob so as to rush into an intoxicated crowd and lovingly dry the face of the one they hate; it takes someone who has herself first experienced a strong love from someone else. We must first be loved in order to love. We can’t give what we haven’t got.

Great men and women like St. Francis, Mother Teresa, John Paul II, and Thérèse of Lisieux are also people with a stunning self-confidence. They have no doubt that God has specially gifted them and they have the confidence to publicly display those gifts. The sad fact is that many of us, perhaps most of us, simply lack sufficient self-image and self-confidence to do what they did. Perhaps our hearts are just as loving as theirs and our empathy just as deep, but, for all kinds of reasons, not least because of how we have been wounded and the shame and reticence that are born from that, it is

existentially impossible for us to, like these spiritual giants, stand up in front of the world and say: “I love you — and it’s important that you hear this from me!” Our tongues would surely break off as an inner voice would be saying: “Who do you think you are? Who are you to think the world needs to hear of your special love?”

Truth be told, too often it isn’t virtue that’s our problem; it’s self-confidence. Mostly we aren’t bad, we’re just wounded. William Wordsworth once said something to the effect that we often judge a person to be cold when he or she is only wounded. How true.

Thankfully God doesn’t judge by appearances. God reads the heart and discerns between malice and wound, between coldness and lack of self-confidence. God knows that no one can love unless he or she has first been loved, and that very few, perhaps no one, can publicly display the heart of a giant, the courage of a hero, and the love of a saint when that big heart, courage, and love haven’t, first, been felt in an affective and effective way inside of that person’s own life.

So what’s helpful in knowing this? A deeper self-understanding is always helpful and there can be a

consolation, though hopefully not a rationalization, in knowing that our hesitancy to step out publicly and do things like Mother Teresa is perhaps more rooted in our lack of a healthy ego than in some kind of selfishness and egoism. But of course, after that consolation comes the challenge to throw away the crutches we have been using to cope with our wounds and our crippled self-image so as to begin to let our heart, courage, and love manifest themselves more publicly. Our tongues won’t break off if we speak out loud about our love and concern, but we will only know that once we actually do it. But, to do that, we will have to first step through a paralyzing shame to a self-abandon that up to now we haven’t mastered.

And there’s a lesson in this too for our understanding of ego within spirituality. We’ve invariably seen ego as bad and identified it with egotism, but that’s overly simplistic because spiritual giants generally have strong egos, though without being egotists. Ironically too many of us are crippled by too little ego and that’s why we never do great things as the spiritual giants do. Egoism is bad, but a healthy, robust ego is not.

Bishops challenge all of us to welcome strangers

Journey to Justice

Joe Gunn



Refugees dangerously fleeing to Europe. 25,000 Syrians promised for Canada. Security vs. hospitality. Canadian newspapers are filled with coverage of the unprecedented refugee crisis worldwide. And, in early October, Canada's Catholic bishops released a pastoral letter on welcoming refugees.

This statement, "I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me . . ." (Matthew 25 and the Last Judgment) was a long-awaited project of the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace. Our bishops are following the lead of Pope Francis, whose first trip outside Rome as pope was to the Italian island of Lampedusa, where refugees come ashore from treacherous Mediterranean crossings. The pope was visibly moved by their situation, while decrying the world's "globalization of indifference" to their plight. Francis challenged every European parish to welcome a refugee family.

And in Canada we have been asked to do no less: a September letter from the president of the bishops' conference asked "every Catholic parish and religious community in Canada that has the resources, to sponsor a refugee family . . . either alone or working in collaboration with others." But the bishops' pastoral letter states that, "today, unfortunately, most Catholic parishes in Canada are

not involved in refugee sponsorship."

Beyond sponsorship, the bishops write movingly that "we must provide aid in the camps," recognizing that the suffering of refugees is being unnecessarily protracted due to inadequate global responses. Such misery is a cause of dangerous refugee escapes into Europe, as well as providing a breeding ground for frustrated and hopeless youth.

Eighty-six per cent of the world's refugees find themselves in over-crowded and under-funded refugee camps, hosted by developing countries that are already struggling to support their own citizens. The average length of stay in refugee camps is now approaching 20 years, up from an average of nine years in the early 1990s.

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians (and others) attempt dangerous crossings of the Mediterranean Sea to enter Europe because, after fleeing violence at home, the situation in their countries of asylum remains desperate. Nonetheless, as of June 2015, the UN's humanitarian appeal for Syrian refugees was only 23 per cent funded.

So Canada has cut its foreign aid with disastrous consequences.

Under previous Liberal governments, Canada's spending on foreign aid began to fall in relation to the size of our economy — in spite of the long-standing target of dedicating 0.7 per cent to overseas development assistance. Under the Conservatives since 2011, even raw dollar figures have declined. In 2014, development assistance spending was \$4.9 billion, down from \$5.7 billion three years before. Ottawa's spending



CNS/Umit Bektas, Reuters

WELCOMING REFUGEES — In early October Canada's Catholic bishops released a pastoral letter on welcoming refugees, writes Joe Gunn. "The bishops write movingly that 'we must provide aid in the camps,' perhaps recognizing that the suffering of refugees is being unnecessarily protracted due to the lack of adequate global response."

on foreign aid now sits at 0.24 per cent of Gross National Income — falling below the OECD average for the first time since 1969.

A longer-term solution (to security, migration and development problems) would see Canada more generously assist those poorer countries who are coping with the brunt of refugee flows worldwide.

The bishops suggest that "our action has to be twofold: we must certainly welcome them upon their arrival to Canada, but we must also support them while they are still abroad." Later in the letter, the bishops mention a third response: "political lobbying," and demand that "the Catholic voice be heard by the Canadian government." The pastoral letter provides a bullet list of areas for improvement, in general language.

Church people who work with refugees will welcome this pas-

toral letter — but be far more specific in their demands. Immediately, the Liberal promise to receive 25,000 government-sponsored Syrians before year-end must mean concrete support for faith community settlement groups that will serve these newcomers. Our new government has intelligently refused to appeal the ruling of the federal court that found the 2012 cancellation of the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) as "cruel and unusual." Refugees and refugee applicants need care, and the IFHP, which existed since the 1950s, should be

immediately reinstated.

