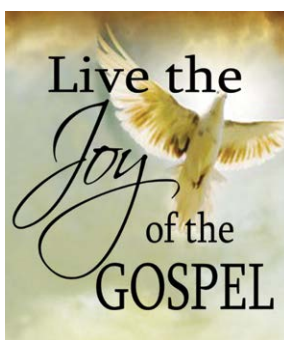




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XIV Ordinary
Synod on the
Family



The Diocesan Messenger

A Publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

February 2015

Clear Eyes, Full Heart, Can't Lose!

by Elizabeth Fitzmaurice

“Clear eyes, full heart, can't lose!” These words, quoted from *Friday Night Lights*, were used as an illustration of how we, as Catholic young adults, must trust God in order to revive our generation. I was blessed to join 20 or so young adults from our Diocese, along with 600+ from across Canada, at *Rise Up*, an annual New Year's event held by Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO). Throughout the week that we spent at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Calgary, AB, we were challenged by various keynote speakers to grow in our faith; to be holy, knowledgeable, and humble; to know and trust God as our loving Father; and to become transformational leaders in all aspects of our lives. When we embrace these challenges we can revive our generation and bring new life into a world of conflict and struggle.

It seemed impossible that anything could top the amazing speakers and yet I was blown away by the joy and praise we experienced. Joining over 600 young adults for praise and worship, Adoration and Mass, was beyond description. And knowing that any time you needed a priest for the Sacrament of Reconciliation or simply to talk, you only had to look around and you were bound to find one. Our own university chaplain, Fr. Dean Henderson, spent one afternoon in the hotel lobby with a steady flow of students joining him for conversation and Reconciliation.

The height of the conference took place at midnight on New Year's Eve in the form of praise and worship. There is no better way to ring in the New Year than by praising God. It seemed to bring together all we had learned: when we clear our eyes, and allow Christ to fill our hearts, we cannot lose. There is strength in trusting God. ✕

See more *Rise Up* photos on page 14!



Diocese of Victoria participants sporting their “Xyolhmetoxw” t-shirts at the Rise Up event in Calgary

Plunging In ...

by Bishop Gary Gordon

The feast of the Baptism of the Lord brings an end to the Advent and Christmas seasons. And though this feast seems minor in comparison to the nativity of Christ and the Epiphany star guiding the searching Magi, it is important to consider the mystery of his baptism at the Jordan by John the Baptist. Jesus' going to the Jordan river to be baptized by John is the cause of a greater joy than Christmas, because it is now Christ who chooses the great descent from heaven to the muddy little waters of the human condition – a very real embrace of the poverty of our frail human condition. The plunge that Jesus takes into the Jordan indicates the beginning of the plunge he will take into suffering and death, and also the final act of descent that we profess in the Creed: “He descended into hell.” Nothing of what God has created will be lost.

Jesus is plunged into the River Jordan, an action that shows forth the great love of God for us – so great a love – the only begotten Son of the Father is immersed into a little muddy stream to show the depth of Jesus being plunged into the humanity he shares with us. Jesus is plunged into the muddiness and depth of sin and weakness, which is the story of the human family. Indeed, the feast of the Baptism of Jesus shows forth a God who is plunged into us, becoming and taking upon Himself the sins of the world.

This feast above all else is a sign of God's favour and self-emptying for our sake and the sake of the whole world. It is also a feast that will begin the path of Christ and the Church to being plunged into the abyss, and the experience of being abandoned. Jesus being plunged into the ‘death’ of baptism is not just to confirm the mess and tragic

trajectory caused by injustice and war and death for the human family, but more vitally, to confirm the extent and depth of love God has for each and every one of us. In fact as the Voice from the heavens speaks of Jesus as the beloved with whom God is well pleased, this Voice now through Jesus and in Jesus speaks of every person who comes into existence.

On this feast we also hear the favour and love of the Father for the Son “You are my beloved in whom I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:21)

The Baptism of the Lord ushers in the way for the Church to be plunged into this world so as to love it back to life.

In the Advent time of preparation for the way of the Lord's birth at Christmas, it is so beautiful to see the work of the priests who join Jesus by plunging themselves into sin in the Sacrament of Mercy, and by being so available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Nothing speaks more beautifully of the mystery of God-becoming-man than the Sacrament of Reconciliation that was made available in our parish churches; by small groups of priests accompanying people in the parish communities to celebrate the great mercy of the Redeemer with each person individually and personally in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Baptism of Jesus indicates and provides the mysterious path of the Church to be plunged into muddy waters and the abandoned peripheries of society as children of the light – beloved and highly favoured.

... continued on page 6

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Celebrations at Penelakut Island ... see Page 7



Out of the Archives



by Theresa Vogel, Archivist, Diocese of Victoria

December's Answers

Thank you, once again, for your interest! I am still waiting for the correct answers, though there were some really good guesses! Here is a little insight into the pictures.



These are the 'episcopal sandals' of Bishop James Hill, (Bishop of the Victoria Diocese from 1946 – 1962), and probably most likely last seen as Bishop Hill's episcopacy neared its end, just prior to the Second Vatican Council. For those of you who remember, Bishop Hill was a tall, graceful man, and his shoes constitute a 'good understanding' – at least a size 12!

In form and function, episcopal sandals (or pontifical sandals) more closely resemble loafers than actual sandals. The liturgical stockings (which are shown here in the shoes) are called *caligae*. The episcopal sandals and liturgical stockings usually matched the liturgical color of the Mass. And, yes, the Archives has all four commonly used sets of Bishop Hill's sandals – red, green, white and violet. The soles of the shoes are of leather; the upper part, generally ornamented with embroidery, is made of silk or velvet. No cross is required upon the sandals, as in Rome this is an exclusively papal privilege.

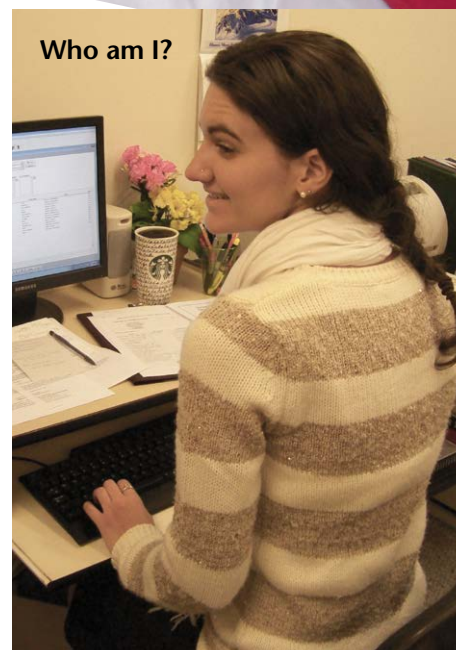
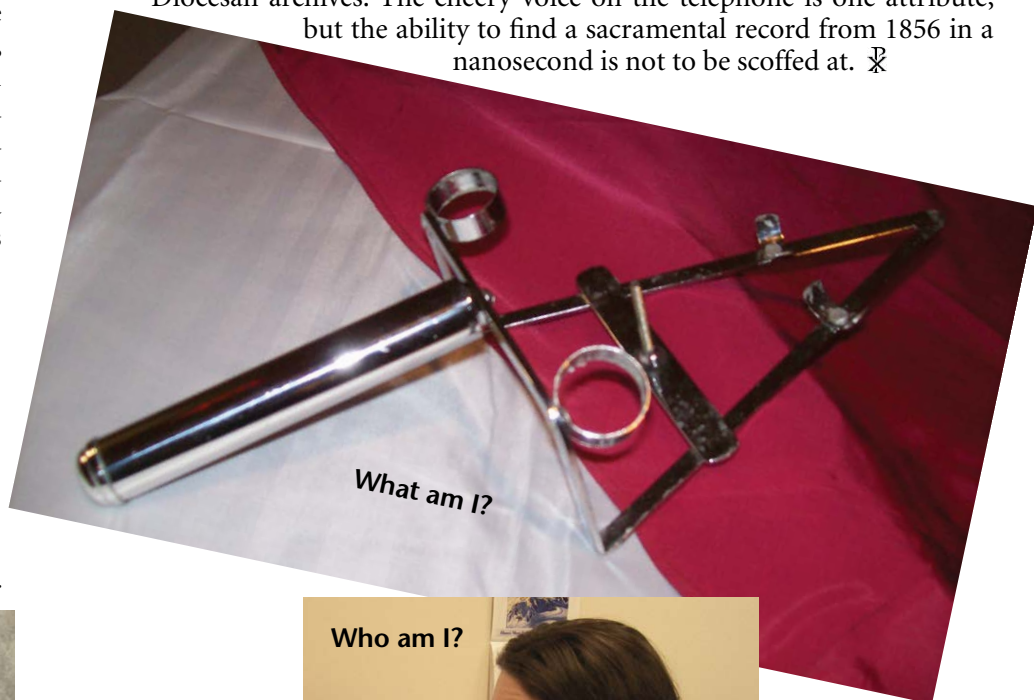
This Sister of St. Ann with her eyes fixed on the missionary fields is none other than Sister Mary Prudentienne (Granger), great-great aunt of our present Bishop, Most Reverend Gary Gordon. Sister Mary Prudentienne arrived in Dawson City on July 11, 1898, after the Sisters of St. Ann had been entreated by Fr. William Judge SJ to come and care for the burgeoning population of Dawson during the Gold Rush. In fact, when the Sisters arrived, Dawson's population stood at 40,000! Though the early endeavor was that of raising up a hospital (which the Sisters paid for almost immediately by the 'pastoral visits' to mining camps – let's leave those adventures to the imagination!), St. Mary's School was opened in November of 1889. Bishop Gordon, as you know, has an aunt who is a Sister of St. Ann here in Victoria, and Sister Mary Prudentienne had three cousins in the same congregation: Sister Marie Louis Adolphe (Morin); Sister Marie Claire Eugenie (Morin); and Sister Marie Placide (Morin). Thanks to the Archives of the Sisters of St. Ann for use of this photo. ✂



February's Query

For the February edition, let us cast our minds back to the days when February 3 was a great observance. While this "What Am I?" looks like it might belong in the office of a dentist or neurosurgeon, it had an important role for all who attended at their church that day.

In the "Who am I?" section, here is the picture of an unsung heroine in the Diocesan archives. The cheery voice on the telephone is one attribute, but the ability to find a sacramental record from 1856 in a nanosecond is not to be scoffed at. ✂



Diocesan Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Coordinator

The Diocesan Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Coordinator administers the Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults in the Diocese of Victoria and Island Catholic Schools.

The incumbent for this part-time position will implement policies, provide training, respond to questions, maintain correspondence and respond to concerns brought forward under the direction of the Advisory Committee. A detailed job description is posted on our website www.rcdvictoria.org/employment.php.

Please submit your resume and cover letter to:

Diocese of Victoria

Attention: Responsible Ministry and Safe Environment Advisory Committee
4044 Nelthorpe Street
Victoria, BC V8X 2A1



or via email to chancery@rcdvictoria.org by February 20, 2015





As a Family, As a Church

Congratulations!! We have exceeded our goal for the Journey of Hearts & Hands - 2014 Appeal, *As a Family, As a Church*, with **over \$856,000 pledged!!**

We are deeply grateful for all of the support from our clergy, parish appeal teams and parishioners. It is only through this spirit of collaboration and participation that we can continue to achieve such wonderful results, which in turn contribute to individual parish projects and allow the Diocese to fulfill its mission to serve the faithful.

In 2015 your *As a Family, As a Church* Appeal donations will support:

Parish Share \$220,000

Funds will be used by parishes to support local initiatives. In 2014 such projects included:

- Youth retreats
- The creation of gardens and grottos
- Sacristy renovations
- Repayment of parish debt

Outreach \$175,000

Retired Clergy Pension Support

- Retirement benefits for 11 priests between the ages of 67 and 90
- Assistance with long-term care for 1 retired sister

First Nations Support

- Priest and Religious Sisters providing pastoral ministry in the Cowichan Valley
- Children and Youth after-school program
- Children's Sunday breakfast program
- Sacramental Preparation
- Homebound and institution/hospital services
- Clergy and First Nations Elder provide community services
- Clergy travel and expenses to remote communities to celebrate Mass and the Sacraments, including Ahousaht, Zeballos, Opitsath, Penelakut Island and Nanaimo Reserves 1 & 4
- Rental space for downtown Victoria outreach program

Parish Missions

- Assist with basic operational costs such as: heat, light, insurance and priests' travel, for small parishes including:
 - North Island Catholic Communities (St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy; St. Theresa's, Port Alice; St. Mary's, Port McNeill; and Our Lady of Assumption, Alert Bay)
 - St. Louis de Montfort, Lake Cowichan
 - St. Ann's, Duncan
 - Holy Family, Ucluelet and St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino

Education \$375,000

Up Island Schools

- Support with general operating expenses for:
 - Queen of Angels, Duncan
 - St. Joseph Elementary School, Chemainus
 - John Paul II, Port Alberni

Island Catholic Schools Capital Plan

- Mortgage for expansion of St. Joseph's School, Victoria

Religious Education

- Education and training of parish catechists for Children's Catechesis and Sacramental Preparation
- Books and supplies for parish catechists
- Resources for K-12 Religion Curriculum

Youth Ministry

- Office of Youth
- Youth retreats and camps
- Diocesan Youth Conference
- Family Life Conference and Camp with over 100 participants

Appeal Expenses \$50,000 (5.8% of pledges)

- Office supplies and miscellaneous expenses: \$1,000
- Travel expenses: \$1,000
- Bank charges for direct deposit & credit card fees: \$5,000
- Postage and mailing: \$ 8,000
- Print and Digital Material: \$10,000 (leaders guide, brochures, envelopes, letterhead, tax receipts)
- Administrative assistant: \$25,000 (plan, coordinate and process the pledges, donations & tax receipts)

Excess over Goal \$37,000

Thanks to everyone's generosity, we have exceeded our goal and are able to use the additional contributions to support the Appeal goals that require extra resources. The funds will be disbursed based on where they are needed the most.

