



See Page 5

Appeal in
Action



See Page 8

cat.chat live



See Page 21

Returning to
Spirit



The Diocesan Messenger

A Publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

September 2011

Corpus Christi Procession

by Joan Ripley

On Sunday, June 26 the Diocese of Victoria celebrated the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi* with a traditional Eucharistic Procession from St. Ann's Academy to St. Andrew's Cathedral. Over 1,000 Faithful accompanied Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament up a steep hill on Quadra, past Christ Church Cathedral where the bells were pealing in His honour and through the heart of downtown Victoria to publicly show their love and adoration and gratitude for His most precious Body, broken and given for us.

City of Victoria police officers on motorcycles supervised the procession and one was overheard saying to another, "There are so many people!" Just being in and around the crowds one couldn't help noticing that everyone was so happy; it was really heart warming.

At Vespers, Bishop Richard Gagnon went to the ambo to give a homily but instead, he turned and faced the Blessed Sacrament on the altar and shared a prayer of praise and thanksgiving to Jesus that was rising from his heart for the graces of



Photo credit: Wilf Krutzmann DVM, CSW

that moment. It was extremely profound and moving. The beautiful occasion concluded most fittingly with *Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament*.

Led by the Victoria Police Pipe Band and three flag bearers, El Shaddai, the Handmaids of the Lord and the Legion of Mary, the procession began on the grounds of St. Ann's Academy, moved out onto Humboldt Street then turned uphill at Quadra. Bishop Richard, carrying the Blessed Sacrament, joined the procession at Mount St. Mary Hospital at Quadra and Fairfield Road.

During the procession the Blessed Sacrament was carried alternately by the Bishop and Fr. Mel Bayron, Pastor of Ascension Parish in Qualicum-Parksville, assisted by altar server and seminarian William Gaertner. Six men of Our Lady of Fatima Parish wearing bright red tabards carried an ornate red and gold canopy over the Blessed Sacrament while another six carried elegant golden coach lanterns. Twelve Knights of Columbus in full regalia provided an Honour Guard.

Continued on Page 5

World Youth Day 2011

by Fr. Dean Henderson

I write on the eve of departure from Madrid, Spain where 28 young adult pilgrims from our Diocese and a group of about 25 chaperones and teens from the Courtenay parish joined our Bishop for the unforgettable experience of World Youth Day and Days in the Diocese of Toledo.

The pilgrimage experience ranged from the most intimate joyful fellowship with our host Spanish families, Sisters and Franciscan Friars in Toledo, an historic walled city of 70,000, to the vigil campout with Pope Benedict on Saturday night prior to the Closing Mass with somewhere between one and two million people (I lost count after the first 500,000).



He commissioned us to return home and simply change the world for Jesus.

The Lord has been in our midst in the joys and the sufferings all pilgrims experience in different ways—and we will all come home changed people. We have been exposed to the most amazing international Catholic gathering of youth, 800 Bishops, countless religious orders of men and women—all in unity with the Pope who invited us to come and be rooted in Christ and become firmer in our faith (Col 2:7). He commissioned us to return home and simply change the world for Jesus.

He also invited us to come in two years to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the next WYD. Who else would like to Praise the Lord big time in Rio? Just plan to bring ear plugs, good walking shoes and be prepared to sweat for Jesus! ✂

Inside

Appeal in Action	5
Calendar of Events	4
Catholic Schools	11
Connections	15
Face the Day	16
Faith Matters.	17
Impressions	22
Island News and Events	6
National/International	20
On Campus	15
Parish Profile	14
Pastoral Itinerary	4
Vocations.	18

Read more about World Youth Day on Pages 12 & 13



Financial Overview

Year ended December 31, 2010

by Leah MacKenzie, BBA, CGA
Financial Administrator

The Diocese of Victoria provides programs and services in support of work carried out directly by parishes, Island Catholic schools and other Catholic entities on Vancouver Island. The Diocesan Pastoral Centre of the Bishop of Victoria, Corporation Sole is the administrative and reporting body for centralized services, which include: Office of the Bishop; Marriage Tribunal; Office of Religious Education; University Chaplaincy; Victoria Hospital Chaplaincy; Social Justice Office; First Nations’ Ministries; Parish Outreach; Building and Property; Financial Services; Payroll, Pension and Human Resources; and Clergy and Seminarian resources.

The Financial Statements of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre are audited annually by the external firm of KPMG LLP. The Audited Financial Statements are reviewed by the Diocesan Audit Committee and the Diocesan Finance Committee. For financial reporting purposes the schools, parishes and other related organizations report their financial activities separately from the Pastoral Centre. Below are excerpts and highlights from the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2010.

Statement of Financial Position

The Statement of Financial Position reports all the assets and liabilities of the Diocese. The financial position is very stable and comparable to the previous year. Cash and term deposits increased slightly mainly due to an increase in deferred donations from the *Journey of Hearts and Hands – New Beginnings* Appeal. Capital Assets and the corresponding Invested in Capital Assets decreased slightly as a parish property was sold and the corresponding proceeds were returned to the parish for their local initiatives.

Statement of Operations

Normal operating surplus was \$159,131 in 2010 compared to \$535,693 in 2009. The most significant difference relates to two large unexpected bequests received in 2009. Operating expenses decreased in 2010 by \$13,460 which assisted in maintaining a net operating surplus. Almost all cost centres maintained or decreased their costs during 2010, with increased costs noted only for retired clergy, property costs, University Chaplaincy, Office of Religious Education and other Diocesan expenses.

Our goal is to maintain a small operating surplus each year through prudent fiscal management while increasing our programs and activities throughout the Diocese.

Overall results for 2010 report a deficiency of revenues over expenses of \$331,591. This is due to activities considered outside the normal operations of the Diocese, such as start-up Appeal expenses, parish land acquisitions and dispositions, litigation, and off-setting extraordinary donations to assist with these expenses.

Diocesan Operating Revenue

Parish Assessments

Parishes are assessed on the basis of their annual collections and other income. Assessment income is the major revenue item which funds the operating services of the Diocese of Victoria. In 2010, parish assessments totalled \$1,122,662, which represents a decrease of 7% from 2009.

Ministry and Program Revenue

Ministry and program revenue is comprised of parish levies, grants, donations and program fees related to the various programs and ministries that the Diocese coordinates. This includes the Hospital Chaplaincy, Office of Religious Education, Campus Ministry, Marriage Tribunal, Social Justice Office, First Nations’ Ministry, Vocations and Seminarians. Overall, Ministry and Program revenue remained consistent with the prior year.

A major source of ministry and program revenue from Catholic Missions in Canada was gratefully received. Catholic Missions in Canada provided a substantial grant of \$142,800 in 2010 and \$137,500 in 2009 to support ministries and programs, mission parishes and seminarians.

Interest Revenue

Interest Revenue represents interest earned in bank accounts, investment holdings and on parish loans. The Diocese makes capital loans to individual parishes, with surplus funds placed on deposit with the Diocese. These funds are loaned out to parishes for special building projects or other capital needs. Parishes are charged a low fixed rate of interest on these loans. The Diocese earned a total of \$140,639 in interest revenue during 2010.

Administration Fees

The Diocese charged related parties \$37,576 for administration and accounting fees for services of the Diocesan Finance Office.

Property

The Diocese of Victoria manages a few rental properties from which it derives income. Revenue on these properties was \$208,650 with corresponding expenses of \$92,175 for a net income on property rentals of \$116,475.

Donations

As a Registered Canadian Charity, the Diocese of Victoria receives donations from individuals and organizations. Donation revenue was lower in 2010, as 2009 included two extremely generous bequests.

It should be noted that Appeal donations received in 2010 were recorded as deferred donations, and therefore are not included as revenue in 2010. The *Journey of Hearts and Hands – New Beginnings* Appeal 2010 donations are for specific programs and initiatives that begin in 2011. The Appeal donations will be recognized as revenue when the corresponding expense is recorded during the 2011 fiscal year.

Diocesan Operating Expenses

Chancery Salary and Benefits

Includes salary and benefit expenses for the Chancery offices for both clergy and lay employees. Chancery salary and benefit expenses decreased by 3% and totalled \$151,773 for 2010.

Retired Clergy and Lay Personnel

These expenses include pension annuities and health care benefits for retired priests, retired sisters and lay personnel. Also included in this category are other related priest expenses such as sabbaticals, subsidies and retreat costs. During 2010 this amount was \$203,404 which is a 24% increase from last year.

Island Catholic Schools Subsidies

The Diocese provides annual support for Island Catholic schools through parish assessments and direct support. An annual subsidy of \$147,768 is paid to ICS.

Other Diocesan Expenses

Other expenses include the Bishop’s travel and residence, CCCB annual fees, the *Diocesan Messenger*, website, hosting special events as well as funding the Pastoral Planning initiative. Other Diocesan expenses increased in 2010 mainly due to \$64,000 of expenses related to consultation and creation of the Pastoral Plan.

Pastoral Centre

Expenses in this category include the costs of maintaining the Pastoral Centre building and grounds. The expense for 2010 was \$76,504 compared to \$68,920 in 2009.

Ministry and Programs

This includes expenses of the Hospital Chaplaincy, Office of Religious Education, Campus Ministry, Marriage Tribunal, Social Justice Office, First Nations’ Ministry and Vocations and Seminarians. Ministry and Program expenses were \$530,736 which was an 11% decrease from 2009. The majority of the decrease was in First Nations’ Ministry due to timing differences for workshops and programs. First Nations’ Ministry costs are anticipated to return and exceed 2009 funding requirements in future years.

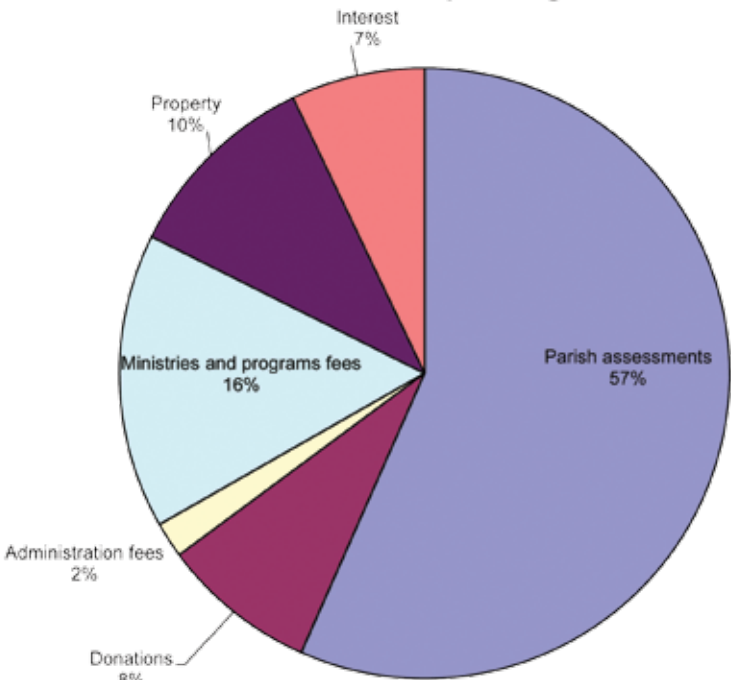
Administration

Expenditures for Diocesan administration were \$398,321 compared to \$451,291, in 2009, a decrease of \$52,970. Diocesan Administration includes the Finance Office, archives, professional and auditing fees, special projects, consultant fees, general office expenses and amortization.

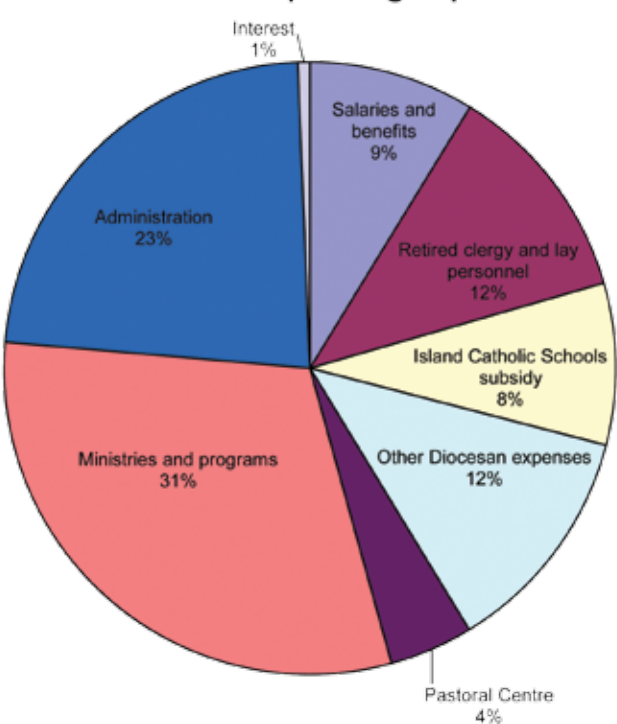
Interest and Other Expenses

The Diocese has interest expenses for bank loans incurred on behalf of parishes. In 2010 the interest expense was \$11,073, a decrease of 21%. ✂

Diocesan Pastoral Centre Operating Revenue 2010



Diocesan Pastoral Centre Operating Expenses 2010



Statement of Operations

Year ended December 31, 2010, with comparatives for 2009

	2010	2009
Revenue		
Parish assessments	1,122,662	1,212,831
Donations	163,296	537,756
Administration fees	37,576	41,406
Ministries and programs:		
Parish levies	71,064	71,064
Donations	86,145	63,582
Grants	127,330	160,374
Program revenue	25,355	6,464
Property	208,650	181,631
Investment Income	140,639	97,630
	1,982,717	2,372,738
Expenses		
Chancery Expenses	151,773	156,490
Retired clergy and lay personnel	203,404	164,163
Island Catholic Schools subsidy	147,768	147,768
Other Diocesan expenses	211,842	152,427
Pastoral Centre	76,504	68,920
Property Expenses	92,175	87,167
Ministries and programs:		
Marriage Tribunal	57,330	64,806
Hospital Chaplaincy	52,991	60,068
University Chaplaincy	84,820	80,523
Office of Religious Education	111,648	99,589
Seminarians and Vocations	63,889	79,789
Priest recruitment and subsidies	45,492	49,279
Social Justice	12,735	16,005
Native Ministry	66,733	96,733
Parish Subsidies	35,087	48,009
Administration	398,321	451,291
Interest	11,073	14,018
	1,823,586	1,837,045
Normal Diocesan Operations	159,131	535,693
Appeal Campaign expenses	170,659	-
Extraordinary expenses (income)	320,063	(380,625)
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(331,591)	916,318

The Diocesan Finance Committee

The Diocesan Finance Committee recognizes that our operations and ability to provide programs and ministries is due to the continued support and generosity of individual parishioners throughout the 40 parishes and missions on the Island. The Diocese of Victoria does not have large capital investments that generate interest income to fund operations; instead, we derive 74% of our funding from parish collection assessments, levies and direct donations. The Diocesan Finance Committee strives to be good and prudent stewards of the resources that are entrusted to us to further the mission of the Church. Foremost in our hearts, minds and prayers is the notion of stewardship and that time, talent and financial resources have been given as a gift to assist with the needs in the Diocese.

On behalf of Bishop Gagnon and members of the Diocesan Finance Committee I wish to thank you for your continued support through your weekly parish collections, the *Journey of Hearts and Hands – New Beginnings* Appeal, direct donations, and your support of the many pastoral and administrative works of the Diocese. We recognize that all gifts come from God and we thank all those who choose to share these gifts, through their talents and resources, to promote the gospel values of stewardship.

Members of the Diocesan Finance Committee

Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, Bishop of Victoria
Msgr. Michael Lapierre, Vicar General & Chancellor
Fr. Frank Franz
John Anderson, Chair
Colleen Kovacs
Mary McCaffrey
Mike Mills
John Mochrie, Past Chair
Gus Pokotylo
Dion Pomponio
John Shenton
Allen Vandekerkhove
Leah MacKenzie, Financial Administrator
Cynthia Bouchard-Watkins, Recording Secretary

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2010, with comparative figures for 2009

	2010	2009
Assets		
<i>Current assets</i>		
Cash	1,305,519	152,286
Term Deposits and accrued interest	1,149,679	1,605,252
Accounts receivable	278,904	295,072
Prepaid expenses	6,677	14,047
	2,740,779	2,066,657
<i>Loans and investments</i>	2,824,195	2,819,098
<i>Capital assets</i>	51,862,584	52,175,258
	57,427,558	57,061,013
Liabilities and Net Assets		
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Accounts payable	139,489	281,806
Demand bank loans	256,719	287,042
Loans payable	-	-
	396,208	568,848
<i>Long term debt</i>	-	-
<i>Deferred revenue and contributions</i>	3,203,630	2,336,519
	3,599,838	2,905,367
<i>Net Assets</i>		
Invested in capital assets	50,282,717	50,562,591
Restricted for endowment purposes	377,650	373,985
Internally restricted	852,017	833,368
Unrestricted	2,315,336	2,385,702
	53,827,720	54,155,646
	57,427,558	57,061,013

Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Advisory Committee

Bishop Gagnon established the Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Advisory Committee in December 2010 to review Diocesan procedures, protocols and policies. The resulting *Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Policy* objectives include screening procedures for clergy, employees and volunteers, tools for evaluating risk, definitions of what constitutes misconduct and procedures to be followed if a complaint is to be made. The Advisory Committee has been diligently meeting each month to revise and update the policies and procedures to ensure that we create a safe environment for all parishioners—especially for children, youth and the vulnerable. The policy has been released in draft form to parishes and clergy and we are thankful for the positive responses and suggestions that have been received. The policy will be continually reviewed and discussed in order to ensure that the best practices are implemented in our Diocese but the Advisory Committee has recommended that the *Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Policy* be officially released to parishes in September with complementary workshops and training sessions scheduled to assist clergy, parishioners, employees and volunteers in understanding and implementing the new policy and procedures.