Canada took only 23,286 refugees in 2014, roughly the same number as each year of the last decade. Indeed, the federal government should "expand the acceptance of refugees to Canada" as our bishops advise, specifically by facilitating procedures for refugees from beyond Syria.

By challenging us all to welcome strangers, as well as to act for change in refugee policy this Advent, our bishops are preparing our hearts and inciting our yearning for the coming of the refugee-child Jesus.

Gunn is the Ottawa-based executive director of Citizens for Public Justice, www.cpj.ca, a member-driven, faith-based public policy organization in Ottawa focused on ecological justice, refugee rights and poverty elimination.



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Will new government boost social justice causes?

By Will Braun
Canadian Mennonite magazine

When a provincial election brought a wave of optimism to Manitoba — or at least parts of it — in 1999, a colleague said, “yep, the reign of God should descend upon us any time now.”

Change is always less dramatic on the ground than on the stump, which is either good or bad, depending on your political tilt. But still there is something of the reign of God at stake. So, what might the change in Ottawa mean for a few issues that faith groups have pushed?

Social values

Traditionally, many people of faith have cared about conservative social issues such as abortion and same-sex rights. But Conservatives dropped those battles years ago so change is a moot point.

Aid

Canada’s official development assistance budget has sunk to 0.24 per cent of Gross National Income, far below the 0.7 per cent goal set in 1969 by a United Nations commission led by former Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson. Will Trudeau live up to Pearson’s ideal? During the campaign, Liberal party president Anna Gainey said the party “will aspire to reach this allocation,” noting that “(Trudeau), in particular, is strongly committed to Canada fulfilling this obligation.” Good intentions but no commitment.

The Liberal platform does commit to refocus aid on “the poorest and most vulnerable,” reversing a Conservative trend toward blending aid with commercial, political

and ideological goals.

Jennifer Wiebe, who directs the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ottawa office, says she’ll be watching for reassessment of Canada’s list of 25 priority countries to include fewer middle-income nations. She would also like Canada’s commitment to overseas food security to shift more toward smallholder agriculture.

Justice

None of the 100-plus categories in the online version of the Liberal platform is devoted to justice issues. There’s nothing, for instance, about Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA), the bold and innovative program struggling to survive after being largely dropped by Ottawa. Last year there were 16 CoSA organizations across Canada, many with strong faith ties. They match released high-risk sex offenders with volunteers who provide friendship and accountability.

The CoSA offices had received about \$650,000 annually from Correctional Services Canada (CSC). Public Safety Canada had also funded a \$7.5-million demonstration project that allowed for significant expansion of the programs between 2009 and 2014. That project proved the program to be effective at reducing reoffences and saving government money. Despite that, last year Ottawa cut about half of the \$650,000 and offered nothing to replace the demonstration project funding.

Eileen Henderson, who heads CoSA work for MCC Ontario, says four of the 16 CoSA organizations no longer function and the others are struggling to stay alive. She is hopeful the new government will shift its justice focus from punishment to rehabilitation and reintegration.

In addition to funding, she will be looking for greater dialogue with decision-makers and sustainable funding for community-

based organizations so they can focus on their work rather than paying bills. She also hopes for an atmosphere in which work with victims and work with offenders are seen on the same spectrum not in opposition to each other.

Refugees

One photograph had all parties suddenly scrambling to appear responsive to refugee concerns in September. The Liberals are prioritizing their promise to bring 25,000 government-sponsored refugees from Syria and Iraq to Canada by year’s end. Whether or not they meet this target, it is clearly part of a larger shift.

Among various promises to make it easier, faster and cheaper to become Canadian, the Liberals committed to reinstate health coverage for people in the immigration process, reversing a Con-

servative move that stung refugee claimants and sponsors.

Brian Dyck, who serves as Migration and Resettlement Program Coordinator for MCC Canada, will be watching to see whether overall refugee settlement targets rise, or whether Syrians simply fill existing limits, displacing others. Over the long term, Dyck wonders how humanitarian immigration — primarily refugees as opposed to other immigrants — will fit in the overall immigration plan.

War and peace

The Liberals have committed to “maintain current National Defence spending levels,” though they will opt for something cheaper than the F-35 stealth fighter jets the Conservatives had on order. They have made vague commitments to increase Canada’s role in UN peacekeeping missions, something Harper had nearly eliminated. And

of course, Trudeau has said he will end the combat mission in Iraq, while still training local forces.

KAIROS

KAIROS, the national ecumenical organization best known for having its funding abruptly cut by the Conservatives, is hoping for change. In an email, KAIROS director Jennifer Henry said that at the time their funding was nixed, “assurances were made to (KAIROS) from all opposition parties that they would restore funding.” She hopes the new government will “honour this commitment.”

The chill

Church organizations and aid agencies have felt the threat of Ottawa coming after them if they publicly ruffled Conservative feathers. A year ago, at least a few sentences in this article would have caused me pause. That has changed. Julia Sánchez, head of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, said via email: “Our sense and our expectation is that the chill is off.” She added that organizations have become so “used to self-censoring over the past few years” that it may take time to readjust.

Jennifer Wiebe points to the section of the Liberal platform that says the party will: “allow charities to do their work on behalf of Canadians free from political harassment.” The platform refers to “an understanding that charities make an important contribution to public debate and public policy.”

Let me exercise this new freedom to say the Liberals, like other parties, pandered to the financial self-interest of voters as much as they invoked a broader vision for society. Still, the new government may well extend its sunshine to some of “the least of these.” At such times, church folk will be there to encourage and collaborate.



Art Babych

NEW GOVERNMENT — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shares a moment with Silver Cross Mother Sheila Anderson while awaiting the march past of veterans following the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the National War Memorial in Ottawa Nov. 11. Will Braun asks what the change in Ottawa may mean for issues that faith groups have pushed.

In our grief and confusion, turn to Jesus, who was not ruled by fear

Porch Light

Stephen Berg



We grieve for the families and friends of those murdered in Paris, we feel relief hearing from friends and family who are safe. Too, we are thrown into confusion, and again wonder about our shifting world, suddenly more uncertain, dangerous, threatening, incomprehensible — which, if I’m completely honest, is part of the grief I feel.

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

And there’s the lure of fear, of hatred, of vengeance, of trying to find meaning in meaningless violence. And while there is no way to prevent any of these thoughts and feelings from washing over us (in fact they should be washing over us and anger is a completely appropriate emotion), there is a way of refusing the bait, the bondage.

