



See Page 3

*Appeal in  
Action*



See Page 12

*Most Reverend  
Richard Gagnon  
Farewell Mass*



See Page 2

*3rd Annual  
Diocesan  
Conference*



# The Diocesan Messenger

*A Publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria* December 2013

## Special Feature: An Interview with Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon

by Connie Dunwoody, Editor, *The Diocesan Messenger*

“I think that my first attraction to the priesthood was probably when I was in grade three or four,” said Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon, in response to my question. “I come from a Catholic family on both sides, and the Faith has always been part of our family fabric. We grew up with Catholic devotions and the practice and stories of the Faith handed on by grandparents ... so I remember when I was in grade three or four, actually pretending to say Mass in the closet!”

Imagining a diminutive Gagnon whispering Mass, I admit to myself that I’m a little nervous interviewing Most Reverend Richard Gagnon, former Bishop and current Administrator of the Diocese of Victoria, Archbishop-Elect of the Diocese of Winnipeg. But Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon (“Bishop Gagnon”) is adept at setting people at ease, and I relax, settling in for what promises to be a very interesting hour of conversation.

He continues. “And then growing up I did all the normal things that young people do, but we always had this connection with the Church. I come from a family of five kids, and had lots of cousins; the Church was a place we socialized and had fun. We became part of the coffee hour at the Cathedral when Folk Masses first started after the second Vatican Council. I soon learned that being Catholic can be joyful and positive! And I learned that it’s normal to be a Catholic, it’s normal to be a priest, and it’s all part of life. I think family plays a role in vocations, but also the priests themselves do—if they find time to spend with younger people, to communicate with them, to have a laugh with them, and have coffee with them, it teaches young people that it’s perfectly normal to be a priest.”

“I realized I never felt completely fulfilled as a teacher, and I always felt there was something else that I needed to do.

As we sat in his office at the Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Centre, Bishop Gagnon went on to describe time spent in his early youth in Vancouver’s East Side, ministering to the occupants of “Skid Row.” “I met some wonderful people there whose lives were full of suffering and difficulties and I got to talk to them about God—you simply talk about God! You talk about football—and you talk about God. You talk about jobs—and you talk about God. God is always intermixed in everything, you know. It’s not like ‘God’s in the Church and your life is over here,’ it’s all mixed together,” he said.

Working in various jobs, he always felt there was something missing. God’s irresistible call became more urgent around the time he was 25. “I felt a strong



Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon with  
Diocesan Messenger Editor Connie Dunwoody

pull towards the priesthood; it wasn’t something that I would have chosen—I taught high school, and I had just received a promotion—but The Call became stronger and clearer, and I began to think about it more. In fact, I drew a line down a piece of paper and on one side I wrote all the reasons why I should *not* become a priest, and on the other, all the reasons I *should*. Much to my consternation, I found that the list of why I *should* was getting larger, and longer—and *longer*! That was part of the path that led me to enter the seminary—over a number of years my Vocation became clear to me. I realized I never felt completely fulfilled as a teacher, and I always felt there was something else that I needed to do. All the wonderful experiences I had teaching, working with families, parents, all of that converged and contributed to my life as a priest.”

The early December sun streams in through the office window as I ask him, “What were the most challenging aspects of the Diocese of Victoria?” He pauses, reflects, considers. “As everybody probably knows, when I came to the Diocese in 2004 we were still in the middle of a very difficult financial and legal battle. I came to appreciate the wonderfully talented individuals at the Diocesan level who were a great assistance to me as their Bishop. That’s why until 2007 we really couldn’t do any planning. By 2008, the issues had been resolved, and we were able to look to the future.”

We talked about more challenges: the Catholic Schools program which saw one new school in Port Alberni and one school amalgamation in Victoria, a shortage of clergy now being resolved through vocations (and he expressed his gratitude for priests from

other dioceses who have helped our Diocese); the gradual withdrawal of the Oblates from active ministry, and the need for the Diocese to take over the First Nations Ministry formerly run by the Oblates.

“The Diocese had to learn how to develop a Native Ministry. I began encouraging our clergy and lay people to begin to make connections with

*Continued on page 22*

## Inside

Appeal in Action .....	3
Calendar of Events .....	4
Catholic Schools .....	10
Connections .....	16
Face the Day .....	17
Faith Matters.....	18
Island News and Events .....	5
National/International .....	20
The Campus Mission.....	16
Vocations.....	15



Students from St. Joseph’s School, Chemainus, take part in the Annual  
Ladysmith Lightup Parade

*Christmas Mass Schedule Page 24*





# Third Annual Diocesan Conference, “Walk Humbly With Our Lord”

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

## A Powerful Theme Emerges: “Witnessing to the Spirit Working Among Us”

“Gratitude”, “Appreciation”, “Opened eyes and hearts”; “Inspired by ordinary people responding to the Holy Spirit”; “Connecting with others”; “The power of prayer”. These are but a few of the many enthusiastic comments received in response to the personal witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in ordinary lives given over two days of the Third Annual Diocesan Conference.

Kirby Kranabetter, Coordinator of Pastoral Services and Director of Mission, Ethics and Client Relations at Bruyère Continuing Care, Ottawa, shared a moving testimony of his own journey from a young man at the top of his game with the world open for his taking, who survives a life-altering accident and literally has to crawl his way back to mere basic functioning, but who goes on to complete two degrees, compete and achieve Silver Medal status on the world stage as an elite wheelchair athlete, and share his wisdom in guiding the rehabilitation of others encountering similar life changing challenges.

Now a quadriplegic with physical challenges appearing virtually insurmountable, Kirby’s inner struggle was essentially with God. And while not receiving the physical cure he had hoped for—and even pleaded and bargained with God for—it was a far more profound inner healing which God was effecting in him. This was, ironically, to prepare him for opportunities and accomplishments which he never would have, or could envisioned for himself, not the least of which would be his testimony to God’s faithfulness and love, as an inspiration for and an instrument of healing for others.

Kathy Korman, Principal of John Paul II School in Port Alberni, bore witness to a local success story, again fundamentally a testimony to the power of prayer and trust in God. Inspired by preceding diocesan witnesses such as Fr. William G. Smith and the Sisters of St. Ann, who established a vibrant Smith Memorial School in Port Alberni from virtually nothing, Kathy went on to share her own and others’ leap of faith and trust in God to provide, describing the astounding story of God working through the generous response of people. John Paul II School, rising from the spiritual legacy of Smith Memorial School is the result—a remarkable story of a living witness to prayer, faith and service in cooperating with the Spirit’s promptings.

“... we have no idea how much our small gestures of kindness can change the life of another, revealing the Face of God.

Bishop Gagnon testified to cooperating with the Spirit citing Mother Theresa, “The fruit of Silence is prayer. The fruit of Prayer is faith. The fruit of Faith is love. The fruit of Love is service. The fruit of Service is peace.” We all want to be of service, and we see much in the way of good service. Conflict can arise when do not allow “space for God” in our lives and particularly our relationship with others in our parish communities. When we operate from our own agenda rather than listening and responding to God’s call, we can fall into the trap of defining ourselves by what we do, our ministry, rather than listening and being open to God, and where God is calling us to serve. Ideologies conflict and disunity results, whereas service in the Spirit unifies. Bishop Richard recalled Pope Benedict’s example of taking the courage to make room for the Holy Spirit’s lead and stepping down. He also cited Pope Francis’ example of service, an “encyclical of gestures”, speaking much louder than words. Both remind us to be grounded in Christ making our relationship with Him the essence of our life. With open hearts and surrendering to Him we rediscover a renewed enthusiasm, hearts transformed by grace.

Char Deslippe introduced a panel of witnesses who shared wonderful stories of being open to the Spirit’s prompting to respond to need. Stephan Brulot-Sawchyn, Alexander Morrow and Benjamin Gyorkos, Grade 7 students at St. Patrick’s School, shared their story of their successful toy sale project to raise funds for children in need; Yvonne Van Ryk and Jackie Cleaves shared their experience with the Breakfast Club at Queen of Angels School which has been a remarkable coming-together of all members of the school community reaching out, embracing needs and witnessing to the greater community. Amber Rainshadow from St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Victoria, shared her own journey revealing the Love God manifested to her through the generous response of others, and how we have no idea how much our small gestures of kindness can change the life of another, revealing the Face of God.

On Saturday, afternoon workshops gave parishioners from all walks and stages of life the opportunity to recall, name, experience and inspire their own “faith in action” through gathering in groups dedicated to dialogue and brainstorming in the various ministry areas. Outcomes from these sessions will be returned to parishes for consideration and discernment for action, as they will have implications for local parish pastoral plans. As well this data is being reviewed and is informing the Diocesan Offices in their ongoing work of listening, adjusting and evaluating the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

While every human enterprise is bound by human limitations, our coming together annually as a Diocesan family is not only a wonderful reminder of why we do what we do, but also a moment of encounter. It is the realization that we are all being sustained by the loving presence of our loving God, the God who saves and who gifts us for the sake of revealing and sharing that saving love with the world. ✠



Kathy Korman with her brother, Kirby Kranabetter, at the 3rd Annual Diocesan Conference



Sisters of St. Ann, Joyce Harris, Mary Ellen King, Margaret Jacques and Sheila Moss enjoying some “nunsense”



Stephan, Alexander and Benjamin, Grade 7 Students at St. Patrick’s School



Cowichan First Nations Team (L to R): Sr. Vinda, Fr. Joe, Myra Charlie, Barbara Charlie, Sarah Modeste, Sr. Elisa





# In Proportion to Our Blessings

by Mike Patterson, Appeal Coordinator



## Appeal in Action Report to December 2013

by Mike Patterson, Appeal Coordinator

*If you give to others, you will be given a full amount in return.  
It will be packed down, shaken together, and spilling over into your lap.  
The way you treat others is the way you will be treated.*

~ Luke 6:38

As the Diocese of Victoria says farewell to Bishop Richard we anxiously await the announcement of a successor. Meanwhile the work of the Diocese and the need for the Appeal continues. Imagine the pleasure the new Bishop will feel when he is greeted with the news of the stewardship of Vancouver Island Catholics as expressed in another successful Diocesan Appeal. Will your gift have played a part in making the new Bishop welcome?

Thank you and blessings to all parishioners who have supported the 2013 Appeal: *Journey of Hearts & Hands: In Proportion to Our Blessings*. We are particularly grateful that you have decided to bring life to your stewardship role with your gifts. The support of the *Journey of Hearts & Hands* Appeal has enabled the pastoral priorities of both your parish and Diocese to be supported and will further the unfolding of our Diocesan Pastoral Plan. Your gift and commitment to our *Journey of Hearts & Hands* Appeal will allow our goals to become a reality. More importantly, your example is an encouragement to all of us and is a witness to discipleship in Jesus, Our Lord. Being a good steward of the many gifts we have all received will lay a solid foundation for future generations of Catholics in our Diocese.

Parishioners who have not yet made a gift to the Appeal are reminded that there is still time before the end of the calendar year to participate. Gifts made by December 31 will be eligible for a charitable tax receipt for 2013. If you need pledge forms please ask at your parish office.

### Appeal Gifts and Pledges Received:

Summary of 2013 pledges to date:

- We are thankful for almost 2,000 gifts and pledges so far.
- We are 94% of the way to our Appeal goal of \$750,000!
- 18 parishes have received more than 60% of their parish goals!
- Parish and Diocesan totals will be published regularly in Sunday bulletins.
- Gifts or pledges received by December 31 will receive a 2013 tax receipt.
- Final numbers will be seen in *The Diocesan Messenger* in the New Year!

### Annual Appeal on the Diocese of Victoria Website

Parishioners are encouraged to visit [www.rcdvictoria.org](http://www.rcdvictoria.org) for more complete Diocesan news, especially about the 2013 Appeal *Journey of Hearts & Hands: In Proportion to Our Blessings*. Recent postings include the 2013 Appeal video and pledge materials.

### Who is Waiting for Your Gift or Pledge to the Appeal?

- **Retired Clergy**  
Priests who have had long careers of service in our Diocese deserve a stable and dignified retirement. The pensions of ten retired priests are supplemented by resources from the Appeal.
- **First Nations Parishioners**  
Appeal resources assist with staff and programs in support of our First Nations communities. The community of Ahousat on the west coast receives services from the pastor of Ucluelet and Tofino. On the east coast of the island the Cowichan First Nation is served by the pastor, a small team of RVM sisters, and members of St. Ann's Parish.
- **Individual Parishioners and Projects**  
Most parishes have set priorities for the parish share of Appeal revenues. These priorities are a mix of parish operations, programs and capital improvement plans. Pastors and/or parish leadership can explain the plans for your parish.
- **Students and Staff of Island Catholic Schools**  
Catholic education is a foundation building block of our Diocese. The Appeal provides a subsidy to Island Catholic Schools for safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable Catholic schools in Greater Victoria. In addition the Appeal supports special projects at Catholic schools outside Victoria and the Office of Religious Education.
- **Youth Ministry Staff and Volunteers**  
Youth programs throughout the Diocese are organized and supported by the Diocesan Youth Office and many parish level volunteers. These youth programs are supported by the Appeal.

- **Social Justice and Respect for Life Volunteers**

The Diocese assists through coordinating Diocesan-wide and local parish initiatives such the World Food Day March, Development and Peace initiatives, educational sessions concerning the Social Teachings of the Church, and outreach to the marginalized.

- **Pastors and Parishioners of the West and North Coast**

There are a number of small and remote parishes on the west and north coasts of the Island which are not large enough to support a pastor. The Diocese provides a monthly subsidy to make sure the parishes are viable in terms of basic operating costs.

### A Stewardship Prayer

*Lord, we thank you for the abundant gifts you have given us. You have blessed us beyond our hopes and dreams—even beyond the majority of people in our world.*

*We have food, heat, lights, clothes, means of transportation and all other things that bring comfort to life.*

*We have family and friends so that we are not alone. We have a faith community filled with love and support. We have education and work that allow us to develop our gifts and talents.*

*For all of these gifts we are thankful. But most of all we are thankful for your Son, Jesus Christ. He found us to be worthy not only of your love but also to be disciples and stewards of his Gospel.*

*It is our privilege to be asked to bring a portion of our many communal and individual gifts to the Eucharistic table and unite them with Christ. Together we can transform all life for your glory.*

*As a parish family committed to doing your will, we ask that you instill in us the grace to be even more grateful and the wisdom to understand how we can be better stewards of all that has been given us.*

*We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen ✠*



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# Calendar of Events

## December 2013

**22 St. Ann's Chapel, Victoria:** *Tidings of Comfort & Joy!* Join the Friends of St. Ann's Academy at their Singalong celebration with the Casavant Organ at 2 pm. Entrance by donation or bring a small non-perishable food item for their Giving Tree. For more information phone 250.953.8829 or visit [stanns.academy@gov.bc.ca](mailto:stanns.academy@gov.bc.ca).

## January 2014

**04 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** Knights of Columbus are holding a Christmas Tree Recycling (by donation) and Bottle Drop-Off event, 10 am – 3 pm, with all proceeds going to the Knights of Columbus charities. For more information, call Gerry Poitras at 250.812.7611 or email him at [glpoitras@shaw.ca](mailto:glpoitras@shaw.ca).

**11 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** Knights of Columbus are holding a Christmas Tree Recycling (by donation) and Bottle Drop-Off event, 10 am – 3 pm, with all proceeds going to the Knights of Columbus charities. For more information, call Gerry Poitras at 250.812.7611 or email him at [glpoitras@shaw.ca](mailto:glpoitras@shaw.ca).