Performance by Parish

Eight parishes achieved or exceeded their goal: Holy Cross, Victoria; Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford; Our Lady of Victory Mission, Gabriola Island; St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria; St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy; St. Jean Baptiste, Victoria; St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria; St. Rose of Lima, Sooke.

Fourteen more parishes achieved or exceeded 70% of their goal: Christ the King, Courtenay; Church of the Ascension, Parksville; Holy Family, Ucluelet; Our Lady of Assumption, Alert Bay; Our Lady of Grace, Salt Spring Island; Our Lady Queen of Peace, Esquimalt ; Saanich Peninsula Parish; Sacred Heart, Victoria; St. Edward the Confessor, Duncan; St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino; St. Francis Xavier, Mill Bay/Our Lady Queen of the World, Shawnigan Lake; St. Patrick's, Victoria; St. Peter's, Nanaimo; Trinity Catholic, Nanaimo. ✠

Over \$856,000 pledged!

All Parishes Summary

2014 Appeal As a Family, As a Church as of January 21, 2015

Organization	Goal	Total Pledged	Total Paid	# of Families	# of Pledges	Average Pledge	% of Goal Pledged	% of Goal Paid
Christ the King Parish	81,000.00	56,115.00	43,915.00	935	194	289.25	69.28%	54.22%
Church of the Ascension	46,000.00	44,042.40	36,287.40	662	183	240.67	95.74%	78.89%
Diocese of Victoria BC	0.00	45,172.00	44,772.00	17	8	5,646.50	0.00%	0.00%
Holy Cross Parish	44,000.00	58,352.00	46,787.00	468	165	353.65	132.62%	106.33%
Holy Family	1,000.00	700.00	100.00	22	2	350.00	70.00%	10.00%
Holy Family/Notre Dame Parish	39,000.00	24,630.00	19,770.00	661	92	267.72	63.15%	50.69%
Our Lady of Assumption	1,000.00	750.00	750.00	11	5	150.00	75.00%	75.00%
Our Lady of Fatima Parish	19,000.00	6,160.00	5,360.00	174	25	246.40	32.42%	28.21%
Our Lady of Grace Parish	16,000.00	12,580.00	12,400.00	132	34	370.00	78.63%	77.50%
Our Lady of the Rosary Parish	33,000.00	34,378.00	31,566.00	489	101	340.38	104.18%	95.65%
Our Lady of Victory Mission	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	44	5	200.00	100.00%	100.00%
Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish	14,000.00	11,975.00	8,160.00	88	52	230.29	85.54%	58.29%
Our Lady Star of the Sea	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
Saanich Peninsula Parish	50,000.00	42,245.00	31,225.00	433	159	265.69	84.49%	62.45%
Sacred Heart Parish	37,000.00	32,585.00	28,220.00	524	135	241.37	88.07%	76.27%
St. Andrew's Cathedral	111,000.00	171,749.29	139,064.29	1,344	333	515.76	154.73%	125.28%
St. Ann's Parish	3,500.00	1,420.00	645.00	12	8	177.50	40.57%	18.43%
St. Bonaventure	1,000.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	45	9	200.00	180.00%	180.00%
St. Edward the Confessor Parish	45,000.00	43,575.00	34,805.00	531	154	282.95	96.83%	77.34%
St. Francis of Assisi	1,000.00	700.00	700.00	10	4	175.00	70.00%	70.00%
St. Francis Xavier / Our Lady Queen of the World	24,000.00	20,490.00	13,520.00	119	49	418.16	85.38%	56.33%
St. Jean Baptiste Parish	5,000.00	6,720.00	5,885.00	57	25	268.80	134.40%	117.70%
St. Joseph the Worker Parish	50,000.00	54,728.75	39,785.75	771	148	369.79	109.46%	79.57%
St. Joseph's - Tahsis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Joseph's Mission - Mayne Island	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Joseph's Parish	12,000.00	5,090.00	2,790.00	82	15	339.33	42.42%	23.25%
St. Leopold Mandic Parish	10,000.00	50.00	50.00	1	1	50.00	0.50%	0.50%
St. Louis de Montfort	3,500.00	1,895.00	1,565.00	39	10	189.50	54.14%	44.71%
St. Mary's	1,000.00	295.00	295.00	21	3	98.33	29.50%	29.50%
St. Mary's Parish	16,000.00	2,445.00	1,895.00	120	11	222.27	15.28%	11.84%
St. Patrick's Parish	70,000.00	51,931.05	37,046.05	478	153	339.42	74.19%	52.92%
St. Patrick's Parish, CR	48,000.00	27,882.00	23,472.00	809	105	265.54	58.09%	48.90%
St. Peter & Paul - Gold River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Peter's Parish	49,000.00	35,479.00	29,629.00	732	89	398.64	72.41%	60.47%
St. Rose of Lima Parish	15,000.00	26,650.00	21,750.00	124	23	1,158.70	177.67%	145.00%
St. Theresa's	1,000.00	600.00	600.00	11	3	200.00	60.00%	60.00%
Trinity Catholic	37,000.00	32,670.00	24,690.00	353	131	249.39	88.30%	66.73%
Report Totals for 37 Organizations:		\$856,854.49	\$690,299.49	10,319	2,434	\$352.04		



Calendar of Events

February

4-8 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition is coming to Our Lady of the Rosary Parish! There will be an opening Mass on Wednesday February 4, 2015, at 6:30pm followed by the opening of the Exhibition, which will run from Thursday, February 5 to Sunday, February 8 in the mornings from 9:30am – 3:30pm and in the evenings from 6:30 – 8:30pm. For more information please contact (250) 478-3482 or email olor@shaw.ca.

5 Sacred Heart, Victoria: The Trinity presented by Dr. Les McKeown, running Thursday evenings from 7 – 9pm through March 5. The course follows the revelation of Trinitarian theology from its source in the Old and New Testaments through the refinements of early Church Councils and includes contemporary contributions to Trinitarian understanding. To register call (250) 479-1611 or email sacredheartchurch@shaw.ca.

7 St. Andrew's Cathedral: Ordination to the priesthood of Deacon Harrison Ayre, 10 am.

14 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Centering Prayer Workshops Saturday mornings through March 28 from 10am – 12 noon (except March 7), based on DVD talks by Fr. Thomas Keating OCSO. Centering Prayer is a method that helps you get in touch with your inner self by learning to meditate. This prayer teaches us inner silence and stillness that diminishes the inner chaos that we sometimes experience. It is a tradition that goes back to early Christianity. For more information or to register call (250) 479-7413 or contact Charlie Allen at charlieballen@gmail.com.

14 Downtown Churches Association celebrates 25 years with Brother Emile of Taizé. To celebrate this anniversary, the DCA will host a prayer service with Brother Emile of Taizé at Fairfield United Church at 6pm followed by a catered dinner at 7pm. Tickets for the dinner can be purchased at the St. Andrew's Cathedral Parish office for \$20. The prayer service is free of charge and open to all.

14 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Men's Breakfast. Bishop Gary will speak on *Awe*. Three discussion questions: 1) How can men authentically witness the Love of God? 2) How can men lead their families in excellence? 3) How can Catholic men be leaders of authentic Catholic witness in the public square? Upcoming dates: March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13. Information can be viewed on our website mfaff.org or email Chris Burke at cburke@shaw.ca.

17 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Centering Prayer Workshops Tuesday evenings through March 31 from 10am – 12 noon (except March 10). See Feb 14 for description.

17 The Union Club, Victoria: Victoria Association of Catholic Leaders Breakfast, 7am registration, 7:30am breakfast. Guest speaker: Bishop Gary Gordon. Topic: Lay Leadership in the Mission of the Church. Cost: \$28. More information: victoriabcac@gmail.com.

17 Christ the King, Courtenay: Pastoral Care Outreach Training Program, Session 4 – *Who Am I as a Pastoral Care Outreach Visitor?*, 9am – noon. Please register by calling the office at (250) 334-4716 or email ctkparish@shaw.ca.

18 St. Vincent de Paul, Victoria: Centering Prayer Workshops, held Wednesdays from 1:30 – 2:30pm. See Feb 14 for description. Call (250) 382-0712 to register for this location.

21 Victoria Chinese Catholic Community at Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria: Bishop Gary Gordon will be celebrating Chinese New Year Mass (Year of the Lamb) with us

at 4 pm followed by a potluck dinner in the basement. Dishes can be dropped off at the basement before Mass. All are welcome!

28 St. Patrick's, Victoria: Pastoral Care Outreach Training Program, Session 2 – *Listening and Communications & Mental Health*, 9am – 2pm. Registration: (250) 592-7391 or stpat190@telus.net or (250) 477-5321 or office@holycrossvictoria.org.

March

3 St. Patrick's, Victoria: Mary-Anne Neal, Nancy Stuart and Pat Mochrie will be giving a talk about their trip and the work of the Oblates at 7 pm. If you wish to support the work of the Oblates, please visit their website at www.oblatemissionassociates.ca. For more information, please contact Nancy Stuart at nancy-stuart@shaw.ca. See story page 20.

6 St. Peter's, Nanaimo: Nanaimo's World Day of Prayer for all the area's Christian churches hosted by St. Peter's at 301 Machleary Street. Join us for the worship celebration written by WDP Bahamas, starting at 1:30pm.

9-13 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Spring Break Camp Youth Camp for kids 12 to 15 years old. 9am – 1pm. Cost: \$20 per participant. We invite the teenagers to join us at this camp, so they can volunteer at the children and young kids' camps 2014. For more info or to register: Email olor@shaw.ca or phone (250) 478-3482.

16-20 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Spring Break Camp Youth Camp for kids 7 to 11 years old. 8:50am – 2pm. Cost: \$60 per participant. For more info or to register: Email olor@shaw.ca or phone (250) 478-3482.

16-20 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Spring Break Camp Youth Camp for kids 4 to 6 years old. 8:50am – 12:30pm. Cost: \$60 per participant. For more info or to register: Email olor@shaw.ca or phone (250) 478-3482.

★ The cost for Our Lady of the Rosary's Spring Break Camp is \$60 but, if you register your child for the Spring Camp and for the Summer Camp (July 13-17) before March 5, 2015, you will pay only \$100 for both weeks. Bursaries available, please contact the Parish office.

28 Holy Cross Parish, Victoria: Pastoral Care Outreach Training Program, Session 3 – *The Grieving Process & Ministering to Families*, 9am – 2pm. Registration: (250) 592-7391 or stpat190@telus.net or (250) 477-5321 or office@holycrossvictoria.org.

April

17-18 Holy Cross Parish, Victoria: The Diocese of Victoria is pleased to welcome Fr. Mark Miller, CSsR, a clinical bioethicist who will speak on *The Healing Ministry of the Church and Ethics at the End of Life*. 7 – 9pm on April 17; 9am – 4pm on April 18 (lunch will be provided). Please contact Moira Gill at (250) 479-1331 or email mgill@rcdvictoria.org to register.

18 Sacred Heart Parish, Victoria: Sacred Heart Christian Charities Spring Used Clothing and Attic Treasures Sale Saturday, April 18th 9am – 2pm. Parish Hall, 4040 Nelthorpe St. Clothing & accessories,

bedding & linens, housewares & attic treasures. Everyone welcome. Free admission & wheelchair accessible. All proceeds to charity.

24-25 St. Patrick's, Victoria: 9:30am – 2pm, St. Patrick's CWL Spring Good Used Clothing Sale. There is ample parking and the facility is wheelchair accessible.

25 Holy Cross Parish, Victoria: Pastoral Care Outreach Training Program, Session 4 – *Who Am I as a Pastoral Care Outreach Visitor?*, 9am – 2pm. Registration: (250) 592-7391 or stpat190@telus.net or (250) 477-5321 or office@holycrossvictoria.org.

June

12-14 Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Conference, Camp Barnard: This year's theme is *Love Is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive*. Camp Chaplain: Fr. Dean Henderson. Keynote speakers: Brett and Andrea Powell. More information: Fr. Dean Henderson (catholic@uvic.ca) or Reine and Ian at (250) 884-7100 or email reine_and_ian@hotmail.com. See advertisement page 24.

To have your event included in the Diocesan Calendar of Events on the website, please email the details to editor@rcdvictoria.org

“Small, yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples. ~ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 216



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*The Diocese of Victoria
Celebrates the Ordination of
Deacon Harrison Reynolds Ayre
to the Priesthood*

*Saturday, February 7, 2015
10 am at St. Andrew's Cathedral
740 View Street, Victoria*

Reception to follow at the
St. Andrew's Elementary School Gymnasium
1012 Pandora Avenue, Victoria



Pastoral Itinerary

February

- 1
- Campbell River, Gold River and Tahsis:** Masses – St. Patrick's and Missions
- 7
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Ordination of Deacon Harrison Ayre to the Priesthood (10am)
- 8
- Victoria:** Holy Cross Church, Mass, UVic Catholic Students Association (4pm)
- 14
- Victoria:** Celebration, Downtown Churches' Association 25th Anniversary (6pm; dinner following at 7pm. Prayer service at 6pm is open to all; tickets for the dinner at 7pm may be obtained through St. Andrew's Cathedral office) *See Calendar of Events for more information.*
- 14
- Victoria:** Men's Breakfast, Horseshoe Club (8 – 10am)
- 15
- Duncan:** Confirmation, St. Ann's Parish (11am)
- 15
- Victoria:** Visit to William Head Prison (6:30pm)
- 17
- Victoria:** Association of Catholic Leaders (ACL) breakfast, Union Club (7am)
- 18
- Victoria:** Ash Wednesday Mass, Sacred Heart Church (11am); Ash Wednesday Mass, St. Andrew's Cathedral (7pm)
- 21
- Victoria:** Mass in Memory of Fr. Giussani and of the Pontifical Recognition of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation, Sacred Heart Church (12 noon)
- 21
- Victoria:** Mass and supper with Chinese Catholic Community, Our Lady of Fatima Hall (3:30pm)
- 22
- Victoria:** Mass with French community, St. Jean Baptiste Church (10am)
- 23-27
- Victoria:** Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops
- 26
- Victoria:** Mass – Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops, St. Andrew's Cathedral (5pm)

March

- 3-6
- Toronto, ON:** Catholic Health Alliance Conference
- 7-11
- Fort McMurray, AB:** Parish Mission for people of Fort McMurray, St. John the Baptist
- 14-15
- Nanaimo:** Masses – St. Peter's Parish (Sat. – 5pm / Sun. – 8:30 & 10:30am)
- 21-22
- Nanaimo:** Masses – Trinity Parish (Sat. – 4pm Korean, 6pm English / Sun. 8 & 9am); and Gabriolo Island (Sun. 4pm)
- 26
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Chrism Mass (7pm)
- 29
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Palm Sunday Mass (11am)

Weekly Events

Mondays

St. Patrick's, Victoria: Do you often feel helpless and frustrated when listening to the news, or talking to family and friends about their struggles and problems? How often do we then say, "Well, all we can do is pray," while thinking that prayer is not enough. But prayer is the most important thing we can do. Prayer is our way of saying "God is with us." We welcome you to St. Patrick's Prayer Group, which meets every Monday at 1pm at 2701 Asquith St. For more info, please contact Mary Weicker at 250-361-7015

Tuesdays

Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria: Traditional Latin Mass, 9am.