I (we) can start by seeing my own inconsistency, that is, my lack of concern for countless other victims in places like Beirut, Tunisia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, Gaza, and so on, where acts of terror with collateral murder have gone, and continue to go, mostly unnoticed. Empathy for those in the Paris attacks, yes!

Better still to grow empathy for victims across our globe.

I (we) can also look away. I can refuse to be taken in by the sacred fascination (I owe much here to the writings of James Alison) that attends an orchestrated act like this. Consider the chosen location: Paris, a city symbolic of western culture, wealth, success, a city with access to the full power of the media, has quickly become a kind of “sacred centre.” (Not unlike New York and the site that was christened “ground zero.”)

And as all sacred centres do — even amidst (or capitalizing on) the genuine displays of grief and compassion — they begin to generate feelings of unanimity. Gone, our uneasy consciences, our half-conscious lives, replaced, for the moment, by a shared innocence, goodness, and the righteous outrage of being wronged.

In the heat of this new transcendent collective things come clear and the old complexities devolve and harden into a militant “us” and “them.” In this climate/spirit, to reflect on the “why” of the attack is weakness; to question

our rightness, to question the closing of borders to Syrian refugees, to question renewed civilian surveillance, militarization and the intensifying of counter strikes, is to risk identification as one of “them.”

I say all of this with utmost care, for my sole intent is to offer, as best I can, a kind of gospel perspective. In effect I’d like to frame the attack like this: Some fellow humans, whose minds and souls have somehow, and at some time, been turned to believe that all those outside of their experience, their creed, their cabal, are corrupt, inhuman and so expendable, have committed a grievous act of suicide and murder, that is creative of nothing, has no meaning except what we give it.

Therefore, to support immediate reprisal without reflection, is to give it meaning and unwittingly believe the ancient “satanic” lie. I’m not referencing some ethereal entity here, just a basic anthropological observation of how scapegoating violence begets pseudo-community, pseudo-solidarity, and forever requires more

violence, more scapegoats, for its maintenance.

But now, even as I write this I feel as though I’m sinking. How naive it all sounds. Violence “works,” doesn’t it? And yet, and yet, nothing changes, more is needed to defeat more . . . and how do we keep from becoming mirror images of what we call inhuman? So as naive as it appears, I throw in with the one who refused the seduction and exposed the lie of redemptive violence by allowing himself to be its public victim. I reference Jesus — not the Jesus hijacked by fundamentalists, or the escapist Jesus held by certain evangelical enclaves, but the Jesus who, as far as I can tell, was not managed or manipulated by fear, or ruled by death, or controlled by religion, or would be impressed by the accoutrements of corporate Christianity — but the Jesus pointed to by the likes of Baca Khan, Gandhi, Tolstoy, King . . . who by following and modelling threw some mercy and love into the mix, and by that move kept open the possibility of a different reality.

Find ‘Calcutta’ in our homes, schools, workplaces

Catholic Connections

Chad Wotherspoon

The theme within the Prince Albert Catholic School Division this school year is “Faith: Live it.” When it comes to journeying in faith, Rev. Robert Barron encourages us to “begin with the beautiful, which leads to the good, which leads to the truth.” Bearing this in mind, I will attempt to shed some light on the journey my wife, Megan, and I experienced.

After teaching for three years with the Prince Albert Catholic School Division, Megan and I decided to apply for a one-year leave. Our leave was graciously granted and as the school year drew to a close, we were excited to see what would unfold. We wanted to begin our time in a simple manner, one with a focus on the God of creation and an eye to appreciate the *beauty* around us. The first section of our trip was bicycling from Calgary to the West Coast where we continued south to California. It was liberating to have only food, our bicycles, the essential camping gear and the beauty of nature to accompany us.

Cycling along the coast of the United States, we were at times overwhelmed by the incredible kindness, generosity, and heartfelt conversation of our southern neighbours. For example, one lady invited us to camp on her land, shared tea with us and the next morning brought us pancakes. Another fellow pulled over beside us on the highway and insisted on giving us money. After we refused the money, he set it on the road and drove away. In a world so “up to date” with news and gossip, this was a breath of fresh air when it can be all too tempting to become doubtful of the basic *goodness* of people.

Later in our trip we were fortunate to discover more of this goodness of strangers while spending two months in Kolkata, India. Kolkata is a vibrant city with a collision of different people, sounds and cultures. While volunteering with the Missionaries of Charity in the city, we met a wide variety of fellow volunteers from all over the world. Each week there were new priests celebrating mass at Mother House along with the sisters of the Missionaries of Charity, the volunteers and other local parishioners. On more than one occasion the visiting priests shared the most heartfelt of thanks with the sisters for reminding them why they had become priests.

Mother Teresa truly left a mark; she put “skin” on the *truth* of the Christian message in a way that the world has not been able to ignore. While she may not have left pretty shoes to fill, she did

leave a captivating example, timeless words of wisdom, her faith-filled way of life that fosters humility and prayerfulness, and a legacy of love that continues to walk with and greet the poorest of the poor each day. Her words, “Don’t look for big things, just do small things with great love . . . the smaller the thing, the greater must be our love” began to take on a very personal meaning.

Many volunteers we worked with as well as numerous sisters at Mother House had known or met Mother Teresa. I asked the same question to many of them: “What was it like to meet Mother Teresa?” By far the most common answers referred to

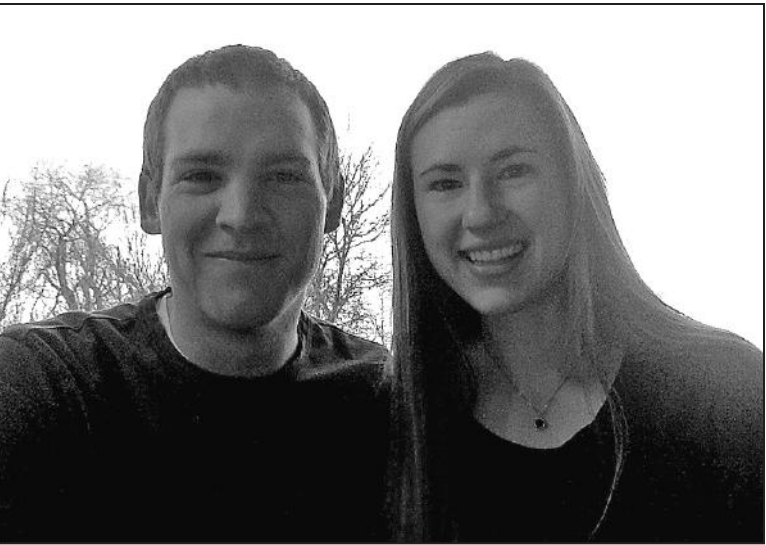
how Mother Teresa made each person feel as if she or he were the only person in the room. Each of these people spoke of her whole-hearted presence and attention to who she was speaking to no matter what was going on around her. To me this seems so profound, so simple, so small and yet so rare when really, you’d think any of us could practise this if we really made it a priority — couldn’t we?