**31 – Feb 2 Camp Homewood, Quadra Island:** *iBelieve* featuring Ken Yasinski and Face to Face Ministries will be held on Quadra Island. For more information contact Terri-Ann Wynans at 250. 724.5465 or email [wynans@shaw.ca](mailto:wynans@shaw.ca); or Bonni Roset at 250.923.4299 or email [broset@telus.net](mailto:broset@telus.net). This event is sponsored by St. Patrick's Campbell River and Holy Family/ Notre Dame Port Alberni with financial support from the Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island.

## February

**6 – Mar 14 St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Victoria:** A study on The Gospel of John led by Dr. Les McKeown. For more information or to register email [stjwoffice@shaw.ca](mailto:stjwoffice@shaw.ca) or call 250.479.7413. This course is co-sponsored by St. Joseph the Worker and Sacred Heart parishes.

## Upcoming Events

**27 May – June 9, 2014 Pilgrimage to Poland.** Chaplain: Fr. Paul Szczur SDS. For more information visit the parish web site at [www.olorchurch.ca](http://www.olorchurch.ca) and click on "Pilgrimage to Poland" or send an email to [olor@shaw.ca](mailto:olor@shaw.ca) or phone Fr. Paul directly at 250.479.7413.

## Miscellany

**Wednesdays**  
**St. Patrick's Victoria:** Moms & Tots group. Come together with the moms of St. Patrick's Catholic Church (2060 Haultain Street, Victoria) for faith, fellowship and laughter. We discuss everything from two-year-old tantrums, to the dignity of women, to faith in our families and back to potty training. We meet at 9:30 am on Wednesday mornings; childcare is provided. Contact Bonnie at (250) 213-4984 or [koalabear\\_writer@yahoo.ca](mailto:koalabear_writer@yahoo.ca) for more info.

**Fridays**  
**Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria:** 9:30 – 11 am, Moms & Tots Group. All mothers with children 6 years and under are welcome. For more information contact Rosemarie Urbanson at (250) 391-6618; no registration is required.

**Saturdays**  
**Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria:** Traditional Latin Mass at 10 am (except December 24).

**At the Cathedral:** 4th Saturday of each month the 9:30 a.m. Mass is offered for the sanctity of human life and for the intentions of those who support Respect Life Ministry. All are welcome to participate.

**Sundays**  
**Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria:** Traditional Latin Mass at 12 noon with Gregorian Chant and Sacred Hymns.

**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](mailto:onthisrock@shaw.ca).

**At the Cathedral.** 4th Saturday of each month the 9:30 a.m. Mass is offered for the sanctity of human life and for the intentions of those who support Respect Life Ministry. All are welcome to participate.



## The Diocesan Messenger

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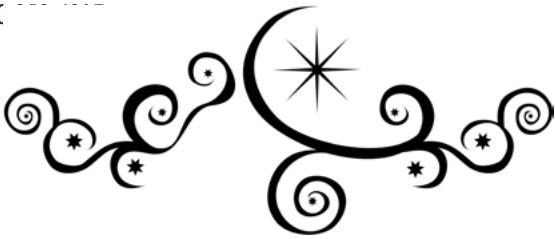
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To have your event included in the Diocesan Calendar of Events on the website, please email the details to [editor@rcdvictoria.org](mailto:editor@rcdvictoria.org)





# Island News & Events



## CWL Concludes 75th Anniversary Charter Celebrations in Parksville

by Sandi Digras

The Church of the Ascension CWL will finish its 75th Anniversary Charter celebrations with a Christmas Lunch on Saturday, December 14. We will also celebrate our two members who admit to being 75 this year! Donna Booth and Mary Sheil both have their birthdays in Christmas week; Mary on Christmas Day and Donna on December 29. So a big cake, balloons and crackers are in order as well as a catered lunch from the Galloping Gourmet so the ladies can sit in their finery and enjoy the celebrations. We will also have a toonie auction and door prizes.

Our November General Meeting was particularly inspiring as we listened to our Pastor, Father Mel, talk about the devastating effects of the October 15, 2013 earthquake on his home island of Bohol, Philippines. His PowerPoint presentation showed the destruction of the many churches as well as the efforts to gather food, water and building supplies to help his family and friends construct new shelters. This island was not directly hit by Typhoon Haiyan, which was a blessing.

Sr. Bettie Wilms (SA) was given her 50th anniversary pin from the CWL and a white prayer shawl by a group of our members at a recent celebration at Eagle Park Lodge. Sr. Bettie has been a wonderful spiritual influence in our parish for many years. She visited the sick and brought comfort to many, including myself when I was in the hospital a few years ago with a severe lung infection. Her prayers helped me get better a lot faster. About 12 CWL members were privileged to surprise her with a cake and the pin and shawl. ✕



Ladies of Church of the Ascension CWL with Sr. Bettie



*Most Reverend Richard Gagnon*  
*The parish of*  
**St. Francis Xavier/  
Our Lady Queen of the World**  
*offers their sincere congratulations*  
*on your appointment*  
*as Archbishop-Elect of Winnipeg*

*Thank you for your devoted and caring*  
*tenure as shepherd of our diocese. You will be*  
*greatly missed.*  
*God's blessings to you in your*  
*new ministry.*

St. Francis Xavier / Our Lady Queen of the World



## St. Joseph the Worker Considers Twinning Proposal with Masithuthukisane Community

by Lorraine Calderwood-Parsons

Fr. William Hann, parish priest at St. Joseph the Worker parish in Victoria, was inspired by the message of Pope Francis to the world's youth Dare to Care. Fr. William also heard the Pope express the need for Christians to demonstrate through concrete actions their love for the poor and for God's creation.

To follow the guidance from Pope Francis, Fr. Hann decided to explore a twinning project that would encompass the social and ecological aspects of the Pope's message. In November, the Parish Council at St. Joseph the Worker began investigating the possibility of twinning with an organic farming project, the Masithuthukisane ("ma-sih-tu-tu-kih-SA-nay") Community Project in the Diocese of Mariannhill, KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa.

The Masithuthukisane project is an organic farming project run by the Diocese of Mariannhill. Its goal is to teach the people sustainable farming methods and management that will eventually see diocesan land returned to local people

The largely Zulu diocese of Mariannhill, where the project is located, has been devastated by HIV/AIDS, suffers from desperate poverty, and is home to many orphan-led and grandmother-led families. The major goal of the Masithuthukisane project is to hire local unemployed women and men to work in cooperatives, and to be able to feed a population of 3,500 people, many of whom are undernourished.

Under apartheid, many Zulus worked as labourers on farms owned by white landowners, but did not learn skills that are required to keep the land healthy and the farm economically and environmentally viable. This was made worse by the abandonment of land as a result of civil strife between post-apartheid factions.

The project would:

- initiate 350 organic gardens to produce fresh vegetables and maize to reduce the level of undernourishment by 20 per cent by 2016;
- employ 250 women and 60 men in 10 cooperatives in advanced farming methods so they become independent and self-sustaining;
- register 10 cooperatives and link them with resources found in government and independent foundations so that they become self-sustaining through local and international markets;
- consolidate 5 community property associations with justice and peace groups;
- facilitate land and soil development to help community potential land owners to prevent land degradation;
- improve farming methods for crop production; and
- improve animal husbandry.

The parish will seek input from parishioners before Parish Council makes a final decision on the twinning project. If a decision is made to proceed with the Masithuthukisane project, the twinning could take many forms, but first and foremost it would be relational. It would build relations with the people in the project through prayer, communication exchanges, involvement of school children in both countries, possibly exchange visits, financial assistance, knowledge transfer on both sides, and so on.

Should the parish decide to proceed, a steering committee will be established in 2014 and will include representatives from different parish ministries, youth and schools to work out a process, goals and specifics with the committee in South Africa. ✕

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# Squires News

The Pope Pius XII Columbian Squires Circle 1169 was able to hand a \$400 cheque to Grand Knight Frank Peters of the Knights of Columbus Victoria Council 1256 to go towards their “RSVP” program. RSVP is a program run by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council that provides reimbursement of \$100 to the Council if it donates \$500 to a seminarian.

The Squires also handed a \$100 cheque as an Ordination gift to Fr. David Hogman when he attended their November monthly meeting. With the \$500 cheque they gave Bishop Richard Gagnon in the summer, the total amount they gave in support of the seminarians was \$1,000.

The Squires would like to thank those who supported them in their fundraising event and who continue to support them in their activities. For more information on the Squires, please visit their website at <http://squires.kofcvictoria.bc.ca>. ✂



Squires Bursar Michael Gingras handing the \$400 cheque to Grand Knight Frank Peters of Victoria Council 1256

# CWL Provincial Fall Midterm 2013

By Evelyn Rigby, Communications Chairperson, BC & Yukon Provincial Council

White Ribbons were on display recently at Seton House of Prayer in Kelowna. The occasion was the Fall Midterm meeting of the BC & Yukon Provincial CWL Council which took place during the *Pornography Hurts!* campaign of the Catholic Women’s League of Canada.

Members were spiritually enriched by the presence of Fr. Edwin Kulling, Provincial Spiritual Advisor, who celebrated Mass each day, led the *Liturgy of the Hours*, and gave two spiritual reflections during the business sessions. The first described the life of Elizabeth Ann Seton who, spurred on by her faith, used her talents and determination to deal with the many and varied challenges in her life. The second, entitled *Prayer*, was a comprehensive study of Catholic methods to raise the mind and heart to God, attesting to the proven beneficial effects that prayer has on our lives and on those for whom we pray.

President Doreen Gowans guided members through a packed agenda which contained not only exciting preparations for the 2014 Provincial Convention to be held June 5 – 7 in Kamloops but also the creation of a new subsidy which would help members get there. It was confirmed that Catholic Missions in Canada would have a booth at the event. A further initiative to help members attend the 2015 National Convention in Vancouver was also approved. Treasurer Sandra Stajduhar reported on changes to the annual budget.

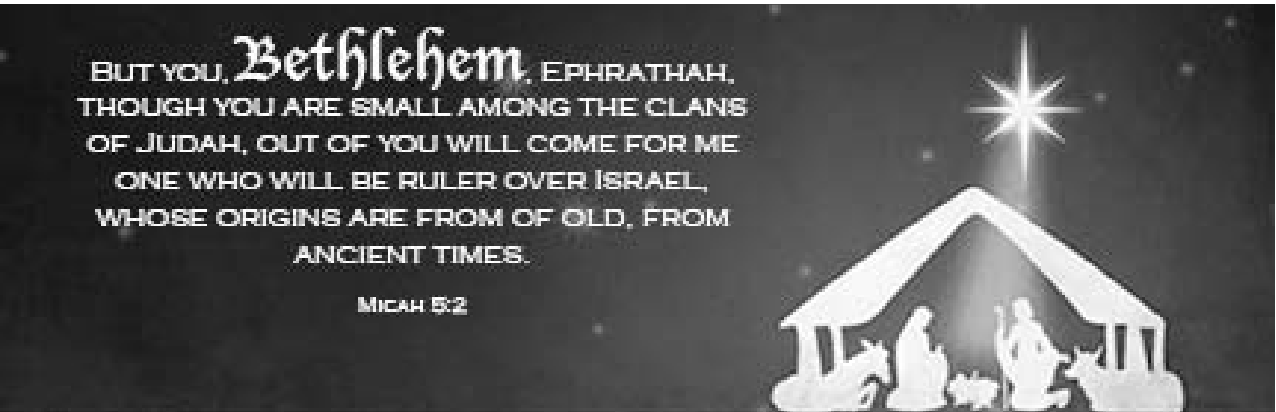
Past President Nancy Simms conducted the biannual revisions to the provincial *Policy and Procedure Handbook*. She also reported that one parish council had successfully applied for a grant from the Women’s Inter Church Council to be used for their dental health outreach (Toonies for Teeth) to the needy.

Each attendee received a copy of *Walking with Pope Francis*, a small book with daily reflections on his encyclical *Lumen Fidei*, as well as a resource kit from COLF (Catholic Organization for Life And Family) containing helpful booklets and pamphlets on all aspects of Christian family life. A book by Catholic artist Louise Tessier, *The Garden Stations of the Cross*, was also circulated. If there is enough interest it will be offered at a special rate to CWL members and can be ordered through [maria.medeiros@novalis.ca](mailto:maria.medeiros@novalis.ca). A copy of the provincial Fall newsletter featuring articles submitted by six dioceses received final editing before being posted to the provincial website, [www.bcyukoncwl.com](http://www.bcyukoncwl.com).

Provincial Officers were honored to receive invitations to the John Diefenbaker Defender of Human Rights and Freedom Award, and it was confirmed that several present would be able to attend and witness the presentation to Cardinal Zen.

Six Diocesan Presidents were in attendance, including three new to Midterm deliberations: Catherine L’Heureux (Kamloops), Sharon Ciebin (Vancouver ) and Laura Esposito. Each reported on the progress of *Catch the Fire* and learned about its sequence *S’mores*. They suggested ways in which diocesan and/or provincial personnel could be useful resources for parish councils seeking help. Despite the packed agenda, attendees enjoyed pockets of social time.

Fog on the day of arrival had interfered with several travel arrangements, but the Executive left for home in bright sunshine, spiritually refreshed. ✂



# Themba lethu (Our Hope) Orphanage

by Lorraine Calderwood-Parsons

Aphiwe, a nine-year-old Zulu girl, is a whiz at soccer. She handles the ball with deftness and skill, wheeling away from her playmates, calm and confident, with a big grin on her face as she spins and dribbles on the rough playing field at the South African children’s shelter where she lives.

This is something that we visitors had not expected when we brought out a soccer ball donated by St. Andrew’s Regional High School athletic program, and tossed it on the field.

Aphiwe, whose name means *We have been given* in Zulu, is not only a first-class athlete, but is also an avid student. Aphiwe’s parents died in 2008, leaving their HIV-positive child with an aunt who abused her. Social workers brought her to the Themba lethu (pronounced “tem-ba-LAY-too) children’s shelter, run by the Zulu Order Daughters of St. Francis of Assisi. One would never guess the harshness of the life Aphiwe has endured from the broad smile she always had for our group of Canadians who spent time at Themba lethu earlier this year.

The home is intended as temporary shelter for children until they can be placed with extended family or adoptive parents. The reality is that many youngsters spend their formative years there. All have compelling stories about their young lives.

This was brought home to our group of eight, six of whom attend Victoria area parishes. My husband, Vic, and I spent three months there volunteering in 2007, but for the others it was a first visit to witness the impact that HIV/AIDS has had on rural South Africa. The children, ranging from 10 months to 13 years of age, number anywhere from 20 to 32.

One of the older girls is Anele, a shy 13-year-old. About two years ago her unmarried mother died, leaving behind Anele, some older siblings who had a different father, and her younger twin brother and sister, Bandiswa and Andiswa, now aged ten.

Anele at 11 years old became the primary caregiver for the twins and herself. It came to light that the female twin, Andiswa, had been abused by one of the older siblings. All three children were taken into custody and brought to Themba lethu.

“There was an urgent need to remove the children to the shelter for care and treatment,” said Sr. Andrea Khanyile, who heads the shelter. “They are all attending school, Anele in grade 6 and the twins in grade 4. They have no one visiting them. We cannot trace the relatives from their father’s side.”

Themba lethu is supported financially by the Victoria-based African AIDS Angels Society and by a special annual Christmas concert by the Arbutus Choir at St. Joseph the Worker parish. What strikes anyone who visits is how amazed that people in Africa are that halfway around the world there are others who care about what is happening in their lives.

And how Victorians cared! Local musician Michael Mitchell, St. Andrew’s High School, St. Andrew’s Elementary School, the Lower Vancouver Island Soccer Association, the Victoria Rugby Association and St. Joseph’s all made donations that were carried to Africa.