Wednesdays

St. Patrick's, Victoria: 9:30am, Moms & Tots group. Come together with the moms of St. Patrick's Catholic Church for faith, fellowship and laughter. Contact Bonnie at (250) 213-4984 or koalabear_writer@yahoo.ca for more info.

Fridays

Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria: Traditional Latin Mass, 9 am, first Friday of the month only.

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: 9:30 – 11am, 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.

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: *YDisciple* is a Catholic program to help teenagers take ownership of their faith. We meet from 7 – 8:30pm in the parish hall. Youth leader is Jose Mendez. More info: olor@shaw.ca or call (250) 478-3482.

Saturdays

St. Joseph the Worker Parish: 3 – 4:30pm, Jesus Youth at SJTW Parish invites youth in high school to come out to the Jesus Youth Prayer meeting! Jesus Youth is an international Catholic youth movement with a charismatic spirituality. For more information contact: mr.georgephilip@gmail.com.

At the Cathedral: 4th Saturday of each month the 9:30am 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.

April

- 2
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Holy Thursday service (7:30pm)
- 3
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Good Friday service (3pm)
- 3
- Mt. Tzouhalem:**
- 4
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Easter Vigil service (8pm)
- 5
- St. Andrew's Cathedral:** Easter Sunday Mass (11am)
- 11-12
- Sidney/Saanichton:** Confirmation and Weekend Masses – Saanich Peninsula – St. Elizabeth's Church, Sat. 5pm & Sun. 10:30am (Confirmation); Our Lady of Assumption Church, 8:30am
- 15-17
- Lower Mainland:** BC Catholic Schools Administrators' Retreat
- 17-18
- Victoria:** Holy Cross Parish, Fr. Mark Miller CSSR / guest speaker – *Catholic Ethics at the End of Life*, Fri., Apr. 17 7 – 9pm; Sat., Apr. 18 9am – 3:15pm
- 19
- Chemainus:** 50th Anniversary Celebration and Mass – St. Joseph's School
- 20
- Comox:** Fr. Mark Miller CSSR / guest speaker – *Catholic Ethics at the End of Life*. Location: St. Joseph's Hospital
- 22-25
- Toronto/Waterloo, ON:** Catholic Missions in Canada Meetings – Our Lady of Lourdes



The Healing Ministry of the Church and Ethics at the End of Life

The Diocese of Victoria is pleased to welcome
Fr. Mark Miller, C.Ss.R.

A clinical bioethicist, Fr. Miller will speak on
The Healing Ministry of the Church and *Ethics at the End of Life*.

Fr. Miller is the Provincial of the English-speaking Redemptorists of Canada and continues his clinical ethics work part-time at the Centre for Clinical Ethics at St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Hospitals in Toronto.

Holy Cross Parish, Victoria

Friday, April 17 (7 – 9pm)
Saturday, April 18 (9am – 4pm, please bring a bagged lunch)
All are welcome to attend

Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria: Victoria Chinese Catholic Community (VCCC) regular meetings with faith sharing, prayers, potluck, Mass or special presentations by expert speakers, 3:30pm. Please note meeting dates may not fall on First Saturdays of the month; please contact Ben for more information. Meetings will conclude with a potluck supper.

維多利亞天主教團體：定期聚會活動包括信仰分享，祈禱，彌撒或專題講座。每次聚會皆有 potluck 聚餐作結。日期暫定為每月第三個星期六，而時間則為下午三時半至六時許。地點在花地瑪天主堂 (4635 Elk Lake Drive, Victoria) 舉行。請電 (250) 893- 9938 或電郵 benchow@shaw.ca □詢及核實活動日期等詳情。

For more information phone (250) 893-9938 or email Ben Chow at benchow@shaw.ca.

Sundays

Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria: Traditional Latin Mass, 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. 9:40am – 10:25am 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, with potluck dinner! For more information contact Bonnie Landry at (250) 743-1982 or email onthisrock@shaw.ca.



Diocesan News & Events



Plunging In ...

... continued from page 1

As I reflected on this Feast of the Baptism it become a natural segue into the approaching Lenten and Easter seasons, when we all try to follow Christ more closely as missionary-disciples. We are recipients of God's outpouring of love made so visible in Christ's passion, death and resurrection, and we are participants in this same mystery of Christ's passion, death and resurrection because we are his body, his people. The approaching Lenten season gives us the opportunity to rejoice in the outpouring of Divine favour as the beloved of God, and being so loved moves us into a dynamic plunging into the abyss of human anguish. We are reengaged in our discipleship by accompanying Jesus to our brothers and sisters in the margins and on the periphery. This accompaniment is more than an ideology of justice or peace: it is an enabling justice and peace founded in relationships of dialogue and communion.

As I often gaze out upon the Pacific ocean, it always brings home to me the breadth and depth of God's love which is so real for me, and it reminds me of the extent to which God will go in His Church to plunge into the watery, murky depths of our individual and collective tragic trajectories.

I do hope and pray that everyone can know and experience the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus and this encounter with love will cause a great stirring of the Spirit so that the Kingdom of peace, justice and life will flourish. ✠

Men's Day of Reflection

by Bernie Musto

A day for Catholic men sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 4253 was the first of three Sunday Advent Reflection days to be held in St. Edward's parish in Duncan. Under the theme *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*, Fr. Alfredo Monacelli and Phil Jennings helped portray a deeper understanding of Christian Stewardship to all present by posing a series of direct questions asking about the depth of our faith, prayer and scripture reading life; do we understand what we do as Catholics that makes us Catholics; and are we still searching for a better understanding of our faith? Fr. Monacelli and Phil also shared how and where the answers could be found.

Following a lively and revealing discussion during which personal witnessing was shared, the Holy family, John the Baptist and St. Paul were called upon as examples of stewardship and evangelization.

Further questions were posed, asking if we could identify with either Mary or Joseph; did we see ourselves as voices in the wilderness into today's world; were ready to evangelize; and if so, how? The strength of Prayer and the importance of Domestic Church within our lives was demonstrated, first by Phil breaking down the Canticle of Zechariah and then by Fr. Alfredo explaining the Lord's Prayer. To hear these two magnificent parts of our faith delivered in this fashion with so much reverence, passion and joy reminded us of how truly blessed and rich our faith is.

Following a short, silent reflection on responsibility and accountability, the question was asked: Are we in the desert or in a rain shower of questions regarding the stewardship of the faith?

It was during each spell of silent reflection that I was reminded that an encounter with Christ is through another and that we must be vigilant at all times to be aware, so to be able to recognize that presence.

The evaluation discussion at the end of the day produced many heart-rending comments about how the day had gone, and how some of the profound content had inspired each individual present. ✠

Newly Installed Bishop Visits William Head

By Jack Yu, Interim Editor, Out of Bounds Magazine

The Most Reverend Gary Michael Gordon hosted a Catholic service and gave, as one of the attendants described, a 'lovely' sermon at William Head Institution on November 30. Twenty-three people attended, including our on-site photographers who kept us smiling while they took turns taking our group pictures.

I was asked to speak with Bishop Gordon. What question could I have asked? I was ill-prepared at that time. I had not read a single book on interviewing, nor had I received any article written about Bishop Gordon. We stood there and shared a moment of awkward silence before we parted, but I was impressed by his ease when chatting with us, his heartfelt faith that he shared so freely with us, and his sincerity.

Bishop Gordon drives a truck, owns a Golden Retriever named Merlin, and loves fishing. Shortly before his Installation in October, he visited William Head Institution for the first time. Upon seeing our fishing dock, he jokingly asked one of the residents, "Can I go back and get my fishing rod?"

Bishop Gordon is always down-to-earth with his people, even those people society labelled as wrongdoers, criminals, and murderers. For visiting William Head Institution and for relating to us, I would like to take this opportunity to utter a whole-hearted 'Thank You'. ✠


Celebrating Canadian Saints and Blesseds

by Connie Dunwoody

On the recommendation of the Joint CCCB-CRC Ad Hoc Committee and the approval of their Executive Committee, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' (CCCB) website will be posting short biographies and outlines of Canadian Saints and Blesseds who lived the Consecrated Life. The principal texts, which are posted on the opening page of the CCCB website, are taken from the special fascicules published by the French Sector Commission for Liturgy and the Sacraments for each Canadian Saint and Blessed. They are being translated into English by CCCB staff. Links will also be provided for catechetical materials related to the life of each saint.


There are also links to this information on our Diocesan website at <http://www.rcdvictoria.org/the-year-of-consecrated-life.php>. As Saints are featured by the CCCB, we will update our information. As at press time, Saint Brother André Bessette (January 7) and Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys (January 12) are featured.

Please follow along as we celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life! ✠



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St Patrick's Council 7934 serving Oak Bay and Saanich East
Langford Council 8394 serving Western Communities and Sooke
Saanich Peninsula Council 9703 serving Saanich Peninsula & Gulf Is.
St. Joseph the Worker Council 13356 serving Saanich West
Sacred Heart Council 15445 serving Sacred Heart Parish—Saanich North and East
Fr. Brabant 4th Degree Assembly serving Greater Victoria
Bishop Demers 4th Degree Assembly serving Greater Victoria

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Christmas Eve Celebrations on Penelakut Island

by Rella Sylvester

It's been years since we had Mass here – over twenty years. When Fr. Jose said, “We will celebrate Mass with Bishop Gary, the new Bishop. We’ll welcome him that day and have baptisms and confirmations,” I felt so happy and blessed. It took me a long time to convince people to get their children baptized. I spoke for hours about the Spirit.

I felt so happy and proud of my daughter, Geneva. She received her first communion a year ago, on my birthday. This past Christmas she had her confirmation. How elated I felt. My brother Steve Sylvester and myself were the last ones who were confirmed here in Penelakut. That was 30 years ago. So to have my daughter go through with this on Christmas Eve was a gift from God. The night was a true celebration with my family. It was also my grandfather Francis James's birthday. What a night!

Having most of my family present was a true blessing; they all got to watch and all took part. The drum group was one of the most beautiful. My brother August Sylvester sat down and sang family prayer songs, bringing tears to my eyes. He is more than 70 years old and a Council Chief. He is our family leader. He gave everyone a present that day.

I would like to thank all who took part, including Srs. Vinda and Elisa, and Fr. Jose for arranging this celebration, and most of all, thanks to Bishop Gary for blessing all the beautiful souls of these children. I can't thank everyone enough ... we are making new paths here with people who were harmed. We will always lead with love. Let us all learn to love God and learn to love each other more.

Blessings from Penelakut Island. ✂

by Cheryl Jim

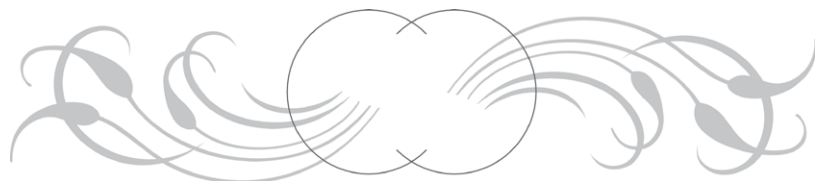
On December 24, 2014, we entered the gym around noon for the Christmas Eve Mass. Bishop Gary came over to Penelakut Island for the first time. When we entered the gym, there were already a lot of people there; there was also to be Baptism and Confirmation during the Mass.

There were thirteen people – babies, children and adults – who were baptized. Before the Mass started, I think everyone was nervous and excited for the baptism. Following the baptism there were four of us who got confirmed and one who received First Communion. Following the confirmation, the Bishop completed the service. The families were all happy and they also enjoyed spending time together after the Mass.

“I am hoping that one day there will be a church built here on Penelakut Island again and that more people will join us in the Catholic faith.

The Christmas Eve Mass brought more of our community members back to the Catholic Church. I got baptized over two years ago before I got married. At the Christmas Eve Mass, my husband and I were confirmed as well. Becoming Catholic has had a positive effect on our life. We see life in a different way and pray every morning when we wake up and pray every night before we go to bed. I was proud to see all the ones who got baptized at this Mass. I was also happy that I was confirmed with my husband and my sister as well – I consider Geneva as my sister in Christ. It was a journey that the three of us took together.

I am hoping that one day there will be a church built here on Penelakut Island again and that more people will join us in the Catholic faith. ✂



Centering Prayer: Discovering the Inner Room

by Charlie Allen

Joe was a very busy man with a bustling family and a demanding job. He told Fr. Pennington that his life was a “three-ringed circus,” and there was no way he could find 20 minutes twice a day for centering prayer. Fr. Pennington replied, “Joe, where there's a will, there's a way.”