Members of the Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Advisory Committee

Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, Bishop of Victoria
Msgr. Michael Lapierre, Vicar General & Chancellor
Mr. Leo Chaland, Diocesan Responsible Ministry Coordinator
Mrs. Leah MacKenzie, Financial Administrator
Mr. Jim O'Reilly, Religious Education Coordinator
Mrs. Pat Davis
Mrs. Char Deslippe
Dr. Tamara Goranson
Mr. Nate Lampard



The Diocesan Messenger

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Knights of Columbus, Distribution



Pastoral Itinerary

Calendar of Events

Bishop Richard Gagnon

September

- 8

Poor Clares Monastery, Elections & Pastoral Visit, Duncan
- 9

Anawim House, 20th Anniversary Celebration, Victoria
- 9

125th Anniversary of St. Francis Xavier Church. Gala dinner and fundraiser, Arbutus Ridge Golf & Country Club, Cobble Hill.
- 14

General Clergy Meeting, St. Peter's, Nanaimo
- 15

Catholic Health Association of BC Conference, Coquitlam BC
- 17

Day of Reflection (9:30 am - 3:30 pm), St. Rose of Lima Parish, Sooke
- 18

Mass (11 am) for Vocations, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria
- 23

Diocesan Appeal, Mass (5:30 pm), followed by Dinner at (7 pm), St. Peter's Parish, Nanaimo
- 24

Confirmation (11 am), St. Leopold Mandic Parish, Victoria
- 28

Council of Priests meeting, Victoria
- 30

Diocesan Appeal Regional Reception (7 pm), St. Patrick's Parish, Campbell River

October

- 1

Diocesan Appeal Regional Breakfast (9 am), Christ the King Parish, Comox
- 1

Mass (5 pm) launch of the 50th Anniversary of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Victoria, followed by dinner
- 2

50th Anniversary of St. Joseph's Friary Mass (9:30 am), Victoria
- 4

Diocesan Appeal Reception (7 pm), St. Andrew's Regional High School, Victoria
- 14

Diocesan Appeal Reception (7 pm), St. Peter's Parish, Nanaimo
- 15

Diocesan Appeal Regional Breakfast (9 am), Holy Family / Notre Dame Parish, Port Alberni
- 16-21

CCCB Plenary, NAV Centre, Cornwall, ON
- 22

Blessed John Paul II Mass, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria
- 28-29

Diocesan Conference "Discipleship – the Journey of Hearts and Hands," St. Andrew's Regional High School
- 30

Mass (11 am), St. Andrew's Cathedral

November

- 1

Mount St. Mary Hospital Mass (11 am), Victoria
- 4

CISBC meeting, Chancery Office, Vancouver
- 5

Archdiocese of Vancouver Eucharist Congress Guest Speaker, St. Helen's Church, Burnaby
- 9

Council of Priests meeting
- 14-18

Liturgy meeting, Winnipeg
- 19

Remembrance Mass (9:30 am) for deceased members of the Clergy and Religious
- 30

St. Andrew's Feast Day Mass (9:30 am), St. Andrew's Elementary School
- St. Andrew's Feast Day Mass (12 noon), St. Andrew's Cathedral

December

- 2-3

Knights of Columbus District Deputies Meeting, Surrey
- 13

Mount St. Mary Hospital Mass (11 am), Victoria
- 24-25

Christmas Masses, Ahousaht Village, West Coast

Holy Family / Notre Dame Parish

Port Alberni

presents a day seminar

Salvation is from the Jews

with Dr. Patricia Rooke

Saturday, October 22, 2011

Please register ASAP as spaces are limited.

For information and registration,
please contact the Parish Office at
Ph: (250) 723-8912 Fax: (250) 723-0123
Email: rc-portalberni@shaw.ca

September

- 16-17

St. Edward's Parish, Duncan: Development and Peace Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, Sept. 16 from 7:00 - 9:30 pm and Saturday, Sept. 17 from 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, 2085 Maple Bay Road, Duncan.
- 17

St. Joseph the Worker / St. Joseph's School, Victoria: annual Fall Bazaar 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. In addition to great raffle prizes, the following stalls will be available: home baking, garage sale, collectibles and treasures, jewellery, books, white elephant, The Café, plants and garden items, used clothing, crafts and fabrics, Knights of Columbus breakfast and lunch, Children's Corner including a Kids Activity Area. Bazaar donations will only be accepted at the parish hall and school gym on Thursday, September 15 (3-9 pm) and Friday September 16 (1-9 pm). For more information, please contact the parish office by email to sjtwoffice@shaw.ca or phone (250) 479-7413.
- 18

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Mass at 10:30 am followed immediately by the Parish Potluck Picnic. Thanks to the Knights of Columbus who will provide hamburgers and hotdogs. The Social Team has a prize to give away to a lucky family attending the picnic. Please bring a salad, pasta or fruit to share. We'll have a Bouncy Castle, Science Show, Face Painting and an Open House for our Pre-school. For more information, contact the office at (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca.
- 28

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Cat.Chat Musical Concert (see story on page 8), 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall at 798 Goldstream Avenue. This is an interactive experience of nonstop fun with The Cat.Chat Man, his family and Moses the Cat. Kids of all ages will enjoy this dynamic event, packed with God's Word and Catholic truths that bring children into a refreshing experience of Catholic faith. This event is sponsored by the Parish, so there is no charge to attend, but tickets need to be reserved so please contact the office at (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca. Donations would be appreciated.
- 28

New Westminster, BC: Class of '61, St. Ann's Academy New Westminster is holding its 50th reunion. For information please contact Sharon Ramsay Doucette at cdoucette@telus.net.
- 30

St. Patrick's, Victoria: Good Used Clothing Sale from 9:30 – 2:00 pm at 2060 Haultain Street in the Parish Centre. This event will continue on Saturday, October 1. For more information contact Inga Pungente at ingaink@hotmail.com.

October

- 1

St. Patrick's, Victoria: Fall Bazaar and Good Used Clothing Sale from 9:30 – 2:00 pm at 2060 Haultain Street in the Parish Centre. The clothing sale is continued from Friday, September 30. For more information contact Inga Pungente at ingaink@hotmail.com.
- 1

World Day of the Rosary, Rosary Walk, Victoria: (See story page 6) Beginning at 1 pm at Mile Zero on Dallas Road and ending at St. Andrew's Cathedral, this year's Rosary Walk will be hosted by The Legion of Mary Curia Ark of the Covenant. For more information contact Mary Fallot at (778) 433-0615 or Rita Medernach at (250) 380-6529.
- 1

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Family Movie Night with Mass at 5:00 pm and Movie at 6:00 pm. We'll have refreshments (can you say "pizza?") and the movie *Happy Together* featuring the Veggie Tales, will be followed by crafts and fun family time. The movie is 86 minutes long. Contact the office at (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca for more information.

November

- 18-20

Bethlehem Retreat Centre, Nanaimo: A Weekend Retreat for Women *And So We Wait* facilitated by Sarah Donnelly, BA, M.Div. This retreat will give participants the opportunity to reflect on their own unique experience of waiting, and how we actively engage in these times in our lives. Program, private room and all meals: \$260. Registration limited to 30 women and runs from 5 pm on Friday the 18th through 1 pm on Sunday the 20th. To register or for more information please call Sarah at (250) 710-7675.
- 19

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Family Movie Night with Mass at 5:00 pm and Movie at 6:00 pm. We'll have refreshments (can you say "pizza?") and the movie, *It's A Meaningful Life* featuring the Veggie Tales, will be followed by crafts and fun family time. The movie is 48 minutes long. Contact the office at (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca for more information.

The Diocese of Victoria and Island Catholic Schools is seeking an IT Manager. This is an exciting and challenging position that will allow the successful candidate to use his or her strong leadership and technical gifts to assist the Diocese in continuing to advance Information Technology in the Diocese.

For a full description of the opportunity please see:
<http://www.rcdvictoria.org/documents/it-tech-manager.pdf>

December

- 1-4

Bethlehem Retreat Centre, Nanaimo: *Transitions: Your Journey through Grief and Loss* facilitated by Sarah Donnelly, BA, M.Div. This retreat will provide insight, hope and prayerful support for those who have experienced a wide variety of losses including the death of a loved one, illness, loss of a job and the ending of a marriage or significant relationship. Program, single bedroom and meals: \$394. Registration is limited to 12 participants. Program runs from 5 pm on the 1st through 1 pm on the 4th. To register or for more information please call Sarah at (250) 710-7675.
- 11

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Mass at 10:30 am followed immediately by the Family Christmas Party potluck lunch. Please bring a green salad, pasta or fruit to share. Thanks to the Knights of Columbus who will provide hamburgers and hot dogs. Santa Claus is making a special appearance, and he will have a present for you! RSVP to the office at (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca by November 30.

Miscellany

- Thursdays

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: 9:30 – 11:00 am, Moms & Tots Group. All mothers with children 6 yrs and under are welcome. For more information contact Rosemarie Urbanson at (250) 391-6618.
- Sundays

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Religious Classes for Children and Preparation for First Communion and Confirmation for children from Kindergarten to Grade 6. 9:40 am – 10:25 am every Sunday. For more information contact Marie Peeters at (250) 542-4483.
- Our Lady of the Rosary**, Victoria: Holy Families Group on the last Sunday of every month. This is an opportunity for married couples to share their faith and discuss marriage and family concerns in an authentically Catholic setting. And there's a potluck dinner! For more information contact Bonnie Landry at (250) 743-1982 or email onthisrock@shaw.ca.



Clergy Appointments

Bishop Richard Gagnon has, in consultation with the Priest Personnel Committee, made the following appointments:

Effective July 1, 2011

Rev. Roger Poblete appointed Pastor of the North Island Parish Communities of Alert Bay, Port Alice, Port Hardy, and Port McNeill. Father Roger is on loan from the Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador.

Effective August 1, 2011

Rev. Alfred Alilio appointed Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Victoria. Father Al is a priest on loan from the Philippines who recently completed pastoral assignments in the Archdiocese of Kingston, Ontario.

Effective September 6, 2011

Rev. Luyen Dau CSSR appointed Assistant Priest at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria. Father Dau is a Redemptorist priest who was serving in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Rev. Paul Szczur SDS, Pastor of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, appointed Chaplain and Bishop's Representative to St. Andrew's Regional High School.

Appeal in Action



by Mike Patterson, Diocesan Appeal Coordinator

Background

The Diocese of Victoria has served the spiritual needs of Catholics since its founding in 1846. This landscape now includes 30 parishes and 11 missions with more than 9,000 Faithful. The Diocese serves a culturally diverse population that provides outreach to First Nations and also ministers to Croatian, English, French, Hungarian, Polish, Portugese, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese-speaking parishioners. The Diocese has seven Catholic Schools with over 1,800 students.

Lay people provide leadership and pastoral care in a number of capacities including our Catholic Schools, adult education, family counselling, prison chaplaincy, youth ministry and parish administration.

We are proud of all these ministries and their support is vital to meeting the needs of the Faithful and those with needs throughout the Diocese. It remains a challenge to fund them at sufficiently high levels or to support new programs and services. It is for this reason that the Diocese has begun additional ways to fund new and current programs—including an Annual Diocesan Appeal.

St. Paul reminds us to “Think of us as servants of Christ; stewards entrusted with God’s mysteries. It is required of these stewards that they be found trustworthy.” In this spirit of stewardship we continue the Diocesan Appeal: *Journey of Hearts and Hands*.

Inaugural Year of Diocesan Appeal

In 2009, after extensive consultation, the Diocese undertook the development of a Pastoral Plan. Out of the Plan came six Diocese-wide priorities:

- Marriage, Family Life, and the Sanctity of Human Life
- Liturgy, the Sacraments, Prayer and the Word of God
- Youth and Young Adults
- Parish Outreach, Social Justice and Ecumenism
- Religious Education and Vocations
- Stewardship, Administration and Finance

In 2010, the Diocese embarked on a first ever Diocesan Appeal: *Journey of Hearts and Hands: New Beginnings* to support these identified priorities. Pastors led teams organized in every parish to bring the message of the Appeal to the people. Through the Grace of God and the overwhelming generosity of parishioners throughout the Diocese the \$750,000 goal was surpassed with pledges totalling over \$1.2 million. Parishes were able to raise considerable funds through the Appeal for their local priorities as well.

2011 Appeal Summary

The annual Appeal will continue in the autumn of 2011 with *Journey of Hearts and Hands: On Our Way* to build on the strong foundation of the 2010 Appeal. The overall goal of \$750,000 remains the same with the funds to be divided as follows:

Retired Clergy – Pension Supplement	\$100,000
First Nations Support	\$50,000
Parish Mission Outreach	\$25,000
Social Justice & Charitable Works	\$25,000
Island Catholic Schools	\$350,000

2010 Appeal Funds

Over 90% of the \$1,200,000 in pledges have been received resulting in \$1,086,000 of donations. Below is a listing of how the funds have been spent as of August 31, 2011.

Parish Portion	
Returned to parishes for their local initiatives	\$ 387,000
Parish Outreach	
St. Bonaventure Parish, Port Hardy	\$ 10,000
Holy Family Parish, Ucluelet	\$ 4,000
St. Louis de Montfort, Lake Cowichan	\$ 4,000
North Island Catholic Parishes	\$ 4,000
First Nation Ministry Fund	
St. Ann’s Parish, Duncan	\$ 4,000
Outreach and workshops	\$ 25,000
Retired Clergy	
Monthly pension supplements	\$ 117,000
Seminarian students	
Room & board, tuition, books and living expenses	\$ 25,000
Youth Ministry	
Retreats and events	\$ 3,050
Religious Education	
Parish resources- materials and books	\$ 2,000
Island Catholic Schools’ Capital Plan	
Donated to ICS for consultants and architect fees	\$ 386,000
Total Appeal Funds spent	\$ 971,050

Religious Education	\$25,000
Youth Ministry	\$25,000
Parish Share	\$150,000
	\$750,000

New St. Rose of Lima Church Construction Underway

by Alan Strickland

It has been a busy summer for St. Rose of Lima parish in Sooke, with the groundbreaking and start of construction of a brand new church on Diocesan property on Townsend Road.

The construction project kicked off in mid-July with Bishop Richard Gagnon giving a special blessing and taking silver shovel in hand to break ground. Others attending the ceremony included Pastor Fr. Mike Favero, Fr. Gary Hartmann, St. Rose of Lima parishioners, local dignitaries, well-wishers and curious neighbours.

“This is an important time for St. Rose of Lima parish and the Diocese of Victoria,” Bishop Gagnon said. “Turning the sod and starting construction means the gears have kicked in, and it’s *all systems go* for creating a new church and community service facility for the Sooke area. Most of all, it is the beginning of an exciting journey of faith, of building a house for God’s presence here for the Catholic community, and a sign of goodness for the community of Sooke as a whole.”



Bishop Richard gets help with the silver shovel from Fr. Mike Favero

The new 4,600-square-foot church is due for completion next spring. The multi-functional, single-floor design of the church will allow for a range of religious, educational and community activities.

Responsible environmental stewardship is also a key factor in the design. For example, rainwater will be collected and dispersed in a measured way to a series of rain gardens on the property, to ensure the soil is continually nourished with water in order to protect the habitat and slow down water runoff in the Sooke watershed.

St. Rose of Lima parish will be moving to its new home from the current church located on T’Sou-ke First Nation property in Sooke, where it has served the Sooke Catholic community for the past 85 years. ✠



Holy Family Church in Ucluelet receives a new roof



Island News & Events



Continued from Page 1

Corpus Christi Procession

The Blessed Sacrament was preceded by three altar servers bearing incense: Ron Turner and seminarians David Hogman and Harrison Ayre; and several members of the Diocesan clergy notably Fr. John Laszczyk, Rector of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Fr. Dean Henderson, Roman Catholic Chaplain to the University of Victoria and Camosun College, Fr. Benoit Laplante, Pastor, Paroisse St. Jean Baptiste and Assistant Pastor at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Fr. Manuel Cardozo, Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Royal Oak, Victoria, Fr. John Domotor, Pastor at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Esquimalt, Fr. Alex MacLellan, retired, and Fr. Sean Flynn, Pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Mill Bay and Our Lady Queen of the World Parish in Shawnigan Lake.

When the procession reached St. Andrew's Cathedral, participants filled the church to overflowing. Prior to Vespers and Benediction, First Nations children from St. Ann's in Duncan, led by Myra Charlie, Sarah Modeste and their pastor, Fr. Jai Joseph, sang three songs accompanied by traditional rhythm instruments. ✠



Choose Life

by Steve Weatherbe

A new pro-life group has started in Victoria with the intention of holding the *40 Days for Life* vigil that started in Texas in 2004 and has now been held in more than 250 cities in the US, Canada and overseas.

The group was recently incorporated by the B.C. government as a non-profit society with the name *Choose Life Victoria*. Organizers hope it will fill the void left by *Victoria Right to Life*, which ended its activities this winter after dispensing its assets to several other city pro-life groups.

"We want to make a stand to protect life," says Wendy Willis, who is the group's treasurer. "We hope that *40 Days for Life* will be a way to raise awareness with the public and the people seeking abortions about the options available such as bearing the child and adoption."

The vigil will be held outside the regional abortion clinic at Helmcken and the Old Island Highway. It will be totally non-confrontational, says vigil coordinator Alex Berns. "I've been pro-life all my life but those early demonstrations back in the '70s and '80s left us with a black eye," thanks to angry signs and words. Berns promised that those holding the vigil will spend their time praying for the women going into the clinic "and for all the other people in their family and the father's family who are affected by an abortion."