Amid the harsh reality that blights the lives of so many in the world, there are always glimmers of generosity and hope. ✂



Preschoolers at Themba lethu, with Novice Sr. Fundi



# Doing Something About It!

Remarks made by Barbara Ann Charlie at the Diocesan Conference

I am Barbara Ann Charlie. I am from Cowichan. I am wife to Tom Charlie and mother to Suzanne and David Charlie. I am proud to be grandma to five beautiful children.

I am a parishioner at St. Ann’s church, a beautiful church situated at the base of Mt. Tzouhalem. St Ann’s is where I was baptized and also where I was married. My children and my beautiful grandbaby Axis were also baptized at St. Ann’s.

When I was a child my parents took me to Sunday Mass on regular basis. I remember walking into the church and being welcomed and seated by my grandfather, William Throne, my *Popa*. While being escorted to the third pew on the left side I would see my grandmother, *Mom* as we called her, kneeling at the last pew with her rosary beads draped over her hands, quietly reciting the rosary. I will always remember the sparkle of her beads. As a family of eight the Thorne family took up the whole third pew.

As a teen and most of my adult years my attendance at Mass was sporadic. Yet my dad never wavered and always encouraged me to attend and be involved in the church. When I did attend, I always noted my dad’s smile and the glimmer in his eyes as I sat next to him—something I will always remember.

My dad sang all the hymns beautifully; I especially loved when he sang the *Hulqumi’num* songs. Dad also read the readings perfectly; what an amazing voice. Dad would always encourage me to sing. Now I don’t have the voice he had, but he always said, “It doesn’t matter what you sound like, just sing!”

Looking back now, I wonder if Dad’s encouragement was because he knew that singing songs praising God would be healing to my spirit, and they truly are.

My Mom, *Lovely Rita* as my Dad’s friends called her, taught me to pray the rosary: before I went to bed I would lie next to my Mom while she taught me.

Today I sit on the Parish Council and I am member of the Legion of Mary and I support the Child and Youth Ministry. The Child and Youth Ministry began as outreach work. We set up tents in a central area on one of the Cowichan Tribes’ reserves. We went to where the children were. We begin the two-hour session each Thursday by sharing a nutritious meal with the children. Once the children have eaten we begin teaching arts and crafts or read with them. They are then given time to respond in the form of art therapy. The children, who range in age from three to ten, have made beaded rosary bracelets, bookmarks and framed pictures, and have completed numerous picture responses to various books.

Through our outreach work many parents and grandparents have approached Sr. Elisa or Sr. Vinda or Sarah [Modeste] to have their children baptized on site or at St. Ann’s. Both Fr. Joe and Bishop Richard Gagnon have baptized children.

Today one grandfather and/or grandmother attend Sunday Mass with several of their grandchildren. These children attend Catechism and one ten-year-old does a reading for our children-sponsored Mass that is held every third Sunday. The children are bringing the adults back to church.

Now that we are into cooler weather one mother has opened her home to our Thursday Child and Youth Ministry sessions.

What are my hopes for the Child and Youth ministry?

I hope that we will be able to continue to offer these sessions on a weekly basis. Secondly, I hope more parents and children will become involved so that one day we will be in a position to host youth conferences that will bring many Indigenous youth together.

I believe as participants we are continuing with the work that our ancestors began.

As Cowichan people we have a responsibility to support the wellbeing of our people.

My grandfather, my Popa, said, “Treat your children well and they will always remember how you made them feel. This is important to me.”

I would like to share with you why I revealed some of my history to you. As a people it is important to make a connection. When I meet a fellow First Nations for the first time I usually tell them my name and who my parents or grandparents are. This way we connect and they know where I belong.

By being involved in the church and welcoming us to Sunday Mass Popa created for us a sense of belonging. With their presence Mom and Popa ensured an air of familiarity, a connection.

“There are may successes in our group that may seem so small but are actually life-changing accomplishments.

We need to ensure that all children have a sense of belonging. We need to provide opportunity to children so that they’ll experience mastery. We need to encourage independence. And finally we need to encourage generosity.

As a group we approach our work in true faith of God. As a group we welcome, acknowledged and celebrate each child’s attendance at our group. We respect and honour each child. During Mass we continue to sing in *Hulqumi’num*. Children participate in the Offertory. The children have experienced mastery in that they are proud to make the *Sign of the Cross*, *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*.

By opening her door to our group the young mother has modelled generosity. Another mother has sent bottled juice to share with the group. The community safety department demonstrated generosity when they provided a barbecue dinner.

There are many successes in our group that may seem so small but are actually life-changing accomplishments. One three-year-old attended our group with his sisters; the first few sessions he sat and sat and sat through the whole sessions. When we placed food in front of him, we literally had to feed him. During art works we would guide his hands into strokes, we would sing to him, talk to him usually with no response. Today, he plays with Fr. Joe, he openly expresses himself, he smiles when we play with him, he has a hearty appetite and feeds himself.

Sue, one of our members, says the change in the children is like night and day. This three-year-old now jumps up and greets Sue with a hug. This beautiful little boy lost his father approximately two years ago. He, along with his sisters, looks forward to our Thursday sessions. Their grandmother says they count down the days each week.

The children are modelling independence. One ten-year-old read the first reading on site at the Baptismal Mass. She did so well, she was asked to do a reading at Sunday Mass at St. Ann’s. She walked to the front and froze. Sr. guided her back to her seat. Fr. Jai commended her on the courage it took to stand at the front and suggested she perhaps try again. At the next children-sponsored Mass she read beautifully.

One of my Aunts who passed away about two months ago used to say, “If you are not happy with how things are going—*do something about it.*” So that is what we are doing. We are doing something about it. ✂

# A Pastor’s Perspective on a Bishop’s Ministry

by Fr. William Hann, Pastor, St. Joseph the Worker Parish

Relational Leadership is defined as *a process of bringing people together to attempt to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good*. Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon is a true relational leader. Mine was his first ordination when he arrived in 2004 and in the past nine years I have worked closely with him in my capacity as a parish priest; I have served on many of his committees and most recently, as his Episcopal Vicar for Catholic Education and Evangelization. I remember my first meeting with him after I was ordained and I told him I would always be a person who would talk to him about what I am experiencing and feeling and I know he values that. He may not always agree with my perspective but he listens, and he respects and appreciates that dialogue and consensus approach.

“I think his greatest legacy will be the bridges he has built with First Nations communities; he has truly reached out in healing hope to reconcile, restore right relationships and build community among our First Peoples.

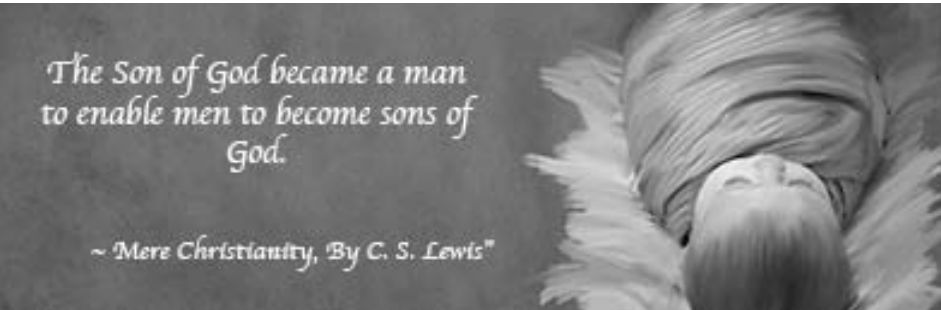
Recently I told him that I have learned much from him during his time as our Shepherd. Under his pastoral leadership we have healed, planned and set new courses in many pastoral initiatives. In all discussions, even ones regarding difficult issues, I have always found him to be accessible, available and a willing listener. As we developed and implemented a Pastoral Plan in our Diocese he invited, engaged, and consulted many people. Whenever he had a vision of what could be, he invited others to build that vision and in doing so he modelled collaboration and strategic

thinking. An example of this was when he consulted the People of God, using a survey to gain feedback, which was used for developing a Pastoral Plan. I think his greatest legacy will be the bridges he has built with First Nation communities; he has truly reached out in healing hope to reconcile, restore right relationships and build community among our First Peoples.

At the heart of the Gospel is the mandate to build community and make the Kingdom of God manifest in a broken world. Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon understands that mandate and, as a shepherd, he gathers people together and encourages all to use their callings and gifts to help one another and reveal the Kingdom. Being a shepherd in a pilgrim Church has many joys and a fair amount of challenges but at the heart of a shepherd is care for his sheep. I am grateful for Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon’s invitations to me to serve with him in many capacities. My prayer for him is rooted in Scripture:

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

~ Romans 15:13 ✂





# Wait A Minute...

by Jean Allen

“Advent: “Arrival, emergence, dawn, birth, rising up, coming.”

Those words make sense in the context of Christmas but would you ever use any of those words in the context of your everyday spiritual life? Emergence? Dawn? Birth? Rising up? Advent challenges you to not only acknowledge that Jesus came and will come again for the world, but also to remember he came for *you*, comes for *you* and will come again for *you*—and that’s just in the next two minutes. Jesus never stops coming. Ever. The thrust of his whole nature is to come to us.

But we fail to live in anticipation. We get caught up in our daily challenges and we forget to expect the One who comes. We stop waiting for him so we miss him all the time. We stop waiting because we have been disappointed before. We have preconceived ideas of what it will look and feel like when he comes and we become spiritually disheartened when our expectations are not met. We try to live in his presence but it feels like a failed experiment. Days, weeks and months can go by and prayer feels dry and unproductive. We feel we might as well be talking to ourselves.

Every one of you could easily identify something you are waiting for. Maybe you’re waiting for healing or a change. You may be waiting for a spiritual breakthrough. Perhaps you’re in transition and are waiting for life to settle. You could be waiting for direction for a tough decision. We are all waiting for something and waiting is very difficult. What we don’t often realize is that waiting is a vital, beautiful and deeply spiritual activity. Waiting is prayer. Waiting is pilgrimage.

Waiting seems counterproductive because we are too influenced by the world’s perception of value. There is no doubt that “doing, accomplishing and moving forward” are essential to life but when “doing and accomplishing and moving forward” are applied to our spiritual life we are apt to forget spiritual reality. It becomes difficult for us to remember that God is in control and we are not. We forget that our control over our circumstances is not what motivates God to come to us; He comes simply because He loves us too much not to. It’s our anxiety over loss of control that causes us to miss Him when He comes.

Waiting means letting go and paying attention to the present moment without knowing what the next moment is going to hold. It means understanding that we cannot manipulate and control people or situations. It means being poor in spirit, and spiritual poverty is something that is terribly difficult to comprehend in a world that values achievement and status. Waiting for the Lord sometimes seems futile but Scripture tells us: *They that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength and mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.* (Isaiah 40:31)

Waiting in the spiritual life is a critical part of prayer and growth so the Church offers us this Advent time of waiting to remind us that waiting is fundamental to the spiritual life. If you resist entering into the pilgrimage of waiting, you may have a slightly mistaken idea of what the spiritual life is all about. Even God—especially God—waits.


“For this cause the Lord will be waiting so that he may be kind to you; and he will be lifted up, so that he may have mercy on you; for the Lord is a God of righteousness: there is a blessing on all who wait for him. (Isaiah 30:18)

Not only is there a blessing for all who wait for God but He, too, is engaged in waiting—longing for us, longing to be kind to us, incarnating Himself into the world, rising up so that He can have mercy on us. Out of His silence He rises like the dawn out of darkness—for us. Always for us.

There is mystery and freedom in waiting, in being entwined with the Lord in eager stillness or still eagerness. We are encouraged so many times in Scripture to wait so there must be something extremely powerful in this holy activity. *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord.* (Psalm 27:14)

Be still. Be strong. Advent is the pilgrimage of waiting for The Child who is easily missed. Make quiet your anxious heart.

Sssh. Someone is coming... ✂



## CASA NOVA CATERING

We offer Archbishop-Elect Gagnon our very best wishes and prayers for his new ministry in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, and express our thanks to him.

*Merry Christmas*

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# Sr. Lorraine Beatrice LaMarre, Sister of St. Ann (SSA)

Sr. Lorraine Beatrice LaMarre SSA (Sr. Mary Celine) was born March 13, 1934 in St. Boniface, Manitoba, and died November 26, 2013 at Victoria General Hospital, Victoria, BC.



The youngest of thirteen children of Jean Baptist and Virginia (Beaudin) LaMarre, the family moved to BC in 1946 and Lorraine attended St. Ann’s Academy, New Westminster. She entered the Sisters of St. Ann in 1951 and pronounced her vows on August 6, 1953 in Victoria, BC.

A teacher, Lorraine taught at Smith Memorial School in Port Alberni; in Vancouver at Little Flower Academy and at St. Augustine’s School; in Kamloops at St. Ann’s Academy and at the Indian Residential School; in Victoria at St. Ann’s Academy; and in Duncan at St. Catherine’s Day School and Queen of Angels School.

Lorraine served as Principal in Duncan and at Kuper Island Indian Residential School. After 17 years of teaching Lorraine served as a Guidance Counsellor for First Nations Students living between Qualicum Beach and Mill Bay. Responding to the needs of those she cared for, Lorraine was a co-founding member of the Kakawis Family Development Centre on Meares Island, Tofino, and served there for 8 years.

Lorraine ministered for 10 years in SSA Community Leadership as Assistant Province Leader in Victoria and as a member of the Congregational Leadership Team while residing in Lachine, Quebec. Upon returning to the West, Sr. Lorraine served in the ministries of Formation and Spiritual Direction.


In November 2000 Sr. Lorraine worked in collaboration with Kathy Bentall to found “The Listening Post” in the heart of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. She worked there for 10 years responding to the needs, especially of women, in the inner city. She was a loving, compassionate sister, aunt and friend to many.

A year ago Lorraine returned to live in Victoria while continuing to provide spiritual direction and some retreat work on Bowen Island at Rivendell.

Sr. Lorraine is survived by her brothers, Roland (Ellen) LaMarre and family and John LaMarre and family as well as numerous nieces and nephews and her religious community of the Sisters of St. Ann.

The Sisters of St. Ann are very grateful to the paramedics and the Emergency staff at Victoria General Hospital for their compassionate care and concern. ✂

## We congratulate Most Rev. Richard Gagnon on his installation as Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg



*We affirm you  
as a collaborator  
and we pray that  
your ministry  
be fruitful.*

Bishop David Motiuk, President  
Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops (AWCB)



# Shakespeare is for Everyone

by Elaine Goranson

“Why wait?” is the attitude some children have taken at Our Lady of the Rosary parish. After last year’s successful venture into the classics performing the comedy *Twelfth Night* this risk-taking troupe is launching the tragedy *Macbeth*. This Shakespearience Theatre group, besides fulfilling their roles in the play, also learn about the life and times of William Shakespeare and his famous Globe Theatre. Discussions and discoveries are made about universal truths embedded in Shakespeare’s work—some of those very ones based in our Christian faith.

The challenges the children embrace in their role of “walking in the shoes of another” enables them to portray their characters and also to become more empathetic. These participants lack intimidation of Shakespeare’s timeless stories. They have the wherewithal to “crawl inside the skin of characters” and express emotions from that perspective with vigor and excitement. They appear to embrace what intrigues them about humanity and express this accordingly.

*Macbeth* (remember high school English?) is a play about abusive power and loyalty—challenging themes that are real to all of us. An honorable Scottish noble wins a major military battle for his King. His encounter with the Weird Sisters (witches/hags) and his reliance on their prophecies lead him into a dark, intense and terror-filled world. This begins a chain of events that leads to his decline and eventual demise. His evil ambitions for power, the influences of Lady Macbeth and the choices he makes provide an excellent context for debate and discussion. It allows the director to engage the children in comparing and contrasting Biblical prophecies and outcomes with those that consumed Macbeth’s motivations. We see the decline in morality of a noble person who turns into a murderer and traitor (there’s no violence on our stage). Final justice brings a sense of hope and renewal.