“Centering Prayer has inspired me to deal differently with the locked door within me. This prayer is amazing. (CW)

So, Joe was in his office 20 minutes early every morning, spending the extra time in centering prayer, and when he got home, after greeting his family he took a bath and prayed for another 20 minutes, while in the tub. This went on for about three weeks and his wife began to notice that he had changed from carrying the world on his shoulders to being upbeat and happy. She was suspicious and wondered if he was having an affair at the office. One evening when he came out of the bathroom, she demanded to know what was going on. He told her about centering prayer. She then decided she spend quiet time in the bath, engaged in centering prayer while Joe prepared supper for the family.

Do you suspect that there may be more to reality than you are presently aware of? Do you ever get an inkling that there may be a spiritual dimension to yourself and the entire universe that is key to who you are and what you do?

Centering prayer is going within – deep within – to our spiritual centers. There is always more than we know going on deep inside and we are often out of touch with who we are. We are generally in touch with the physical, psychological and social dimensions of ourselves and we identify with these qualities. We assume that is all there is. But there is a hidden depth to each of us, a buried treasure.

The inner world is the hidden place of communion with the Divine. If we never visit it, the relationship with God withers. “But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

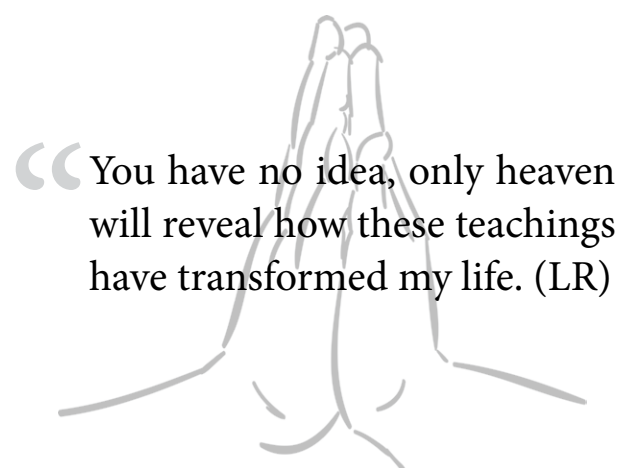
Centering prayer is a method of getting in touch with the indwelling presence, which is a personal, gracious and healing presence. It is the presence of the Blessed Trinity. It fosters a deepening relationship with Jesus Christ.

Six Centering Prayer Workshops (Based on Fr. Keating's DVDs) will be held at St. Joseph the

Worker church during Lent: mornings beginning Saturday, February 14, from 10 – 12 am, or evenings beginning Tuesday, February 17, from 7 – 9 pm.

There will also be six workshops held at the St. Vincent de Paul Office on View St. beginning Wednesday February 18, from 1:30 – 2:30 pm.

To register for workshops at St. Joseph the Worker, please call (250) 479-7413 or email charlieballen@gmail.com. To register for the workshop at St. Vincent de Paul, please call (250) 382-0712 or email charlieballen@gmail.com. ✂



“You have no idea, only heaven will reveal how these teachings have transformed my life. (LR)



Groundbreaking Ceremony: Comox Valley Residential Hospice at The Views at St. Joseph's

by Jane Murphy, President & CEO, St. Joseph's General Hospital

The construction of the new Comox Valley Residential Hospice was celebrated at an official groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, December 19, 2014, at St. Joseph's General Hospital. Don McRae, MLA for Comox Valley and representatives from Island Health, St. Joseph's General Hospital, Comox Valley Hospice Society and the St. Joseph's General Hospital Foundation came together with invited guests to celebrate the start of construction of the four-bed hospice space at The Views.

Palliative care is aimed at relief of suffering and improving the quality of life for persons who are living with or dying from advanced illness. The hospice space at The Views at St. Joseph's will provide an environment characterized by peace, quiet, dignity and privacy where our palliative patients and their families can receive needed care and feel at home during this challenging time.

The new hospice service and beds are a community partnership involving Island Health, St. Joseph's Hospital, Comox Valley Hospice Society and the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation. The Province of BC contributed \$250,000 towards infrastructure improvements in May 2014.

Renovations are well underway to create the new hospice at The Views with four private rooms and bathrooms for both the patient and their family. Each of the new hospice rooms will have ocean and/or garden views.

A clinical operations working group is working behind the scenes to establish how the new hospice service will operate, including developing procedures, admission criteria and eligibility requirements that will become a model across Vancouver Island. ✂



Comox Valley Hospice Groundbreaking Ceremony, December 19, 2014. L to R: Mr. Don Hubbard, Board Chair, Island Health; Ms. Audrey Craig, President, Comox Valley Hospice Society; Hon. Don McRae, Comox Valley MLA; Mr. Chris Kelsey, Board Chair, St. Joseph's Hospital; Ms. Marion Lade, St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation Representative.

Victoria Foundation Grant Assists SVDP with New Vision

by Margaret MacIntyre

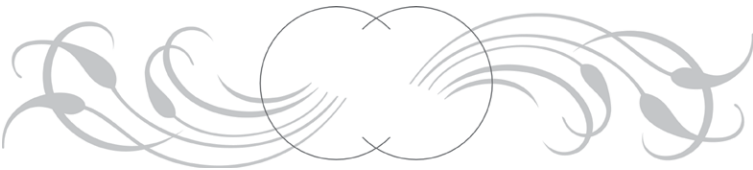
In December 2014, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SVDP) was approved for a Community Grant of \$25,000 from the Victoria Foundation for its innovative employment program BLESS: Building Lasting Employment Success Strategies. BLESS is directed toward adults with significant barriers such as mental, developmental and physical disabilities to assist them in finding appropriate employment that will increase their quality of life financially, emotionally and socially. The project will offer help in overcoming obstacles to employment; greater financial stability and independence; improved self-esteem through a sense of accomplishment and more integration into the local community.

This grant came at an opportune time, as the Society is on the cusp of implementing a new vision for its operations and ministry in the Capital Regional District (CRD) which will involve a greater emphasis on developing programs designed to lift people up out of poverty while at the same time maintaining the traditional emergency food and clothing services which strive to meet the immediate needs of its service base. An essential part of the new vision is decentralization – moving services out into the local communities of the CRD where the eight SVDP conferences reach out to needy people in their geographic locations through home visits and other services. While the downtown core remains a high priority, needy people live all over the Victoria area and the intention is to serve them locally so that people do not need to travel downtown to pick up hampers or access programs. The long-term dream of the Society is to have strong conferences throughout the CRD offering a range of long term and emergency services that meet the needs of local populations through developing partnerships with other service providers.

The Society also has conferences in Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Courtenay and Campbell River. Due to the size of these communities, these conferences are already at the heart of things, forming partnerships with local service groups and providing access to food and household necessities through home visits, soup kitchens and other programs. They also strive to provide long-term assistance to raise people out of their situations of poverty.

2015 should be a good year for the Society as it continues to build up its ministry to the needy people of Vancouver Island. ✂

For more information or to donate please contact SVDP at (250) 727-0007 or go to the website – <https://svdpvictoria.com>, or ask at any of our thrift stores.



Church of the Ascension CWL's New Team

by Sandi Digras

On Thursday, January 8, 2015, the Church of the Ascension Catholic Women's League new Executive Council for 2015 – 2016 was blessed following the Mass celebrated by our Spiritual Director Fr. Mel Bayron.

Our past President Tina Hanlon handed over the gavel to incoming President Nancy Horsfield before opening the 2015 General Meeting. Many of the the past Council renewed their commitment and stayed on in their portfolios. Pat Sestan, our very capable past secretary, gave her job to a new member of the Council, Barbara Potter. Staying on for the next two years are: Pat Worcester (Treasurer); Carol Low and Penny Cowan (Spiritual); Mary Sheil (Organization); Carmen Parent (Christian Family Life); Rose Marie Hague (Community Life); Maureen Dawson (Education); Julia Murrell (Health/Resolutions/Legislation); Sandi Digras (Communication/Special Events).

"I am so blessed to have such a dedicated team who are willing to support me as their new President and give me their guidance and ideas," commented Nancy Horsfield.

Our past President Tina Hanlon will still be very active within the Council by sharing her warmth and caring in the kitchen and within the Council. The 2015 agenda is already full with our Annual Baby Shower for the Pregnancy Crisis Centre scheduled to be held on the February 19, 2015.

There will also be a spring tea and fashion show as a fundraiser and we will again sponsor "Let's Talk" on June 1 in honour of the World Day of Communication. "Let's Talk" is a way for all the ministries to communicate what they do within the Parish, and perhaps recruit new volunteers. Last year we were very successful and many ministries were able to enlist a number of willing hearts and hands. ✂



Church of the Ascension Catholic Women's League Members with Fr. Mel



Celebrations Continue as Sacred Heart Parish Approaches Its 50th Anniversary

By Ben Pires, Member, 50th Anniversary Committee

Sacred Heart Hymn Contest Now Has Prize Money

First Prize	\$1,000
Second Prize	\$500
Third Prize	\$250

The Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island, has approved a grant of \$1,750 for prizes for the Sacred Heart Hymn Composition Contest launched in October with the parish’s talented musical director, Rafael Oei, in charge.

Deadline for submissions is Friday, April 24, 2015.

It is open to all parishes throughout the Diocese of Victoria, and across Canada. Special invitations to join the contest are being sent to the more than 120 Sacred Heart parishes in the country including Sacred Heart Cathedrals in Kamloops, Prince George, Bathurst, Prince Albert and Whitehorse.

A panel of judges will select contemporary “Sacred Heart” hymns, particularly those that resonate with the youth, an anniversary legacy for the benefit of our youth. The panel will look for:

- warm, welcoming processional hymns;
- meditative hymns for communion;
- rousing, joyous recessional hymns.

The composition should be catchy, easy to follow and remember, and the pitch range should not be too high nor too low so that it does not exclude anyone from singing.

Please email sacredheartvictoriabc@gmail.com to request an application form. Submissions can be sent by mail, hand-delivered or through e-mail to sacredheartvictoriabc@gmail.com. ✂

The Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island is a charitable entity with a vision of islanders living vibrantly the teachings of Jesus. Its sole responsibility today is to nurture and shepherd an endowment fund – income earned from donations given – that enables the Foundation to give grants prudently to organizations, institutions, groups or individuals to help them undertake spiritual, educational, social, and charitable projects and programs that help islanders live vibrantly the teachings of Jesus.



“How I Long For a Poor Church for the Poor!”

George Bergoglio said these words soon after becoming Pope Francis on February 28, 2013. He wants Catholics to devote greater attention to poverty alleviation. As a key activity of the year-long celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the First Mass at Sacred Heart Church on Nelthorpe Street on September 5, 1965, our faith community will sponsor a night of ‘Feeding the Needy’ on Friday, February 20, 2015, at the Philippine Bayanihan Community Centre at 1709 Blanshard Street.

“To love God and neighbour is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person in the face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, in the face of Jesus.”

~ Pope Francis, during visit at the homeless shelter “Dona Di Maria,” May 2013

There will be two sittings: 5pm for families and 7pm for individuals. The program involves getting ingredients for the meals donated, half a dozen volunteers to prepare the meal, and a few volunteers to serve the food, clean up and provide security.

Pastors in the Greater Victoria area are being invited to serve at the dinner. The people who come for the meal are usually selected by an organization that has experience in helping the needy. St. Vincent de Paul Society will issue the tickets for our parish’s project. Coordinating the event are Judith Ravaï and Bernie Shaw.

The ‘Feeding the Needy’ program is in its fourteenth year at the centre, having started immediately after the centre opened in November of 2001. Various individuals, families, groups and organizations – including Couples for Christ, the Victoria Fil-Can Seventh Day Adventist Church, and staff of Aberdeen Hospital – sponsor, prepare and serve the meals for the needy and the homeless. From 60 to 120 individuals are served each time. The downtown centre is ideal as suburban locations can be inaccessible and discomforting for them.

The centre provides the venue free of charge because one of its core values is to show compassion for the needy by feeding them. ✂

“Poverty calls us to sow hope.... Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures.”

~ Pope Francis

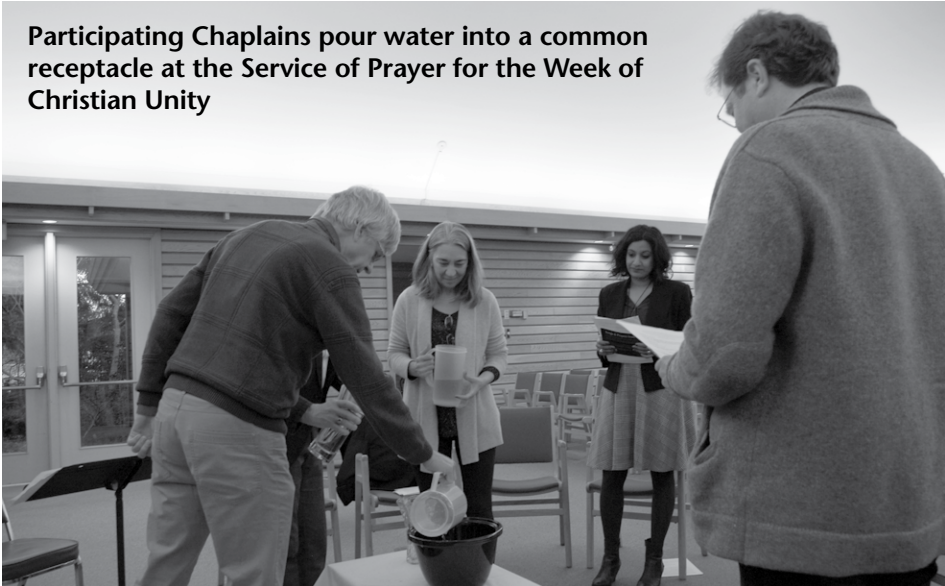
Christian Unity at the University of Victoria

by Fr. Dean Henderson

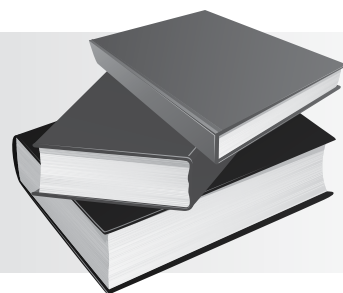
On Tuesday, January 20, 2014, for the first time in my eight-year history as UVic Chaplain, the UVic Chapel welcomed its first Service of Prayer for the Week of Christian Unity.