The *40 Days for Life* vigil is being supported in Vancouver by the Catholic Archdiocese and the group plans to ask for support from the Catholic Church and other pro-life denominations such as the Lutheran Church Canada, the Baptists and individual evangelical Protestant churches. ✠

More information is available at
www.chooselifevictoria.com
and www.40daysforlife.com/victoria.

Legion of Mary

by Rita Medernach

Queen Of Families Presidium at St. Andrew's Cathedral

The Legion of Mary has been in existence since 1921, and was started so that lay people would help their bishops and pastors of the Church with evangelization by example, love, word and action. The Legion of Mary is not a new organization, as some may presume, and is the largest Marian movement having expanded all over the world.

We are so blessed to be able to a part of this very important part of the Legion in our parish and Diocese. We are supported under the guidance of Bishop Richard Gagnon and Fr. John Laszczyk and are encouraged to help evangelize and spread the love of Jesus to those around us, be it at work, with our families or to people we encounter in our daily lives.

FAMILY ROSARY: Members also respond to requests to go to homes and pray the rosary with families. If you would like us to pray the rosary with your family, or have a special prayer request, please contact Mary Fallot at (778) 433-0615 or Rita Medernach at (250) 380-6529.

The Legion also centers on doing good spiritual works and deeds, as Mary did as the first disciple of Jesus and as Mother of the Church. The Legion of Mary meets in prayer every Friday at 7:00 pm at St. Andrew's Cathedral to pray the rosary with Mary as our intercessor to Jesus. Sr. Josephine Carney SSA prays with us and guides us as our Spiritual Director at our meetings. God, our Father in heaven, has answered many prayers on our prayer request list.

World Day of the Rosary—Rosary Walk on October 1, 2011

Every year on the first Saturday in October The Legion of Mary, Ark of the Covenant Curia organize a Rosary Walk beginning at Mile Zero on Dallas Road and continuing to St. Andrews Cathedral, ending with prayer and hymns. This year it will be held on Saturday, October 1 at 1:00 pm. You are invited to come and pray with us, especially for families, the Respect Life Ministry, for religious vocations and for any personal intentions

Groups will gather in prayer in union with more than 140 countries around the world. One of the main sites is the Basilica of our Lady of Guadalupe. For more information please contact Mary Fallot at (778) 433-0615 or Rita Medernach at (250) 380-6529.

The Ark of the Covenant Curia consists of Mary Morning Star, St. Anne's Church, Duncan – First Nations Cowichan Band; Mary Queen of Families, St. Andrews Cathedral; Mary Queen of Prophets and Mary Queen of Angels – both Korean presidiums of Sacred Heart Church, Victoria. ✠

Birthright Strollerthon 2011

by Ann Richards

After having had such a successful sponsored Walk last year Birthright members decided to try it again this year—and were not disappointed. Again walkers came out from parishes across the region, with pledges collected from parishioners and others in their local communities.

Birthright is well known as the registered charity that assists women with problem pregnancies to encourage them to give birth to their babies. Staffed solely by volunteers it has previously relied on donations and money raised by selling plants in the Spring and home-made fudge at Christmas in the Catholic parishes of the area.



Participants followed the same route as 2010, starting and ending at Fisherman's Wharf along Dallas Road and Douglas Street (stopping at the Beacon Hill Drive-In for ice-cream) and back along Belleville Street. This year the event took place on July 23, earlier than 2010. We were blessed again with good weather: sunny but not too hot. And again participants finished with cake and juice in Fisherman's Wharf park.

All the money is not yet in, but the organization has received pledges for well over \$2,300. Again this year, the walker who raised the most money was Mike Puszkas from Our Lady of the Rosary parish.

Next year Birthright hopes to see even more walkers, and encourages every parish to participate.

Birthright extends its thanks to everyone who donated and participated in this very important cause, helping women with problem pregnancies to make the loving choice: to CHOOSE LIFE! ✠



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New Translation of the Mass

by Rev. John Laszczyk, Diocesan Liturgy Commission, Chair

Sunday, November 27, 2011 (with anticipated Masses on the 26th) is the day when we first begin to use the new translation of the Mass.

Perhaps some are wondering why we need a new translation. It is a fair question. The *Roman Missal*, the book that contains all the prayers for the priest for the celebration of Mass, was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970 as the definitive text of the reformed liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. That Latin text was translated into various languages for use around the world; the English edition was published in 1973. The *Missal* and all the other liturgical books were very quickly translated from Latin into English and it was soon recognized that there would have to be a revision at some stage. Indeed since that first edition mandated by Pope Paul VI, a new missal has been published during the pontificate of John Paul II.

The new translation of these texts began in 2002 and aims not only at being a more accurate translation of the Latin, but also at deepening our love and understanding of what it is we're doing at Mass. The texts will be contained in a book that will now be called the *Roman Missal*, but was once called the *Sacramentary*.

There is always great curiosity over who is involved in such work. The international Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) has overseen a large number of experts who have worked on the translation. The ICEL is a mixed commission of eleven bishops from around the English-speaking world whose purpose is to prepare English translations of each of the Latin liturgical books in accord with the directives of the Holy See. Together with teams of experts, they have translated the *Roman Missal*, ensuring it is faithful to the Latin. They were also assisted by the *Vox Clara*, a special committee of bishops and consultants from English-speaking countries assembled specifically to assist with this English translation. In April 2010, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in Rome announced the approval of the 'universal edition' of the revised *Roman Missal*. Finally, it is up to each Conference of Bishops to make final adaptations for cultural understanding, to set the implementation date and to authorize publication of the new liturgical books.

And so, another question might be, why is there not simply one English translation as opposed to several? For instance, why will we use a Canadian version as opposed to an American or a British or Australian version?

It comes down to language. There are subtle differences in the use of English around the world. For example, in North America the word for car fuel is *gasoline* but in England it is *petrol*. The word *momentarily* in North America means *soon, in a few moments* but in other English-speaking countries, it means *for a few moments*. This difference may not seem significant until you consider what your reaction may be if you were about to take off in an airplane and the captain said "we will be flying momentarily." One understanding would be welcome: "we will be taking off soon;" the other understanding would be horrifying: "we will be airborne for only a few moments before crashing." The Church in her wisdom has allowed each Conference of Bishops the flexibility to alter the text according to the culture and understanding of the local people. There is also the reality that each country has its own celebrations for special holidays (Thanksgiving, Canada Day) and also has saints specific to the country.

The next few months will bring many challenges as we seek to learn new texts and the meaning behind them. We will have new challenges as we seek to learn new renditions of the Gloria and other Mass parts. But, we will also gain great spiritual insights as we prepare for the first Sunday of Advent and these texts. ✠

<http://old.usccb.org/romanmissal/samples-people.shtml>

Did You Know...

by Friar Anthony Gonsalves OFM, Guardian of the St. Joseph's Friary

50 years ago in 1961, in the shadow of Craigdarroch Castle, the Franciscans of Western Canada of Christ the King Province established their first community consisting of seven priests and brothers at 1076 Joan Crescent in Victoria.

Earlier, in 1957, the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Victoria made a request to the then Provincial to send help from Alberta (where Franciscans had been in active ministry since 1909) to staff the Francophone parish of St. Jean Baptiste in Victoria. Some itinerant preachers were already on the Island, and others made their rounds publicizing St. Anthony's College in Edmonton, Alberta. These early pioneers saw a need in this part of Canada and offered their services.

In the past 50 years both priests and brothers made an impact on the people with their presence. The Friars faithfully worked for several ministries, including the Chaplaincy to Sisters of St. Ann (Queenswood); the Catholic Women's League; the St. Vincent de Paul Society; the 9 – 10 Club (soup kitchen in St. Andrew's Cathedral basement); visiting the sick and personal counselling; in Diocesan Administrative roles; in nurturing the Secular (Lay) Franciscans fraternities; in their involvement in two parishes (Port Alberni and Sacred Heart in Victoria); and last, but not least at St. Joseph's Friary Chapel. Even though the members aged, their services never flagged.

To date nine Franciscans share communal living in the spirit of the Poverello, St. Francis of Assisi. The Franciscans, after Vatican Council II, diversified their vision through teaching and implementing documents to form an adult Church, opening itself to discussion, exchange of ideas and dialogue for growth, not losing sight of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the core of Franciscan Spirituality.

To celebrate this milestone and in thanksgiving the occasion will be graced by Retired Bishop Remi de Roo who will celebrate Mass at 7:00 pm on Saturday, October 1, 2011. On Sunday, October 2, the Most Rev. Bishop Richard Gagnon will preside at the 9:30 a.m. Mass. Light refreshments will be served after the Sunday celebration. ✠

Website Resource for New Roman Missal

The National Liturgy Office and the Publications Service of the CCCB are pleased to announce that a new Website is now online for the *Roman Missal*. This Website, www.romanmissal.ca, is designed to help parishes, missions and institutions across Canada in understanding the contents of this new book, which will be available this fall. The Website includes resources for preparing parish bulletins and workshops. It also contains links to *Roman Missal* related materials from the National Liturgy Office and the Publications Service of the CCCB, which are producing the book. There are also links to Websites of Catholic Dioceses in Canada concerning the Roman Missal, as well as links to *Roman Missal* Websites from English-speaking conferences of Bishops around the world and the Vatican.

The prefaces and other prayers for the Sundays of Advent from the CCCB edition will soon be posted, to facilitate the efforts of Priests in preparing to proclaim these new translations. For musicians, there are links to recordings of the three settings for the *Ordinary of the Mass* that were composed specifically for Canada.

Every diocese and parish with a Website is more than welcome to put a link to www.romanmissal.ca on their own sites. The cover image of the *Missal* makes a great image for such a link. Our webmaster would also be pleased to post any additional diocesan links for the *Roman Missal* that we may have overlooked.

Because this is the only version of the new translation of the *Roman Missal* approved for use in parishes and institutions across Canada by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the CCCB offers www.romanmissal.ca as the new resource to aid in the implementation of the *Roman Missal* on the first Sunday of the Advent, November 27, 2011 ✠

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New President and CEO at St. Joseph’s General Hospital

The Bishop of Victoria and the Board of St Joseph’s General Hospital are pleased to announce that Jane Murphy has been appointed to the position of President and CEO effective September 1, 2011. Jane has replaced Michael Pontus who retired on July 29, 2011 after 21 years of dedicated service at the hospital.

Jane started her career as a nurse and she holds a Masters degree in Health Services Planning & Administration from UBC. Jane has worked extensively in the BC Health system in senior leadership positions including Chief Operating Officer/VP Clinical Services at Langley Memorial Hospital and with the South Fraser Health Region as the VP of Strategic Initiatives.

More recently Jane has spent some years in Texas, and has held senior leadership roles at both the Driscoll Children’s Hospital and the CHRISTUS Spohn Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Jane was raised in Campbell River and has a long term commitment and connection to Vancouver Island. She is delighted to be returning to the Island and is excited to be able to return to BC healthcare in this challenging leadership opportunity.

In accordance with the management agreement between Glacier View Lodge and St. Joseph’s, Jane will be appointed as the new CEO for Glacier View Lodge. She will also join the Board of the Cumberland Regional Hospital Laundry Society as Secretary Treasurer. Jane, in her role as President and CEO of St. Joseph’s, will also assume national and provincial membership on the Boards of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada and the Denominational Health Association of BC, respectively. ✂



Christ the King Parish Bids Farewell to Harrison and Nathan

by Dale Jeffrey

Christ the King parishioners held their Annual Picnic on July 10. The parish also said farewell to Harrison Ayre and Nathan Hoffart.

Nathan Hoffart led our youth choir this past year and assisted the parish with the youth group. He will be greatly missed by all.

Harrison Ayre has completed his year of internship at the parish. Right from the start Harrison was involved in parish ministries. He coordinated our altar servers, RCIA and Young Adult program. As well, Harrison assisted our World Youth Day Pilgrims with a parish wide fundraising dance! It was great fun—we’ll do it again sometime! During the month of June, Harrison facilitated a very interesting course on the *Early Church Ecumenical Councils* with 25 parishioners attending.

To finish off his year Harrison co-ordinated a parish golf tournament with Bob Buckley. Bishop Richard Gagnon just happened to be travelling up-Island and was able to join in the fun! Will Gaertner, another seminarian for our Diocese, was also one of our special guests.

Although we are sad to see them go, we wish Harrison and Nathan well and will keep them in our hearts and prayers. ✂



St. Joseph the Worker Parish to Celebrate 50 Blessed Years

by Moira King

St. Joseph the Worker Parish will be half a century old next year.

Bishop Richard Gagnon will officially launch a year of celebrations with a Mass of Thanksgiving on Saturday, October 1, 2011 at 5:00 pm. Mass will be followed by a Multicultural Potluck Dinner to celebrate the heritage and diversity of our faith community.

Originally called St. Joseph’s Parish in 1962, and renamed St. Joseph The Worker in 1998, the Parish continues as a strong and vibrant faith community. This strength is reflected in the 50th Anniversary theme, which evolved through discussions with our Pastor Fr. William Hann, a planning committee and other parishioners: *A Pilgrim People, Rooted in Jesus Christ—Yesterday, Today and Forever.*

The intent of our Parish’s Jubilee Year is to show appreciation for God’s love and grace, as well as our gratitude for the dedicated and generous service of so many people, past and present, and for those who will carry our parish mission forward into the future.

While a Mass and Gala Dinner will formally commemorate the Parish’s 50th Anniversary on May 1, 2012, in conjunction with the Feast of St. Joseph The Worker, our 2012 Anniversary Year will be marked by an exciting calendar of additional events and initiatives to honour this special milestone. For example:

- Worship celebrations, prayer services and personal faith renewal
- An update of our Parish history including interviews with “still active” founding members
- A 50th logo and graphic image for posters, banners, etc.
- Parish socials, and joint parish and school events
- A pilgrimage to Rome
- Social justice and ecology outreach initiatives
- Creating a lasting heritage relating to First Nations that involves forgiveness and healing
- Ecumenism and interfaith gatherings
- Legacy projects
- Much visiting and reminiscing

More celebration details will be reported in upcoming issues of the Diocesan Messenger and on our parish website at www.sjtw.ca. ✂

Catholic Kids Concert Coming This September

by Marnie Wynans

Audiences across the US and Canada have been wowed by Cat.Chat Live concerts, featuring Moses the Cat, the Cat.Chat Man and his family, who educate kids and families with a combination of faith, fun and songs that will have you and your kids dancing for joy even as they’re learning the Faith!

Catholic families, committed to teaching their children a true love for their faith, are always on the lookout for creative and enriching catechetical tools. Cat.Chat (short for Catholic Chat) fits this bill. It is dogmatically sound, creative, entertaining and fun. Cat.Chat has six audio CDs, three Vacation Bible School programs, each based on a certain aspect of the faith (*Mary, The Mass* and *The 7 Sacraments*) and a DVD of their concert, all available for sale at the concerts or on their website. They also just completed filming a new series for EWTN to air in Spring 2012.

Concert dates for Vancouver Island are:
Sun, Sept. 25 at 3:00 pm Port Alberni at JPll Catholic School Gym
Wed Sept. 28th 6:30 pm Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Langford

For more info, and to listen to some of their music, check out www.catchat.ca or call Marnie Wynans at (250) 723-3263. ✂

Holy Family/ Notre Dame Parish Hosted Cat.Chat VBS

by Marnie Wynans

Approximately 30 kids in Port Alberni sang and danced their way into a deeper understanding of their Catholic faith during a week of faith, friends and fun at the 3rd annual Cat.Chat Vacation Bible School this past July.

The Cat.Chat team (short for Catholic Chat) has written 3 VBS programs: *A Cool Kingdom Party—Mary Leads Me Closer to Jesus; Marvelous Mystery—The Mass Comes Alive*; and their latest, *A Wilderness Adventure through the Seven Sacraments*.

Using crafts, games, the amazing music and even snack time, the children learned about a different Sacrament every day. By the end of the week, kids as young as 4 were able to tell Pastor Fr. Stephen what Holy Orders are, what Eucharist means and even the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Each day began with a different virtue and Bible verse to go along with the Sacrament as well as a Saint of the Day. Youth helpers ran games and assisted the leaders at each station. The week ended with a beautiful outdoor Mass on the shores of Roger Creek and picnic lunch with families.

Anyone interested in hosting their own parish Cat.Chat VBS next summer should check out www.catchat.ca, and call Marnie Wynans, Religious Education Coordinator in Port Alberni at (250) 723-3263. ✂



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De-Humanization

by Annette Turgeon, Respect Life Ministry Coordinator, St. Andrew's Cathedral

What would facilitate a normally tame human being to commit acts against another human being? Why would a mother go against her basic instinct to protect her child? What would motivate totalitarian regimes like the Nazis to attempt to annihilate whole races of people? Perhaps the cause of all these atrocities is the de-humanization of another human being.

Once a society dehumanizes a person (and every society today has), it no longer has to treat that person as a human being. Frequently abortion-minded people will deny the humanity and personhood of the unborn child. Frequently the unborn child is referred to as an “it,” “product of conception,” or “piece of tissue.” Words like killing or destroying, are replaced with choice, termination of pregnancy or removal of fetal tissue. This is not the first time euphemisms have been used to justify destroying another human being.

In a recent article I read it was argued that an unborn child is not a person and further implied that the unborn child is not a human life that deserves protection. That people are arguing this demonstrates the effectiveness of dehumanizing tactics. It was recently illustrated to me, in the following example, how effective these tactics are when applying the argument that life does not begin until birth to nonhuman life forms:

During the recent BP disaster in the Gulf, oil was approaching beaches used by nesting sea turtles to lay their eggs. At tremendous financial cost, great efforts were made to painstakingly dig out and carefully transport turtle eggs to safe beaches. Why save the eggs unless the eggs are turtles in a stage of development? You save the eggs because you want to save the turtles. I don't recall any debate about whether these sea turtle eggs were



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dm0911

turtles or would be turtles. The logic seemed simple. Why isn't the logic so simple when it comes to unborn people? ~ P. Ney

So how can we humanize people? We can start by talking with them. We sit down with them face-to-face and listen to their stories without comment and without prejudice or judgment. We listen to how they too are struggling with their wayward son, how they are living with a daughter who is addicted to drugs, how one's husband or wife is heavily involved with pornography, how an affair/betrayal is tearing apart one's marriage, how one has lost their job, how a person is struggling with same sex attraction.