The cast and writers/director of Our Lady of the Rosary’s production of *Macbeth*

This year the unique intergenerational approach (children, parents, grandparents) to this production makes it a family affair contributing to modeling and assurances of deeper understanding of the plot. Storytelling-grandparents coupled with young dramatists is an awesome combination.

As writers/director of this adaptation of *Macbeth*, my husband Alan and I are gratified to know that the Shakespearience Theatre young players are contributing all proceeds to benefit children/youth in our parish. It truly becomes the Gift of Giving for this Advent season. ✂



**Victoria Diocesan Council of Development and Peace wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas.**

**We take this opportunity to thank Bishop Richard for his leadership and encouraging presence over the past 9 years.**

**We also send our very best wishes and prayers as he embarks on his new journey as Archbishop of Winnipeg.**



# Latin Mass Altar Rails Restored at Our Lady Queen of Peace

by The Latin Mass Society of Victoria.

On Sunday, November 24, 2013, permanent Altar rails were restored to Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Church in Esquimalt. This is the only church in the Diocese of Victoria where the Traditional Latin Mass is celebrated. It is offered every Sunday at noon, every Friday morning and on many of the prominent Feasts of the 1962 Church calendar. The New Order of Mass is celebrated at the same church six days a week, including all Sundays.

Fixed Altar rails had been a prominent feature at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church until late into the 1980s. The style of the old rails matched that of the High Altar and its reredos, which were also preserved after the changes made in the other parishes. The old High Altar is now unique in the City among the parishes of the Diocese. Public Latin Masses were offered at the church from 1984 until 1993 and were then restored on Easter Sunday 2008, and rails were deemed necessary so that faithful could receive Holy Communion *in lingua* whilst kneeling, which is required by the laws governing the celebration of the pre-conciliar Latin Mass, especially as a consequence of Article 28 of Benedict XVI’s 2012 instruction entitled *Universæ Ecclesiæ*. Surviving stubs from the original rails had been put in place for each Latin Mass but these were found to be unsafe, as some visitors, not realising that they were movable, tended to lean forward on them.

In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued an apostolic letter *motu proprio* entitled *Summorum Pontificum*. This document made public the finding of Holy Church that the Traditional Latin Mass had never been juridically abrogated when or after the New Mass was promulgated. As a result, every priest of the Latin Church has a general right to offer it. In addition, the *motu proprio* found that groups of lay faithful have a right of due process in petitioning to benefit from celebrations of the Latin Mass in accordance with the Roman Missal of 1962.

Fr. John Domotor, formerly a military chaplain, graciously decided to learn how to celebrate the Traditional Latin Mass before he assumed responsibilities as Parish Priest, for which the Latin Mass community is truly grateful. He has also substantially increased the number of Latin Masses celebrated. Realizing the practical need for restoring the rails and also appreciating how they would complement the High Altar visually, he retained the services of a true artist. The new rails respect the design of the originals and match the style of the High Altar to perfection.

Every Parish in Victoria has a special character and it is warming to the hearts of many that there should be at least one church in the City that reflects the history of the Diocese and that of the Roman Rite for so many centuries. May the restored Altar rails at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church remind the faithful that the Church of our ancestors also belongs to us. ✂



The newly installed altar rails at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

**Congratulations, Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon**  
**Our Prayers go with you in gratitude for your Service**

*Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island*



# Island Catholic Schools



## Advent...a Time for Waiting

by Joe Colistro, Superintendent, Island Catholic Schools

*Above all, trust in the slow work of God.  
We are quite naturally impatient in everything  
to reach the end without delay.*

~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

In the busyness of life we have become impatient. We live hectic lives, attending meetings, rushing from point A to B, shuttling our children from event to event. We are not very good at waiting, and as a result it has becoming increasingly difficult to teach children that waiting is a important part of life, a time to experience God's grace.

Think of your earliest memories of waiting. Was it turning five so you could start school, or your first bicycle, finishing school, getting a job?—and the list goes on. As adults we are impatient as we wait for the long-anticipated trip, a holiday, a new job. How many times have we said, *I just can't wait*? Whatever situation comes to mind, the actual end of the waiting period usually seems to be blurred by the experience of the anticipated event, gift, or much-coveted reward.

We are, or certainly long to be, a hope-filled people. Advent is about hopefulness, and the joyful expectation of the coming of Christ in our lives. It is a time of waiting for the birth of Christ. As parents and teachers, it is important to pause and reflect on how we model waiting, to be present in the moment with patient anticipation. In this time of instant-everything, of always feeling behind and incomplete, waiting can seem like time poorly spent ... the lineup to drop off or pick up our children, the drive home or the long grocery queue when you have just a few things to purchase. It takes patience and a feeling of God's presence when the fast pace of life frustrates us.

What message are we giving our children? Do we model the joy and awe that is a part of the Advent season? It is important that we take this time to rediscover the many gifts we have been given and all that Jesus brings to our lives. Life presents opportunities for us to cherish every moment, even while we wait.

During the last week of November, someone in the lunchroom mentioned that a friend had purchased all their Christmas gifts, finished their baking and mailed Christmas cards. Those listening were either amazed or envious! Have the tasks of Christmas, as some would see them, overshadowed the true meaning

of the Advent Season? What message do we give our children, our families? Is it shopping, holidays, the number of gifts and over-indulgences that bring meaning to the season, or is it celebrating the joyful event as a family?

Children have become immersed in the secular culture and eagerly await candy canes, Santa Claus, gifts, the Christmas tree and parties that celebrate the season. What can we, as parents, teachers, school leaders, do to put Christ back into Christmas? In our homes and schools, it is important to mark the time of waiting with Advent calendars and the Advent wreath. It's a wonderful time to read from the Bible and to remind children of the centuries of waiting recorded as the chosen people awaited the coming of the Messiah. Lighting candles on the Advent wreath week by week helps children mark the present time with a special focus on the symbols of hope and light. When we do good deeds for others, for the less fortunate, we see the face of God.

“What message are we giving our children? ... It is important that we take this time to rediscover the many gifts we have been given and all that Jesus brings to our lives.

Advent is a time of waiting, a time of awe, a time of joy. Time may be the most precious gift we give to our children and to each other. Things happen in God's good time, and as de Chardin suggests we must “trust in the slow work of God.”

During this Advent season let us make a point of taking our children to visit the crib, talking about the birth of Christ, praying for peace, singing with joyful hearts, and doing something for the poor, not only the less fortunate, but the poor in spirit.

Let us not count how many gifts are under the tree, but how we can be a gift to each other. Keep Christ in Christmas should not be a slogan, a message we can simply ignore, but rather a reminder to each of us that the true meaning of the Season will be celebrated with fullness when we focus on the birth of Jesus.

On behalf of the Administrators and Staff of Island Catholic Schools, I wish you and yours a peace-filled and joyous Christmas season. ✂

## Waiting in God's Light

by Deanne Paulson, Principal, St. Patrick's School, Victoria

At Christmas, God in His great love offers light to the whole world: His Son, Jesus. Jesus shows us a bright path that we can follow in our everyday lives. Christmas joy and anticipation are breaking out all around us. The St. Patrick's school community welcomes Jesus and strives to be children of the Light by spreading kindness and friendship all around us.

Our award-winning choirs spread the joy of Christian music wherever they perform. This month they participated in civic functions, bringing cheer to seniors and entertaining the public at the downtown library and airport.

For the fifth year in a row, every child from kindergarten to grade seven will be involved in our Christmas Cracker project. The generous candy donations started rolling in after Hallowe'en, followed by paper rolls and colourful wraps and trims. Students personalized each cracker with a heartfelt message and created around 1,000 crackers in total! Volunteers ensured that the festive crackers made it to holiday dinners sponsored by a number of local charities.

“Students personalized each cracker with a heartfelt message and created around 1,000 crackers in total!


Elementary school is a nurturing formative environment for Christian leaders of the future. Students are committed to social outreach throughout the school year, but this month's initiatives included a collection of warm outdoor clothing and a food drive in support of St. Vincent de Paul and Anawim House. Our grade seven classes spearheaded a global non-denominational outreach campaign in support of Operation Christmas Child. Each student filled a shoebox with hygiene items, school supplies, toys and treats and then paid to ship it to a needy child in the Developing World. The senior leadership students planned and hosted *Kids Night Out*, an evening of childcare and fun for younger students. Donations went to support the CanWES free quality education program in Nepal.

The last week of school in December will be a very busy, but re-affirming one with two Advent concerts, one featuring all of our primary students and the intermediate students in the other. They are always heartwarming and faith-filled evenings that set the tone for family holiday celebrations.

May you and your family live in the light of Jesus. ✂







The People of God in the Diocese of Victoria congratulate

**Most Reverend  
Richard Gagnon**

on his appointment as Archbishop of Winnipeg

We send with you our gratitude, prayers and every  
blessing for your continuing journey.

*God to enfold you  
Christ to uphold you  
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight ...*

The Clergy and Faithful  
of the  
Archdiocese of Winnipeg  
extend a warm welcome to  
Most Reverend  
Richard Gagnon  
as our  
**Seventh Archbishop**

Installation Fri. Jan. 3, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. CST  
St. Mary's Cathedral, Winnipeg  
Livestream broadcast on Salt and Light  
[www.saltandlighttv.org](http://www.saltandlighttv.org)



*Archdiocese*  
OF WINNIPEG



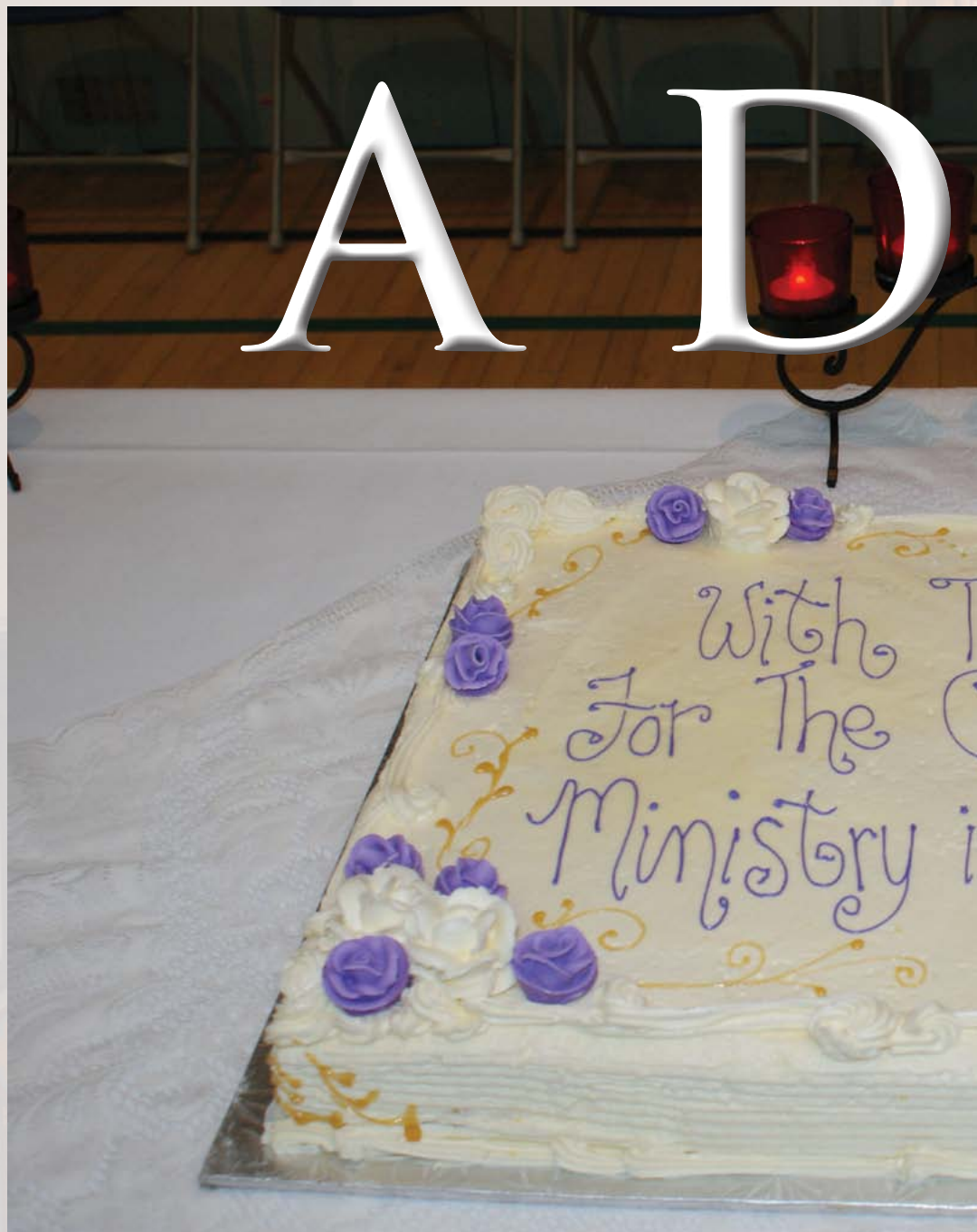
*Congratulations*

to **ARCHBISHOP-ELECT RICHARD GAGNON**



From your friends at the  
**ARCHDIOCESE OF VANCOUVER**





## A Message of Thanks from Most Rev. Dr. [Name]



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
My heart is filled with gratitude for the privilege of having been called to serve as your bishop for the past nine years. In many ways I feel that there is so much yet to be done as we journey in faith together. I am consoled however, with the knowledge that Christ is always present to us and that God's plans are far greater than our own. The priest, Jean-Baptiste Lacordaire put it this way: "All that I know of tomorrow is that Providence will rise before the sun."

I have had the honour of knowing so many wonderful people during my time here and have been inspired by the numerous dedicated and faith-filled individuals of all ages, cultures and ways of life. My own faith has grown as a result and I will never forget the Catholic communities which form our local Church on these islands.

To our clergy, I can only say how grateful I am for their example, hard work and collaboration. To our religious communities, I simply wish to express my appreciation for their friendship and support over these nine





Photo credit: Roy Legate



## st Reverend Richard J. Gagnon

years. I am immensely thankful to all the staff at the Pastoral Centre for their commitment to the Diocese and openness to my leadership. Our First Nations people have been a continual source of joy in my ministry and I thank them for their witness to the Gospel. Finally, I have always been impressed by the genuine faith within the People of God in our Diocese, many have taken on various leadership roles within Church organizations and many more form the backbone of parish and school life in our Diocese by seeking to genuinely grow in their Catholic Faith.

We have experienced many joys and challenges as the years have gone by, yet the Lord calls us to walk in the light of faith each day and to look forward with trust in God's providence. I accept humbly my new assignment as Archbishop of Winnipeg and I carry with me all that I have learned and experienced in the Diocese of Victoria, most especially the Disciples I have come to know and admire. The theme for our Diocesan Pastoral Plan sums it up very well:

*Claiming the Past with Gratitude; Living the Present with Enthusiasm; Looking to the Future with Hope.*



Photos by: Joan Ripley



# Students Thank Archbishop-Elect at “Soup and Soul”

by Greg Van Dyk, UVic Catholic Students’ Association President



Juggling the long list of Richard Gagnon’s various current titles can be a mouthful. But when Archbishop-Elect of Winnipeg and Bishop Emeritus of Victoria, Most Reverend Richard Gagnon visited Catholic university and college students at “Soup and Soul,” the titles weren’t the focus of conversation. Instead, thanking him for his incredible support of students and campus ministry was the reason for gathering at Holy Cross parish hall after the 4:00pm student Mass on Sunday, November 17.