A small but significant gathering included UVic Chaplains from the Catholic, Lutheran, United and Baptist Christian communities along with others who gathered in Christ’s peace and charity. The service, which this year was shaped by those from Brazil, included a reflection on the Biblical passage of the woman at the well in John 4, and included a symbolic act of pouring water into a common receptacle by the four Christian leaders.

After an hour of prayer and praise in the Taizé style, we all enjoyed light refreshments, and making and building friendships. We hope for a repeat of this positive spiritual encounter with Jesus and each other next year. ✂



Island Catholic Schools



An AWEsome Responsibility

by Bishop Gary Gordon

The gift of children and youth! They call forth from their Moms and Dads AWE and wonder at all that God has given! They call forth all of the responsibility to be authentic – to witness to the excellence that God has imprinted in their being from the moment of their existence in their mother’s womb.

The staff of our Island Catholic Schools assist parents in their primary responsibility of being good teachers and examples of virtue for the treasure of their children. *Authenticity* of Catholic education is founded in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, who in his life, death and resurrection, reveals what it is to be fully human – and the meaning of life itself.

“How precious must the human person be in the eyes of the Creator, to have gained so great a Redeemer.”

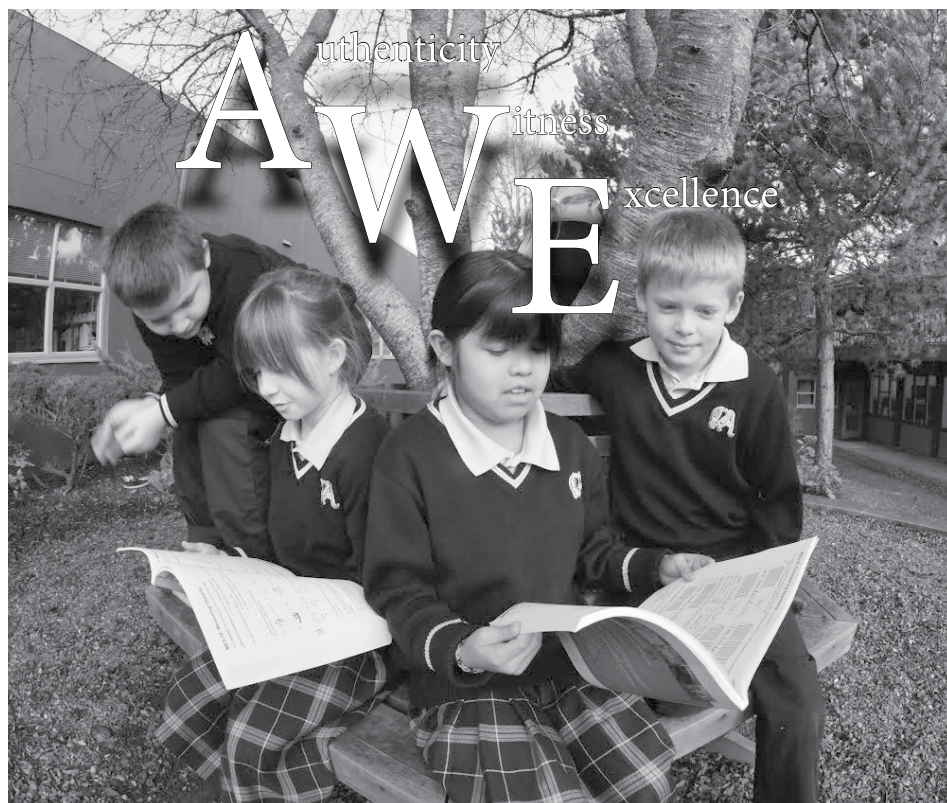
~ (cf. *Redemptor Hominis* #10 St. Pope John Paul II)

The Catholic school is a witness to the Gospel of life and the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ. This fundamental goal of Catholic schools explains why the staff of our schools, above all else, *Witness* to their personal relationship with Jesus Christ with you and your children, and are authentically engaged in their own Catholic community (parish) on a regular basis, by full conscious, active, participation. It is from our Catholic communities of worship, charity, mercy, justice and truth that our schools find their roots and meaning.

The glory of God is the human person fully alive, and to this end, *Excellence* in formation of the human person to be all that God wants each person to be is our mission. “How precious must the human person be in the eyes of the Creator, to have gained so great a Redeemer,” (cf. *Redemptor Hominis* #10 St. Pope John Paul II).

These foundational principles of Catholic education is the mission of Island Catholic Schools.

Finally raising children, is an *AWEsome* responsibility which we share in mutual trust and collaboration as parents, educators, and parishes. And with the grace of the Holy Spirit our schools, create an environment where our young people can grow in faith hope and love. ✠



2015 – 16 Catholic School Registration

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent of Island Catholic Schools

It is the time of year that parents begin to consider what school they want their child(ren) to attend next year. Those of you who have children ready to begin kindergarten are invited to visit the local Catholic school. To those of you, who have children in the public system, please consider us. The Catholic schools of the Diocese not only offer an excellent academic education, they do so within a Catholic framework.

The following questions are often asked about our schools.

When did Catholic Schools in BC first come into existence?

Catholic schools first came into formal existence in the middle of the 1800s in British Columbia, with the arrival of the Sisters of St. Ann to Victoria and Kamloops. Religious Orders of the day played a dominant role in establishing Catholic Schools throughout the province. At that time, there was a lack of schools and a need to educate children so the religious came with a purpose to bring a Christian education to the youth of the area. Schools were funded by donations from the community and parishioners.

Where are the schools of the Victoria Diocese located?

There are six Catholic Schools in the Diocese (five elementary and one high school):

- John Paul II in Port Alberni (K-8)
- St. Joseph’s School in Chemainus (K-7)
- Queen of Angels School in Duncan (K-9)
- St. Joseph’s School in Victoria (K-7)
- St. Patrick’s School in Victoria (K-7)
- St. Andrew’s Regional High School in Victoria (8-12)

All of the elementary schools offer Preschool and many offer out-of-school care and daycare.

Are there entrance exams?

There are no entrance exams for BC students. Based on our mission statement, Catholic schools first accept students from Catholic families and Catholic parishes. Others families not of the Catholic faith but wanting a faith-based education for their child and who support the Catholic philosophy are accepted. Catholic schools bring the Gospel message of Jesus Christ to all within their walls.

Do you accept children who require a Learning Assistance and/or Special Education Program?

Yes, all of our schools accept students of all ability levels. Principals will accept students requiring special assistance into the school following the procedures outlined in the admissions policy, provided the appropriate program, facilities, classroom space and support personnel are available to meet the needs of the child.

What qualifications are required of teachers employed in the schools?

Teachers must be certified by the BC Teachers Branch of the Ministry of Education. All of our teachers require the same education and training and certification as public school teachers.

Are the teachers part of the BC Teachers’ Union (BCTF)?

Our teachers are not a part of the BC Teachers Federation (BCTF). Most of our teachers are members of the Catholic School Teacher’s Association.

Is the BC curriculum followed?

Yes. The curriculum established by the Ministry of Education must be taught in order for our schools to receive 50% funding. All other Ministry requirements must also be met (e.g., hours of instruction, health and safety, records management, and so on). In addition, all of our students are required to take Religious Education.

Are your schools evaluated?

All independent schools are evaluated by the Ministry of Education every six years and they undergo monitoring visits every two years.

Why are Catholic schools in BC not publicly funded like the schools in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario (where you declare where you want your property taxes to go)?

This is an historical issue. Education is a provincial jurisdiction and when Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario joined Canada, Catholic schools were publicly funded and have remained so to this day. All other provinces have “partial” or “no” funding for Catholic schools, thus the need for tuition fees for our schools.

Feel free to check out the Island Catholic Schools website for more information at www.cisdv.bc.ca. The individual school websites can be accessed through this site. ✠

Should you wish to speak to someone about our schools, please contact the local Catholic school in your area, or call the Diocesan Island Catholic School Office at (250) 727-6893



Catholic Schools Week February 1 - 7, 2015

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent of Schools

The first week of February marks the beginning of Catholic Schools' Week (CSW) in British Columbia. Every year, Catholic schools throughout the province join together to send a message about the importance and value of Catholic education. Special events are planned throughout the week and it is our hope that people in the community will visit our schools. (see Centre Spread, pages 12 & 13, for more information). CSW marks the formal beginning of registration time for the following school year. Lastly, this week more than ever is a time to thank:

- Parents for choosing a Catholic education for their children and for their financial sacrifice;
- Local School Councils, the Board of Directors and the many volunteers who give so freely of their time;
- Community businesses for their donations;
- Pastors for their spiritual guidance;
- Parishioners for their prayers and financial support;
- Students for the joys they bring; and
- Staff for their dedication and commitment to Catholic Education.

Thank you – you are a blessing to the Diocese and the mission of Catholic Education! ✠



Island Catholic Schools Live the *Joy* of the Gospel

Dedicated staff are committed to educating the "whole" child in Christ-centred communities of learning. They strive to help students reach the highest levels of development by providing exceptional learning opportunities that stimulate growth in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and personal values in line with Catholic beliefs.



St. Joseph's
(Pre-School to Grade 7)
9735 Elm St, Chemainus
250-246-3191
www.stjosephselem.ca

Queen of Angels
(Pre-School to Grade 9)
2085 Maple Bay Rd, Duncan
250-746-5919
www.queenofangels.ca

St. Joseph's
(Pre-School to Grade 7)
757 W Burnside Ave, Victoria
250-479-1232
www.stjosephschool.ca

St. Patrick's
(Kindergarten to Grade 7)
2368 Trent St, Victoria
250-592-6713
www.stpatrickselem.ca

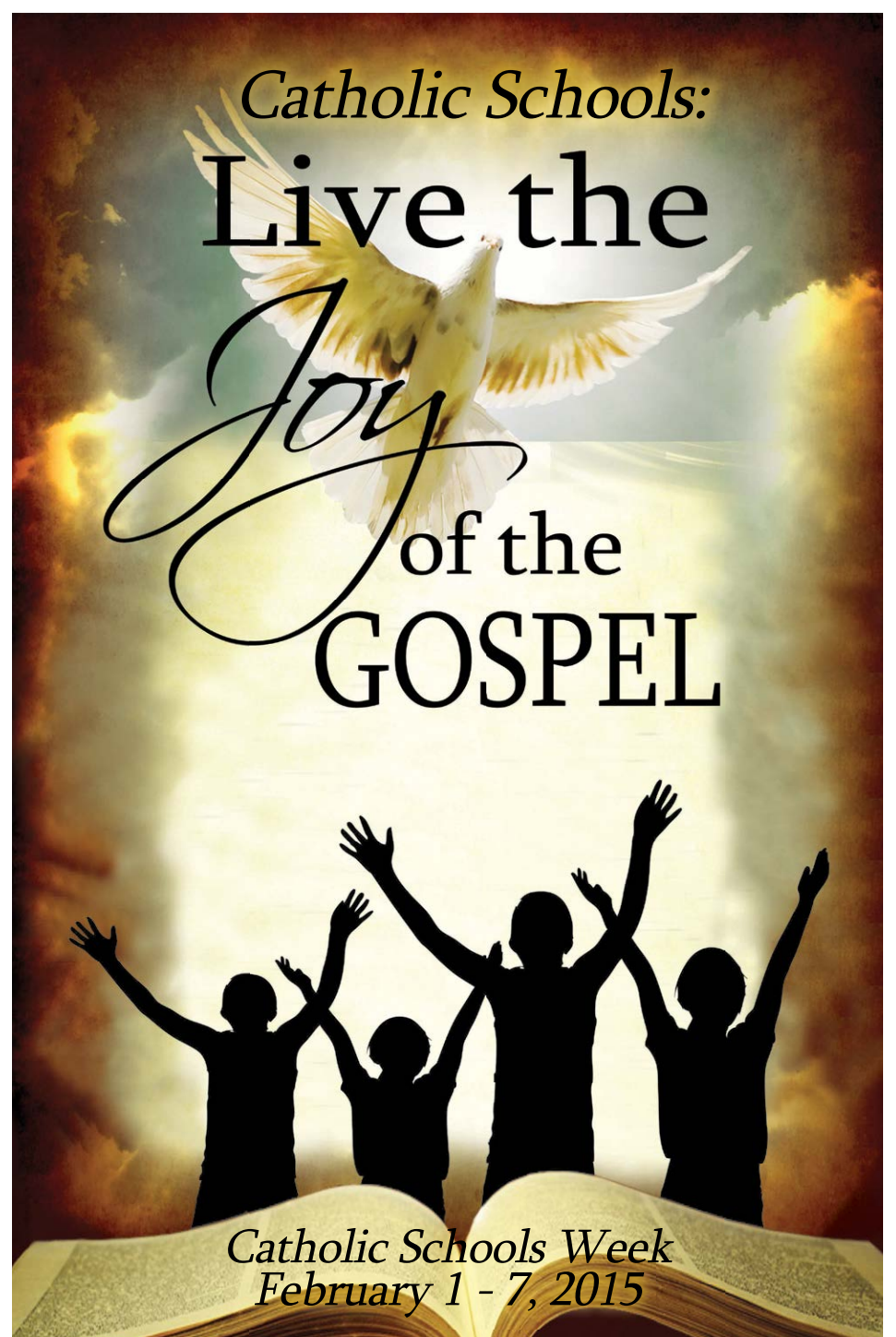
St. Andrew's Regional High
(Grade 8-12)
880 McKenzie Ave, Victoria
250-479-1414
www.standrewshigh.ca

John Paul II
(Kindergarten to Grade 8)
4006 8th Ave, Port Alberni
250-723-0637
www.jp2nd.ca

Call today for registration information

K to 12, Pre-school, Day Care, Out of School Care for September 2015!