When we first went to visit Nrimal Hriday, the home for the destitute, one of our volunteer friends who had met Mother Teresa and did his best to live by her words, “the person who gives with a smile is the best giver because God loves a cheerful giver,” looked at me and noticed I looked nervous while greeting the patients. He echoed Mother Teresa’s challenging words and loving way, insisting that I “smile” and “be not afraid.”

I had another opportunity to respond to his challenge when another cheerful friend introduced me to the art of shaving the patients’ heads and faces. This man was always smiling and singing as he worked, and he obviously enjoyed dousing the men’s smooth, freshly shaven faces with wonderful smelling aftershave that he had picked up in a little shop. When I asked him about this little ritual, he told me, “they really love this!” I think he enjoyed it even more than the men he was taking care of.

Although volunteers working with the Missionaries of Charity may come from completely different cultures with completely different languages, one common thread linked the community together: everyone was excited about catching a glimpse of the huge mark such a small lady left on the world. Almost equally inspiring for us was hearing the ways in which so many of the people who had been deeply impacted by her had continued to live the rest of their lives. Some became “lifers” as Missionaries of Charity along with countless others who went back to their home countries to do “something beautiful for God” in their own unique ways. Their lives were a testament to Mother Teresa’s words: “Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta . . . What you are doing I cannot do, what I’m doing you cannot do, but together we are doing something beautiful for God. You must put your love for God in a living action.”

During her lifetime Mother Teresa spoke of the many people dying for lack of food and the many more dying for lack of a little love. In our western world, where there is so much striving to be or do something worthy of praise, we see almost as many signs of loneliness, lack of meaning and purposelessness. Could part of the solution we are looking for be as simple as cheerfully giving the people around us the real, quality attention they hunger for? Could it be as simple as



JOURNEYING IN FAITH — Megan and Chad Wotherspoon took a year off from teaching in the Prince Albert School Division to “journey in faith.” They share their experiences and encounters.

doing small things with great love?

Thanks to the strangers we met along the way, Megan and I have returned from our journey with a new perspective on the importance of beginning each day with a focus on the *beauty*, *goodness* and *truth* surrounding us. A personal goal of mine is to remember to be more present and to seek first to understand and see the *goodness* in each person I’m with — both inside and out-

side of the school. A goal Megan has is to spend more time focusing on the *beauty* and *goodness* in the everyday things here in Prince Albert as opposed to the not so good things. A key takeaway from the trip that we both hope to remember is that each one of us can find “Calcutta” right here in our homes, schools, workplaces or wherever else we may be — and to be inspired by the many people who are doing just that.



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Observations on language lighten November darkness

Around the Kitchen Table

Lloyd Ratzlaff



A few observations on language. Back in high school, old “J. B.” once demonstrated to our Grade 11 class how the German language can create words of indefinite length. Suppose, he said, there was a Hottentot living in South Africa: in German this would be a *Hattentat*. Suppose further there was a man who mur-

dered *Hottentots*: in German he would be a *Hattentattoeter*. And if this slayer of Hottentots owned a writing desk, it would be a *Hattentattoeterbierotisch*, and one leg of the killer’s desk would be a *Hattentattoeterbierotischbein*. . . . And so on, so that theoretically a single word could become almost endlessly long.

But why he picked this example, none of us ever knew.

A curse on Baruch Spinoza delivered July 27, 1656: “With the judgment of the angels and the sentence of the saints, we anathematize, execrate, curse and cast out Baruch de Espinosa, the whole of the sacred community assenting, in presence of the sacred books and the six hundred and thirteen precepts written therein, pronouncing against him the malediction wherewith Elisha cursed the children, and all the

maledictions written in the book of the law. . . . Let him be accursed by day, and accursed by night; let him be accursed in his lying down, and accursed in his rising up; accursed in going out and accursed in coming in. May the Lord never more pardon or acknowledge him; may the wrath and displeasure of the Lord burn henceforth against this man, load him with all the curses written in the Book of the Law, and blot out his name from under the sky” (quoted in Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*).

The first edition of Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* sold poorly, and the Boston *Intelligencer* said of it: “The beastliness of the author is set forth in his own description of himself, and we can conceive of no better reward than the lash for such a violation of decency. The author should be kicked from all decent society as below the level of the brute. He must be some escaped lunatic raving in pitiable delirium.”

I’m sitting against a fence near St. George elementary school, writing in my notepad. At recess time some kids see me and yell, “Hey, hobo!” I look up, they shriek and scamper off, but curiosity pulls them back again — *Look! old guy with pencil and paper.*

I resist many labels, but Hobo is one I happily accept.

Examples of some powerful remedies to be found in the Boomtown drugstore of the Western Development Museum: Sarcoptic Mange Medicine for Hair and

Scalp. Purified Solution of Liver. Albert’s Grasshopper Ointment. St. Jacob’s Oil (Intended to Help Relieve Pain). Barbed Fence Liniment. Dr. Pierce’s favourite Prescription for Women (No Alcohol). And (my favourite), Miller’s Diarrhea Mixture.

And today in the washroom of a Shell service station, a new medicament: Genuine Horny Goat Weed (Sexual Stimulant For Men).

An instruction sheet with a gift from friends: *FLOWER STAND Fold type Natural*: Please understanding the natural wood likely to have the status of distortion, damage or some cracks. The wood will possibly have some status of cracks, rot, rust and other phenomena if the wood with water and wet. Please pay more attention to the product which will be broken under the situation of flop down. Please do not throw and cast it, in order to avoid injury and damage to the goods. Please surely do not use it for other purposes.