The smell of warm soup filled the air as even warmer chatter packed the hall. Students shared a casual meal with our former bishop, and had a chance to ask questions of Most Reverend Gagnon regarding his fast-approaching move to the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. During his time as Bishop of Victoria, Richard Gagnon has shown his love for student ministry through great support of a Catholic community for students at the University of Victoria and Camosun College. It was Bishop Richard who appointed Fr. Dean Henderson to serve the student community and provide an invaluable sacramental presence on the university campus. Bishop Richard supported student initiatives not only financially, but with his own participation as well. He attended popular “Dish with the Bish” pizza nights, grad banquets, and even led Eucharistic Adoration on campus when Fr. Dean was out of town and students couldn’t find an available priest.

Our student community will miss Richard Gagnon greatly, and will be praying for him as he continues to lead through service in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. And we know he’ll be praying for us, too. ✕


## Sacred Heart Catholic Church

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P: 250-479-1611 | F: 250-479-9350

Sacred Heart Parish Council, together with our entire community wish to congratulate Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon on his recent appointment to the diocese of Winnipeg.

Thank you Bishop Gagnon, for your dedicated service to our diocese and the congregation of people within it.

May God bless you and guide you in your new role.



Bishop Gary Gordon  
and the  
Diocese of Whitehorse

offer prayers and blessings to

Most Reverend  
Richard Gagnon

on his appointment as

Archbishop-Elect of Winnipeg

Lord Jesus, you shall be my song  
as I journey ...

~T. Arche Hymn, Stephen Somerville

St. Joseph’s Chemainus Parish  
sends sincere congratulations to

Bishop Richard Gagnon

On his appointment as


Archbishop of Winterpeg

And thanks him

For all his wonderful work in our Diocese.

### Archbishop-elect Richard

With gratitude for  
your leadership and  
prayerful best  
wishes as you  
" shepherd "  
the Archdiocese of  
Winnipeg



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# Vocations



## Discern This

by Fr. Sean Flynn

I'm looking for a way to get men's attention to God's call to the priesthood.

"The Lord be with you!" was offered to a noisy room of Catholics. There was an immediate response, "and with your spirit!" The attention seeker smiled a big smile and said, "it works every time." If it were only that easy.

Why do we lack men discerning the priesthood from our own parishes? Perhaps it is because they were never invited. It would be easy to deny that claim—but what if that is the reality?

The Diocese has been offering "a day of reflection to the priesthood" for the past three years. This day gives men who would like to investigate the practical component to their tentative Yes to God's call. There have been articles in the *Diocesan Messenger* that, I hope, have been inviting to those interested in making a commitment to priesthood. Parishes and prayer groups have been praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Some priests are regularly celebrating "Vocation Holy Hours." All the priests have been given a booklet written by Reverend Thomas J. Richter titled *Is Jesus Calling you to be a Catholic Priest?* They are to give it to anyone who shows interest in the priesthood. They may even take the initiative and present it to someone who they feel should consider priesthood.

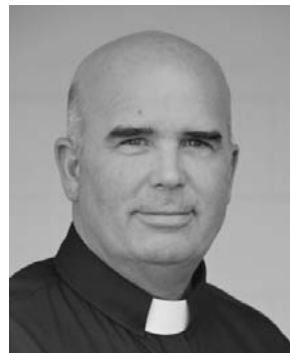
The laity has been asked to be encouraging in suggesting this vocation to family members or friends.

These all seem like ways to invite one to reflect seriously on a call to priesthood, yet "what if they were never invited" is true, despite these attempts to invoke reflection on saying Yes to priesthood. To receive an invitation from God the heart needs to be receptive so as to ponder, wonder, and devoutly receive the call as important and not judge it by the many consequences a Yes can bring. So the next step is to find such hearts.

Last year, and again this year, I made visits to most school classrooms in our Catholic school system. I extended an invitation to the children to be open to God's call to sisterhood/brotherhood or the priesthood. I have the pleasure of being a product of our local Catholic school system. So I could tell the children that we shouldn't have to look to other countries to send us priests, brothers or sisters. I told them, "Anyone of you can be a priest, brother or a sister." I made it short and sweet, very sweet, for them to have such a consideration included on the list of the many life choices to serve God and neighbour.

So what next? It is a time of Advent so I suppose we need to wait. But before I enter into that wonderful time of "waiting" I want to take one more shot at invoking serious attention to God's call into those wonderful receptive hearts ... *The Lord be with you!* (Just in case it is that easy!)

Have a blessed Advent. ✠



## Most Reverend Richard J. Gagnon: A Brief Biography

Born on June 17, 1948, Richard J. Gagnon was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop James Carney on June 24, 1983, at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. He was appointed Bishop of Victoria on May 14, 2004 and ordained to the Episcopate by Archbishop Raymond Roussin SM at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria, on July 20, 2004.

Most Reverend Richard J. Gagnon received a B.A. in History/English from Simon Fraser University in 1973, and received his Teaching Certification for the Province of British Columbia in 1975. From 1979–1983 he studied at the Pontifical Bede College in Rome.

His first appointment, in 1983, was as Assistant in St. Mary's Parish, Vancouver and he simultaneously held the post of Director of Religious Studies at Notre Dame Regional Secondary School until 1984, when he was appointed Assistant Pastor in Corpus Christi Parish, Vancouver. From 1984–1985 he continued to serve as Director of Religious Studies at Notre Dame.

From 1985–2002 Most Reverend Richard J. Gagnon served on numerous Boards and held a wide variety of Offices, including a role as Founding Pastor of St. James Parish in Abbotsford, BC. He served as the Director of the Office of Religious Education for the Archdiocese of Vancouver in 1992, was appointed Vicar General for the Archdiocese of Vancouver in 2002, and was named Prelate of Honour by Pope John Paul II. At this time, he was Pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish in Vancouver, a member of the Board of St. Mark's College and served on the Advisory Board for Redeemer Pacific College.

Since his appointment as Bishop of Victoria, Most Reverend Gagnon has served on CCCB Commissions and Councils, as well as on the Board of Catholic Missions in Canada and the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops.

Most Reverend Richard J. Gagnon was appointed Archbishop-Elect of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg by Pope Francis on October 28, 2013. ✠



**'I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people'**  
Luke 2:10

Photo: Junior Jacasum (standing) and Liam Stephen at Christmas Day parade in Attawapiskat, Ontario. Photo courtesy of Diocese of Moosonee.

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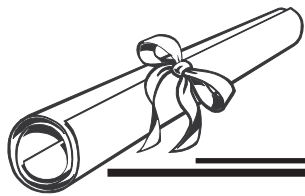
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# The Campus Mission



by Fr. Dean Henderson

**“It is better to marry than to burn with passion.” (1 Corinthians 7:9)**

St. Augustine once said, “World history is a battle between two forms of love; love of self, propelling toward the destruction of others, in conflict with the love of others necessarily requiring the renunciation of the self.”

The path of selfless love requires patient practice of the virtues of Christian discipleship. Mastery of self and delaying gratification is the path of holiness and the Christian vision of genuine happiness. The real secret, which is lost in the contemporary culture of unrestrained and instant sensual pleasures, is that the Christian life really works, it really does produce joy and happiness.

The Christmas story of the miracle of the Incarnation which began as Mary’s *fiat* (*fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, “be it done to me according to your word”) is the foundational battle cry against self (ish) love through the self-emptying love of God, and of Mary, and of Joseph and ultimately of the God/Man Jesus. The conflict between selfish love and self-denying love is first a war within my own heart but it is evident on a universal social scale too. Nowhere on campus is this battle of loves more pronounced than in the realm of sexual morality, marriage and family life, and is paving the way for a legal challenge between Catholic Students and the University Student Society over religious freedom.

In my Diocesan responsibility for the Church’s mission in building up family life we enter the theatre of what Augustine would call a “combat zone.” In the complexity of modern social life, “marriage, the sanctity of life, and family” has become one of the urgent priorities of the Catholic Church which as our Mother knows, “as the family goes, so goes both the Church and society.”

O brother! Nothing like a challenge—we’ve been losing ground for decades and need a radical, positive renewal of God’s vision for the sacredness of the sacrament of marriage, and a radical repentance for embracing philosophies and practices inimical to the selfless vision of Christian love. A small council of volunteers joins me in supporting ongoing marriage preparation weekends, promoting and instructing couples in the use of Natural Family Planning, organizing new initiatives like the recent Family Conference, and encouraging parishes in the continuation or initiation of family formation. We’re not the whole show, but an enthusiastic leaven-like attempt to strengthen one of the six priorities of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan. And we have our work cut out for us! At times I feel like David coming up against Goliath without any stones for ammo.

I recently read that the Canadian divorce rate has fluctuated between 35 and 42% over the past decade, but regionally there are some startling differences: the rate of divorce in the Yukon is closer to a whopping 60% and that of the Maritimes a relatively modern-meager 25%. I’ll leave the reader to speculate on reasons for such disparity. But apart from moving everyone out east, what can be done to prepare people well for the sacrament of marriage, support good family life, and assist the healing process when marriages and families suffer?

*Gaudium et Spes* in the documents of Vatican II grants a lofty Biblical vision for the self-denying sacrament which must be reclaimed and then proclaimed with zeal and joy: “This intimate union in the mutual self-giving of two persons, as well as the good of children, demands full fidelity from both, and an indissoluble unity between them.” (GS n. 48) Full fidelity, as Catholics were reminded by Pope Paul VI in *Humane Vitae*, means to embrace a counter-cultural vision of God’s design for every conjugal act being an expression of full, total, exclusive and fruitful marital love. In short, sexual love must not rend asunder its unitive and procreative purposes—the precise purpose of contraception. G.K. Chesterton commented on the 1920s Lambeth Bishop’s Church of England acceptance of ‘birth control’ in his typical wit: “It is in fact, of course, a scheme for preventing birth in order to escape control.” Birth control replaces self-control. Back in my younger days of Christian youth leadership, in the privacy of “men’s fellowship” we would admit the difficult but necessary control of the passions. With a wink and a nod, a quick reference to St. Paul’s discourse on marital ethics in Corinthians would bolster our resolve: “But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” Many chose to marry early rather than “burn.”

The acceptance of both contraceptive and cohabiting practices, especially since the 1960s, has wreaked havoc on the social order and as Paul VI predicted led to the denigration of the sanctity of life, the decline of marriage, the diminishment of respect for women, and a disordered relinquishment of family authority to the state. In very practical application more and more couples, influenced less by distinct Catholic catechesis and Christian formation, are approaching the Church for marriage as cohabiting, sexually active people with little knowledge or concern that the Catholic Church calls that “living in sin.” Older disciples of the sexual revolution might still react with horror that anything, including God or the Pope might inhibit “free love,” but the younger generation tends simply to yawn and at best express bewildered incomprehension: “like dude, what’s the big deal?”

What most of us fail to acknowledge is the massive negative impact this has on all of us. As Sociologist Linda Waite observes after analysing 10 years’ worth of social science data, “Cohabitation may offer short-term advantages but at a high long-term cost. Couples who live together and then get married face higher chances of divorcing than do couples who never cohabited.” (*The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better off Financially*, Waite and Gallagher). The vow of permanence, in sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, in good times and bad produces individual and societal long-term benefits of selfless love. Cohabitation conversely produces long-term costs of selfish love.

The Catholic Church has not only made her choice about the kind of love she believes in, she is defined by it. “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down his life for his friends.” It is time to come back to the revolutionary vision of the whole of our Catholic faith. It’s true, it’s beautiful, and it works! The battle is on! ✕



## Connections

*We are pleased to welcome youth writers from St. Joseph’s Elementary School in Chemainus to this edition of the Diocesan Messenger. Thank you for your contributions!*

### WAITING

Here we wait for our new King and hope that he brings something that will change us all. The day grows closer and birds sing with joy. The hour grows closer and our hearts beat faster. The Star of David shines. Now three kings have arrived and the shepherds too. But what about the baby?

Mary and Joseph’s eyes widen to see the newborn King. “A King has been born. A King has been born.” Let us sing a joyful Alleluia. Together, everyone join hands. Our sins are forgiven.

~ Steven, Grade 6

To me, waiting during Advent is the best part of Christmas—almost. I also enjoy the spirit, the energy, and the excitement in the air. The look on peoples’ faces when I give them presents makes it all worth the waiting. But, don’t forget about these wonderful things in Advent: *peace, joy and love*. There is a tree, there’s happiness, and of course there is Jesus.

My family has a nativity set, but we leave [the baby] Jesus out to wait for Christmas too. Waiting for Christmas, waiting for Santa—but mostly (never forget) it’s about waiting for Jesus.

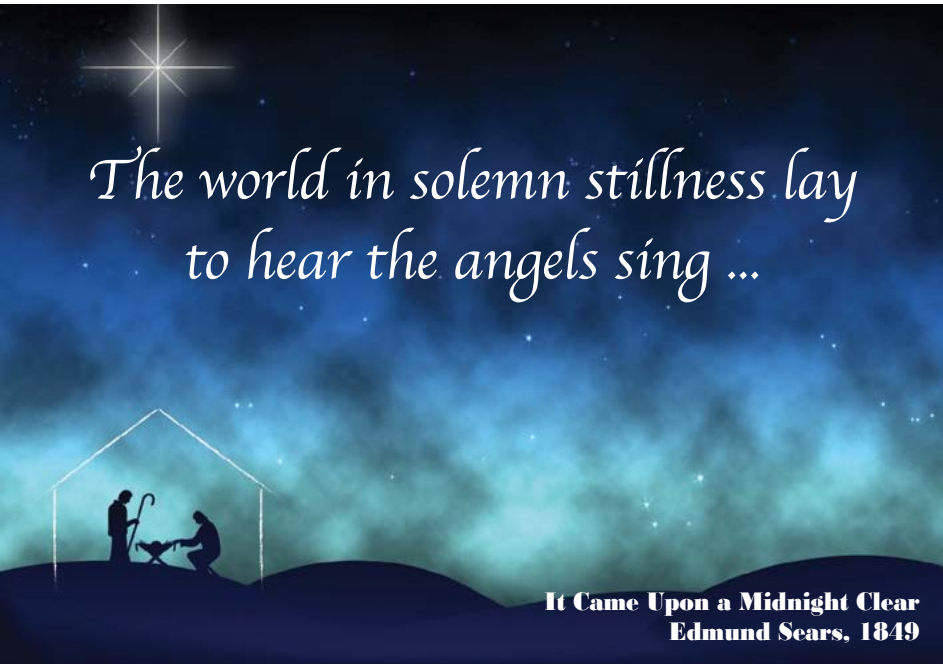
~ Rachel, Grade 7

As Christians we are always waiting. We are waiting for the coming of Christ. Waiting can be difficult. We become impatient; angry even. We lose faith and sometimes make wrong turns, but Jesus will always forgive us and welcomes us with open arms. When we’re afraid, we think that God has abandoned us, but He is always in our midst. When we die, we pass in the hope of the resurrection of the Prince of Peace. We ascend and He clears all our sins. The greatest reward is sitting

at the right hand of God. Jesus loves us and He is always listening. We know that at the right time He will come.

So as we wait this Advent, let us pray to the Lord our God that even when we grow impatient we will not lose faith.

~ Emily, Grade 6 ✕







# Face the Day



by **Bonnie Landry**

Dear Bishop Richard,  
I will miss you. My family will miss you.

The first time we met in person was at my now-16 year-old's confirmation. We were sitting on the grass eating cake in the churchyard of Saint Francis Xavier in Mill Bay. "You write for the *Messenger*, don't you?"

"Yes," I said, somewhat flattered that you would make that connection. "You're funny," you said. "Thank you," I said in return, forever wondering if you meant *funny-ha-ha* or *funny-peculiar*.