Once a society dehumanizes a person (and every society today has), it no longer has to treat that person as a human being.

We all have joys and fears. We all can laugh and cry. It doesn't matter if we're red or black, fat or thin, NDP, Conservative or Liberal, smart or dumb, we are all humans. And when we are tempted to treat another person as "less than," we need to resist dehumanizing them and instead we need to de-dehumanize them.

Once a society dehumanizes a person (and every society today has), it no longer has to treat that person as a human being.

In the next *Diocesan Messenger* I will address the "wanted, unwanted and welcomed child." ✂



PREGNANT?

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To all who are in support of Human Life!

As you may already know, the Cathedral parish in Victoria has operated a Respect for Life Ministry for the past year. We have seen some phenomenal successes in ministering to women and men who have been confused and not entirely certain if they should keep their unborn babies or reject them through abortion. Praise God for our presence in the city of Victoria!

One year ago we began this ministry and we asked numerous people to assist us in funding the work. Once again, this year, we are approaching people for funding this important ministry.

I am grateful for your support for the Respect Life Ministry and am certain you will be pleased by all that has occurred in this first year. While the work is primarily in Victoria, there is an openness to venture further up island should there be a need expressed.

If your financial circumstances permit, perhaps you will be able to assist us in some way and if not then perhaps you can offer the support of dedicated prayer for the cause of Life.

Donations can be made by cheque, payable to St. Andrew's Cathedral parish or by Credit Card. As always, tax receipts will be offered for all donations.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely, in Christ Jesus and Mary his Immaculate Mother,

Fr. John Laszczyk
Rector, St. Andrew's Cathedral Parish

740 View Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J8 Tel: (250) 388-5571 / Fax: (250) 388-5998

In the past year the ministry has assisted...

- Single mom of 1 being pressured by her parents to abort her 2nd child, has gone through with the pregnancy
- 5 babies born and doing very well.
- Single mom being pressured to abort by the father of her child, is going through with the pregnancy
- Single mom assisted with ensuring family maintenance
- Single mom who has had 2 abortions, pregnant a third time and is carrying the child to term. Mom says RLM is her life line. Ongoing counseling for post abortion sorrow with this mom.
- Married couples dealing with fertility challenges and learning how to address the challenge within the context of our Catholic faith/belief.
- Provided 2 full nurseries for 2 single mothers
- Married couple seeking information regarding parenting concerns
- Ongoing peer counseling and mentoring with 3 mothers
- Mediation between 2 single mothers and their parents
- Persons dealing with domestic violence
- RLM hosted two pro life workshops for the greater Victoria area.
- Addiction counseling
- Marriage counseling and support



Parksville Church of the Ascension CWL News

by Sherry Thorpe, Communications

Church of the Ascension CWL awarded three \$500 bursaries to members of the parish this summer: Sophie Deborba, Joan Mendoza and Casey Luklinkhof. We extend our congratulations to the recipients and pray their continued education will be both enriching and rewarding.

Patricia Morrison (née Williams) was provided monetary support from our CWL to attend the World Youth Day in Madrid this summer. Patricia is a member of our parish who works with our youth and we are certain this experience will benefit all of us at the Church of the Ascension.

Late in June the CWL members and parish members hosted a farewell dinner for Fr. Jozef Kobos SDS. The event was a huge success with over 300 guests attending to express their appreciation and to say farewell to Fr. Jozef—who was very pleased with the celebration! Many thanks to our CWL sisters for their help with the banquet as well as all other parishioners who participated.

At time of writing, we are in the planning stages for our Membership Tea which will be held September 1 in the Parish Hall. Our Fall Bazaar will take place Saturday, October 29, 2011, 9 am to 1 pm in the Parish Hall, 887 Wembley Road in Parksville. We will have home baking, crafts, sewing and knitted goods, silent auction items, a deli table and preserves. Everyone is invited to attend. ✂

Knights of Columbus Silver Rose Relay

by Wil Wilmot, State Deputy

On Sunday, July 24th, 2011 members of the Knights of Columbus gathered at 11:00 am at Good Shepherd Church in South Surrey as part of the Silver Rose Relay Run celebration. A 4th Degree Honour Guard processed into the church ahead of Worthy State Deputy Wil Wilmot, who carried the Silver Rose icon. Silver Rose Relay Chairman Kevin Kirkwood then addressed the parishioners by giving a brief history of the Silver Rose. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Stanley Galvon, parish priest, assisted by Fr. James Fagan and Deacon Pablo Santa Maria.

Following Mass the Knights along with spouses, Squires and Squirettes boarded a bus to travel to the International Peace Arch. After assembling, the Honour Guard marched to the Peace Arch where they were met by their counterparts from Washington State accompanied by their Colour Party of the 4th Degree. A symbolic relay run was performed by five Squires and Squirettes around the park, which concluded with the handing over of the Silver Rose icon by Wil Wilmot to Washington State Secretary George Czerwonka.



An inspirational prayer by Fr. Edwin Kulling, assistant pastor of Star of the Sea Parish, invoked the blessings of Our Lady of Guadalupe upon the efforts of the Knights of Columbus of North America.

This concluded the Silver Rose Relay Run for the BC/Yukon Jurisdiction. The State Deputy and District Deputy both expressed gratitude for all brother Knights who were involved in the planning of this significant event. ✂

*Address ... one another in psalms and hymns
and spiritual songs, singing and making melody
to the Lord with all your heart.*
~ Catechism of the Catholic Church 1156, Eph 5:19



A New Generation looks to the Future

by Fr. John Laszczyk

If you have ever attended 11:00 am Sunday Mass at the Cathedral or participated in a diocesan liturgical celebration then it is probable that you have heard the Pipe Organ, a majestic instrument providing appropriate accompaniment to chant and hymn as well as allowing our hearts to soar as preludes and postludes are played.

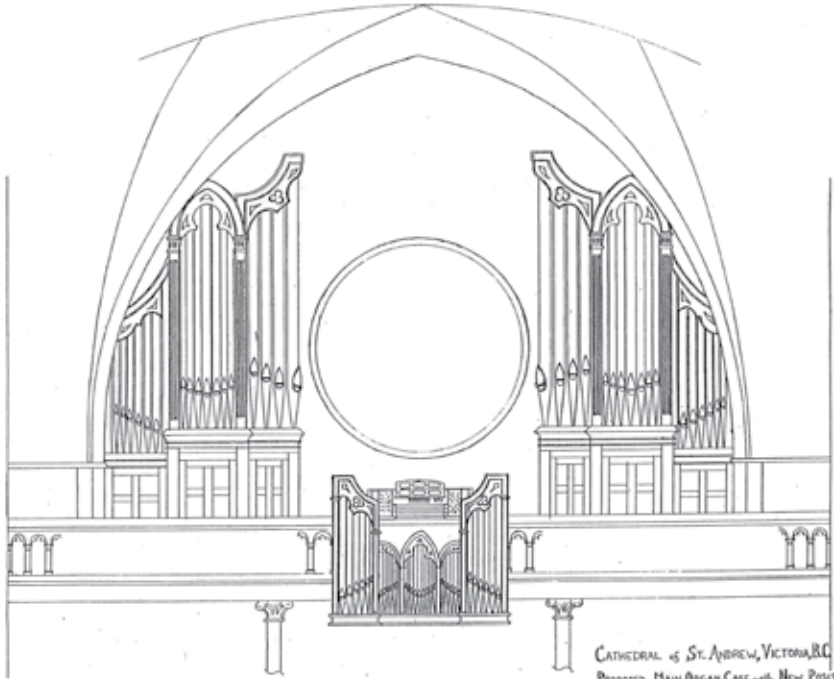
The Cathedral Pipe Organ dates back to 1907 and has undergone some renovations over the years. Built in 1907 by Casavant Frères, it was one of their first organs on Vancouver Island. The Opus 293 had 23 stops controlling 27 ranks of pipes with a two manual and pedal board console and tubular-pneumatic action.

In the late 1940's, Chandox Dix of New Westminster unsuccessfully attempted to convert the action of electro-pneumatic which was to use electric power from a car battery. Stan Haddon of Vancouver was then hired to restore it back to the original.

In 1966 – 1968, Hugo Spilker electrified the action, provided a rebuilt three manual console with prepared Positive Division, removed some pipes, re-arranged some others and added three new ranks.

Grant Smalley installed a new three manual drawstop console in 1989, did some restorative work and re-leathered the manual chests in 2008.

Now, under the direction of Grant Smalley, there are plans drawn for a cantilevered Choir/Positiv Division on the Balcony rail. The Cathedral already has the pipes and a windchest in storage in anticipation of installing this division. The acquisition of these pipes and others along with the windchest was made possible through the gifting to the Cathedral of the Kolbinson Casavant Opus 301 c 1905 which is compatible with the Cathedral organ.



The cost of completing the Cathedral Organ is not within the ability of the Cathedral congregation at this time. Therefore, we invite music lovers from all parts of the diocese and from every denomination to respond, if so desired. A report has been received from a Structural Engineer giving insights into the scope of work required.

All important projects take time to develop. In order that this project may eventually attain a successful completion, a fund has been established and will continue to grow as donations and bequests are received. It is estimated that \$30,000 will adequately cover the costs of scaffolding, renovation, construction and installation.

For more information or to donate, please contact Fr. John Laszczyk, St. Andrew's Cathedral, 740 View Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1J8 or email padre@standrewscathedral.com.

The acoustics of the Cathedral are among the finest in Victoria and we hope the organ will be completed in the not-too-distant future. ✂

Divine Mercy Devotions

Fridays at the Cathedral, beginning September 30

Chaplet of Mercy is prayed at 2:55 p.m.
followed by Benediction.

Eucharistic Adoration begins after morning Mass



Superintendent's Message

by Joe Colistro

Catholic Schools Plan: Strong foundations for a bright future

Two years have passed quickly and I am very excited about my return to Island Catholic Schools. The years away have been very rewarding and provided an opportunity for me to reconnect with staff and students as my time was spent working directly in schools. My first year was as principal of a very large high school of over 2,500 students in China. God leads us in mysterious ways as this past year was spent in Williams Lake in very small school. Both experiences, unique in their own ways, provided excellent opportunities to work with students of varying talents and abilities.

I must begin by thanking Mr. Leo Chaland for providing solid Catholic leadership at a crucial time for Island Catholic Schools. His clear, precise and thoughtful approach has been valuable in the launch of the Catholic Schools Plan. There is certainly excitement in the air as the Diocese of Victoria and Island Catholic Schools embark on a major building and renovation project.

September is always a special month in our schools as classrooms fill with new students and the excitement of a new year begins. Teachers, renewed and refreshed, gear up to provide instruction in a faith-filled environment in which excellence in learning is viewed as a top priority. Each year we continue to focus our energy on the learning and growth of every student.

The theme for the coming year is *Catholic Schools: ilearn, ibelieve, ipray*. The theme provides a focus for each of us, a reminder of our calling and vocation to Catholic education.

As we enter a new school year we are optimistic and filled with hope as we implement our vision for the future. Through the cooperation and collaborative efforts of all, we will continue to live out the mission and vision of our schools and build strong foundations for a bright future. ✠



St. Andrew's Regional High School Graduates

The following is an excerpt from Principal Andrew Keleher's remarks at the 2011 Academic Awards Ceremony.

Congratulations on a job well done. At school, academic achievement is second only to cultivating our relationship with God. God has brought you to where you are and He loves you deeply. You have succeeded in your undertakings because the Lord is with you, and always is in your time of need.

As children of Christ, you have excelled. Many of you have done so while finding time to participate in extra-curricular activities, taking on a part-time job, or in the face of increased responsibilities at home. Please take the time to reflect on how proud we all are of you.

Let us take pleasure in the accomplishments of all among us. There are several qualities that make schools great: school spirit, athletics, music programs, fine arts, school trips, excellent teachers and engaging courses are among them. Right at the top of that list is sound academic achievement. It is the reason why we will be awarding over \$19,000 in scholarships and bursaries, more than half of which is to our graduating students.

St. Andrew's Regional High School is strong. Here, you will receive a superior education from exceptional teachers that will prepare you for life and work in the 21st century. Thank you for all that you do to make St. Andrew's a success.



New Rowing Academy at St. Andrew's Regional High School

by Joanie Bidlake

"UP TO THE CATCH, READY, ROW!!" This familiar command will soon be heard drifting across the water by St. Andrew's rowers, many of whom have joined the newly established "St. Andrew's Rowing Academy," according to Head Rowing Coach and Program Coordinator Alia Zawacki.



The brand new program, set to kick off at St. Andrew's Regional High School in September, will be a full-year, credited course run by Ms. Zawacki. We are very excited not only about being able to offer a full-spectrum rowing program that will include leadership, human services, strength training and other components—but are also thrilled to have a high calibre, elite-level, former athlete teaching it. Alia holds a Masters of Education in Coaching Studies, and has completed the Level 3: National Coaching Certification Program.

In the Spring, the Rowing Academy will also include on-the-water training, within the school timetable, in preparation for the National High School Rowing Regatta ("Schoolboys") held every year in St. Catharines, Ontario. This will take place in June 2012.

For more information, please contact Ms. Zawacki at the high school at (250) 479-1414, or email her at azawacki@cisdv.bc.ca. Happy Rowing! ✠

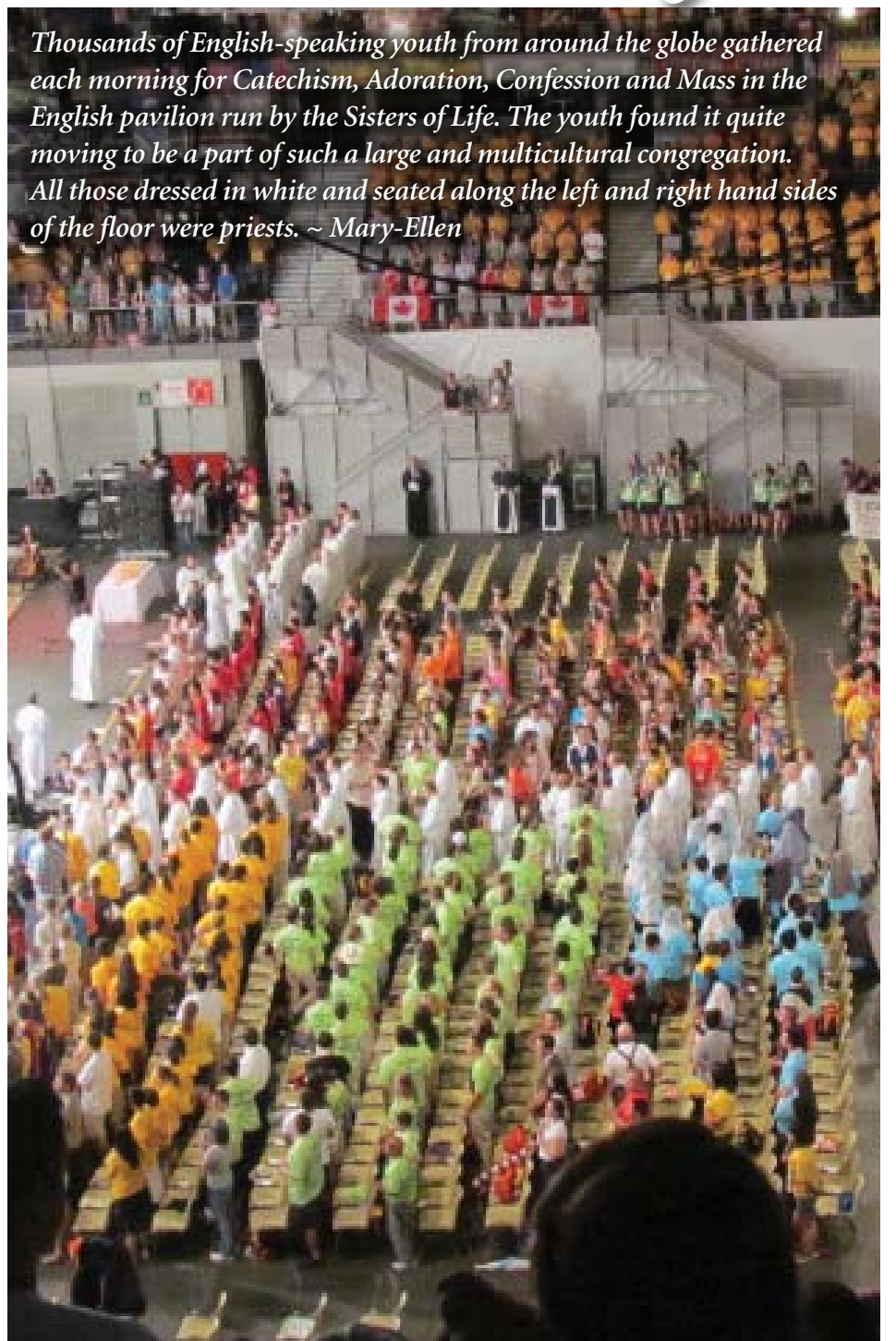
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ST. ANDREW'S REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS OF 2011. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO ST. ANDREW'S AND WISH YOU WELL IN ALL OF YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVOURS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU IN THE YEARS AHEAD.