A confession of Franklin Merrell-Wolff in *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*, “I find that I had had too high an opinion of the intelligence of the average man, and that the individual who is capable of understanding the wisdom contained in the fable of the goose that laid the golden egg is really quite above the average level of intelligence. Frankly, I have not yet completely adjusted myself to the disillusionment that comes with a more objective and realistic appreciation of what the average human being is, when considered as a rel-

ative entity . . . (W)hile I am much more certainly aware of the Jewel hidden within the mud of the personal man, yet I see more clearly also the fact of the mud and its unwholesome composition. It is not a pretty sight and not such as to increase one’s regard for this world-field. All in all, the more objective my understanding of the actualities of the relative life, the more attractive the Transcendent World becomes.”

At the funeral of our good friend Guy Giroux, the priest’s homily says the story of the raising of Lazarus shows that Jesus has called Guy *from* death, but also calls *us* to “free Guy and let him go.” So valiant a reinterpretation that now the story says the opposite of what it did before. In the Bible story, it was to *this* world that Lazarus was recalled, and bystanders were instructed to remove his shroud so that he was free to walk and talk and eat as before. Yet not even the biblical story has him doing any of this. It doesn’t say, They took Lazarus home, and while Martha made supper Mary and Jesus sat with him, and finally Lazarus said, “It wasn’t the way I imagined . . .” Nor does it say that eventually Lazarus had to die again. And what was the point, then, of the resurrection?

The priest expressed another thought about Guy being “recreated on the last day” and becoming immortal. But his tenses were all mixed up — “was raised, is raised, shall be raised” — and I’m still not sure what the priest, or the biblical author, meant.

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Muslims oppose ISIS

ISIS has changed our global climate.

The Nov. 14 attack on Paris and the subsequent city-wide lockdown in Brussels are both linked to ISIS. Broader yet is the near universal fear that ISIS will strike again, and so countries, cities and security forces are being held hostage — not to mention citizens who fear going about their ordinary business.

One of the byproducts of the ISIS terror campaign is the fear of Muslims in western countries. The fact that ISIS identifies itself as Muslim makes it easy to open the floodgates of prejudice and discrimination against all Muslims. Overlooked is the fact that in the Middle East Christians, Muslims and Jews generally lived together in harmony for centuries.

As noted in last week's editorial, the fact that Muslim faith leaders are speaking out against ISIS and labelling it a terrorist and extremist organization that has nothing to do with the Muslim faith helps to clarify, and rectify, the picture.

Another positive item to note is newly released data that the Pew Research Centre collected in 11 countries with significant Muslim populations. People from Nigeria to Jordan to Indonesia overwhelmingly expressed negative views of ISIS. Pakistan was an exception.

The nationally representative surveys were conducted in the centre's annual global poll in April and May this year. In no country surveyed did more than 15 per cent of the population show favourable attitudes toward Islamic State. And in those countries with mixed religious and ethnic populations, negative views of ISIS cut across these lines.

In Lebanon, a victim of one of the most recent attacks, almost every person surveyed who gave an opinion had an unfavourable view of ISIS, including 99 per cent with a very unfavourable opinion. Distaste toward ISIS was shared by Lebanese Sunni Muslims (98 per cent unfavourable) and 100 per cent of Shia Muslims and Lebanese Christians.

In Nigeria, there was somewhat more support for ISIS (14 per cent favourable) compared with other

countries, but attitudes differed sharply by religious affiliation. An overwhelming number of Nigerian Christians (71 per cent) had an unfavourable view of ISIS, as did 61 per cent of Nigerian Muslims. However, 20 per cent of Nigerian Muslims had a favourable view of ISIS when the poll was conducted in the spring of this year. The group Boko Haram in Nigeria, which has been conducting a terrorist campaign in the country for years, is affiliated with ISIS, though the two are considered separate entities.

In a global world, where increased travel and migration are realities, citizens have to learn how to live together in a culturally mixed society. We also need to learn how to respect "the other" with their beliefs and customs. Along this line, Pope Francis is calling for "fervent dialogue" among Christians, Muslims and Jews during the coming Year of Mercy.

That dialogue needs to clarify what prejudices each faith community has held against the others, so that healing and understanding can replace fear and ignorance. — PWN

Refugees currently 'in orbit' have no protection and are stateless

By Randy Fleming, Moose Jaw

Premier Wall might wish to reconsider his statement regarding cancellation of receiving refugees from Europe.

The timing of the premier's statement to the Paris attacks makes me wonder if he was not simply reacting to the shocking turn of events all in one brief

evening when ISIS made its assault on Paris. Unquestionably, the internal security of Canada is both a legitimate and paramount consideration for all levels of government today.

But what is required, I believe, is a sober second consideration in the context of the current plight of refugees currently "in orbit" (a term coined 30 odd years ago

when a similar situation was occurring in Europe whereby refugees were being refused or turned back to their country of origin or habitual residence). In short, they have neither protection of, or in, any country; they are stateless.

Wall may not have been afforded the opportunity to receive a complete briefing of the situation on the ground overseas as well as

the steps or process(es) being put in place by Ottawa (as we speak) to safely patriate those persons selected to come to Canada. Armed with this kind of security and settlement information from his federal counterparts, the premier might be more inclined to take a second look.

While no inference of partisan politics is being suggested, it's

important that people across this land get "all of the facts." The premier too is entitled to receive all of the facts so that he in turn can make a good informed decision. But let's not for a moment lose sight of the fact that we are dealing with people's lives — aged and some infirm, pregnant women, mothers with children of tender years as well as men of all ages and backgrounds.

All these people are facing so much uncertainty, perhaps a winter living outdoors if no suitable reception plan can be devised, no reasonable prospect of being settled soon or at all, and how long will the host country grant them asylum while waiting for permanent reception from some country.

We cannot overlook the fact that within the global security community and national governments, there are enormous resources and intelligence being shared and available to quickly weed out potentially unsuitable individuals or undesirables.

Such security risks can be filtered back into centres overseas

— CANADA, page 19

Gluten-free food benefits consumers and industry

By Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, Troy Media

Gluten has divided consumers into two camps: those who can't get enough gluten-free products, believing that eliminating the little protein composite leads to a healthier life, and those who dismiss its sudden popularity as a cultural phase.

Even if you are puzzled by the gluten-free trend, it has clearly benefited the industry and, most importantly, consumers.