But it didn't really matter. You singled me out, remembered me, made my life somehow memorable to you. I was later to discover that this gift, your capacity to make my life important, is your charism. You made us, your flock, important. Recognized. Special to you. I felt a very part of your prayer life.

Thank you for that.

Thank you for all you did for families. Wow. The clarity of the purpose of marriage preparation and Sacramental preparation. The institution of the office of marriage and family. Our first Diocesan Family Conference. Outreach to remote communities. You created a sense of the larger community of Catholic families and purpose in this diocese.

You have confirmed my four youngest children. You were a big part of our growing family. You laughed with them and sometimes at them (in the very nicest way possible) and appreciated their childishness. There you stood, confirming my children, administering Sacraments that would strengthen them for the years to come.

You served. Just like Jesus asked you to. You served me, my family, the Diocese and the Church. And you continue to serve the Church. God knows we need more people to love and serve His Church in religious vocations.

Thank you for that.

I ask those in our Diocese to pray for you, in gratitude for what you have given, and for your future as Archbishop of Winnipeg.

“God, eternal shepherd, you tend your Church in many ways and rule us with love. You have chosen your servant, Bishop Richard Gagnon, to be a shepherd of your flock. Give him a spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and love. By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care, may he build your Church as a sign of salvation for the world.

~ *A Catholic Prayer Book*

Whatever vocations our children choose, it is the examples around them that affect their choices most. Parents who live out their vocation to the fullest, desiring heaven and striving for holiness are everywhere in this Diocese, and are such joyful witness to families, children and young adults. These families, and our many devoted clergy are living examples to our children of the possibilities of how they can serve God, and what He may be calling them to. They are always observing the adults around them, the choices the make; the attitudes we have and how we serve. Your example has been noted.

Thank you for that.

And, Bishop Richard, I wish you well in your new appointment, and we will keep you in our prayers. I'm a little envious of your new flock. They will be blessed. ✠

Love,  
Bonnie



## A Christmas Reflection

by **Fr. David Mercer**

I have in my file a note passed to me some years ago. It relates to a survey of the words or phrases people most like to hear said to them with sincerity. The most welcomed phrase: "I love you." In second place: "You are forgiven." In third place (are you ready for this?): "Supper is ready." Those three most welcomed phrases are said to us at Christmas.

*I love you.* The Old Testament is one continuous story of God's love for the people. And yet, the people developed a longing for a messiah who could lead them to greater faithfulness in their covenant with God who loved them unconditionally.

At Christmas, God's messenger announces to shepherds and to all of us: "I come to proclaim good news to you... This day in David's city a saviour has been born to you, the Messiah, and Lord."

Although the people are not always faithful in their covenant with God and each other, God never abandons them, but fulfils in Jesus the promise of unconditional love. To those shepherds long ago, to the people of every age, and to each of us as we gather for Christmas, God says: "I ... love ... you."

*You are forgiven.* At Christmas, God's messenger announces to shepherds and to all of us: "Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favour rests." God's nature is to delight in offering us peace, the grace of forgiveness.

Jesus, born in Bethlehem, will later tell a parable about a son who turns his back on his father, runs off with his share of the family inheritance, squanders it, and then returns home to beg his father to accept him back. The father, however, never turns his back on this son and never takes his eye off the point on the horizon where his son had disappeared. When his son reappears, the father runs to him, throws his arms around him, kisses him, and then throws a welcome-home feast of uncontained joy. God's unconditional love is expressed in God's constant readiness to throw His arms of forgiveness around us, although we do nothing to deserve it. We simply turn toward God and accept it as grace.

For whatever we have done, wherever we have been, whatever we have said, God says to each us what was said to the shepherds long ago: "You ... are ... forgiven."

*Supper is ready.* We join the shepherds in finding Jesus lying in a manger, which is a feeding trough. At Christmas, we go to Jesus to be fed. Jesus, born in Bethlehem, will later feed those who come to him with his words and with bread that is blessed, broken, and given to them. After the Resurrection, Jesus' disciples will encounter him in the breaking of the bread.

We place our hope and faith in Jesus the Bread of Life and in his words of life. We might be discouraged at times, but, Sunday to Sunday, we gather on the holy ground of our churches so Jesus can feed us with the Good News of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. We then turn to the altar to encounter Jesus in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup. What the Gospel proclaims is made real in the Sacrament of God's love and forgiveness. Jesus Christ feeds his people: "Supper ... is ... ready."

At Christmas, we join the shepherds who go to Mary and report what they have seen and heard. St. Luke tells us that, "Mary treasured these things and reflected on them in her heart." We too take all this into our hearts.

At that first Christmas and again at this Christmas, in the proclamation of God's word and in the Sacrament at our altars, God tells us what we most want to hear: "I love you," "You are forgiven," and even "Supper is ready." ✠

*Fr. David Mercer is Parochial Administrator at St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Church in San José, California.*

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*"If catechesis is done well, Christians will be eager to bear witness to their faith, to hand it on to their children, to make it known to others, and to serve the human community in every way."*  
Words of Pope John Paul II - 'Catechesi Tradendae'



# Faith Matters



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

## “Waiting”

The Oxford English Dictionary notes that the words *wait* and *wake* are related, stemming from the Old Northern French *waitier* and the Germanic *wachen*. Early senses included, respectively, *lie in wait (for)*, *observe carefully*, and *be watchful*, and included, in Old English, the sense of *remain[ing] awake and hold[ing] a vigil*.

Waiting does not find favour in our contemporary culture. Often we hear of the consequences of those who are not able to wait; “road rage” is one example that comes immediately to mind. It is indeed difficult to wait when the prevailing utilitarian culture measures most things by quick, or more commonly, instant returns. This sense of urgency pervades our very language: “time is money,” “time is of the essence,” “time waits for no one,” and “it’s a fight against time!” As Christians we know our preoccupation with time, without due consideration to the “Eternal Now,” can create a serious imbalance for us.

Our spiritual tradition focusses on time too, but in a much different manner than the culture around us, using such phrases as “in the fullness of time” or “at the appointed time”:

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption.*

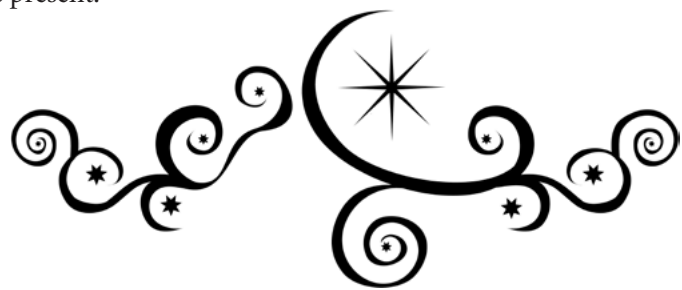
~ Galatians 4:34

Christ entered our history, our time—entered into our common humanity, our flesh, revealing the eternal love of the Father, and now available to all who enter into the death and resurrection of Christ. Beginning with the “door” of Baptism, in Word, Prayer and Sacrament, we transcend time and enter the very Death and Resurrection of Christ. This ritual “remembering” united with the Risen Christ’s saving presence makes present for us the saving event with its eternal graces in an Eternal Now:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us. For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

~ Ephesians 1:3-10

The Eucharist, the source and summit of Christian life, roots us, binds us, in a similar fashion to Christ’s saving action which redeems all time. In effect the Church’s Liturgical Year represents for us “Sacred Time,” a beautiful rhythm which naturally assists us in aligning our *kronos* (measured time: “chronometer”) with God’s *kairos* (timeless time); helping us encounter the God who is always and everywhere present.



## *The Prairie Messenger Staff*

*offers its congratulations to*

## *Most Reverend Richard Gagnon*

*on his new position as*

*Archbishop of the  
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg*

And so it is we find ourselves in the beautiful, though perhaps undervalued, season of Advent. During this time the lectionary immerses us in themes which focus on a type of waiting which is characterized by watchfulness, anticipation and hope; the antithesis of our culture’s instant gratification and “I-need-it-yesterday” rat race.

The readings look forward to the “End Times” and the coming of the “Day of the Lord” or the “Messianic Age” and preparing “the Way of the Lord”—again, realities which in part are present to us now.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that our “time” needs to be focussed on being *watchful*, attentive to the things that are “timeless”:

*In Jesus “the Kingdom of God is at hand.” He calls his hearers to conversion and faith, but also to watchfulness. In prayer the disciple keeps watch, attentive to Him Who Is and Him Who Comes, in memory of his first coming in the lowliness of the flesh, and in the hope of his second coming in glory. In communion with their Master, the disciples’ prayer is a battle; only by keeping watch in prayer can one avoid falling into temptation.*

~ CCC #2612

Sacred Scripture is clear about the importance of readiness:

*But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.*

~ 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

While this passage includes a real warning, it is not a warning to induce fear, rather to state a fact and make a point. Just like one in love, God is in love with each of us, longs for us, prepares for us, and is patient with us. Such love inspires love, urgently compels one to make a reciprocal response in love, a response that is not bound by time, but by a constant yes.

*Free your minds, then of encumbrances; control them, and put your trust in nothing but the grace that will be given to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

~ 1 Peter 1:13 ✂

## The Knights of Columbus of British Columbia & Yukon

***Wish to Congratulate His Excellency  
Archbishop-elect Richard on his appointment as  
Archbishop of Winnipeg***



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Wil Wilmot, Immediate Past State Deputy





# Bishop’s Distinguished Lecture at UVic

by Wendell Clanton

A lecture by Mary Anne Waldron QC, on her groundbreaking book *Free to Believe: Rethinking Freedom of Conscience and Religion in Canada*.

On the occasion of the Bishop’s Lecture, presented by Professor Mary Anne Waldron, Jamie Cassels, President of the University of Victoria, thanked Fr. Dean, the Bishop and the Diocese for organizing the Bishop’s Lecture series, referring to the Lecture as “a wonderful way in which the University and institutions in the community can collaborate.”

Dr. Paul Bramadat, from the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, a Centre established with a generous gift from Catholic philanthropists Allen and Loreen Vandekerkhove, introduced Professor Waldron.

Mary Anne Waldron, QC, Professor of Law at the University of Victoria, is the fourth distinguished speaker invited to present the Bishop’s Lecture. Professor Waldron has twice received the Faculty of Law’s Terry J. Wuester Teaching Award. For nine years she was Associate Vice-President Legal Affairs for the University of Victoria. From 2009 to 2010, she was a visiting fellow at the University of Victoria’s Centre for Studies in Religion and Society.

This article on Professor Waldron’s presentation is like showing someone a photo of fine cuisine. It will hardly do justice to a lecture by someone so accomplished in her field, a mentor of mentors and an academic par excellence. What you really want to do is to sit down at the real meal, a feast for the mind. Hopefully this snapshot of Professor Waldron’s lecture will motivate readers to purchase her book, judge the merit of her arguments and, after carefully considering the implications of her ideas, accept and enact her proposals for the good of our society. Certainly, any society that values the concept of inalienable rights, and especially those communities that do not, could benefit greatly from Mary Anne Waldron’s thoughts.

Audience members were treated to a highly informative and erudite presentation by a distinguished Catholic professor intent on equipping Catholics and all people of goodwill with the knowledge to engage and improve Canadian society. With obvious mastery of the topic, Professor Waldron helped the audience navigate a complex and serious problem.

Courts, and the law they make, follow the societal trends. Moreover the philosophical perspectives are generally ... adopted from the popularized rather than the nuanced notions.

Waldron referred to the structure of her thesis by recalling the central question: Why bother protecting freedom of religion and conscience? Her goal was and is, via her book, to persuade others that the enterprise (of protecting freedom of religion and conscience) is a worthwhile one.

She outlined her approach by initiating a “critique of the current way we approach the problem and make suggestions for other conceptualizations of the freedom [of religion] that may merit consideration.”

Among the five main issues that she addresses in her recent book, Waldron contends that “... we have seriously misestimated the role of belief in our society, in our policy making and our law.”

Challenging those “who would divide the world into those who have beliefs ... and those who operate on rational principles,” Waldron rejected such attempts by the likes of Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins to characterize believers as irrational. Waldron commented that to hold such a divisive and dividing notion creates an “untenable split” between faith and reason.

Waldron challenged certain limited notions about freedom of religion and freedom of conscience in Canada. She offered an analysis of opinions often proposed as “Canadian values”, opinions that are frequently pitted against fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Professor Waldron reminded the audience that “the Canadian Charter names freedom of conscience and religion as a fundamental freedom, indeed the first listed fundamental freedom.” She continued by describing how “federal and provincial human rights legislation further protects those with religious beliefs ... from being excluded from the goods of our society ...” She described the ideal that “(w)hen the state attempts to repress expressions of belief, the courts will restrain [the state], absent pressing reasons.” Waldron noted the said ideal is frequently overlooked or compromised by competing considerations.

Waldron critiqued the theoretical structures comprised of the arms of the state, i.e., the legal system and human rights tribunals, that have been instituted to protect fundamental freedoms yet often oppose such freedoms. She continued with the gentle jab that “lawyers make rather poor theologians and probably worse philosophers. Courts, and the law they make, follow the societal trends. Moreover the philosophical perspectives are generally ... adopted from the popularized rather than the nuanced notions.”

Articulating the predicament in which Canadian society finds itself, Waldron stated:

*[Freedom of conscience and religion] is truly a fundamental freedom because it is fundamental to our ability to survive as a reasonably free and open society. Our formulation of policy cannot be free unless our multiple beliefs, religious and otherwise, and our ability to use and express them in arguing for and against various positions, and indeed most importantly to try and convince others of the superiority of or truth of our beliefs, are protected.*

The alternative is to use state power, expressed in the legal system, to attempt to return us to uniform belief. I suggest it is much too late to adopt this alternative without seriously restrictive and repressive measures that will make our society neither democratic, nor free, nor eventually peaceful.

Waldron offered the reminder that “freedom of conscience and religion is not merely a private personal matter. It is a matter of vital importance to all of us and our society’s wellbeing.” Critiquing contemporary legal appreciation for freedom of religion, Waldron stated that “(c)ourts often seem to have failed to overlook this idea (that religion and conscience are not merely a private personal matter), and thus their interpretations of freedom of conscience and religion are often narrow and sometimes simplistic.”

Judges are held to the quality of the arguments presented by lawyers ...

To illustrate her point, she followed with a critique of state-mandated education courses which purport to teach about religion in a neutral way, but in fact frequently interfere with parents’ rights to teach the tenets of their Faith to their children.

Citing the problems encountered by parents confronting state-sponsored religion courses in Quebec, Waldron asked whether or not it is possible to teach about ethics and religion from a completely neutral perspective. She pointed out that current Quebec education policy actually prohibits the teaching of facts about the beliefs of various religions and various ethical systems. Waldron noted that “(a)s often occurs when we’re asked a difficult question, we unthinkingly often substitute a simpler one.” Waldron noted that recent Supreme Court decisions that dismiss parental concerns show some signs of that approach. Her analysis identified the serious consequences of relativistic philosophy that has become entrenched in the Canadian legal and political systems.

Professor Waldron indicated to the audience that, far from attempting to rise to the level of philosopher or theologian, her intent is “to speak as a lawyer, as an observer of the law, of its internal logical and consistency, of its purposes and effect.” Given the breadth and specificity of her presentation, Mary Anne Waldron is clearly entirely capable of providing Canadians with a wise and timely counsel.