250-727-6893 or visit www.cisdv.bc.ca





We’re looking forward to an exciting and joy-filled Catholic Schools Week at JP II! Catholic Schools Week is a great time to celebrate all of the unique and delightful parts of our school. What fun we will have!

~ Gordon Higginson, Principal, John Paul II, Port Alberni

Queen of Angels Catholic School will be celebrating the joy of Catholic education during Catholic Schools Week. We are doubly joyful because we will have been in the Cowichan Valley for 50 years as of April, 2015. We have much to be grateful for. Our school has an Early Learning Centre and offers grades K – 9. All together we serve 296 families with a total enrolment of 461. Our staff numbers 54.

~ Kathy Korman, Principal, Queen of Angels, Duncan

A Catholic education is not a duplicate of that offered in other school systems. It follows the Ministry of Education requirements, but from a Catholic perspective and with a curriculum enhanced by Gospel values. In the words of Pope John Paul II, “Community is at the heart of Catholic education.”

At St. Patrick’s School, students are guided and nurtured in a caring community of school, home and parish. They are given opportunities to put their values to use – in the classroom, at recess, in the community and in extra-curricular activities. With the support of highly engaged staff and parents, students are not just preparing for tests in the classroom; they are being prepared for tests in life.

I am always delighted to showcase this great little school. Please join me for our open house on February 4, 2015, or call to arrange a tour.

~ Deanne Paulson, Principal, St. Patrick’s, Victoria

School	Saturday / Sunday Jan 31 / Feb 1	Monday Feb 2	Tuesday Feb 3
St. Andrew’s Regional High School *Events subject to change; please check with the school office to confirm*		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outreach in Victoria by VOICE and Student Council• Assembly presentation about the CSW theme• Introduction of the TAG Trivia Challenge which will run until Thursday with prizes awarded next Monday.• Exhibition basketball game with Queen of Angels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poetry Presentation• TAG challenge• Parent trivia
John Paul II Port Alberni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead Mass at Holy Family/ Notre Dame 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morning Prayer Assembly (Gr 6)• Begin a “Joy Chain” in our “school family groups” – students/ staff think of things that bring them joy. Write one a day on a “chain link” and decorate. Chain added down the main hall for the duration of the week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morning Prayer Assembly (Gr 6)• Afternoon Parishioner Assembly 1 – 2pm. Choir / band presentation
Queen of Angels Duncan Activities throughout the week will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CSW prayer services in each classroom• Staff baby photo contest• Estimating contests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mass at St. Edward’s Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher’s Surprise Swap in classrooms 8:40 – 9:35am• Treat for staff from Admin.• Jr. Girl’s and Boy’s Basketball teams are visiting St. Andrew’s High School for an exhibition game in the afternoon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dress up as a character• Special School Assembly and prayer 9am
St. Joseph’s Chemainus Activities throughout the week will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily prayer services• Presentation of our Peace Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mass at St. Joseph’s Parish, 10:30am (Sunday, Feb 1) with pancake breakfast hosted by KofC• Mass at St. Mary’s Parish, 9am (Sunday, Feb 8) with pancake breakfast hosted by KofC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assembly and Focus 9am• Summit Assembly and Event Rotation #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assembly and Focus 9am• Summit Assembly and Event Rotation #2
St. Joseph’s Victoria Activities throughout the week will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily prayer services• Presentation of our Peace Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Mass on Saturday, January 3 at St. Joseph the Worker Parish 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open House featuring tours and a short program of performances 5 – 7pm	
St. Patrick’s Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Mass – Celebrating Catholic Education at St. Patrick’s Parish 10:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show your school colours “green and gold”• Staff vs. students volleyball game	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Mass at St. Patrick’s 9:15am



Monday Feb 3	Wednesday Feb 4	Thursday Feb 5	Friday Feb 6
Presentations Range via challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">VOICE bake saleTAG ChallengeParent trivia challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prayer Experience Workshops 11am – 12pmClass visits to the Eucharistic Miracles Tour at Our Lady of the Rosary after lunchBrad Henning presentation for parents, Open House	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guest Speaker at SARHS – Brad Henning – all day
Prayer (Gr 4/5) Tea for rs and on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Morning Prayer Assembly (Gr 7/8)Students v. Staff Floor Hockey Game 1:00 – 1:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Morning Prayer Assembly (Gr 2/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Morning Prayer Assembly (Gr 1/2)Classes visit neighbouring seniors homes with Valentines.Family Potluck Dinner 5:30pm.Talent show to follow.
s a famous chool Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">“Enjoy-mints” will be handed out to parents in the parking lot.Buddy activities to create Valentines. Valentines will be distributed to seniors in community the following week. 1:20pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Open House 1 – 6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Closing assembly 2pmContest winners announced, balloon for each student
nd Focus sembly and tion #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assembly and Focus 9amSummit Assembly and Event Rotation #4Open House 10am – 2pmFamily Burger/Dog/ Games night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assembly and Focus 9amSummit Variety Show 1 – 2:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assembly and Focus 9amWind-up Assembly and Event Rotation #5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">House games		
ss at s Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Open House 5:30 – 6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Principal and Vice Principal for a dayField trip to Our Lady of the Rosary parish for the Eucharistic Miracles exhibit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff and parent appreciation day

At St. Joseph’s School in Chemainus, students will celebrate Catholic Schools Week with some exciting events. The theme of “Live the Joy of the Gospel” is infused throughout the activities. This year children will take part in a “Catholic content” Vacation Bible School program (VBS) that focuses on lessons and experiences that help them understand that, as Christians, we can meet life’s challenges with confidence in God’s steadfast provision for our needs.

Each day the school community will gather for a short assembly at which the theme for the day will be introduced and they will sing a special theme song specially composed for the school this year. The VBS sessions will take place right before lunch break and will include crafts, sport and science activities, bible study, social justice activities, and songs.

Through this special week of prayer, study and community activity students at St. Joseph’s School, together with their families and teachers, strengthen faith and understanding of our call to live in joy and confidence as children of our merciful and abundantly providing God!

~ Bern Muller, Principal, St. Joseph’s Chemainus

St. Joseph’s Elementary School joins Catholic schools across the province in celebrating Catholic Schools Week February 2 – 6.

Our Catholic schools are a treasure to be shared and celebrated for the unique learning environments and rigorous education they provide – come and see what Catholic education has to offer!

~ Simon DiCastri, Principal, St. Joseph’s Victoria



Focus on Youth



Clear eyes,

Full heart ...

Can't lose!

World Youth Day 2016 Official Hymn Released

In Krakow, on the 6th of January (Tuesday), at noon, which coincided with the Epiphany, we listened to the first performance of the official hymn of the World Youth Day Krakow 2016 as it was played for the finale of The Three Kings Parade. The hymn is titled *Blessed are the Merciful*, inspired by the theme of the WYD Krakow 2016 announced by the Holy Father, which is "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." (Mt. 5:7)



Along with the author of the hymn, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz was among the large audience of Krakow dwellers who were gathered to listen to the anthem being premiered.

The premiere of the anthem was performed by three singers, Katarzyna Bogusz, Aleksandra Maciejewska and Przemek Kleczkowski, a mixed choir of around 50 people and by an orchestra under the baton of conductor Hubert Kowalski.

Jakub Blycharz, a Cracovian composer, is the author of the music and lyrics of the anthem *Blessed are the Merciful*. A lawyer by education, a musician by passion, he is the author of liturgical pieces of music such as: *Dobry jest Pan* (Good is the Lord), *Bonum est Praestolari* (It is Good to Wait), *Uczta Baranka* (The Feast of the Lamb) or *Swieta Dziewico* (Oh, Holy Virgin), as well as *Amen*, *Godzien* (Worthy) and *Nie Umre* (I Will Not Die). Along with his wife and daughter, he is involved in the life of a Cracovian community called Głos na Pustyni (A Voice in the Desert).

Mark July 19 – 31, 2016 on your calendars, and join the Diocese of Victoria's World Youth Day Pilgrimage to Krakow Poland! Led by Fr. Paul Szczur SDS, Pastor, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, and Fr. Dean Henderson, Chaplain at the University of Victoria and Camosun College, you will get an insider's view of Krakow traditionally known as one of the leading centres of Polish academic, cultural, and artistic life, as you experience the excitement and spiritual blessings of World Youth Day. For more information contact Fr. Paul olor@shaw.ca or 250-478-3482, or Fr. Dean Henderson catholic@uvic.ca or 250-882-2151, or visit the Diocesan website at www.rcdvictoria.org/world-youth-day.php. ✕

Peace Leaders at St. Andrew's Regional High School

by Julie Cormier and Kelly Bourke

As you may recall from a previous *Diocesan Messenger*, in 2014 the Sisters of St. Ann brought PeaceQuest to Victoria and in particular to our Catholic schools. PeaceQuest is an initiative connecting and building peacemakers locally in an effort to contribute to a network of peace. The goal is to mobilize Catholic students and the community around peace, non-violence and reconciliation. As was highlighted in the previous article, "peace is work and therefore has to be created in order to be maintained." St. Andrew's Regional High School is doing just that by becoming a PeaceQuest school.

What is a PeaceQuest school? PeaceQuest Schools are a national component of the PeaceQuest initiative, which began in Kingston, Ontario, to raise awareness about peace among youth. In order to become designated as a PeaceQuest school, the institution needs to take on a school-wide commitment to working for peace. The four criteria they must meet are: Creating Community Connections; Acting for Peace; Raising Awareness and Engaging Families.

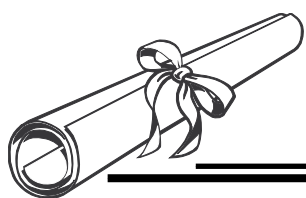
So far, the school has begun this journey by inviting author Jamie Swift to engage the students on the politics in remembering war; organizing 'Peace Week' leading up to Remembrance Day; as well as participating in the PhotoVoice Peace Challenge, using photography to showcase individual expressions of peace. These activities came together through the collaboration of PeaceQuest Coordinator Julie Cormier, the Youth Office Coordinator Kelly Bourke and staff at St. Andrew's Regional High School (SARHS). The students themselves have been the major push and spark for the momentum of this campaign, in particular, the VOICE group, a school club focused on creating awareness around justice issues. After attending a workshop in October titled *Who Will You Make Peace With?* which provided an opportunity to learn about peace building and practices, the students were inspired to plan the first 'Peace Week' at SARHS. Peace Week involved a labyrinth workshop, inviting Saul Arbess, representative of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative, and holding a bake sale to raise funds for Restorative Justice Victoria.

Peace building is fundamental to our faith. We are called to work for peace. PeaceQuest Victoria is giving students an opportunity to explore avenues for peace building within themselves, their relationships now and in the future. This is an important initiative the Sisters are happy to support. Stay tuned for news on further developments on peaceful actions at St. Andrew's High School. ✕



Some VOICE team members with Bishop Gordon and the Religious Education Director Glen Palahicky from the October 2nd Workshop "Who Will You Make Peace With?"





The Campus Mission

by Rob Koechl



Great Expectation – Hope

“I thought to myself, ‘Wow, I’m experiencing what God’s mercy actually feels like.’”

“I’ve been able to experience God’s joy again and that’s through [Eucharistic] Adoration, through Mass.”

It takes boldness to hope for experiences like these. Who would dare expect that experience? Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) instilled that audacious hope in 600 young adults gathered last month. CCO hosted their national annual *Rise Up* conference in downtown Calgary from December 28 – January 1. Great expectations are one of the five tenets of CCO’s work, and the movement encourages students to hope for great things from God.

“I have to have a very great expectation because my father is a king.”

What are great expectations? Andre Regnier, co-founder of CCO explains it like this: “We expect that God is going to use events and initiatives for His glory. He has taken CCO from a small group of enthusiastic young people to a national movement having international influence. Is there a more wonderful or more hopeful place to be than in the midst of young people who are working for the kingdom, expecting God to work powerfully through them?”

“I’m not as hesitant about the future. I’m expectantly hoping for the next challenge God will give me.”

As missionary disciples, we can all strive for the attitude of expecting great things from God. We can trust Him because we see that He has done great things in the past. He can bring the greatest of things from the smallest of places. In Scripture, Mary affirms that “He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.” (Luke 1:52) St. Paul says that “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.” (1 Cor. 1:27) God uses the lowly, the weak, the small, to do great things.

“I haven’t been able to experience that before, so this is a really new experience. And it’s incredible.”

“I finally heard God say for the first time in my life that He loved me and that He thought of me as good and I wept and wept.”

“Why did I waste all my time worrying, He’s obviously got it under control.”

The Old Testament story of Gideon is a vivid depiction of God moving in great expectations. The Midianites, who were overwhelming in number, oppressed the Israelites. God tells Gideon that he will lead his people to victory. He’s an unlikely candidate; he’s the least in his family and belongs to the weakest clan. (Judges 6:15-16). Then, once Gideon has his army of 32,000 men, God says that they’re too many. Gideon should pare down the army. This paring continues until only 300 men remain. God wanted Gideon to have an army so small that winning would seem impossible.

It needed to be obvious to Gideon – and to all of Israel – that it would not be them who defeated the enemy. It could only be God.

It’s the same with our evangelization work today. It is not we who do this work, but God. Just look at CCO’s history! What started with a small group at the University of Saskatchewan is now a national movement. There are more than 70 CCO missionaries on 12 campuses across Canada. At the first Rise Up, 15 years ago, a small group of 100 people began hearing about God’s love for them. This year, 670 people heard the Gospel message.