Sales growth of gluten-free products have been impressive. Increases have been particularly high in Europe and North America. Global sales of gluten-free products are at \$3.7 billion and many experts expect that number to exceed \$4.5 billion by 2020. The gluten-free feature has seen the greatest market growth since 2010, up 615 per cent. Other health-oriented features, such as hormone-free (up by 200 per cent), all-natural products (up by 155 per cent), and even organic (60 per cent) don't even come close.

In a zero-growth, zero-interest-rate economic environment, the food industry, particularly food processors, are desperate to increase their volumes. And in a sales environment with challenging socio-economic factors, innovation plays a key role. Through improved packaging and, of course, better products, the industry can reinvent itself in numerous ways.

The fact that the anti-gluten movement overlapped with the increase in food prices is no coincidence. A rise in revenues enticed

the industry to reassess innovative risks. Product development came into style again. Most consumers are unaware of how multifaceted the development of a new food product can be. From concept to market, costs can easily exceed \$150,000 per product. And almost nine in 10 projects fail to reach the consumer or generate a single sale. In other words, a single success story can cost millions. That's why the food industry had been risk averse until 2008, when prices started to increase dramatically.

The food industry has been known to misread the market climate, target the wrong group, hit the market with the wrong price point, or even cannibalize sales coming from other product categories. Any of these mistakes lead to failure. But the gluten-free sector is breathing some desperately needed air into research and development.

Previously, gluten-free products were produced for a small and underserved demographic (celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder, affects barely one per cent of the population). The swift emergence of a large market of healthy lifestyle enthusiasts caught the industry off guard.

Despite the rising antagonism against the gluten-free portfolio, this industry has done some incredible work in recent years. Less than a decade ago, the inferior taste of gluten-free products likely pushed many consumers away. But recent food science innovations mean that the taste of many products, particularly gluten-free bakery, are virtually indistinguishable from conventional equivalents.

Gluten is the protein composite found in wheat and some other grains that gives food products texture, elasticity and the ability to rise, so finding workable alterna-

tives was both critical and difficult.

The industry has capitalized on the market momentum of gluten-free products. And the phenomena has captured the attention of prominent athletes and actors who showcase their new gluten-light dietary habits. As a result, the market has drawn a large self-diagnosed "gluten-intolerant" segment of consumers.

There is a benefit to all of this product development and availability. The many consumers who actually do require a diet free of gluten now have access to better, tastier products.

Innovation is a trial-and-error

process — chocolate-chip cookies, potato chips, Corn Flakes and even the microwave were discovered by accident. Research to support innovation must accept risk.

And the food industry must always evolve. Growth has been marginal this year and the industry now forecasts that the gluten-free segment will peak over the next five years. The industry should embrace the legacy of the gluten-free movement: the innovative talent that has been nurtured by it. And let's hope those innovators develop yet more novel products that are good for both our health and the economy as a whole.



CNS/Heinz-Peter Bader, Reuters

REFUGEE HOME OPENS IN AUSTRIA — Austrian Cardinal Christoph Schonborn poses with refugees from Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria Nov. 17 during the official opening of an asylum home for unaccompanied minors in a former monastery in Vienna, Austria.

Charlebois is a professor at the Food Institute at the University of Guelph. He is currently on leave at the University of Innsbruck in Austria. www.troymedia.com

Don't forget the other side of Trudeau as prime minister

The Editor: What jubilation is in the air with the election of Justin Trudeau as prime minister! Paul H. LeMay (PM, Nov. 4) more or less refers to him as a god-send. Does he forget that when Justin was elected Liberal party leader, he proclaimed that anyone who does not support abortion-on-

demand need not apply to be a Liberal candidate? Also, at one point, he claimed to be a devout Catholic. It is also public knowledge that he is a proponent of euthanasia and has promised to let everyone get high on marijuana. And what did we get under the tenure of his father, Pierre? We got abortion-on-demand legalized, a

new Constitution which guaranteed everyone "rights" without any corresponding responsibilities, and a Supreme Court of Canada that was set on a course to judicial activism. If ever there was a time for the Canadian bishops to publicly excommunicate someone, the time is now. — **Ben Lewans, Shaunavon, Sask.**

People help make world 'a better place'

Continued from page 1

Foundation in London, being religious means imitating God, particularly in the pursuit of justice and the demonstration of mercy. Making the world a better place, he said, "is all about individuals, it is about bottom up, it is about little acts of mercy. . . . It's not going to happen through conferences of interfaith leaders making more proclamations about the meaning of mercy or theologians delving deeply into what mercy means, but it's about people of different faiths living together and trying to see the other for who the other really is and responding accordingly." "It happens on the ground," the rabbi said. "It happens in a million different little acts every day." For Jews, he said, God's justice and mercy go together. "There is a passage of Jewish teaching in the Talmud that states that if someone is merciful to the cruel, they will end up being cruel to the merciful. In other words, justice is important in Judaism; it is not just unadulterated mercy."

"But what we do in our liturgies," the rabbi said, "we are constantly asking God to temper his justice with mercy." It is a "bit of a caricature" to say the might of God in the Hebrew Scriptures is greater than his mercy, Brawer said, because the Bible presents different images of God. "There are times in which he is angry and vengeful, but then there are times in which God is extraordinarily vulnerable, betrayed and almost astounded by the behaviour of a people he loves who are not returning that love. So, yes, God can be vengeful and wrathful and demand justice, but then he very often allows humans to challenge that, invites humans to challenge that and I think that's the fuller picture."

For example, he said, after the Israelites worship the golden calf, God tells Moses, "I'm going to wipe this lot out," — that's one snapshot — but what's equally important is the following snapshot in which Moses intercedes and God gives way, and that's an extraordinary thing."