With kind words for his former teacher and now colleague, the response to Waldron’s presentation was given by the eminent Vancouver lawyer, Mr. Earl G. Phillips who, citing an inherent challenge within the legal system that has resulted in the marginalization of religious belief, commented that “judges are held to the quality of the arguments presented by lawyers.” In effect, judges are at the mercy of the quality of the arguments made. During question period, passing mention was made to the current situation in which University of Victoria students find themselves with regards to the suppression of their religious beliefs. The Catholic Students’ Association (CSA) is currently confronting actions by the University of Victoria Students’ Society (UVSS) to restrict CSA activity on campus. The UVSS Board passed a series of motions against the CSA that impinge on freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

The UVSS Board has a history of harassing groups that represent ideas that run counter to UVSS policies. One such group on campus that is currently engaged in yet another legal action to protect its right to freedom of speech at UVic is Youth Protecting Youth, the Pro-life group on campus.

Thus, Waldron’s work has immediate application in our own community. ✂

*The Bishop’s Distinguished Lecture is an initiative of the UVic Catholic Chaplain and sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Victoria. Previous speakers include: His Grace Michael Miller, Archbishop of Vancouver; Fr. Thomas Rosica, founder of Salt & Light Television; and Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration. The Lecture is free. Additional information can be found at: <http://bishopslecture.webs.com/>*



L to R: Fr. Dean, Paul Bramadat (CSR UVic), Mary Anne Waldron, President Jamie Cassels, Earl G. Phillips





## Second Session of Council of Cardinals Meetings

On Tuesday morning, 3 December, Pope Francis met with the Council of Cardinals, the group of eight cardinals assisting in the governance of the universal Church and examining a revision of the Apostolic Constitution Pastor bonus on the Roman Curia.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=23742>

## Mountains of Faith? Church Takes on Large-scale Mining.

At the latest meeting of the Latin American Observatory of Mining Conflicts held in November in Lima, Peru, a group of Catholic Church and other religious members from the region formed a working group on mining and spirituality to address the social and environmental impacts of large-scale mining and to strengthen the Church's local power to fight damaging projects. Participants included notables such as Guilherme Werlang, Bishop of the Diocese de Ipameri in Brazil, who has promoted a stronger role for the Church in the intervention in mining conflicts in Brazil, in particular those caused by mining giant Vale in the Carajás region.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=23736>

## Pope Advises Dutch Bishops: 'be present in all spheres of humanity'

Pope Francis yesterday received in audience a group from the Bishops' Conference of the Netherlands on their 'ad limina' visit. The Holy Father focused on how to accompany those who suffer from "spiritual emptiness" and who seek the meaning of life. "Listen to them", he said, "to help them share in the hope, joy, and capacity to carry on that Jesus Christ gives us".

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=23735>

## First-ever Prayer & Activity Book for Children in Hospital

*My Hospital Prayer and Activity Book*—the first-ever hospital prayer and activity book for children was launched at a reception in Vaughan House last week in the presence of Archbishop Vincent Nichols. Written by Fr Peter-Michael Scott, Westminster Diocese's Advisor on Healthcare Chaplaincy, who has many years experience working as a hospital chaplain in London, with illustrations by Jane Morgan, the book is a lively mix of stories from the Bible and lives of Saints, games, Sacramental preparation, prayers, games, puzzles and activities.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=23731>

## New Data Shows Catholic Schools in England Serve More Disadvantaged Pupils

The Catholic Education Service has today released its annual Digest of 2013 Census Data for Schools and Colleges in England. Catholic schools make up 10% of the maintained schools sector, employing over 46,000 teachers, 37,000 education support staff and educating 770,000 pupils. The data collected in the census show that on average pupils at Catholic schools in England come disproportionately from the most deprived areas. 18.4% of pupils in Catholic primary schools are from some of the most deprived areas, compared to only 13.8% nationally. Catholic secondary schools follow a similar trend.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=23729>

# New Bishop for Paraguay Originally from Canada

(CCCB – Ottawa)

His Holiness Pope Francis on November 6, 2013, named Father Pierre Jubinville, CSSp, Bishop of San Pedro, Paraguay. At the time of his appointment he was stationed in Rome as first general assistant of his religious community, the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans).

Bishop-elect Jubinville was born in Ottawa in 1960 and raised in Hull, Quebec, which is now part of the city of Gatineau. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1988 by the Bishop of what was then the Diocese of Gatineau-Hull, the Most Reverend Roger Ébacher, in the parish church of Notre-Dame-de-la-Guadeloupe. He holds a licentiate in religious studies from the Institut Catholique de Paris, and has been a missionary in Kongolo, Democratic Republic of Congo; Mexico, and Paraguay. He has also served in the parish of San Francisco de Asis, Lima, Paraguay, and was superior of the Spiritan community in Asuncion, Paraguay.

The Diocese of San Pedro has a Catholic population of 416,000, which is served by 28 diocesan priests as well 47 priests who are members of religious communities. ✠

# Pope Francis Phones Critic

Vatican City, Nov 23, 2013 (CNA/EWTN News)

Mario Palmaro, a traditionalist writer who co-authored an article critical of Pope Francis, received a phone call November 1 from the Pope himself, who knew that the writer is suffering from a grave illness.

Palmaro shared with CNA November 22 that "Pope Francis wanted to act as a priest; yet he is a very special priest and bishop, by calling me and paying attention to my health condition."

According to Palmaro, one of the features of the new pontificate is "the Pope's phone calls to people, who luckily represent many other people who do not receive a papal phone call."

"It is the kind of attention Pope Francis wants to show for sick people."

"He just wanted to tell me that he is praying for me," Palmaro explained of the Pope.

Palmaro recounted that the phone call lasted "just some minutes," and they "only talked about a few things, because I was so moved from the phone call that I was not able to conduct so much conversation. Indeed, for a Catholic, getting a Pope's phone call is unbelievable."

Pope Francis called Palmaro's home, and when his wife answered the phone, he could hear a "known voice asking her if it was my house and if she was my wife."

After getting affirmative answers, Pope Francis continued: "Madam, I have known that your husband is very sick, and I would like to speak with him."

During the conversation, Palmaro reminded the Pope that he had co-authored an article in which he criticized him.

The article was written together with Alessandro Gnocchi, and published in Italian newspaper Il Foglio October 9 with the headline, "The reason why we don't like this Pope."

Gnocchi and Palmaro criticized passages in both the Pope's major interviews, published in La Repubblica and in La Civiltà Cattolica.

In the interview in La Repubblica, conducted by Eugenio Scalfari, Pope Francis was reported as saying that "everyone has his own idea of good and evil, and must choose to follow the good and combat the evil in the way he conceives them."

Palmaro and Gnocchi quoted John Paul II's encyclical Veritatis Splendor, and concluded that newspapers were honest in contrasting Pope Francis' words with those of his predecessors, and in highlighting the contrasts in their headlines.

The two also focused on Pope Francis' assertion about the Second Vatican Council in the La Civiltà Cattolica interview, in which he said, "Vatican II was a re-reading of the Gospel in light of contemporary culture."

Gnocchi and Palmaro, however, argued that "the world is not anymore shaped in light of the Gospel, while the Gospel is deformed in the light of the world."

Pope Francis has met many of their criticisms with adjustments of his own.

In a November 22 article at L'Espresso, Sandro Magister noticed that Pope Francis has recently both had the La Repubblica interview removed from the Vatican website, where it had been posted among his speeches, and has also modified his judgement of Vatican II, "distancing himself from the progressive currents that have applauded him until now."

Palmaro maintained, however, that he cannot "state objectively that Pope Francis met our criticisms."

He did add though, that Pope Francis has responded to the article he co-authored.

"We were aware, and we wanted to open a debate, and even to pay the consequences of what we were going to write. After six months of the pontificate, in the midst of the huge consensus the Pope had, we found it impossible that no one would bring up some questions."

He added, "we did not want to judge the Pope as a human person. We distinguish the action from the person."

When he got the phone call, Palmaro said he felt a "duty to tell the Pope that I criticized him. I did not think he would have read my articles, but I thought I was a coward in receiving such a great gift as a Pope's phone call and not being sincere with him."

Pope Francis responded saying that he "understood that the critics had been moved by love for the Pope."

Palmaro concluded that "critics are useful, and the decisions taken during these last days confirmed me of the existence of the problems I highlighted together with my colleague Gnocchi." ✠





# The Joy of the Gospel: first Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis

CCCB, Ottawa, Nov 27, 2013

Pope Francis has issued his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, “The Joy of the Gospel”, on the proclamation of the Gospel in today’s world. The text is addressed to the Bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and lay faithful, and was presented today, November 26, 2013, during a news conference by the Press Office of the Holy See. The Holy Father already gave a copy of his Exhortation this past Sunday to 36 representatives of the Church during the Closing Mass for the Year of Faith. The main chapters of the Exhortation are on the following themes: the Church’s missionary transformation; the crisis of communal commitment; the proclamation of the Gospel; the social dimension of evangelization; and Spirit-filled evangelizers. Printed copies of the Exhortation will be on sale this coming January from CCCB Publications. ✂

# Nelson Mandela Dead at Age 95



Photo: Alexander Joe/Reuters

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace...

# Lay Brothers of the Poor in Mexico

by Rudy van Lierop

Earlier this year, the Lay Brothers of the Poor travelled to Mexico to feed the poor living at the Mexicali Refuse Dump. They didn’t just take food; they carried hope and love with them as well. Volunteers prepared hot meals, after which people lined up to receive a food box that contained canned meat, canned fish, powdered milk, butter, cheese, jam, rice, beans, corn, bread and potatoes, among other items. Over 35 volunteers including local villagers and “Snowbirds” distributed 350 boxes of food and provided a warm meal to those living at the Dump. Police on motorcycles provided an escort for volunteer drivers to ensure their safety, and gave security to ensure the food reached the intended recipients.

For safety, my wife and I stay at a campground in Niland, California, which is close to the border, and then make day trips to Mexico. In addition to trips to the Mexicali Refuse Dump the Lay Brothers also visited the Mefiboset orphanage (which burned down in September 2012 and was subsequently helped by the Lay Brothers—see article in the December 2012 *The Diocesan Messenger*) and Hermoso Atardecer, a care centre for abandoned elderly persons.

To follow dear Mother Teresa, the Lay Brothers of the Poor ask only for prayers, because without God’s mercy we can’t do anything! If people wish to help financially, they can make a donation payable to: The Lay Brothers of the Poor, 6911 Bayside Place, Brentwood Bay BC, V8M 1B2.

For more information about the Lay Brothers of the Poor, visit [www.laybrothersofthepoor.com](http://www.laybrothersofthepoor.com). ✂



The Lay Brothers of the Poor serving a warm meal to residents of the Mexicali Refuse Dump



# Mary’s Meals

by Kaitlin Flynn, Head of Communications, Mary’s Meals North America

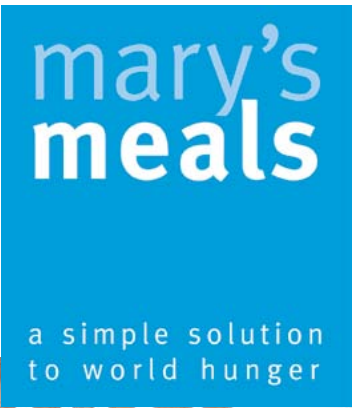
Mary’s Meals is a global charity that feeds 822,142 children every school day in some of the world’s poorest communities. The North American office is based in New Jersey and covers fundraising activities in the United States and Canada.

Last year, a very generous benefactor paid for a documentary to be made about our mission and work, and the award-winning result, the 30-minute film *Child 31*, has just been released online.

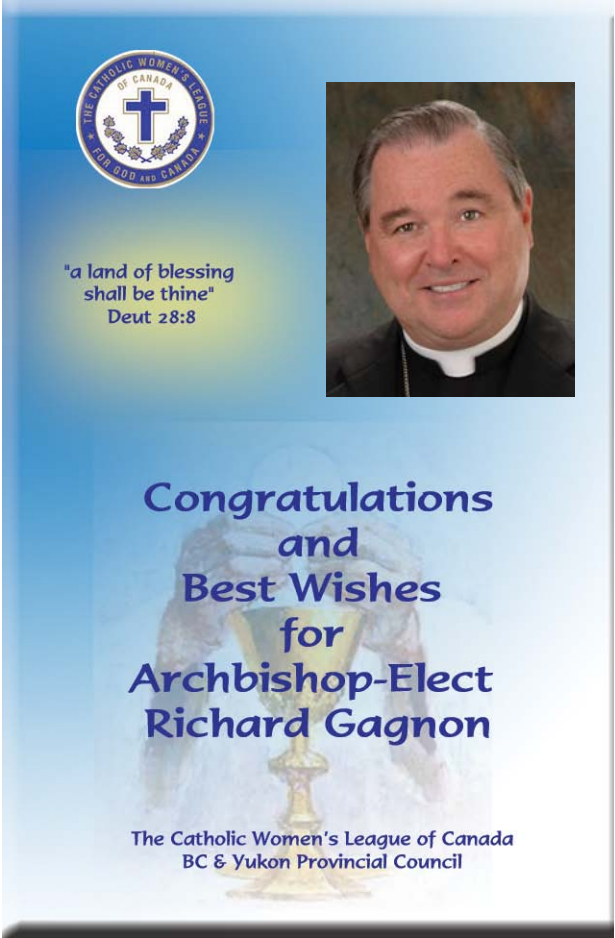
High profile supporters of Mary’s Meals include Gerard Butler and Celine Dion, whose video endorsement of *Child 31* can be viewed online at YouTube (under the title *Celine Dion - Voices of Child 31*). Mary’s Meals Founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow has been knighted for his work, honoured as a CNN Hero, and even travelled to Rome to meet His Holiness Pope Francis after receiving a personal invitation from the Holy See.

We are asking our friends in the worldwide Catholic community to watch and share *Child 31* ([www.Child31Film.com](http://www.Child31Film.com)). I truly hope you will take some time to view the documentary.

To make a donation to support the ongoing work of Mary’s Meals, please donate online at [www.marysmealsusa.org/what-you-can-do/make-a-donation](http://www.marysmealsusa.org/what-you-can-do/make-a-donation), call Mary’s Meals directly at 1-800-385-4983 or mail a cheque or money order to Mary’s Meals, 590 Bloomfield Avenue, Unit 280, Bloomfield NJ, 07003 ✂



Children wait in line at one of the Mary’s Meals-sponsored schools, saying prayers for their daily bread





# Special Feature: An Interview with Archbishop-Elect Richard Gagnon

... continued from Page 1

First Nations People—one of the major social justice concerns in this country. We’re only scratching the surface on Vancouver Island, but there is something very exciting happening. For example, it’s been 40 years since we’ve had outreach on Penelukut Island (formerly Kuper Island) and there’s Mass there every week now. Some of the children are going to the Catholic school in Chemainus. The Sisters (Sr. Vinda and Sr. Elisa of St. Ann’s parish in Duncan) have had a huge impact. The pastors we’ve had there, Fr. Jai and now Fr. Joe, have made an excellent team with the Sisters. They’ve brought new life to this ministry. My hope would be to invite more Sisters to come to the Island to work with the Nuu-chah-nulth in the west coast area, especially with the young people there. I am also grateful for the First Nations Outreach ministry of Fr. Scott and Fr. Roger on the West Coast.”

“I take with me the reality that without prayer, this ministry would be impossible.

“What’s it like at this point,” I ask, “to uproot and move as a stranger in a strange land? Do you know anybody in Winnipeg?”

“No,” he responded immediately with a rueful laugh, “I know the other two Archbishops who live in the city of Winnipeg. I have a large extended family, and I have relatives in almost every province, but no one in Manitoba! I know very little about that province. I’m a west coast boy basically—my family, my history is all here. It’s hard to pull up roots at age 65 and move three provinces away, to the middle of the country. In some respects, everything is a lot different, and in some ways I’m a little nervous about it, but I know that God will supply. His grace is there, and I am comforted knowing that the Church is the Body of Christ no matter where you live.