The Mideanite-like swarm of secularism and vice doesn’t overwhelm just young adults. It affects all people. Only God can defeat this, and He uses what the world sees as small and insignificant instruments. Will we be bold enough to ask God what we can do to tell others about Him? Listen to His answer. Through your witness, God can act and produce experiences like those at Rise Up in Calgary. ✂



Connections

by Raya MacKenzie



Over Christmas, I came across a captivating quotation in a little-known sequel to *Frosty the Snowman*. The otherwise silly movie had these wise words to impart: “When you don’t have all the answers, then there’s room for amazing things to happen.”

As I move forward into the New Year, I keep returning to these ideas of unknown answers and making room. I’m at a time in my life when I feel I know few answers. Some things have become clearer over the last five months. I was accepted to Law School at UVic for September, and I am relieved that I know where I will be in the fall. Still, I have little idea what Law school might hold for me. Will I enjoy it? What kind of Law will I pursue? Will I be good at it?

“When you don’t have all the answers, then there’s room for amazing things to happen.”

So far, my on-the-job education as a legal assistant has presented more challenges for me than I initially anticipated. Most legal assistants take college courses specifically in law firm administration. With none of these credentials, I find myself flung into the fast-paced legal admin world. I stumble over the most basic office procedures. Last week, I had to draft a letter four times because I did not know the proper way to address a corporation. Each time, the lawyer gave me the copy back, streaked with red cross-outs and scribbled corrections. I know none of the answers, and this ignorance, even if it will allow for amazing things, is uncomfortable for me.

In school, I’ve always been a bit like the Hermione Grange character in the Harry Potter series, always rocketing my hand into the air to provide an answer or digging through the archives to find one. In my personal life, I’ve clung just as firmly to knowledge in the hope that it would bring me the security I was really seeking. When I was a teenager in counselling for anxiety, a counsellor once asked me what power I would have if I could be a superhero. I replied, “to know everything.”

I’m not sure I would answer that question the same way today. Not knowing everything—knowing almost nothing—has opened my eyes to a gift greater than the false confidence and security of easy answers. It has forced me face-to-face with humility.

My transition from the English department at university, where I felt I knew everything about my area of expertise, to the law firm, where I don’t know anything about anyone’s area of expertise (I can’t even tell you what the areas of expertise are) is an ongoing exercise in humility for me. I no longer have my letter grades and awards to shelter my fragile ego. Even the skills I gained in earning those grades and awards seem, at least at this point, non-transferrable. I can write a coherent, beautiful, thirty-page thesis but I can’t correctly address a letter to a corporation without four tries. I often struggle with being humbled by my inability to know instinctively how to do my job. I think to myself, “If I am smart, how can I mess this up so many times? I actually must be stupid.”

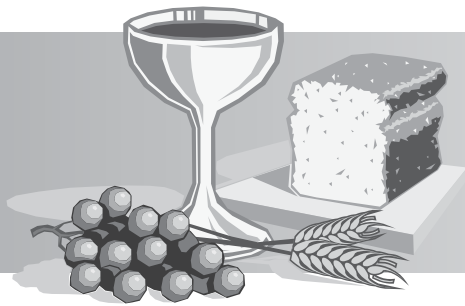
When I encounter these thoughts, I have to remember what it actually means to be humble, to have humility. I easily confuse humility with humiliation. Allowing humiliation to guide my self-worth makes me feel stupid, or ashamed, or unworthy. Embracing humility invites me to recognize my potential for growth. Humility is that room for amazing things to happen. And it has shown me just how much I have relied on external things to value myself instead of trusting in my soul and the voice of God speaking within. I built a superhero mask for myself out of accomplishments and goals and answers I thought I knew. Now that the mask is being crushed under humility, I am free. I am free to show my own face.

It isn’t always a pretty face. Sometimes it is crinkled in the exasperation of making another mistake at work. Sometimes, at home, it is shrouded in the tears that come with the growing pains of change. But more often I catch myself staring, wide-eyed, eager to learn and to love.

So today, instead, I would ask for an amazing power: the strength and the courage to keep the mask off. ✂



Vocations



The Still, Small Voice Within

By Bishop Gary Gordon

The small, quiet voice of God calling Samuel as he slept in the temple is a beautiful story of a vocation (a call) from God. “Samuel, Samuel,” and Samuel responded, “Speak, Lord your servant is listening.” A few months ago I wrote of the seed of vocation that was planted in my own heart by the example of my family. In this little article I want to share a story of a calling, though at the time I did not know it was a voice of calling.

When I was in grade four at St. Francis de Sales school near my home in Burnaby, our class was visited one day by a priest in a long white robe (cassock) who had a Kodak slide projector and showed us pictures of his mission in Congo, Africa, and told us a few stories with the photos. I was mesmerized and challenged by the sheer adventure, and the gentle, calm voice of Fr. Raymond Campeau. This one-day visit and images of the missions stayed with me.

Activities I seemed to naturally choose, like fishing, mountain climbing, boat building, map reading and fixing stuff, together with a great interest in cultures and people, were the ways I was somehow being trained for missionary-discipleship without knowing it. When I was young, I imagined being a forest ranger or coastguardsman, but the real of tug of my youth was to be a missionary of Jesus.

Only some years after ordination was I able to recall the quiet voice that was the call. Indeed the missionary spirit fell upon me as I reflect back on my growing-up years and time in the seminary. Activities I seemed to naturally choose, like fishing, mountain climbing, boat building, map reading and fixing stuff, together with a great interest in cultures and people, were the ways I was somehow being trained for missionary-discipleship without knowing it. When I was young, I

imagined being a forest ranger or coastguardsman, but the real of tug of my youth was to be a missionary of Jesus. It just seemed to be a life that made such a real lasting impact in other peoples’ lives.

You might be wondering why I didn’t join a missionary order of the Church. I am not really too sure, but I know that the ordinary parish life I lived as a priest was really just a means to engage people in the missions of the Church at home and globally.

One of the really great moments of life as a parish priest was twinning with a parish in Haiti, and also hand-mixing and pouring a cement foundation for a medical centre in Puno, Peru.

I think even as a small child going to church on Sunday I was led somewhere beyond my little world. And the wonderful missionary-disciples I have been privileged to know all my life have showed me a world way beyond Sunday Mass, but also have showed me the vital link that Jesus Christ in the Eucharist created in a little heart that is fulfilled in a bigger heart today – leading beyond the geographical margins to the peripheries and hidden depths of the heart and soul of brothers and sisters on the journey of life.

Wow, does it lead somewhere! Way beyond my wildest boyhood missionary dreams! Those early dreams of the missions to the margins of human life are still what fill my heart. ✠

A vocational call naturally requires an openness to the will of God and recognizes that good shepherding always involves consideration of the needs of the People of God. For the past few months, the Personnel Committee (Bishop Gary Gordon, Fr. John Laszczyk, Fr. William Hann and Cynthia Bouchard-Watkins) have been reviewing clergy and Diocesan needs and have determined that certain changes in parish priest personnel will occur in the Diocese on July 1, 2015. Your ongoing prayers for the needs of the Diocese during this period of discernment are greatly appreciated.

Catholic Underground
ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

Catholic Underground is an initiative which engages youth in both their culture and their faith. Located in the basement of St Pat's Victoria.

2nd & 4th Saturday @ 7^{PM}

Grades 10 - 12. All are welcome.
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Face the Day



by Bonnie Landry

For the purpose of this article, I would like to define some terms. For those who were raised Catholic, some of these might be familiar, even comfortable terms. But for those of us raised in the “dark abyss,” understanding of “Catholic language” can come slowly. Fr. John Hardon’s *Catholic Pocket Dictionary* has been one of my best friends over the years, when ignorance of Catholic terms impeded my understanding of events, conversations and expectations. The Catholic Pocket Dictionary still holds office on my ‘daily’ bookshelf as I sometimes awkwardly try to explain Catholic “stuff” to my kids.

The joy of the Gospel is what we experience because of the good news of Jesus Christ. We experience the joy of the Gospel *more* when we understand what it means. We enter more fully into the mystery of Christ’s love.

Here is just one area of Catholic language that increases our ability to fully enter into the joy of the Gospel. The seasons of the liturgical year took a long time to gel for me. So, for those of you who are like me, here’s a little basic information that was helpful:

Liturgical – concerning the official public worship of the Church (that which is for the people, as opposed to private devotion) When we hear terms such as ‘liturgical seasons, liturgical vestments, liturgical colours’, it means those things that pertain to public worship we participate in at Mass.

Ordinary Time – two periods during the Liturgical year: between Epiphany (the end of the Christmas season) and Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent); and again between Pentecost (at the end of the Easter Season, celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, about 50 days after Easter) and Advent. Note: there are several other pretty important days in there, I’m glossing over for the purpose of giving the big picture.

Advent – is the season of preparation for the feast of Christmas.

Christmas – celebrates the birth of Christ. Not the birth of debt.

Lent – is the season of prayer and penance before Easter. It helps prepare the faithful to better receive the graces of the great feast of Easter.

Holy Week and Easter – are the major events of the Liturgical year. The passion (suffering), death, burial and resurrection (arising from the dead) of Jesus are celebrated. It’s not about chocolate. It never has been. It never will be. Chocolate is merely one of the many perks of Christian celebratory seasons. Easter is when we celebrate Jesus’ suffering and death for the purpose of saving us from our own sin and the sin of mankind. *Note: this is Good News, major benefits coming our way!*

Knowing this handful of terms does what for us? How do we benefit from this information?

Formation (the development of the spiritual life, character, good habits) and **Information** (the acquisition of knowledge, facts) go hand in hand to make us whole people. If we don’t know some of the really basic stuff of Christianity, we are impeded in our growth.

Kevin Vost, in his book, *Memorize the Faith* drives the point home that we cannot *be* something, we cannot *do* something that we do not know. He suggests that we memorize the important stuff about our Catholic faith *because we cannot live what we don’t know*. We can’t truly live the teachings of Christ if we don’t know what those teachings are. We can better live the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy if we know what they are, and strive to commit them to memory. When we know these things, we recognize need. And we recognize our ability to respond to the need.

“The joy of the Gospel is what we experience because of the good news of Jesus Christ. We experience the joy of the Gospel *more* when we understand what it means. We enter more fully into the mystery of Christ’s love.

The liturgical seasons: Ordinary time, which we are presently in; Lent, which is fast upon us (pun intended); and Easter, all point to something else. They point to the Gospel.

The Gospel is *good news*! It means, good news, good tidings, awesome announcement, something to hail the Good. The first four books of the New Testament are called the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are four different accounts of Christ’s life. The four Gospels chronicle and explain the scope of Christ coming for our salvation. Fr. Hardon says this about the Good News:

This is the whole teaching of Christianity, which those who believe accept with their minds and strive to put into practice. It is “news” because what Christ revealed had previously been hidden from the foundation of the world; and it was “good” because it revealed the infinite goodness of God, who became man and because, through Christ all the benefits of divine grace have been conferred on a fallen human race.

The joy of the Gospel is something we need to know about. We need to know it, experience it, share it. We need to get it.

It’s good for us to know our faith, including the language of it. It’s good to put posters on our walls, to talk about and memorize those things we are trying to live out.

The joy of the Gospel is not *liturgical*. It is the *reason* liturgy exists. The joy of the Gospel doesn’t belong to a liturgical season, it is the reason for and purpose of those seasons. The joy of the Gospel is not even feeling joy. The joy of the Gospel is Jesus Christ, God, in human form, come to redeem a fallen world.

That’s seriously Good News. ✂

“The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received, the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him. What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known?

~ Evangelii Gaudium, 264

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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'



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Faith Matters



How do I Live the Joy of the Gospel?

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

Live the Joy of the Gospel. There's much to unpack in this little phrase!

How do I Live the Joy of the Gospel?

Live is of course related to *life*, the ability to grow, change, and so on. Live, here, is a verb, and it is used in a particular grammatical structure, that of the imperative form. In other words it carries the added emphasis of a request, an exhortation or a command.

If we look for a moment at the root word, *life*, we do well to consider the potency of its meaning for us as Christians. All life is animated by a force that as yet remains a mystery, particularly to science. Human life is particularly valued for us as Christians as it is directly related to divine life:

... God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Also, St. John tells us *God is love* (1 John 4). So being made in God's image is a direct reference to love, the essence of the Holy Trinity – a community of loving relationship. Love is the life of the Trinity, a complete, selfless love. God the Father's unrelenting outpouring of love to the Son and the Son's completely reciprocal love simultaneously expresses the Holy Spirit. This same community of love is the source of our being, our life, and so we too are similarly made for outpouring ourselves for others. Our true fulfillment is found in selfless love – this is living!

If this is too theoretical, we can start with the evidence of sacred Scripture ... *I chose you before the foundation of the world to be with me forever* (Ephesians 1:4); *Even if a mother should forget her child, I will never forget you* (Isaiah 49:15); *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you* ... (John 15:9). These passages and the testimony of the passion death and resurrection of Jesus are compelling evidence for the depth of God's love for each of us.

St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* reminds us that this "image and likeness" is rooted deeply in us, even in our very flesh as much as it is in our souls. We are made for "the other," be it through the community of love we call marriage (man and woman united as one flesh and bringing God's new life into the world, as well as offering nurturing service to neighbour); or spiritually through living as a single person or a religious, married to Christ and birthing Christ to the world through service to humanity.

What is the Joy of the Joy of the Gospel?

Dr. Peter Kreeft, a noted Catholic philosopher has a very simple and direct way of describing joy:

Joy is more than happiness, just as happiness is more than pleasure. Pleasure is in the body. Happiness is in the mind and feelings. Joy is deep in the heart, the spirit, the center of the self.

The way to pleasure is power and prudence. The way to happiness is moral goodness. The way to joy is sanctity, loving God with your whole heart and your neighbor as yourself.

Everyone wants pleasure. More deeply, everyone wants happiness. Most deeply, everyone wants joy. (<http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics/joy.htm>)

What is the Gospel?