Houshmand said 113 of the 114 chapters of the Quran open with the phrase, "Bismillah al rahman al rahim," usually translated as, "In the name of God, the most gracious, most merciful." Muslims



CNS/Paul Haring

POPE CALLS FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE — Pope Francis walks with Argentine Rabbi Abraham Skorka, left, and Omar Abboud, a Muslim leader from Argentina, as he leaves after praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem in this May 26, 2014, file photo. In his official proclamation of the Holy Year of Mercy, Pope Francis called for "fervent dialogue" between Christians, Muslims and Jews.

begin their formal prayers with the phrase, they say it before meals, begin formal speeches with it and recite it at the beginning of wedding and funeral rites. "Why does the Quran repeat this name so often? Maybe it is because God knows that unfortunately the human heart needs to hear repeated, constantly and often, that God is mercy," she said. "With our instincts and selfishness, our failures and pettiness, the human being tends always to flee from mercy, so the Quran repeats and repeats and repeats it." As in Catholicism, in Islam invoking God's mercy is particularly tied to asking God's forgiveness for one's sins, she said. Islam teaches that "God, the fullness of love, knows and sees the mistakes, errors and sins of the human person. But his mercy never stops in the face of anything. His mercy embraces all of creation — the good and the bad, saints and sinners — and he says, 'I see you, I see your sins, but I am still merciful always. And the doors of my mercy, of my forgiveness are always, eternally open to you.'" Muslims, she said, believe that at different times of the year — such as the last days of the fasting month of Ramadan — the gates of heaven open wider and God's mercy flows more abundantly. "I see the jubilee as having this purpose, too, of healing deep wounds. We must welcome this call to mercy and remember that no one is perfect, no one is without need of mercy. Like Jesus

said, 'Let whoever is without sin throw the first stone.' "

Canada needs to receive refugees now

Continued from page 18

where they would undoubtedly be afforded the opportunity to rebut any presumption of their undesirability to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in concert with governments willing to receive refugees. But to do something is imperative for Canada at this point. We need to address the urgency and immediacy of the situation and the acute needs of these displaced persons. Canada doesn't want to repeat history such as occurred over 70 years ago when, on the eve of the Second World War, Canada under the watch of Mackenzie King did not respond to save refugees. King's indifference and inaction sealed the fate of several hundred Jewish refugees from Europe seeking admittance to Canada on humanitarian grounds by turning their ship back out to sea where on their return back to Europe their fate was sealed.

Fleming is a retired lawyer who spent a considerable part of his practice counselling and representing refugees and immigrants. He is a member of Amnesty International Canadian Section.



A. Wicks

Her Legacy

(a poem suggested by Tiu Lee)

The star's journey into its destiny
Hinged on her assent, her firm commitment
To accept the bidding of angel wings.

Was it a dream? It took her a moment
To orient her bearing as beams of light
Bold, salutary and so amazing

Bathed her being with abundant blessings.

By Conrado B. Beloso

www.prairiemessenger.ca

To do the same today would trigger the wrath of the world community. But, more importantly, it would be a contravention of all the international agreements and accords of which Canada is a signatory, that obligate us to do our part to address this humanitarian crisis of no small proportions. We don't want to turn back the page and start to place what may be restrictive measures on Canada's immigration policy unnecessarily. Apart from this, it warrants taking a look at who has been doing the "heavy lifting" in this crisis during the past year. Germany has generously responded by receiving over one million migrants who have come mainly out of Syria and Iraq. If Germany can absorb this many of the refugees at one time, then doesn't it behoove Canada to mobilize its resources and citizens to respond by seeking to accommodate the 25,000 that Prime Minister Trudeau is committing Canada to absorb now. Yet naysayers among the ranks of Canadians feel that we may be over-extending ourselves by supporting both the Conservative, and now Liberal, plan to patriate this many persons in the next six weeks, citing pub-

lic/domestic security concerns, a seemingly immobilized civil service to handle the caseload and local authorities claiming a similar inability to process and resettle successful applicants for reception. Canada can and must step up to the plate. We did it for the Vietnamese boat people, 60,000 if memory serves me correctly, and probably with little of the infrastructure that this government has at its disposal. I, for one, am very glad that Trudeau chose to take the initiative to do something now, rather than later. This citizen will sleep better knowing that these people can start to carry on with their lives in the security of relative domestic peace in their adopted country. This is what my country Canada is all about.


Cadham appreciated

The Editor: The news of the death of Joan Eyolfson Cadham made me sad as I enjoyed her column very much. She wrote in a simple manner that touched the heart and uplifted the spirit. May she rest in peace with God whom she loved and served. A longtime fan of hers. — **Naden Hewko, Macklin, Sask.**



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Palliative home in Quebec to offer assisted suicide

By Francois Gloutnay

MONTREAL (CNS) — Quebec’s new end-of-life care law will go into effect in December, and at least one of its 31 palliative-care facilities announced that it will be offering medically induced death, or assisted suicide.

By Feb. 1, *La Maison Aube-Lumiere* in Sherbrooke will offer this alternative to its terminally ill patients.

Elisabeth Briere, president of the board of directors of the home, said medically induced death will be offered only in “exceptional situations and as a last resort. And only after all other possible means to soothe the patients’ sufferings

will have been used.”

“Offering medically induced death is totally coherent with the core values of our general philosophy, which puts the patient at the centre of all our interventions. To us, the interests of the patients must always be at the forefront. We also believe that every patient should be offered the possibility to decide, in a free and serene way, how they wish to live the very last moments of their existence,” said Briere.

Sherbrooke Archbishop Luc Cyr said he was “troubled” by *Aube-Lumiere’s* decision.

“When the patient’s sufferings are soothed through proper medical care, end-of-life can be an

outstanding opportunity to step back, to reflect on the meaning of life and to deepen our faith. Fear and anxiety about one’s eventual death thus becomes less acute,” said Cyr, who also praised the medical and non-medical staff who offer palliative care.

Quebec’s Act Respecting End-of-Life Care was passed by the provincial assembly in June 2014. The law offers two possibilities to terminally ill patients: palliative care or medically induced death. Quebec is the first Canadian province to adopt such legislation.

The legislation says every palliative care facility can determine the “kind of end-of-life they wish to offer within their premises.” Quebec has 31 palliative care facilities.

Lucie Wiseman, director of Quebec’s Alliance of Palliative Care Residences, said she surveyed its 30 members in September, and the vast majority refuse to offer medically induced death.

“We respect the freedom of every palliative care facility. They’re all auto-

nous organizations,” she said.

Briere said *La Maison Aube-Lumiere* had staff and volunteers take an online survey and discovered that the “vast majority of the respondents are in favour of offering MID to the patients. And that 20 persons still hadn’t yet made up their mind on the issue.”

The Canadian government still must produce new legislation that will respect February’s Supreme Court

decision that invalidated the Criminal Code articles regarding medically induced death. Normally, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau would have to propose a new bill by February.