Sarah Achtem
Gurjot Athwal
Katherine Avila
Daniella Baldini
Jacob Bentley
Alexander Beresford
David Berry
Raveena Birring
Adam Black
Geoffrey Boyd
Adrian Canagasuriam
Brett Carmichael
Elliot Carter
Bryan Cathers
Phoebe Chang
Brandan Corrigan
Seth Corwin
Emily Côté
Stephanie Crighton
William Croll
Henry DeBoever
Krystal Dick
Lindsay Dober
Owen Duncan
Jude Fernandes
Rachel Fong
Megan Forest
Dakota Foster
Amanda Galbraith
Brianna Gibson

Matthew Glass
Elizabeth Grohovac
Madeline Guy
Brodie Harvey
Hugh Henderson
Abhinandan Jagdev
Chris Jayapal
Jordan Kerr
Olivia Knight
Aidan Koster
Jaclyn Kropp
Ha Jin Lee
Nicholas Lee
Curtis Macheck
Kaitlyn Marsh
Rebecca Maxwell
Michaela Merryfield
Amanda Millar
Jason Mitchell
Kyle Mollard
Charles Mongeau
Mollie Moric
Laura Morino
Adrea Narciso
Brandon Pacukiewicz
Tyler Paterson
Brian Pattie
Vlado Pavlovic
Daniel Penman
Kellan Phillips

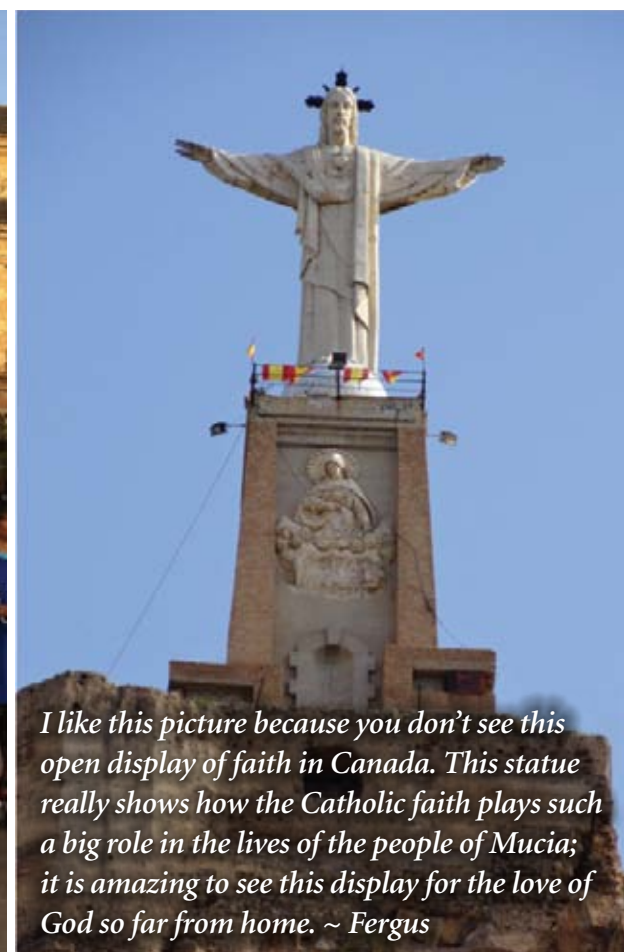
Lonnie Poulton
Katherine Prior
Alexander Rajkowski
Laura Rand
William Reid
Matthew Renko
Ty Rogers-Tillstone
James Ross
Kristoffer Roxas
Elizabeth Savage
Paul Shenton
Evan Souliotis
Brandon Sutton
Jordan Tabbernor
Simon Taft
Cody Therrien
Danielle Toth
Viet Tran
Kelly Turner
Angela Vu
Haylee Walther-Vankooten
Kieran Warren
Nicaela Weigel
Shelbie Weigel
Mimi Weldemichael
Julia Woolfrey
Andrew Yan
Brett Young
Crystal Yu
Victor Yuan





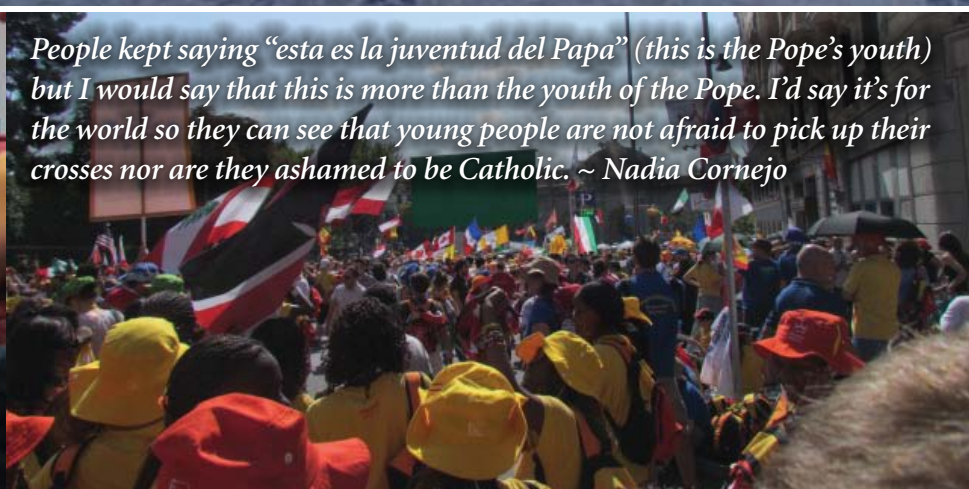
"Thank you young people, you rejuvenate the Pope, inspire the Church and refresh a world thirsty for hope and courage. [I] thank you for your affection and send you out as ambassadors of the joy that our World needs."
~ Pope Benedict XVI

Photo credit: www.zenit.com

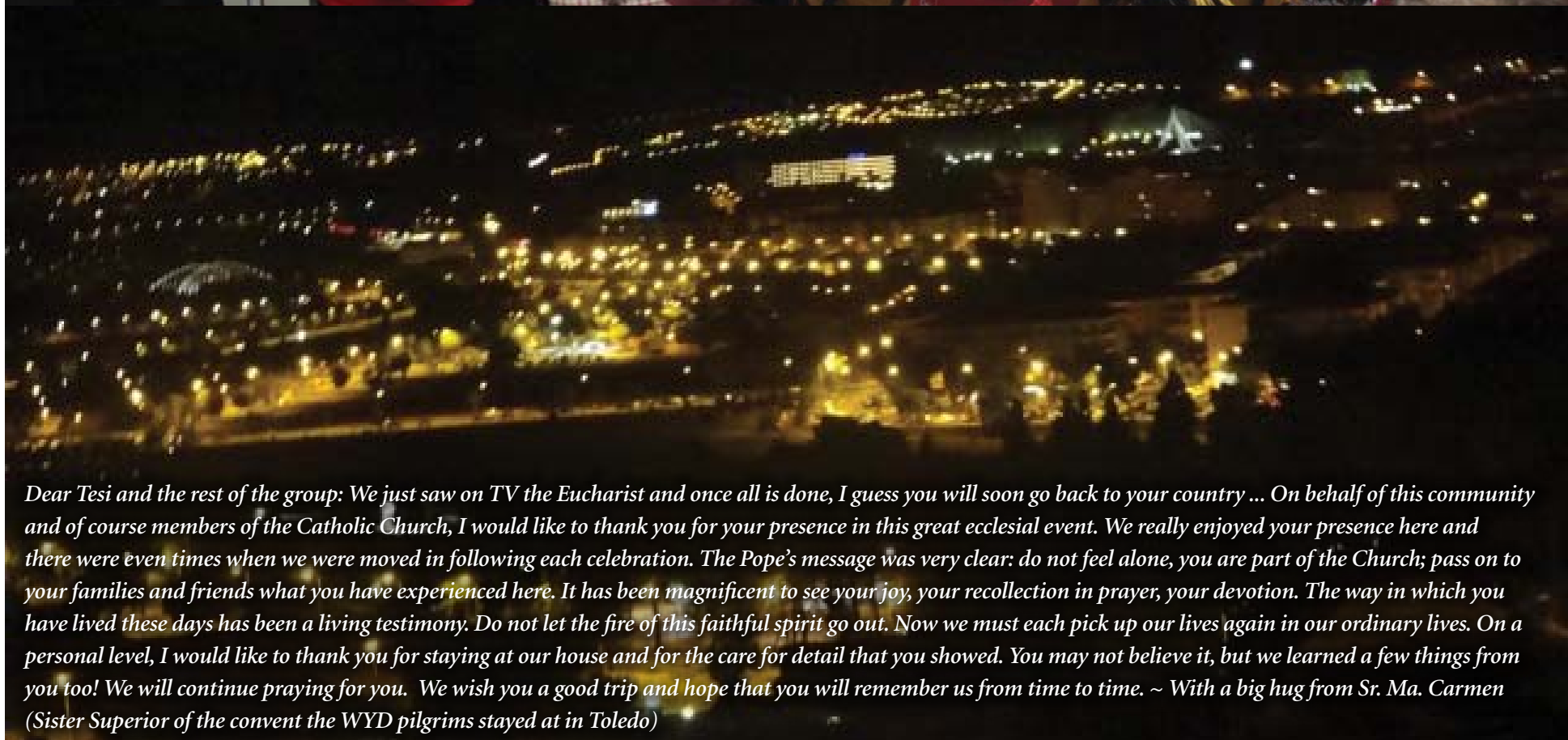


I like this picture because you don't see this open display of faith in Canada. This statue really shows how the Catholic faith plays such a big role in the lives of the people of Murcia; it is amazing to see this display for the love of God so far from home. ~ Fergus

At World Youth Day, the experience of being united in faith with thousands of other excited young Catholics was truly inspiring and breathtaking for me. I left feeling more affirmed in the faith and how I can share God's love and word. ~ Jocelyn Sunderland



People kept saying "esta es la juventud del Papa" (this is the Pope's youth) but I would say that this is more than the youth of the Pope. I'd say it's for the world so they can see that young people are not afraid to pick up their crosses nor are they ashamed to be Catholic. ~ Nadia Cornejo



Dear Tesi and the rest of the group: We just saw on TV the Eucharist and once all is done, I guess you will soon go back to your country ... On behalf of this community and of course members of the Catholic Church, I would like to thank you for your presence in this great ecclesial event. We really enjoyed your presence here and there were even times when we were moved in following each celebration. The Pope's message was very clear: do not feel alone, you are part of the Church; pass on to your families and friends what you have experienced here. It has been magnificent to see your joy, your recollection in prayer, your devotion. The way in which you have lived these days has been a living testimony. Do not let the fire of this faithful spirit go out. Now we must each pick up our lives again in our ordinary lives. On a personal level, I would like to thank you for staying at our house and for the care for detail that you showed. You may not believe it, but we learned a few things from you too! We will continue praying for you. We wish you a good trip and hope that you will remember us from time to time. ~ With a big hug from Sr. Ma. Carmen (Sister Superior of the convent the WYD pilgrims stayed at in Toledo)

Parish Profile



Summer on the Gulf Islands

by Catherine Murphy

Summer on the Gulf Islands might be associated in many peoples' minds with eco-tourism, organic farm markets and the pursuit of holistic health, yet it is also a time of great vitality for our Roman Catholic communities on Saltspring, Mayne and Pender Islands. All three faith communities are served by Fr. Larrie Soberano, pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Ganges, on Saltspring Island. Fr. Larrie celebrates daily Mass at Our Lady of Grace, plus Sunday morning Mass at St. Paul's in Fulford Harbour and twice-monthly Masses at St. Joseph's Mission on Mayne Island and St. Teresa's Chapel on Pender Island.

Christianity has deep historical roots on Saltspring Island, dating back to the Nineteenth Century, when St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church was built—largely with the efforts of our First Nations and Hawaiian settlers.

Summer got off to a start this year with that most happy of events: a baptism. It was with great joy that Kailani Brown, a descendant of the Tahouney family, whose ties to St. Paul's date back to the founding of the church, was received into the Christian community.

Saltspring's Christian heritage was celebrated on July 23rd with the multi-faith event Spiritwalk the Valley, an ecumenical pilgrimage that links the three historical Christian churches in the Fulford Valley. The celebration began with a shore-side welcome by Elders of the Tsawout Nation. Pilgrims proceeded to St. Paul's, where they witnessed a moving performance of Hawaiian chants and songs by the Roland family, members of Saltspring Island's Kanaka community. From there, the pilgrims journeyed on to St. Mary's Anglican Church for a service that featured a liturgical dance. The Spiritwalk concluded at the picturesque Burgoyne United Church at the far end of the valley.

There was also a time this summer for our spiritual family to gather for fun and fellowship on the beach at Our Lady of Grace Parish's annual picnic, on August 21st. Held on a parishioner's seaside property, the picnic commenced with an outdoor Mass followed by a meal of roast Saltspring lamb. Activities sprang up spontaneously and the event truly had the feel of an extended family gathering. It was fun to note that the age range of those in attendance was from 13 months to 90+ years!

By now, summer is fading; and all about the Diocese, we're immersed in our regular parish activities, as Catechism classes resume and congregations are back to full size. I hope you've enjoyed this brief vignette of our summer and that we all continue to be spiritually revitalized in the colder, darker months ahead as we revisit our summer memories. ✠

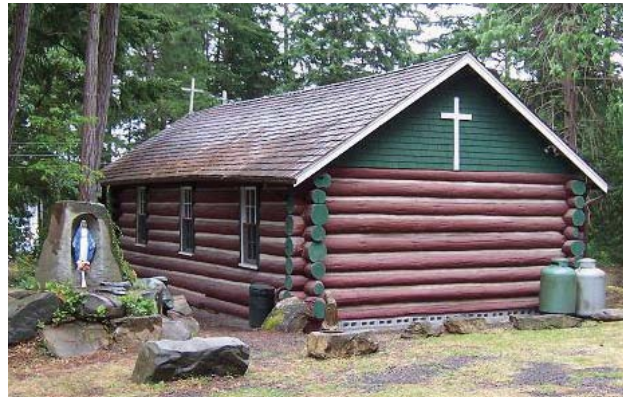


What I Did On My Summer Holidays

by James E. O'Reilly, Office of Religious Education

Warm sun filters through majestic trees and bounces furtively from rich blue bays as we wind our way through verdant pastures; in the distance sailboats languish at anchor, happily at rest. As we turn in and pull up to the modest, charming little hand-hewn church we are greeted by the friendly natives. "You've left your lights on, but don't worry I've got jumper cables, should you need them!"

My wife and I had just completed a couple of days of holiday and calculated we could take in the 4:30 p.m. Sunday Mass in this rustic setting which would be perfect, giving us time to get the boat back to "civilization."



Australia? Fiji? No, Gabriola Island! Our Lady of Victory Mission Church to be precise. Given a small window of opportunity and never having explored the Island before, we were suitably intrigued and most pleasantly surprised. Having spent a delightful couple of days at our B&B interspersed with amazing excursions to Silva Bay, S'ul-hween X'pey the Elder Cedar Nature Reserve, Drumbeq Provincial Park, Degnan Bay, Gabriola Sands Provincial Park, and the Malaspina Galleries, among others, we were not prepared for the wonderful experience of this beautiful part of the world.

The most soul-stirring moment of the trip, however, was attending Mass, celebrated by Fr. Waldemar Podlasz SDS, at the log structure, Our Lady of Victory Church. This was evident right from the jovial welcome in the parking lot, through the warm and friendly greeting at the door, the full and earnest participation of the forty-plus parishioners to Fr. Waldemar's obvious and heartfelt delight with this community, which he enthusiastically expressed after Mass.

Generosity and cheerful sacrifice mark the history of the Church which was consecrated on July 19, 1926 by Bishop Thomas O'Donnell, built with the generosity of Mr. Dan McConvey on half an acre of land purchased from John Silva for the princely sum of \$1.00. The refurbished log church, beautifully appointed thanks to the skills and talents of local parishioners, was rededicated on the occasion of its 80th anniversary in 2005 by Bishop Gagnon.

We covered a lot of territory in our short time on Gabriola, saw some highlights of the many interesting features of the place, enjoyed some very fine arts and crafts food, as well as some very fine food, so we will be back, knowing we will always find the sunshine there, especially with the community which gathers for Mass at Our Lady of Victory Mission in Silva Bay. ✠



St. Teresa's Chapel, Pender Island

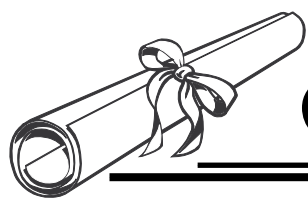
Spiritwalk the Valley



St. Paul's, Fulford Harbour



St. Joseph's Mission, Mayne Island



On Campus



by Fr. Dean Henderson

In 2009 Pope Benedict XVI produced an historic document in relation to Anglicans throughout the world that is now having some effect in the Diocese of Victoria. The Apostolic Constitution called *Anglicanorum Coetibus* (Groups of Anglicans) is subtitled “Providing for Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans Entering into Full Communion with the Catholic Church.” The first paragraph provides some sense of the context for this significant initiative:

In recent times the Holy Spirit has moved groups of Anglicans to petition repeatedly and insistently to be received into full Catholic communion individually as well as corporately. The Apostolic See has responded favourably to such petitions. Indeed, the successor of Peter, mandated by the Lord Jesus to guarantee the unity of the episcopate and to preside over and safeguard the universal

communion of all the Churches, could not fail to make available the means necessary to bring this holy desire to realization.