“I think one of the abilities I have is to go out and to meet and meet new people, and I look on that as an asset that helps me get used to a new area. I’m excited about learning about Winnipeg and Manitoba, about the geography, new cultural groups, all of that. It’s a different lifestyle; then again, there are many similarities too.”

I ask, “What will you take with you, other than a block heater, that is?”

“I *will* take a block heater, that’s in the car already, and a new set of snow tires,” he quips. “But more than that, I take the knowledge that patience is very important. You see, it’s not about you, it’s Christ’s church, and the work is his. You can get in the way, and often we do get in the way of God, and think we want this solved right away, want things changed right away, but God has a much more thorough and wise way for things to happen. We have to change ourselves too, and have patience to let ourselves develop. In some ways, I think being Bishop in the Diocese of Victoria was like my first pastorship. It was in my first parish I learned how to be a pastor, and it was in Victoria that I learned how to be a bishop.

“I also take with me the reality that without prayer, this ministry would be impossible. I have a new fervency and determination to pray, to establish as well as one can a solid spiritual foundation to this ministry.

“There’s also the importance of the ministry of presence—to be present to people. I remember when Archbishop Exner first came to Vancouver and how he spent time with clergy in conversation. We felt uplifted by that, and I try my best to be present to people when I am with them.

“Finally, I think collaboration is very important. I’ve been successful in collaboration in some ways, and in some ways I haven’t. Working together with the people of God and with other priests is very important, and that’s one of the big lessons I learned here”

“All in all, I think prayer and patience is at the very core of the episcopal ministry, and from that comes energy, from that comes discernment, direction and focus.”

“What has delighted you about working in the Diocese of Victoria?” I ask.

His eyes reflect memories, times and places. “There are so many things I can say to that. Going into all these various parish communities in the Diocese—small or large—there’s great variety here, and that has been very enriching. My first Sunday Mass was not at the Cathedral, but in Alert Bay. I wanted to drive the entire length of the Island to see the extent of the Diocese, and so I showed up in Alert Bay for Sunday Mass and I think I surprised a lot of people!”

Bishop Gagnon recalled other delights, such as his interactions with clergy and religious, the beauty and diversity of Vancouver Island, and his trips around the Diocese celebrating Confirmations every year. “I have come to appreciate more and more what a great gift a religious vocation is to the Church. I am deeply grateful for the generous gift that our priests and religious are to our Diocese.”

“I have enjoyed [the Confirmations] as a very active part of the ministry and it’s a good time to evangelize as well. This includes the First Nations; I think in some of those communities I may have baptized 14 or 15 in one ceremony.”

I consider the man before me, himself a culmination of God’s stirring in a third-grade student, a young adult, a teacher, a priest, a Vicar-General, a Bishop—all the things he’s done and been and seen that led him to this place, this turning point to greater leadership. “What changes,” I want to know, “have you noticed in yourself since coming to the Diocese of Victoria?”

“I think I’ve learned to be more compassionate. I’ve learned to be more appreciative of the gifts that are present in other people, and I’ve learned to recognize the fact that God is working in all aspects of our culture and society in marvellous ways. God has lots of friends out there, in the most unlikely places. Even though people don’t articulate a Catholic or Christian faith, there are many traits of Christianity and regard for God that you encounter. I’ve seen that in many

walks of life; it’s been very uplifting and very affirming. It really has been a gift to acknowledge and recognize how God is present in many different ways in our culture.

“Pope Francis is open to seeing God in unlikely places; he follows the charism of St. Francis of Assisi. He gives us courage to come back to our Catholic roots. I’ve heard it said, I think from a priest in Africa, that missionaries don’t necessarily go to foreign lands to bring the Good News; they come to discover the Good News in these people, to help bring it to light.”

I have one final question for Bishop Richard. “What would you like to encourage the people in the Diocese to do in the next few years?”

“I’m glad you asked that question.” He smiled, and then said simply, “Well, I guess, fundamentally, to rediscover their faith. We just celebrated a *Year of Faith* dedicated to rediscovering the joy of encountering Christ in our lives. That is the light that society needs, and if Christians can’t do that, who’s going to do it? In this secular society that we live in, one that is often confusing, one in which people search but don’t find answers, there’s a light that needs to be shed, and it’s up to every baptized Catholic in the nation to do that.

“I encourage the parish communities to complete the Diocesan Pastoral Plan. It finishes in 2015, and many parishes have created very beautiful plans. In these last couple years of the Plan, parishes need to seriously work to develop and complete that process. It may not be a perfect plan, but it is important to learn how to pastoral-plan together, to develop and complete a plan that challenges their parishes.

“It was our dream and hope for years to be able to fund ministries. We established the Diocesan Appeal *Journey of Hearts & Hands* three years ago to fund programs in the Diocese. The Appeal has been successful every year, and it encourages a form of stewardship. The outreach to First Nations is one example among many that is only possible through the works of this Appeal. I certainly want to encourage the Diocese to keep doing that, because it’s a form of unity—it’s not ‘me’ giving to a particular charity, though there’s a place for that. But I am Catholic, I belong to the Body of Christ and the local church, and so we do this together.

“I also encourage the people of God to take the call to evangelization seriously; to be salt and light. There are some fantastic writings recently from Pope Francis on Faith and Evangelization. The Pope is pointing us to go out, to get a little dirty; he’s challenging us, making us all a little uncomfortable. It’s a gift and a blessing to be uncomfortable, because when you are, you actually grow in faith. God seems to like troubling us. He wants us to get off the familiar fence and go into turbulent waters a little bit. Our human side doesn’t want to do it because it’s unfamiliar. His will is not our kind of will. But you find out there’s a great reward there.”


“The Pope is pointing us to go out, to get a little dirty; he’s challenging us, making us all a little uncomfortable. It’s a gift and a blessing to be uncomfortable, because when you are, you actually grow in faith. God seems to like troubling us ...

I ask him what words of advice he would offer to the next Bishop. “I would say to the next Bishop, ‘enjoy your ministry here.’ It’s one of the most geographically beautiful dioceses in Canada. I would encourage him to take his time and to get to know the people here and understand the dynamics—because the new Bishop will have to make some big decisions. We have projects on the go that have yet to be decided. In some ways I wish I could hang on and finish these things, but I can’t. But I am confident the new Bishop will come with God’s grace and God’s help and support from the people of God.”

Bishop Gagnon, I will miss you; you have made my faith stronger. We will miss you; you have made our community stronger. Thank you for your leadership, compassion, kindness, wisdom and love. Thank you for sharing your heart and your journey with us.

Godspeed and every blessing on you as you embark on the next adventure. Our hearts and prayers go with you. ✠

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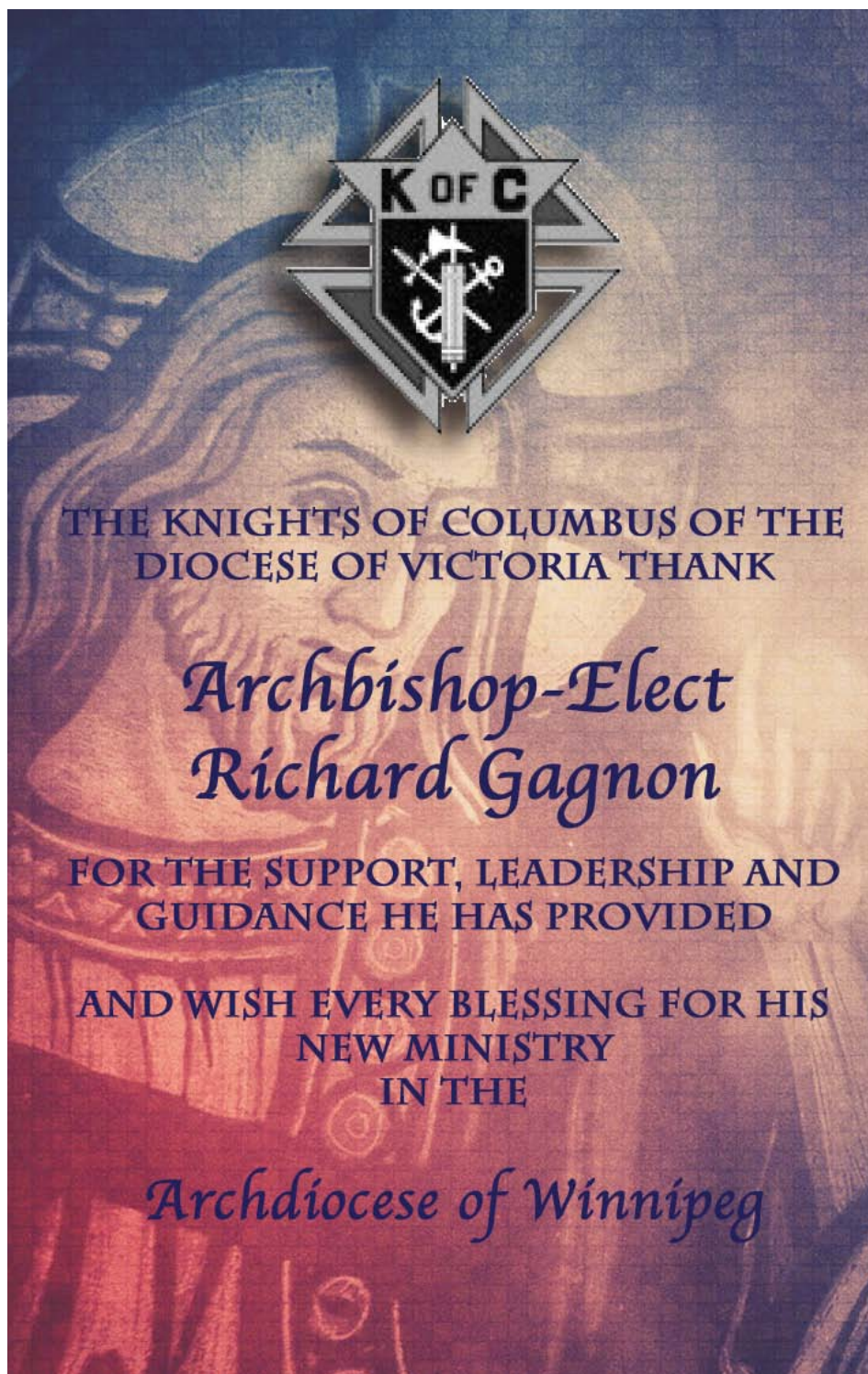
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# Christmas Mass Schedule

Parish	December 24 Christmas Eve	December 25 Christmas Day	December 31 New Year's Eve	January 1 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8 am Mass</li><li>3:45 pm doors open for 4:40 pm Carols and Children's Pageant; 5 pm Mass</li><li>7:30 pm Carols and 8 pm Mass</li><li>10:00 pm Carols and 11:00 pm Solemn Mass of Christmas Night (Incense will be used)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:55 am Rosary</li><li>9:30 am Mass of Christmas Dawn</li><li>11:00 am Mass of Christmas Day (Incense will be used)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>NO 8 am Mass</li><li>12:10 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Incense will be used)</li></ul>
À l'Église St-Jean-Baptiste (St. Jean Baptiste)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 pm Messe de minuit en français</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Messe de Noël en français</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Messe du Jour de l'An en français</li></ul>
Christ the King, Courtenay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4:30 pm Carols; 5 pm Mass</li><li>7:30 pm Carols; 8 pm Mass</li><li>11:30 pm Carols; 12 am Midnight Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Carols; 10:30 am Mass</li><li>2 pm Mass (Hornby Island)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
Church of the Ascension, Parksville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li><li>7:30 pm Mass</li><li>10 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass</li></ul>
Holy Cross, Gordon Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Family Mass</li><li>8 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:30 am Mass</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:30 am Mass</li></ul>
Holy Family/Notre Dame, Port Alberni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li><li>8 pm Mass</li><li>12 am Midnight Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
Mount St. Mary Hospital, Victoria		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
North Island (Our Lady of Assumption, Alert Bay; St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy; St. Mary's, Port McNeill; St. Theresa's, Port Alice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4 pm Mass (Alert Bay)</li><li>8 pm Mass (Port Hardy)</li><li>10 pm Mass (Port McNeill)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass (Port Alice)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass (Port Hardy)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass (Port McNeill)</li></ul>
Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 pm Mass (Portuguese and English)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Children's Mass</li><li>10:30 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Esquimalt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Family Mass</li><li>12 am Traditional Latin Midnight Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li><li>12 pm Latin Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
Sacred Heart, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Children's Mass</li><li>8 pm Mass (English)</li><li>10 pm (Korean)</li><li>12 am Midnight Mass (Polish)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass (English)</li><li>3 pm Mass (Korean)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass (English)</li><li>10 pm Mass (Korean)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass (English)</li><li>12:30 pm Mass (Polish)</li><li>2 pm Mass (Korean)</li></ul>
Saltspring Island (Our Lady of Grace, Ganges and St. Paul's, Fulford Harbour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm (OLOG Ganges)</li><li>11 pm (St. Paul's)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass (OLOG)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass (OLOG)</li><li></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8 am Mass (St. Paul's)</li><li>10 am Mass (OLOG)</li></ul>
Shawnigan Lake (Our Lady Queen of the World and St. Francis Xavier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass (OLQOW)</li><li>11:30 pm Carols; 12 am Midnight Mass (SFX)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 am Mass (SFX)</li><li>11 am Mass (OLQOW)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 am Mass (SFX)</li><li>5 pm Mass (SFX)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 am Mass (SFX)</li><li>11 am Mass (OLQOW)</li></ul>
Sidney (Services are at St. Elizabeth's unless otherwise noted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Children's Carol Service; 6:30 pm Mass</li><li>8:30 pm Mass (Our Lady of the Assumption)</li><li>10:30 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Columba's, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Edward's, Duncan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li><li>8:30 pm Carols; 9 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:30 am Carols; 10 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Joseph the Worker, Saanich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Family Mass</li><li>8:30 pm Vigil Mass</li><li>12 am Midnight Mass (Incense will be used)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Joseph's, Chemainus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass (Carols beforehand)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Leopold (Various Locations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8 pm Mass (Victoria)</li><li>11 pm Mass (Victoria)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass (Nanaimo)</li><li>3 pm Mass (Port Alberni)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>12 pm Mass (Victoria)</li></ul>	
St. Louis de Montfort Church, Lake Cowichan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mass times will be published in St. Edward's, Duncan, Bulletins</li></ul>			
St. Mary's, Ladysmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Patrick's, Campbell River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4:30 pm Carols; 5 pm Mass (Incense will be used)</li><li>7:30 pm Mass</li><li>11 pm; 11:30 pm Mass (Incense will be used)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass (Incense will be used)</li><li>3 pm Mass (Gold River)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass (Yucalta Lodge Care Home)</li><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass (Incense will be used)</li></ul>
St. Patrick's, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Mass</li><li>9 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Peter's, Nanaimo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Family Mass</li><li>8 pm Mass</li><li>12 am Midnight Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30 am Mass</li><li>3 pm Mass (Gabriola)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li><li>4:30 pm Mass (Gabriola)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30 am Mass</li><li>10:30 am Mass</li></ul>
St. Rose of Lima, Sooke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4 pm Youth and Family Mass</li><li>8 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
Trinity Catholic Church, Nanaimo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3:00 pm Seniors Mass</li><li>5:00 pm Children's Pageant</li><li>9:30 pm Carols; 10 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6 pm Mass</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 am Mass</li></ul>
West Coast (Holy Family, Ucluelet; St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino; St. Lawrence, Ahousat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass (Tofino)</li><li>11 pm (Ahousat)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11 am Mass (Ucluelet)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 pm Mass (Tofino)</li><li>7 pm (Ucluelet)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 pm Mass (Ucluelet)</li></ul>