The Canadian Catholic bishops and many other groups and religious leaders have asked the new prime minister not to rush, but to use the derogation clause that would allow his government more time to write a bill.

Patriarch says western nations betrayed Christians

BEIRUT (CNS) — The head of the Syriac Catholic Church has accused western governments of betraying Christians in the Middle East and said it was “a big lie” to suggest Islamic State could be defeated with airstrikes.

In a Nov. 18 interview with *Le Messenger*, an online Catholic magazine in Egypt, Syriac Patriarch Ignace Joseph III Younan said, “all Eastern patriarchs, myself included, have spoken out clearly to the West from the very beginning: Be careful, the situation in Syria is not like that of Egypt, Tunisia or Libya — it’s much more complex, and conflict here will create only chaos and civil war.

“They listened and responded: No, the Assad regime will fall in a few months. As I predicted, that hasn’t happened, and five years later, innocent people, especially Christians, have no support. The West has betrayed us.”

French and U.S. warplanes

stepped up attacks on Islamic State positions in Syria and Iraq after terrorists killed 129 in Paris and dozens in Beirut. But the patriarch said airstrikes were ineffective at targeting Islamic State leaders because its religiously indoctrinated operatives were well financed and armed and had infiltrated local populations.

Younan, a native of the Syrian province of Hassake, served for 14 years as bishop of the New Jersey-based Diocese of Our Lady of Deliverance for Syriac Catholics in the United States and Canada. He was elected patriarch of the Syriac Catholic Church in January 2009 and is based in Beirut.

He said Catholics had lived for centuries in eastern Syria and had “understood the horror of the situation” following the 2003 western invasion of Iraq. He said western nations said they wanted to bring democracy to the Mideast, but “since there’s no real separation of religion from the state, our nations do not easily accept democracy.”

“Western democracies have conspired against Syria and produced the destruction of the nation’s infrastructure, the demolition of houses, towns, villages, monuments and archaeological sites,” Younan said.

He said western politicians, especially in the U.S., Britain and France, appeared to favour “an endless conflict in Iraq and Syria,” while western media had proved “silent, cowardly and complicit” by failing to “defend truth and justice.”

“It’s a shame the West has abandoned Christians to this situation,” said the patriarch, whose interview was also carried Nov. 18 by the Rome-based Asia News agency.

The Syriac Catholic leader praised the pope for being “a defender of justice” and appealing for solidarity with Middle East Christians, but said threatened Catholic communities now needed “not words but deeds.”



CNS/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters

IMMIGRANTS RALLY AT SUPREME COURT — A boy holds U.S. flags as people gather for an immigrant rights rally in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington Nov. 20. Rallies there and at the White House marked the one-year anniversary of President Barack Obama’s executive actions to protect from deportation both those who came to the U.S. as children and the immigrant parents of children who are U.S. citizens or legal residents. Courts have put a hold on the programs.



CNS/EPA

POPE SET TO VISIT AFRICA — A priest celebrates mass Nov. 22 at a Catholic church adjacent to a camp for displaced persons in Bangui, Central African Republic. Pope Francis is scheduled to visit the camp during his Nov. 29 - 30 visit to Bangui. He will also visit Kenya Nov. 25 - 27.

Couple questions pope on intercommunion

By Cindy Wooden

ROME (CNS) — When a Lutheran woman married to a Catholic man asked Pope Francis what she and her husband could do to receive communion together, the pope said he could not issue a general rule on shared communion, but the couple should pray, study and then act according to their consciences.

“I would never dare to give permission for this because it is not in my authority,” the pope told Anke de Bernardinis after a lengthy response about the faith Catholics and Lutherans share and the ecumenical goal of full unity.

The pastor of Rome’s *Christuskirche*, a parish of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church, welcomed Pope Francis to an evening service Nov. 15 by telling him dialogue requires that people get to know one another.

To start the process, he said, several members of his congregation had questions for the pope. As they asked their questions, the pope took notes.

A little boy asked the pope what he likes best about being pope, to which the pope responded, “being a pastor.” He said the formal duties of the papacy, especially the paperwork, were things he endured, but he liked being able to visit the sick, listen to people with problems and visit prisoners.

A Swiss woman asked the pope what Christians can do to help refugees and ensure Europeans do not start erecting new walls. “Speak clearly, pray — because prayer is strong — and serve,” the pope responded.

De Bernardinis told the pope that she and her husband were happily married and shared many “joys and sorrows,” but they could not share the eucharist.

Pope Francis told her the issue is not an easy one to resolve and responding was made even more difficult by the presence in the front row of “a theologian like Cardinal (Walter) Kasper. I’m afraid!”

Clearly, the pope said, all people in heaven will share the Lord’s banquet at the end of time. “But on the journey, I ask myself — and I don’t know how to respond, I’m making your question my own — I ask myself, ‘Is sharing the Lord’s Supper the aim of the journey or is it ‘viaticum’ for walking together?’ I leave this question to theologians, to those who understand.”

In general, the Catholic Church teaches that in most cases, only Catholics free from mortal sin may receive the eucharist at mass, although members of the Orthodox churches also may receive in special circumstances.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Ecclesial communities derived from the Reformation and separated from the Catholic Church, ‘have not preserved the proper reality of the eucharistic mystery in its fullness,

especially because of the absence of the sacrament of holy orders.’ It is for this reason that eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not possible for the Catholic Church.”

The Code of Canon Law, however, does envision a narrow set of circumstances in which eucharistic sharing is possible “if the danger of death is present or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops, some other grave necessity urges it,” as long as the non-Catholic party shares the Catholic belief in the meaning of the eucharist.

Pope Francis told the Lutheran congregation in Rome that “it is true that sharing (the eucharist) is saying that there are no differences between us, that we have the same doctrine,” which the official Catholic-Lutheran dialogue has yet to prove. “But I ask myself, ‘Don’t we have the same baptism?’ And if we have the same baptism, then we must walk together.”

“Life is greater than explanations and interpretations. Always refer to your baptism — one faith, one baptism, one Lord, as St. Paul tells us — and take the consequences from that,” the pope told de Bernardinis. “Speak with the Lord and move forward. I won’t say anything more.”

How did the rose ever open its heart and give to this world all of its beauty? It felt the encouragement of Light against its being; otherwise we all remain too frightened.

— Hafiz