An Ordinariate would be similar to our Canadian Catholic Military Ordinariate which supersedes Diocesan boundaries in the oversight of Catholic Chaplains and Pastoral Associates through the Episcopal ministry of the Ordinary of the Canadian Forces. An English Anglican Ordinariate has already been established with two former Anglican Bishops having received ordination as Catholic priests. They are now serving to lead other British Anglicans into full communion with the Holy See while preserving Anglican tradition approved by the Holy See “so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church, as a precious gift nourishing

the faith of the members of the Ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared. (AC 5.III)” The process is underway in Canada under the leadership of Archbishop Thomas Collins of Toronto, who with two other Canadian Bishops and four mentor priests, are offering support and information at the local level in varied Dioceses. As one of the mentor priests, I, along with another priest from the Diocese of Victoria, have been mandated by Bishop Gagnon to liaise with members of the Anglican/Catholic community seeking membership in such an Ordinariate.

Anyone wishing to know more about this exciting development in the Church is welcome to be in touch by email to catholic@uvic.ca. ✂



Connections



by Raya MacKenzie

When I left home in May for my one-month volunteer project in Mae-Sai, Thailand, I expected that I would return with a revelation—that through working with the poor in a developing nation God would open my eyes to some greater truth or plan.

I had been planning my good-works trip abroad since I was about six years old sitting in the church pew softly singing one of my favorite hymns, *The Summons*: “Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?” Though I was a shy, perpetually terrified child, I grew up taking those words as a sharp reminder that sitting in the church pew was not enough. I needed to go out and do something. And I need to be fundamentally changed. Because I am an over-planned and still fairly terrified young woman, I scheduled my time for charity and change in the file on my laptop impossibly entitled “Plan for Life.” Right there between the second and third year of university I have typed “go on a spiritual adventure.”

Thailand was hot and humid at the end of May. The scorching Thai summer melted into the monsoon season with rain at least three times a day, the beads of water warm as a bath. Luckily, my Project had us working inside most of the time at the Daughters Education Program Day Centre (DEPDC), a school that educates the children most at risk for being trafficked into the sex trade or logging industry along the Myanmar-Thai border. Our group of eleven university students had two primary objectives: renovate a classroom, and help teach the four-year-olds some rudimentary English.

The classroom, quickly nicknamed the “Room of Doom” by one of my project mates, consisted of a dusty concrete floor, four walls covered in a stained mint-green paint, and a partially caved-in ceiling that housed foot-long lizards and button-sized spiders. My project leader, a young Thai woman studying in Bangkok, provided us with scrapers, rubber gloves, and buckets of very potent acid. We were to strip the walls of the hideous green paint.

After several days of scraping at the walls and burning my hands multiple times with the acid, I was very excited when it was my turn to teach the kids. I went with two other girls to the kindergarten room where thirty ecstatic children immediately jumped on our backs. Every time we sat them down and tried to start a lesson, at least five of them would start

scaling up our legs, pulling at our clothes and hair for leverage. Eventually we gave in. We gave them piggy-back rides, let them go to the playground, and tried to stop any squabbling that ensued between them. For the next week and a half I went back and forth between playing with the kids and wall scraping.

But the whole project in general was beginning to feel like wall scraping—taking a little paint off here, teaching a word to the kids there—and never feeling like you were making much progress. We couldn’t make the kids pay attention to our English commands. One day the boys stoned a toad in front of the shrieking girls before we could intervene.

I was exhausted and disappointed. Most of all, I was shocked by how ordinary the whole thing had become, not much different really than the day in, day out grind at home. When I imagined my adventure as a child, I had somehow pictured poor children as “angels” who would guide us “rich camels” through the eye of the proverbial needle. The kids I knew were decidedly human. I thought that God would be present in every aspect of my charitable adventure. He was there, I’m sure, but His presence was barely a background buzz to my daily tasks.

*Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don’t know
and never be the same?*

I remember standing on the basketball court outside the Room of Doom one day, the rain soaking my paint-stained t-shirt, and saying “send me a sign!” But no obvious sign came. We completed the room (and that was satisfying), had one last “party day” with the kids we had slowly come to love for their absolute humanity, and then went off for the touring part of the trip when we would travel around the country.

On the third day of travelling, we went on a lake tour in the South of Thailand. I jumped off the boat into the lake and let myself drift in the soft, warm water. I lay on my back and looked up at the sky, the same blue sky that blankets both Thailand and Victoria on clear days. My chest rose just above the water and I thought that there was then the shortest distance

between myself and the sky, myself and God. It was one of those pure moments like the thousands and thousands I had had at home before in the face of the sunrise or the song of a bird or a mottled shadow on the lawn. There was no revelation, only that one moment of familiar beauty and the familiar presence of God. But there I felt that everything I had done in Thailand had been worth my while for that one moment of ordinary communion.

Maybe there are rarely ever revelations the way we want them to be. Perhaps sometimes (perhaps most of the time) there is only the steady chipping away at the paint on the wall and the daily choice we make to love the humans in our lives, not the “angels”. Sometimes this is all we need and it is more powerful than any flash of fire.

In July, the Catholic community lost two amazing people, both family friends of mine, Victor Anderson and Dennis Payne. Again, I thought, “Hey, God, where are you?” I wished so completely for a revelation to put all the pieces back together. Instead, for both losses, we went to the funeral Mass and heard the same words we hear every week, took the same Eucharist. Every time I see the host I am struck by the colour of it, the paleness I imagine looks quite like the bones underneath my skin. There’s no obvious miracle to bones, the same way we can often forget the miracle of bread and wine at Mass. But bones, in their own quiet way, continue to miraculously carry us onward, as does the Body and Blood of Christ. When we keep praying for a revelation or want God to fall from the sky into our laps, sometimes the strongest thing is to receive Him in the form that we best know Him: in the Eucharist, in the familiar prayers, in moments out on a lake. We don’t need to pressure ourselves to “never be the same” but to be patient in our own understanding and our renewed conversions ...

Because sometimes the greatest revelations happen slowly, the way our bones build up over time without us even thinking of what goes on beneath the skin. Deep in those hidden places in ordinary lives, God works His familiar miracles that ensure that life and love go on. ✂





Face the Day



by Bonnie Landry

I really struggle with technology. I keep thinking it is just moving so fast I can't keep up. In reality, though, I just don't bother keeping up because it requires my time and patience to learn stuff I don't know. And my time, and my patience, are already taxed and limited commodities.

The problem is that I am not bothering to learn it because my kids can manage technology for me. I don't actually know the difference between downloading and uploading. And the fact is, I actually don't care either. It takes practice (translation: time and patience) to learn something. I've noticed the older I get, the longer most things take. Like making myself cute in the morning. It used to take about four minutes, but now its taking more like forty minutes. Using a magnifying mirror.

But I digress.

Technology flips the tables of the natural order of things, I think. It takes me half the time to clean a bathroom or the kitchen or make a bed than it takes me to teach my children how to do it. I know that it's important to learn these skills and foster good habits. But with computer stuff, I don't have to do anything at all because my children are light-years ahead of me with all of it. I don't really have to apply myself or think at all. And they can do it themselves in half the time it would take to teach me.

But I won't always be able to rely on them to do my computer stuff, operate my camera or turn the DVD player on. One day I may be on my own, and it's possible that when that day happens, I'll never listen to another piece of music or watch a DVD or take a picture ever again.

I'm okay with that. But I try to practice, to stretch myself just a little bit with the technology thing. Not because I like it or because I want to or because one day the kids will all grow up and move out and I won't be able to phone them and say, "could you just drop whatever busy thing you have on your plate and come over to

download or upload or something my pictures?"

No. I just think I need to practice the habit of learning something new. I just need to develop habits and hone skills my whole life. We are called "practicing Catholics" because we spend our life practicing the things that help us to become holy: we are developing the habits here on earth that will aid us en route to heaven.

We don't learn computer skills by buying a computer and deciding "now I am going to be a computer person. There." I used to phone Albert at work back in the olden days of 1992 and ask him how to turn the computer on. Then he would tell me what commands to type in. Those were the same olden days when I was grappling with how to pray. And I learned, a little at a time. I learned who Christ was, day by day. I read about Him, I developed my relationship with Him. I talked with others about Him. I practiced in my prayer life, in living sacramentally, in asking what it was God the Father had in mind for me.

Every day and every week I try to learn how to do one little thing on my computer. How to make a new folder. How to create a link. How to make the picture go from my camera to my computer with a little plastic card. It's nothing short of a miracle. Not the transfer of information, but my ability to perform this little function. I get frustrated and I'm not that good at it.

Similarly, every day and every week I try to find out what it is I can do to grow toward God and to know what it is He wants from me. He guides me and sometimes I listen well and sometimes I don't. I get frustrated and I'm not that good at it. But a little bit every day, every week and I'm not the same person I was twenty years ago. We accomplish, through practice, through perseverance and suffering, growth toward God and we change without realizing that it is even happening.

It's nothing short of a miracle. ✠

Mount St. Mary Hospital

70 Years of Caring: 1941 to 2011

by Maureen Gunn

On March 22, 2011, an important anniversary was celebrated at Mount St. Mary Hospital. Seventy years had passed since the first Mass was said in the Chapel at the original hospital site on the corner of Burdett Avenue and Vancouver Street, after the hospital had been open for five days. To mark the 70th Anniversary, Bishop Richard Gagnon celebrated a Mass attended by about 60 people, including several members of the Sisters of St. Ann, some of whom had been missioned to the hospital.

This Mass was the first of many events held to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Hospital and to establish a link between the past and the present. Although much has been modernized over the past 70 years, particularly regarding the physical plant of the Hospital, the underpinnings remain the same. The hospital the Sisters of St. Ann founded has maintained the legacy of the Sisters' values and devotion to the care of the residents.

The original building accommodated 126 residents with a variety of needs from assisted living to complex care. Residents were predominantly from the elder population. The current Hospital on the corner of Fairfield Avenue and Quadra Street was opened in 2003 and was built on the site of the former St. Joseph's Hospital. St. Joseph's Hospital was an acute care facility that was also founded by the Sisters of St. Ann. The new building accommodates 200 individuals ranging in age from 39 to 106 years. All residents at Mount St. Mary require complex care services.

The original site was one of great charm and warmth. Visitors would marvel at the impressive English country style gardens, which in the spring were ablaze with red Emperor Tulips, followed by a famous display of roses in the summer. The grounds were graced by many mature trees, including a cherry tree and several huge plane maples, which were a source of beauty and color for the residents from spring through late fall. A lovely black walnut tree provided welcome dappled shade in the hot summer months.

Entering through the front door, off Burdett Avenue, visitors would find a few offices on the main floor, as well as the lovely Chapel. Everything was scrupulously clean: "the floors shone". The residents lived on the 2nd and 3rd floors in wards, in an open-plan setting. There were spectacular views of the Olympic Mountains at the end of the hallways on these floors, used as an incentive by care staff to encourage residents to take a bit of exercise by walking down the hall to "enjoy the view". Until the early 1990's, the top floor of the four storey building was inhabited by the Sisters of St. Ann who were missioned to the hospital.

There was a giant cedar tree in the front of the building, which was home to a family of raccoons. One staff member recalls being a Care Aide, working the evening shift. As a way to distract and calm restless residents, she would take them to the window so that they could observe the antics of the raccoons in the moonlight. After several minutes watching the racoons' behaviour, the residents would settle for the night.

The old Mount had an almost legendary atmosphere, making the move to the new building in 2003 an unwelcome proposition for some residents. However,

when planning the new building, those in charge, led by the Sisters, made sure that residents would have the best possible environment. Consequently, we sometimes hear first-time visitors quip that they would like to be "put on a waiting list to live at Mount St. Mary".

The 2nd through 5th floors of the new Hospital each have four separate living areas called "Houses." Each House includes large, private rooms for residents, state-of -the-art equipment, a sunroom where families can visit in privacy, and a piano which supports the accessibility of musical entertainment. In the Village Square, residents, families, and staff have access to many features, including the Café where breakfast, lunch and snacks may be purchased at reasonable prices, the Beauty Salon, the Gift Shop, and the Blessed Marie Anne Blondin Chapel. The welcoming Village Square is a gathering place for residents, families and staff to enjoy a meal, visit, or participate in the frequent activities coordinated by the Activity Team. To many, the jewel in the crown is the Chapel, which was designed for easy access, and is beautifully decorated with stained glass windows from the old Chapel.

The new garden inspires equally strong sentiments in visitors to the garden as the old one did. It is an area that offers both shade and sunshine, a large patio with tables, umbrellas and chairs, and pathways for walking. There are flowers and shrubs, and two enormous London plane trees. The centrepiece of this garden, which has been named the Blondin Green, is a beautiful fountain, which creates a soothing and refreshing background. Residents and staff are irresistibly drawn to this space once the weather begins to warm up. It is the perfect place to relax and visit, and children enjoy playing on the climbing gym and on the lawn.

This year all at Mount St. Mary Hospital celebrate the 70th Anniversary and are thankful to the legacy of the Sisters of St. Ann. Mount St. Mary continues to provide Victorians with exemplary complex care services and programs and we look forward to the next 70 years. ✠

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Faith Matters



Faith Matters

by James E. O'Reilly, Office of Religious Education

Sacraments...Holy Communion...the Seven Sacraments... What is a Sacrament?

“An outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace,” is a definition many of us learned¹. “Outward signs”: Water, Bread, Wine and Oil are pretty straightforward, and “instituted by Christ” is also pretty straightforward, and “to give grace” is maybe less concrete, but still fairly straightforward, so what is behind this definition and what is it actually getting at?

God, the living God who is all good, the source of all life and goodness, generously gives life and life-giving actions which we commonly refer to as “blessings.” Grace as God’s strength given to us for our well-being and goodness is but one example of God’s blessings. In fact, all of God’s work and activity is blessing!

The most significant of God’s works (or blessings) is God’s plan of Salvation. Sacred Scripture records the evidence of God’s plan of Salvation—an unlimited and consistent offer of life, of love (despite humanity’s repeated fear, frailty, duplicity, rejection, and even violence)—culminating in God’s ultimate offer of love, His very Self in the person of Jesus.

For Catholics “The World is charged with the grandeur of God.”² All around us that is good and beautiful, is small “s” sacrament: God reveals God’s self in the ordinary “stuff” of our lives, but it is in the Church’s liturgy that the divine blessing is fully revealed and communicated.³

In the gathered Community’s liturgical action the fullness of God and God’s Plan is revealed: the Father gives His Word (spoken to us in human form) who reveals the depths of his love for us in his suffering death and resurrection (the ultimate in self-giving love) culminating in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the Gift of all gifts. Our conscious, entering-into-response, the return to God of that blessing: in our adoration, our praise, our thanksgiving, and in our active commitment in

being at the service of God and humanity—this is the essence of Sacrament—Encounter with God.

Traditionally these Encounters have been called the Sacred Mysteries (mysterion, Greek/sacramentum, Latin), because they are so profound. They represent a simple and yet unfathomable reality: God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all things, makes Himself personally present to us, revealing and sharing His inexhaustible Love with us. This is a Love that is merciful, a Love which through Jesus has incredibly effected our salvation (the freedom from our damaging selfishness and ultimately self-destructive tendencies, as well as the restoration of our fundamental dignity and the vital life of grace once corrupted by sin). This is a work that God initiates, inviting us to transformation into our true image and likeness, in order that we might become more and more His instruments of transformation for the world.

The Encounters mark the important milestones of our lives: Initiation into the Life of Christ and His Body the Church—Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist; Service to the Body and the world—Marriage and Holy Orders; and Healing—Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick.

Theologian Joseph Martos⁴ calls the Sacraments “Doors to the Sacred,” and as with any door they require someone to open them. God, ever respectful of the freedom He gives us, never forces Himself on us by barging through to us. Rather, through our beautiful natural world and the wonderful world of relationships, God provides us with small windows, portals of light: foretastes of the fullness of life and love. These small “s” sacramental experiences provide us with a glimpse, a hope and the courage to experience more fully the Light, the Life and the Love that is always waiting for us through these capital “s” Sacraments, these outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace—these Doorways to the Divine. ✠

- ¹ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (§1131) supplies the following definition, The Sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.
- ² Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ, *God’s Grandeur* (1877)
- ³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §1082
- ⁴ Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred* (London, SCM Press, 1981)

First Annual Diocesan Conference

Welcome

On October 28, 2011, in keeping with the traditions of our First Nations, a Welcome representative of our diverse Diocese will open the First Annual Diocesan Conference, *Discipleship: The Journey of Hearts and Hands*.

David Wells

Internationally known speaker David Wells of Plymouth Diocese, England, will give the opening keynote address. He will summarize developments related to the current state of Western Culture and outline those particular challenges that impact the Church. He will also provide a framework for exploring the relationship between our global reality and the Church’s response for addressing these challenges, specifically through the work of John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the *New Evangelization*.

New Evangelization

This *New Evangelization* essentially refers to certain principles and means of discovering, developing and celebrating our gifts and talents as Gifts from God which are sourced and rooted in our relationship with Christ, the Church and each other, for the purpose of furthering Christ’s work of offering healing to a wounded world.

Susan Campbell

The second keynote address will be given by Susan Campbell (Director of Lay Formation, Diocese of Prince George), who will situate these issues to our Canadian reality. She will also unpack the Canadian Bishops’ recently released document *On Good Soil: Evangelization and Catechesis with Adults*. This milestone document is a “best practices” guide, the result of the detailed analysis of the documents in this area published by the various Bishops’ Conferences of the world. Among many other things *On Good Soil* is a practical and effective blueprint for revitalizing Church communities. Susan has worked with the Canadian Bishops on this document from the beginning.

Bishop Richard Gagnon

Following up on the two keynote speakers, Bishop Richard will connect these global and national realities to our own “back yard,” highlighting implications and opportunities arising out of our *Diocesan Pastoral Plan* in its response to our own unique cultural reality.

Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Plans

Publication of the *Diocesan Pastoral Plan* and the March Parish Pastoral Council Planning Workshops has led to parishes working at developing their own local Parish Pastoral Plans. These Plans are based on the model of the Six Core Areas of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan (Liturgy, Sacrament and Prayer; the Vocation of Marriage and Family; Outreach and Social Justice; Faith Formation; Stewardship; and Youth). These local Parish Pastoral Plans which will form an integral part of the next phase of our planning, concrete measurable goals rooted in the reality of local needs, cooperatively addressed and carefully assessed.

Ministry Workshops

In the next section of the Conference we will move deeper into the realities of the Diocesan picture. Ministry experts in the Six Core Areas (Liturgy, Sacrament and Prayer; the Vocation of Marriage and Family; Outreach and Social Justice; Faith Formation; Stewardship; and Youth) will lead like-minded delegates in a process of assessing current conditions, as well as clarifying and recommending direction for the Six Core Areas of the *Diocesan Pastoral Plan*. The results of the individual workshop session results will be recorded and will form a context for better insight and discernment at the Diocesan level for the “next best steps” to be taken in each of the Six Core Areas of the *Diocesan Pastoral Plan*.

Regional Support Workshops

The final work of the Conference will involve Regional Workshop Sessions. Here parish representatives will convene with regional facilitators who will help a “check in” as to developments at the local level, reviewing resources and determining potential “next best steps”.

Here the locally developed Parish Pastoral Plans will be discussed for determining potential opportunities for regional mutual support, cooperative ventures or mentoring initiatives. While intended to identify possibilities for aiding and strengthening regions, the results of these sessions will also form a basis for on-going Diocesan planning and decision making.

Catholic Schools

Island Catholic Schools, a key connection with the *Diocesan Pastoral Plan* representing the future of the Church embodied in our Catholic youth, will be involved right from the beginning of the Conference through to the Regional Workshop Sessions where their pairing with parishes will help build and enhance a strong network of discernment, creativity and support.

Hope and Help

Providing an immersion in the simple principles and practicalities of the *New Evangelization* is an opportunity for parishioners, together with their parish priest to build up solid, supportive communities which are sources of consolation and healing for a confused culture in a wounded world. This Conference will celebrate a new chapter in our Diocesan family’s growth, a celebration, a coming together, a moment for better understanding and working together to build up the Body of Christ in our Diocese.

Registration

Conference registration is open to everyone, with everyone encouraged to participate, but particularly those involved in any parish ministries, Parish Pastoral Councils and Island Catholic Schools. Registration at \$25.00 (before September 15) is set to permit the greatest possible participation and essentially covers material costs. Registration Forms are available from Parish Offices or are downloadable from the Diocesan Website: <http://www.rcdvictoria.org/>. For more information, please contact Jim O’Reilly, Office of Religious Education 250-479-1331 or Jamie Zwicker, Religious Education Consultant for Island Catholic Schools, 250-727-6893. ✠

Vocations



The Call to the Priesthood and the Religious Life

Discern This!

by Fr. Sean Flynn

One message remains consistent when building the Church with good and holy vocations: “Trust in Prayer.”

Religious scholars generationally bring with them the assurance that prayer will bring an answer to significant questions. From prayer, revelation of God breaks into the heart and mind presenting the reality of what is next in one’s life.

I would like to think I found my call to be a priest in response to my commitment to “be” for God. Before entering the priesthood, I started every day asking God to be with me so I would be the best I could be. I wondered: if I was not for God what was I doing? Because little mattered if I was not forging a path for myself into a relationship with God which involved deeply caring for others. I came to genuinely trust in God and to venture where I did not know anything more than “God will provide.” Clichéd as it may be, when one trusts, one must depend on that trust or it truly becomes an empty word.

Being involved in a family business allowed me little time to disconnect from the business because I cared very much for my family and for the people who sought our service. Such caring can captivate one and bring into question the ability one has to serve all the different needs. What His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI shared in one of his addresses at the twenty-sixth World Youth Day 2011 best expresses what became evident to me during this time of questioning.

You are the future of society and of the Church! As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians of Colossae, it is vital to have roots, a solid foundation! This is particularly true today. Many people have no stable points of reference on which to build their lives, and so they end up deeply insecure. There is a growing mentality of relativism, which holds that everything is equally valid, that truth and absolute points of reference do not exist. But this way of thinking does not lead to true freedom, but rather to instability, confusion and blind conformity to the fads of the moment. As young people, you are entitled to receive from previous generations solid points of reference to help you to make choices and on which to build your lives: like a young plant which needs solid support until it can sink deep roots and become a sturdy tree capable of bearing fruit.

His Holiness celebrated his 60th year of ordination this year, while I celebrated my 6th. At the beginning my vocation I held the belief that youth were going to explode onto the world scene as leaders of a revised understanding based on faith, planted and rooted in Jesus Christ. I wanted to be part of that revolution so I chose the priesthood as a way to support the upcoming movement, a movement away from relativism. What I wanted and what I have received amount to a joy I can share and continue to reap as I journey with the pilgrim Church.

I tell you, I had no idea it would be so moving, so difficult, so completing and so truly full of wonder to be a priest. When people use their imagination to understand what is involved in being a Catholic diocesan priest they continually fall short of grasping the grace it bestows. A vocation that bases its call on God receives grace from God, yet all vocations are not the same. Therefore the graces I have experienced and those experienced by others in their vocation remain particular to oneself—for God is very personal.

The priests of our Diocese went on retreat in early June. We gathered one evening to pray the Rosary, asking the Lord to send many and holy vocations into His Church. The sincerity with which we prayed moved me very much. So, I have recently sent a copy of the booklet that we used to pray the Holy Rosary to every Pastor of the Diocese and have asked the Pastors to commit a time to lead the people of their parish in praying this Rosary as we did on retreat. I tell you this, dear reader, so that you may ask your Pastor for such prayerful leadership. Please don’t be hesitant; I have warned my brother priests about asking you to seek such leadership. So, let us pray ... ✠



Candidate for Holy Orders

by David Hogman

On Sunday, August 7, 2011, I passed another milestone in my priestly formation: I became a candidate for Holy Orders for the Diocese of Victoria. In explaining this event, a friend of mine described it as my “engagement to the Church.” As I’ve meditated on what he said, the depth of the metaphor has had a growing significance for me.

I was not raised Catholic. I am the son of two generations of United Church ministers and my indebtedness to their example cannot be overemphasized. It was through my parents’ teaching and example that I was first drawn to Christ and it was through them that the Lord set me on the path I now follow. Along the way, I encountered the Church (2003) and I fell in love with her. From that time, I resolved to do everything I could to be called her own.

The following years could be described as a proof of longing. I still had to get her attention and her Father’s approval. Daily Mass attendance, parish participation, actively studying the mysteries of our Faith and attending to the temporal needs of life became necessities. I eventually travelled the world to see the beauty of our Catholic tradition from the dome of St. Peter’s Basilica, to the wonderful monasteries of France, all the way to the blessed inhabitants of the streets of Tijuana, Mexico.

Upon my return, Bishop Richard gave me permission to court the Church of Vancouver Island by naming me seminarian for the diocese. I was ecstatic. Whenever a man starts courting a woman, his whole life begins to change and everything is done for her. It became the same for me. She became the reason I would wake up early to pray and the reason to break out of my shell and comfort zone. She deserved the best of me. It is amazing what love can do to a man.

This became particularly clear to me when I was assigned to our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Langford for my internship. I was a stranger among strangers, but praised be Jesus Christ, they welcomed me as their own. The Parish thanked me when I left, but I always felt as if I should be thanking them. It was they who gave a face to the Church I was longing to serve. The faith, the struggles, the tears and the joys of the parishioners revealed the splendour of Christ in the Church more than stone and brick ever could.

It was the week after my departure from Langford that Bishop Richard accepted me as a candidate for Holy Orders: on that day I became engaged to the church. Of course engagement is not a done deal. The Bishop exhorted me to persevere and it is my hope and prayer that I may do so—and I ask for your prayers as well. The generosity of the Lord calls us to great things. It is a marvel of our Catholic Faith that the Lord Jesus calls young men to share in His priesthood and His own self-giving love for the Church.


Please pray for our young men who are discerning the priestly call—that they will not “hide their talent in a napkin.” (E. G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, 1892). To receive this call is to be dispossessed of sight and it takes Faith to walk in the darkness. Blessed John Henry Newman said it very well: *keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me.* ✠

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64th Annual BC & Yukon Provincial CWL Convention

by Jean Wilson, Communication Chair, Provincial CWL

Amen, I say to you as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brothers, you did it for me. This quote from Matthew 25 set the tone for the 64th Annual BC and Yukon Provincial CWL Convention held in Penticton from June 1 – 5.

Velma Harasen, CWL National President, quoted Jesus and reflected on the National theme, *Centred on Faith and Justice*, and encouraged all 238 attendees at the 64th Provincial convention to be Women against Poverty, an initiative of the National Council and a focus for all CWL members for 2011. Velma presented social justice scenarios and asked attendees to discuss what would Jesus do and what can we do. As CWL members we are asked to work for justice in our communities and in Canada.

Provincial President Nancy Simms congratulated the CWL in BC and Yukon for having the courage to reach out and take the challenge to fight as united women against poverty.

The convention carried this theme throughout the two-day business meeting with reports from standing chairs and the six diocesan presidents who told what each area is doing to fulfill this initiative.

Evelyn Vollet, Coordinator of Social Justice in the Vancouver Archdiocese, gave an overview of her job which covers the entire social apostolate from social justice issues and human rights advocacy to corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Evelyn asked the CWL to be aware of proposed legislation which will impact refugees entering Canada.

The Gleaners of the Okanagan provided an excellent example of faith put into action by taking the surplus and imperfect fruits and vegetables of the Okanagan Valley and drying it, bagging it and making the dried surplus available, free of charge, to registered Canadian charities that ship and distribute the food to the poor throughout the world.

Fr. Tien Tran, Provincial CWL Spiritual Advisor, shared his story of coming to Canada in 1980 as a refugee and becoming a priest in 1993. He continued his story by telling of the medical missions to Vietnam he organizes every year to help the poor by bringing medicine, doctors, nurses and medical services.

Marie Cameron, a past National CWL president, enlightened us on the importance of archiving and ways to do it.

Deacon Paul Simms, our Provincial President’s son, ordained in May, shared the influences in his life that lead him to the priesthood. Deacon Paul gave four ways to encourage children and grandchildren in the faith: pray; set the example—be a witness for Christ, go to confession, talk positively about the Church; teach the children—answer their questions about the faith; and finally—love. Children will develop a lasting relationship with Christ through parents.

Four resolutions were presented, discussed and passed: CWL representation at the United Nations for World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations; respect and protection for human embryos and human reproductive material; mandatory reporting of deliberate termination of pregnancy; and prohibition of practices regarding human genetic material. These resolutions will be taken to the National CWL convention in August in Toronto.

The convention began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Tien Tran at St. John Vianney Parish and ended with closing Mass at St. Ann’s Parish, at which the main celebrant was Bishop Corriveau, Bishop of the Nelson Diocese. ✠

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Catholic Foundation Seeks Planned-Gifting as Donors’ Legacies

What makes the annual Diocesan Appeal different from the Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island’s capital fund raising efforts?

“First, the Diocesan Appeal is for the advancement of the *Diocesan Pastoral Plan* including local parish projects—with little or no room for discretionary spending.

“Donations to the Foundation’s endowment fund are for long-term personal legacies that enable the foundation to give grants prudently to organizations, institutions, or groups. This helps them undertake spiritual, educational, social and charitable projects and programs,” says Ben Pires, the Foundation’s chair.

Pires says the Foundation is an independent federally registered charity that nurtures and shepherds the endowment fund—income earned from donations given—and trustees adhere to the “prudent investor” standards of the British Columbia Trustee Act.

“While annual cash donations are welcome, the Foundation emphasizes planned gifting: such as making the Foundation the beneficiary of one’s Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF), estate plan or life insurance—a gift that keeps on giving year after year after year.

“Second, the Foundation does not generally initiate and run programs or undertake projects like the Diocese does. Therefore, its expenditures are discretionary and based solely on applications for grants. No applications, no grant expenditures.

“However, the Foundation does spend a minimal amount annually on: (a) its administration work, carried out by Diocese staff and charged to the Foundation; (b) services of an investment portfolio manager; (c) services of an auditing firm; and (d) the Foundation’s promotion through a website and printed matter. Trustees are not paid. They are solely volunteers with a limited term.

“Most of the grant requests are those that cannot be fully met by the Diocese, parishes, Island Catholic Schools, or the retired priests’ pension fund. Many come from organizations whose projects and programs do not fall within the Diocese’s budget.”

Pires said the Foundation, however, can only award grants that fall within the provisions of the Foundation’s *Trust Deed* [visit the Foundation’s website at www.catholicfoundationofvancouverisland.org for details].

“The Foundation generally does not consider requests for: ongoing operating expenses; grants to individuals; deficit reduction; repairs and maintenance; and a project’s entire capital cost.”

He said Foundation trustees carry out due diligence through questioning and discussion of regular reports on its investment earnings and of the required full-disclosure by grant applicants. This involves background information and financial statements of the organization, detailed description of the project or program for which funding is sought, budget and timing of the project or program, information regarding other initiatives to raise funds for the project or program and any other documentation available in support of the grant application.

This year the Foundation received grant applications totaling \$69,400. However, trustees only approved the following 12 grants totaling \$32,000, with some receiving only partial funding:

- Thinkfast 2011, Church of the Ascension, Parksville: \$800;
- Diocese of Victoria’s *Returning to Spirit*: \$5,000;
- Diocesan Summer Camp Ministry: \$2,000 (returned because camp was cancelled);
- Anawim Companions’ Society Food Program: \$5,000;
- 9-10 Club serving food for the hungry: \$8,000;
- Mount St. Mary Foundation, upholding the Mission through Education: \$1,200;
- Canadian Catholic Campus Ministry: \$500;
- The Society of Friends of St. Ann’s Academy: \$500;
- St. Joseph’s Elementary School: \$2,500;
- South Island Centre for Counselling: \$2,500;
- L’Arche Comox Valley: \$2,000; and,
- Church of the Ascension, Parksville: \$2,000

Two new trustees were elected this year: Fr. Stephen Paine of Port Alberni and Colleen Lissamer of Victoria. They replaced Fr. Marek Paczka of Campbell River and Suzanne Lemay of Victoria, whose term had expired. ✠



Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island’s trustees for 2011-2012
Terrence Penney, Bishop Richard Gagnon, Charlotte Herkel, Ben Pires (chair), Rose Marie Hague, Fr. Stephen Paine, Colleen Lissamer, Judy Roberts, Sr. Marina Smith SSA, Keith Jones, and Leah MacKenzie (Diocesan Financial Administrator).



David Alton: The Great Partnership, God, Science and the Search for Meaning (Hodder and Stoughton).

Once again Jonathan Sacks establishes his reputation as a formidable apologist and wordsmith... he counters what he calls “the unusually aggressive assault on religion” by “the new atheists”, sharing with Albert Einstein the belief that “Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind,”... This is a formidable broadside against the vitriol of Richard Dawkins who argues that religious faith is “comparable to the smallpox virus but harder to eradicate.” <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=18770>

Posted: Saturday, August 20, 2011 12:10 am

Podcast: Middle East Analysis looks at Syria, Libya, Egypt and Iraq

As we approach Eid Al-Fitr at the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the continuing bloodshed in Syria comes into focus in this Middle East Analysis podcast. International lawyer Dr Harry Hagopian discusses the current situation and also looks at the plight of the country’s Christians. Dr Hagopian says: “I think it’s gone crazy in Syria and it’s really mind-numbing in a sense, the scenes that we’ve all seen on our television screens, the reports I get from people both within the country and outside the country. Basically what has been happening is that the military has decided to use its full force in different towns and cities in the country, the main key ones that it considers as troublesome or problematic. The idea behind it is that they think that by sheer force they can crush the popular revolts and re-establish their rule in the country, which I think is a very questionable issue.” <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=18769>

Posted: Friday, August 19, 2011 11:45 pm

World Youth Day 2011 – Financial data

The total budget for World Youth Day is around 50 million Euros and is completely self-financed. The cost is covered in full by pilgrim registrations (70%) and donations (30%). No contribution has been made towards World Youth Day by the Spanish government or the local councils in Madrid. World Youth Day costs the Spanish tax-payer nothing, while it has been estimated that World Youth Day will contribute in excess of 100 million Euros to the Spanish economy. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=18767>

Posted: Wednesday, August 17, 2011 10:56 pm

United Birmingham: one city - one voice for peace

Under the banner ‘United Birmingham – One City – One Voice for Peace’ the Peace Rally, held in Summerfield Park yesterday, 14 August, brought together people from every faith along with civic and political leaders supported by the Emergency Services whose members come from the families of our multi-cultural community – all citizens of our great City of Birmingham. The Rally... was a firm united public response to the recent civil unrest on our streets which had such tragic consequences. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=18761>

Posted: Monday, August 15, 2011 4:25 pm

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land - Never to be Forgotten!!

by Denise Buckley, Pilgrimage Organizer

On May 2, 38 pilgrims from Christ the King Parish in the Comox Valley and beyond (we picked up friends from Victoria, Chilliwack, Calgary, and London, England!) began their journey to the Holy Land.

Arriving in Tel Aviv very early on May 4, we were greeted with gifts from the Ministry of Tourism, and acquired our Guide for the trip “David” (appropriate or what?), and Moishe our Muslim driver. With Fr. Paul Murphy as our Chaplain, we set out for the “joyful city” of Jerusalem.

Our accommodation for the next eight days was at the Ecce Homo Guesthouse in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City. This ancient Convent stands on the Via Dolorosa and to this day contains the *Litostrotos* (pavement) where Jesus was tried before Pontius Pilate and condemned to death, and where He took the Cross. We were privileged to be able to celebrate Mass in the Litostrotos Chapel of Condemnation that first evening. The guesthouse is in a strategic place which, from our huge balconies, offered us breathtaking views of the city and enabled us to meet early each day for Morning Prayer.

During our time in the “City of Peace”, we traveled to Gethsemane, the City of David, Yad VaShem (the Holocaust Museum) and the Valley of the Faith Communities, with side trips to Bethlehem, Shepherd’s Fields (yes, we exchanged “Christmas-in-May” gifts), Abu Gosh, Ein Karen, the Davidson Centre, Emmaus, Hezekiah’s Tunnel, and Bethany—to name only a few. We visited countless churches in areas where Our Lord and His apostles actually walked and prayed! We retraced the glory of the Via Dolorosa (Stations of the Cross). The readings of Scripture came alive as Mass was celebrated in very special sites such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Dominus Flevit, Dormition Abbey, the Church of the Nativity, the Visitation, a Maronite Monastery, and the Ecce Homo Basilica. We walked through ruins brimming with memories of biblical days. Everywhere we went, segments of Sacred Scripture were read by Fr. Paul, and we all marveled at the fact that we were standing on such holy ground.

An unanticipated pleasure was the chance to participate in both of Israel’s main civic holidays: Independence Day and Memorial Day. On these special days, we were able to go to the Wailing Wall and insert the many intentions of our friends, relatives, and parishioners into the ancient crevices.

From Jerusalem, we traveled and toured through the barren land of the Qumran, Masada, and finally (on a very hot afternoon) were treated to a “float” in the Dead Sea! Our home for the next couple of days was a lovely Kibbutz Hotel on the shores of the Sea of Galilee! It was truly a welcome oasis after crossing the Judean Desert.

From the Galilee retreat we drove to Bet Shean, renewed our Baptismal vows in the River Jordan, did a tour of the Kibbutz, visited the Ancient Boat Museum, actually crossed the Sea of Galilee on a boat called the “Faith,” visited Capernaum and Tabgha, and Banias/Caesarea Philipi (“Who do you say that I am?”). We were privileged to celebrate Mass at the site of the Transfiguration on Mt Tabor, the Church of the Primacy of Peter, and all by ourselves on the Golan Heights!! Each Mass was so memorable with Fr. Paul using the readings of what had transpired at each place in those times so long ago.

Our next few days were spent in Nazareth—the home of the Holy Family! One thing is sure, the Franciscan Fathers are doing a fine job of caring for the holy sites—and there are several orders of nuns who help them and whose expertise in maintaining these glorious sites and the peaceful, meticulously kept grounds is a beautiful mirror of their love of God.

We looked in awe at the ruins of Armageddon and Megiddo, celebrated an unforgettable liturgy in the Basilica of the Annunciation, and had an exquisite celebration in Cana during which our married couples renewed their marriage vows. For the occasion, roses were given to each of the “brides”—a gift from fellow pilgrims!

From Nazareth we drove to Haifa, had a good look at the well-manicured Baha’i Gardens and then on to the beautiful and peaceful Stella Maris Carmelite Convent Church for Mass. Further down the splendid coastal drive, we took a tour of Caesarea Maritima (described by 1st century Roman Jewish historian Josephus), which contains a lengthy aqueduct built to bring water from springs at the base of Mt. Carmel nearly ten miles away, a magnificent amphitheatre, and the remains of the harbour palace which contained, among other things, an Olympic-sized pool!!! This was all built under the direction of—who else? Herod the Great!

We enjoyed the rest of this final day by wending our way down the sparkling Mediterranean for our final evening in Tel Aviv. For this occasion, we had a “Farewell Ceremony” complete with “prizes” for the Most Helpful Pilgrims, and presentations to our Guide and Driver. Ten of our group left for home very (very) early the next morning with the remaining 28 spending another half day having a look at Tel Aviv before their departure for Cairo in the late afternoon ... where they would spend a week on a Nile Cruise and more touring ... but that’s a story for another day!!! ✂



Returning to Spirit... a Brief History

by Sr. Marie Zarowny SSA

Come up with a project that seems impossible but would make a difference for others. That was the challenge heard by Sr. Ann Thomson SSA, as she participated in an empowerment training session led by Marc Pizandawatc, Algonquian facilitator. Sr. Ann, who had been serving in the Northwest Territories for over 10 years, had heard the pain, anger and despair in many of the Dene people who had been to church-run residential schools. She had also heard their longing for healing and she longed to respond in a positive way. At the same time, as an official “church” person who was also non-aboriginal, she knew that anything she attempted to do could be suspect. Marc, who had first met and worked with Ann in the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, had the solution: Let’s do it together!

Bishop Denis Croteau OMI, Bishop of the Mackenzie Diocese, was well aware of the challenges posed by the history of residential schools and the need for healing and reconciliation. He whole-heartedly put his support behind the fledgling project and hosted a 10-day designing process at Trapper’s Lake Spirituality Centre near Yellowknife. Members of First Nations, “church” people, psychologists, medical doctors—all participants in previous workshops designed and facilitated by Marc—gathered for the intensive session and thus *Returning to Spirit* was born.

From the beginning, this project was a joint mission between First Nations and the Roman Catholic church. It has not only helped individuals to come to terms with the residential school experience and make a positive move forward in their lives, it has also begun the transformation of the relationship between First Nations and the Church, from one of adversity to one of mutual understanding, healing, forgiveness and reconciliation.



Unique to *Returning to Spirit* is its three-session format: five days of intensive work with members of First Nations; five days of the same process with “Church” affiliated people; and an additional five days for each group: two days as a “refresher”, held separately, and three days bringing together participants from First Nations and from “Church.” Although initially designed for First Nations members who had attended the schools and for Church people who had served in the schools, it quickly expanded to also include any First Nations members who have been affected by the schools (such as spouses or descendants) and Church people who are currently ministering with First Nations communities.

Unique, too, is the experiential approach that leads participants to identify what has disempowered them, causing them to be “stuck” in old patterns of behaviour, judgments and rationalizations and then to become “unstuck” so that the spirit within can blossom. This approach helps participants to go beyond healing. It provides conditions for transformation in personal, family, community, and organizational life.

The first session was piloted in 2001 in Fort Good Hope, NWT with Marc Pizandawatc and Paul Willie (Vancouver Island) leading the First Nations Session. Marc and Sr. Ann facilitated the first “church” session and the reconciliation session. Bishop Croteau was so impressed by the transformations that came from the sessions that he began to promote it with other Bishops for other Dioceses. One of the earliest sessions to take place “in the South” was here in the Diocese of Victoria, when the Sisters of St. Ann hosted a “church members” session at Queenswood in May 2002, with the reconciliation (3rd) session taking place at Bethlehem Retreat Centre in Nanaimo, in October 2003.

The most powerful experience I have participated in—to see two worlds come together with love, relationship and mutuality. To have the church and First Nations recreate pride and dignity—a true experience of letting go of fear and having love show up. The workshop opened up a whole new world of possibilities. Pam Sam, Kuper Island First Nations, BC (2003)

Since then the demand for sessions throughout Western Canada has seen amazing growth; thousands of individuals have experienced transformation through participation. It quickly became obvious that a formal organizational structure was needed, with support for coordination, planning and training of facilitators. Board, staff and trainers commit themselves to be a community that models the values espoused in the session.

Returning to Spirit – Residential School Reconciliation Inc. was incorporated as a not-for-profit society in 2006 with start-up funding from the Canadian Bishops, an anonymous donor, the Catholic Entities Residential Schools Settlement Corporation (CCEPIRSS) and the Counselling Foundation of Canada. Continuing funding from CCEPIRSS has ensured the core financial viability of the project, which also relies on contributions from host organizations/communities and individual participants. As the contributions from CCEPIRSS necessarily diminish, other sources of funding need to be found. ✕

For more information, visit the website: www.returningtospirit.org

Returning to Spirit Reconciliation Workshop

by Sr. Joyce Harris SSA

*“Those who would give light
must endure burning”.*

How do I begin to describe an extraordinary experience like this?

At the outset I felt excited about the prospect of reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people with whom I have lived and worked. I have been engaged in various ministries here, formed some friendships, yet desired a stronger working relationship with those seeking creative solutions to move forward personally and communally.

The first two-day session on communication brought together a diverse group of laypersons, religious sisters, and clergy—Catholic, United and Anglican—whose intentionality was clear: engage in real conversation by learning how to truly listen to each other. We did not have to agree with everything each partner said, but we did need to be fully present to each other. This process was demanding! Practicing how to fully communicate a point of view which I have without becoming “my point of view” was very helpful. Self observation is key: “when I share am I tuning with the person or am I intervening too soon and shutting down the other person?” I also grasped in a deeper way the significance of “intentionality:” when both parties have the intentionality to have a conversation turn out well—it will happen! The facilitators promoted an atmosphere of respect and safety in preparation for engaging our aboriginal sisters and brothers who were receiving the same two-day preparation with aboriginal leaders.

Wisely, the intensity of these sessions was interspersed with tasty meals, informal liturgy and arduous walks around the lake! I enjoyed sharing with people I see infrequently and appreciated getting to know other co-workers better. Stretch the body and stretch the soul was becoming my personal mantra.

The three days of “coming together” were truly Spirit filled and surpassed the expectations of most of the participants. At first many of us experienced some anxiety wondering if we were sufficiently prepared to really listen to and receive each other. It felt like a huge risk despite our goal to share what was needed to be complete without blame or judgement; simply, sincerely and honestly. I appreciated beginning each day with an aboriginal and a non-aboriginal prayer because God’s love created spaces in me for positive energy and openness to emerge.

Gradually, I sensed these moments of “anxious waiting” being overpowered by the concrete, open exchange between two persons. In fact, I felt so focused on listening to my partner that I had no time to feel self-conscious. I truly desired to experience reconciliation with the person before me, to choose to learn, to heal and to be part of an on-going solution for improved, constructive relationships.

It is never easy to share one’s suffering or to listen to another’s pain without trying to “fix it.” I deeply admired the choice of humble sharing “without gloss” as St. Francis of Assisi would say, which brought forth trust, courage, freedom, compassion and new life. The travesty of the consequences of the Residential Schools is real: the past cannot be undone. However, I witnessed a calibre of profound exchange inspired by the Spirit where I realized that the future was ours to make. I, too, struggled to own that I as a non-aboriginal person was part of the colonization process that destroyed the dignity of aboriginal members of God’s family. I agonized and grieved through this burning truth fixed on the gaze of a First Nations Elder whose compassion and acceptance gently affirmed me. She quietly spoke of the good she experienced from me and the Sisters of St Ann. Only God’s love can embrace so much tragedy pushing me/us beyond fear, through healing into reconciliation.

With a new found freedom, I became caught up in laughter and joy delighting in various stories shared sitting around the dinner tables. During free times I participated in precious conversations that revitalized my spirit.

I congratulate both the aboriginal and the non-aboriginal facilitators who enabled us to experience each other as one human family. I now could integrate the fruits of completion. Our closing sessions pulsed with hope and joy as we shared gratitude and blessing with each other. Many of us left feeling highly motivated to work in partnership to build a transformative faith community and a stronger nation. The choice to take personal and communal responsibility for our own feelings and actions is to choose life for us and for our children.

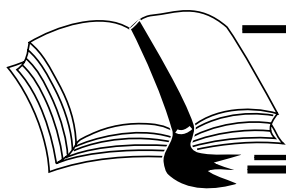
In closing this reflection I know the journey ahead is challenging, yet possible. I encourage any of you who have not participated in this incredible Returning to Spirit workshop to sign up the next time it is offered in our Diocese. God, our loving Creator desires that both aboriginal and non-aboriginal persons seize this time to create a new legacy, not to let such human suffering pull us into darkness but let the fire of Reconciliation be the light that gives us hope. ✕



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Impressions



Vocatus atque non vocatus, Deus ad erit.
(Bidden or unbidden, God is Present)
~ Desiderius Erasmus

by Connie Dunwoody

On a recent vacation, a friend and I were trying to figure out how long we've known each other. "It feels like forever, but let's see ... it was just before you and Randy got engaged in 1987." And another friend, "it was in September of my grade 12 year, in Ms. Ozvoldik's class in high school; remember how she sat us in alphabetical order?" And another: "we met just after Mum died, in May of 2000."

Sometimes I feel as though I've lived my life in a series of Things that Happen. Not including our birth (at which few of us actually remember being present) there are other things that we kind of center our life around, and like Anne of Green Gables we say, "I feel that it marks an epoch in my life." These significant events are sort-of milestones that keep us connected not only to the passing years, but also to memories that impacted the way we viewed the world, or each other. Often, we remember tiny details that would not normally register, things we couldn't forget if we tried. For example, people who have forgotten many details still remember exactly where they were and what they were doing when JFK got shot ...

And I ... I remember the stillness of the room. The scent of sun-warmed flowers on the table under the window, the feel of the knobby carpet under my bare toes and shower-damp hair dripping on my shoulders. I remember silence broken by the sound of air force jets streaking towards an unknown destination. I remember my dog's questioning paw on my foot as my stomach lurched with disbelief, my head roared with stunned and silent grief and my heart wailed with incomprehension.

I remember.



Fr. Brian Jordan blesses the World Trade Centre Cross



Two towers in flames; monolithic buildings crumbling to the ground in a roar of twisting concrete and iron, dust devils whirling in a frenzied dance; battered and confused survivors running for their lives; firemen and rescue workers exhausted and grief-stricken, sitting on piles of detritus without the strength to shake their heads in disbelief and sorrow yet with the courage to continue working...

I also remember a Cross that miraculously and silently appeared in the ruins even as dust continued to drift and whispers of malice wracked our disbelieving ears. In the hushed aftermath of incomprehensible madness rose a Cross whose head pointed to heaven and whose arms stretched wide, unbelievably offered right where we were, right when we needed it, right *there* in the rubble with us as we searched ... and searched ... and desperately continued searching.

Hope, in the midst of despair.

Recently a group of atheists filed a lawsuit to prevent the World Trade Center Cross from being displayed at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City. The Cross, made up of two intersecting steel beams, was the only thing left standing amid the rubble following the attacks. It became a symbol of hope and comfort for a grieving nation.

According to a recent statement by Dave Silverman, president of American Atheists, the World Trade Center Cross is a cruel reminder to Christians "that their God, who couldn't be bothered to stop the Muslim terrorists or prevent 3,000 people from being killed in his name, cared only enough to bestow upon us some rubble that resembles a cross." The ensuing jousting in print, on TV and in the courts held our collective interest for a few days—a relative eternity in our "newsflash" societal attention span.

Well. Political debate over a Cross has theological and historical precedence. We've been arguing about this for eons. 2,000 years ago it was a rabble, not rubble, that sentenced Love to death, stunning the soul into disbelieving grief. A rabble that turned against an innocent man, demanding his blood in incomprehensible madness.

And then ... in keening silence Love miraculously appeared in a garden hushed with morning dew, sounds and scents burrowing into memory while whispers of malice wracked disbelieving ears. There, in the aftermath of incomprehensible destruction, appeared a Cross for the rabble who made it necessary in the first place. A Cross whose Head is heaven and whose arms embrace us for eternity, unbelievably offered right where we are, right when we need, right *there* in the rubble with us as we search ... and search ... and desperately continue searching.

Hope, in the midst of despair.

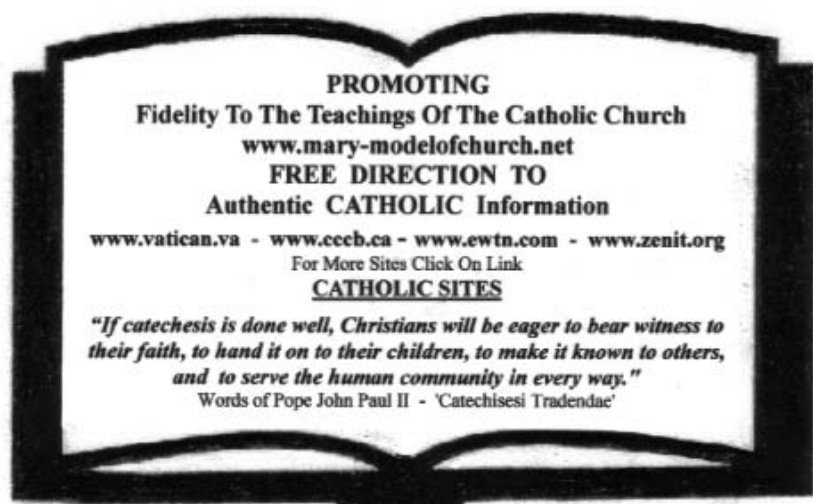
God often works quietly. In moments of heart-wrenching agony, we cry out, "*God, where are You?*" and in the pause that follows comes the understanding that He was there all along. We believed ourselves self-sufficient, or able, or were too busy digging to be still enough to see clearly through the dust. Perhaps only when our spirits are completely exhausted can we collapse wearily on our rubble and realize with dawning comprehension that while we were frantically searching, He moved into our hearts and silently raised a Cross.

Hope, in the midst of despair—and the courage to continue working.

I wonder if Dave Silverman minds being a messenger of God; how very like Him to speak through an unlikely emissary (there's Biblical precedent for that, too). Into an atheist's protest God breathed words to remind us that He was with us ten years ago, and 2,000 years ago, and always. In His "straight paths with crooked lines" way, we are given an opportunity to reaffirm our faith from the rooftops, shouting down the babble of a rabble.

Thus I believe Mr. Silverman actually got it exactly right: in the rubble only a Cross is strong enough for the need. At Ground Zero and in our hearts it stands agelessly amidst the despair of destruction, waiting only for us to notice...

... and respond in hope. ✠



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See story on Page 17



On a wing and a prayer

Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie, O.M.I., and pilot, Ted Dodds.

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