In the simplest of terms, it is the good news that the human condition of sin and death is not the end of the story! God the Father never stops loving us; He constantly calls us back into His desired relationship with us, and God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit shows us the way.

I can do all things in him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

So, let's put all this together. We don't really *live*, if, as those marked by divine love, we do not have a relationship with God, the source of all *love*.

“You may be the only gospel someone reads.”

~ Attributed to St. Francis

By definition this involves being *generous* in love. This is not the common notion of "love," that of a mere emotional feeling; no, this is *choosing* to love, especially those who are the "hard-to-love!" Is this easy? No! Is this counterintuitive to self-preservation? Yes! Does this involve sacrifice? Absolutely! So this is where trust and faith, built only through our ever-deepening personal relationship with God, comes in. His grace gives us the ability to do this, and this gives us *joy*, a joy reaching deep into the heart. A *lived joy*, based on knowledge and a personal experience of the One who has first loved us, Who constantly saves us, blesses us, has given us everything, and Who has spared nothing for us, not even Himself!

This selfless, mutuality of love, this commitment is what gives St. Paul the ability to say:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Our Holy Father Francis, in *Evangelii Gaudium*, beautifully sums all of this up by reminding us *who we are, what we are about* and, *who "the other"* is that we are to be concerned about:

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization. (#120)

To be evangelizers of souls, we need to develop a spiritual taste for being close to people's lives and to discover that this is itself a source of greater joy. To be Mission is at once a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people. (#268)

So, go ahead and Live the Joy of the Gospel! ✠

Ordinary Time is Not Just Ordinary

by Glen Palahicky, Director, Office of Religious Education

“God Walks Among the Pots and Pans”

~ St. Theresa of Avila

How quickly the different seasons come and go. The Christmas Season, with all its wonder, festivity, colour and beauty is over; now we begin Ordinary Time.

The Church celebrates 33 weeks (sometimes 34) of Ordinary Time within the year. This counting of time is linked to the word "ordinal," (i.e., first, second, third and so on.) This is the historical reason we call it "ordinary time," but the common understanding of this naming is worth reflection.

Ordinary time is *not* a season of feasting, like the Christmas and Easter Season; or of fasting and waiting, like Lent and the Advent Season; but it is a time of ... well ... *ordinariness*. This season is laced with a few special feasts, including Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, the Sacred Heart, the Transfiguration, the Triumph of the Cross and Christ the King; but in relation to the other seasons there is a quality of plainness and uneventfulness. Seemingly nothing too special happens. But isn't this the case for most of us in our lives, personally and within our families? Most of our lives are experienced in ordinary time; day-in-day-out stuff. We get up, have our routines, off to work, back home with a few more routines and down for the night; quite ordinary.

How wise and beautiful that the Church celebrates liturgically what happens within our spiritual and daily lives. The Church is telling us that the ordinary time in our life is still sacred time. It needs to be counted. The Church challenges us to *celebrate* ordinary time not just endure it. It is a time of grace. "God walks among the pots and pans of our lives." The profound mystery of Jesus' hidden life – a time when he lived an obscure, un-noteworthy, ordinary life as a Jewish carpenter – assures us that ordinary time is still holy time. God is present in all the ordinary events of our lives. Maybe the common green color of this new season will remind us of *life* – all of life. And where *life* is – God is. Even when it's ordinary.

Fredrick Buechner wrote:

Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.

Happy Ordinary Time! ✠



The Voice

by Jean Allen

In Mark 1:14-20 Jesus tells Peter and Andrew to follow him because he will make them fishers of people.

Is there anyone else out there who secretly thinks the disciples had it easy when it came to hearing Christ’s call? They heard a voice, looked up and Jesus was right there, in the flesh. There was no mistaking who he was and what he was asking them. Sure, they had some decisions to make but at least they knew by whom they were being called in that moment.

Sometimes God’s voice is clear to me but, for the most part, I’m not having “walk away from your net” experiences every day. We don’t always hear God’s voice in a way that leaves no doubt in our hearts; it’s actually a rare and beautiful thing to hear God’s voice with the same clarity the disciples or Samuel heard it.

Why does it have to be so rare? Why does hearing the Lord have to involve such hard discernment? “Is this God’s voice leading me or not? Am I supposed to do this or not? If I’m not supposed to do this, I’m sure God will close the door – oh please God, close that friggin’ door!” Then there are the actions I would really like to do. “Is God leading me or not? If I’m not supposed to do this, God will close the door.” However, if God actually does close the doors, I’m ready to find a window and if he shuts the window, I have this fire axe ...

Why does it have to be so difficult? Is it our fault? Is it because we don’t spend enough time in prayer or in the right kind of prayer? Does God get frustrated because we seem to be so deaf?

I don’t believe that. I believe that He allows us to struggle so we will discover that His voice comes in many different ways and forms. He allows us to pray, ask, seek and pray some more. If He does speak clearly in one situation, He may completely change the source of His voice in another. If He always made it easy for us to hear, the truth is we wouldn’t seek Him anymore and we wouldn’t

discover how immense and all encompassing He is. We would be so busy listening for a single note that we would miss the whole symphony of God. We would wait for a singular voice to tell us what to do and where to go and we would respond like good little robots. We would be ‘push button Christians’. We need to understand that it’s not always about what God calls us to do; it’s often more about our relationship with Him and with others as we struggle to discern His will. Sometimes His will is simply, “Stay close to me and dance. Don’t try to figure out the moves or the end results. Just find my rhythm and I’ll take care of the rest.”

We tend to focus strongly on end results and accomplishments. God is not all about end results and accomplishments. He is about being known. If we simply seek to know Him we will start to recognize His voice in ways we never thought we would hear it. If all we listened for was, “Yes, go,” and “No, stop,” what kind of a relationship would that be?

In John 20:29, Jesus said to Thomas, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” (NRSV) He could well have said to any of his disciples, “Have you followed because you heard me? Blessed are those who do not hear and yet follow.” Christ is perfectly capable of revealing his voice when it’s time, but until that moment, rest assured that his voice is gently guiding you and leading you even while you are achingly praying for clarity. This is not a test that you pass or fail. This is God enticing you to seek Him more deeply and know Him more fully.

The Lord is calling you right now. If He weren’t, you would have absolutely no desire to know His will or to follow after Him.

Your desire is the sound of His voice. ✠

(Condensed from Manna Gathering)

Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is.

In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness:

Touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.

~ Frederick Buechner

Called to be One

Excerpted from the Homily by Reverend Canon Dr John Alfred Steele CD at the Opening Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

“We are called to be one so that the world may believe.

I grew up in an era in which Roman Catholics and Protestants lived lives of what may most kindly be described as separate and disparaging existences. By the Grace of God we have moved on.

The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has 120 members and the primary purpose of this Commission is “to serve the churches as they call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one Eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe.”

This year, The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity presented us with two questions:

- Which is the path of unity, the route we should take, so that the world may drink from the source of life, Jesus Christ? Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer that all of his disciples be one so that the world may believe (cf. John 17:21) was a prayer for unity, a call to mission and a call to evangelization. We are all called to manifest the visible unity of the Church so that the world might believe.
- Which is the path of unity that gives proper respect to our diversity? We all drink from a common source of living water – Jesus. As the Samaritan woman drank and then shared her experience, people came to believe first through her witness and then through their experience of Jesus. So it is through our diversified lives and witness that people will come to drink.

At an Ecumenical Council we were asked to formulate a response to the convergence document produced by The Commission on Faith and Order of the WCC. The first convergent text was *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* that had a great influence on mutual recognition of Baptism.

The second convergence text follows from the first and is *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*. This is not simply theological reflection on the nature of the Church. The document is meant to be practical and influence our lives in the way we follow Jesus and live them out as members of the Body of Christ. Through the study of this document we are to become renewed in our spiritual lives.

We are called to be one so that the world may believe. Let us call one another to visible unity expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world so that the world may believe. Amen. ✠



L to R: Bishop Gary Gordon, Rev. Canon Dr. John Alfred Steele CD, Fr. John Laszczyk at the opening service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service at St. Andrew’s Cathedral



Thai Clinic Offers Lifeline to Burmese children

We take our medical care for granted in the developed world. If a child is sick we rush them to the GP or hospital and they are treated immediately. The situation is very different in Myanmar (Burma). More than 20 years of rule under a military junta and internal conflicts have left the country with such a shortage of doctors, nurses, medicines and equipment that people have to travel great distances to get the most basic treatment and children are dying of quite treatable conditions. Maternal and infant mortality rates are among the highest in the world.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=26536>

Pope Francis: War Must Not be Waged in the Name of God

Pope Francis has appealed for peace and reconciliation in Niger, where many churches and other Christian buildings have been destroyed by rioters protests over the Charlie Hebdo cartoons. Addressing the crowds at the weekly General Audience today, the Pope explicitly referred to brutalities perpetrated against Christians, children and churches. He invited everyone present to join him in praying for the victims of recent violence in Niger.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=26535>

Viewpoint: Pope Francis, 21st Century Leader and Defender of God's Creation

As we await the new encyclical being timed for release ahead of the UN climate talks in Paris this coming Autumn, Pope Francis displays incredible leadership qualities that give hope to many within and beyond the boundaries of the Roman Church. Pope Francis is attracting the attention of the world press for his outspoken and critical rhetoric on two important but related subjects. The first is how humanity is contributing and responding to climate change and the second is the global financial system, which is also the underlying driver of environmental destruction.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=26527>

Global Catholic Climate Movement Launched

In advance of the publication of Pope Francis' Encyclical on the Environment, a group of Catholic theologians, scientists, clergy, religious and laypeople have launched the Global Catholic Climate Movement. The Global Catholic Climate Movement is a first-of-its-kind international coalition of Catholics from many nations, continents, and walks of life.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=26512>

Africa, South America trips in Pope's Sights for Next Two Years

by Alan Holdren, Catholic News Agency, Vatican City, January 19, 2015 (CNA/EWTN News)

Pope Francis has revealed that he hopes to make extensive voyages to Africa and Latin America in the next two years.

"The plan is to go to Central African Republic and Uganda. These two, this year," Pope Francis said during a press conference January 19 on his return flight to Rome from the Philippines.

The Pope's revelation comes in response to a French journalist aboard the flight.

Pope Francis said the trip to Africa is "a bit overdue." He said he would have traveled to Africa sooner, if not for the Ebola epidemic.

"It is a big responsibility to hold big gatherings, (because of the possibility of) contagion, no? But, in these countries there is no problem," he said.

The latest World Health Organization estimates suggest the Ebola outbreak has killed more than 8,500 people in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The incurable disease has a high mortality rate.

Pope Francis said Central African Republic and Uganda are still "hypothetical" destinations, but he confirmed that a trip to Africa "will be this year."

He clarified that he will go later in the year to avoid the rainy season.

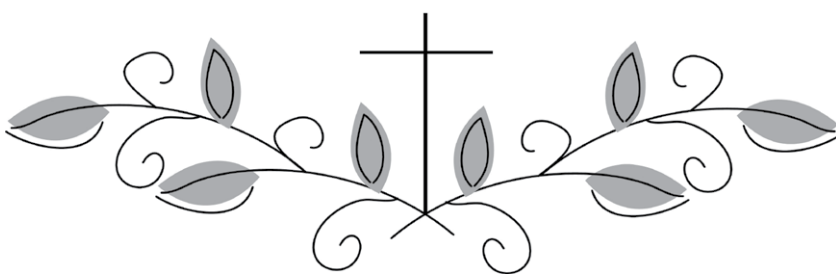
During the in-flight press conference, Pope Francis also confirmed plans to make two separate visits to South America over the next two years.

A trip to South America this year could include stops in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Paraguay, while a possible visit in 2016 or 2017 could include stops in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Peru.

The trip would be Pope Francis' first visit to his home country of Argentina since his election to the papacy in March of 2013.

Vatican spokesperson Fr. Federico Lombardi was quick to clarify that the travel plans are still in the beginning stages.

"Everything is provisional, nothing is decided yet," Fr. Lombardi said. ✠



Gracias, Gracias, Gracias

by Mary-Anne Neal, Nancy Stuart and Pat Mochrie

Fearless ... heroic ... joyous ... skilled ... kind ... industrious ... The Oblates of Mary Immaculate working with the poorest of the poor in Peru embody these characteristics and more. During our two weeks with Fr. Jim Dukowski, Fr. Victor Santoyo, and other Oblates, we explored the mountains, coast and high jungle of South America.

In all of these places, the OMI priests and brothers work tirelessly to meet the needs of the people for the basic necessities that we so often take for granted here in Canada. Not only do these missionaries provide food, shelter, education and access to medical facilities, but – even better – they build capacity in the community to manage the projects themselves. For example, rather than simply doling out food to the needy, the priests in Comas set up a soup kitchen that also serves as a training ground for young people to learn food preparation skills.

Our intrepid hosts met us at the airport in Lima and took us to the Parish rectory in the suburb of Comas, which served as our home base for the next two weeks. After only a couple of hours of sleep, we attended Mass at Our Lady of Peace, where no fewer than 90 young people, surrounded by their families, were baptized in an hour. No mean feat!

Our first big adventure was to Cuzco,

where we visited the Sacred Valley and learned the history of the Incas as well as pre-Incan civilizations. From Ollantaytambo, we took the train to Aguas Calientes and then the bus up to Machu Picchu, which is indeed one of the Wonders of the world.

After returning to Lima, we repacked our bags and headed for the jungle on a sleeper bus. To give you an idea of the road conditions, it took almost 12 hours to go 400 kilometres from Lima to Huanuco, where we had lunch with Bishop Jaime Rodrigues. From Huanuco, Fr. Justo drove us to Aucayacu which is situated in the high jungle on an Amazonian tributary. Although Aucayacu was the scene of Shining Path violence in the 1980s, we were thankful to learn that the community is once again peaceful.

Our last trip was to the coast, where we were uplifted and inspired to see adobe houses being built under the watchful eye of Br. Blaise MacQuarrie. Many Peruvian families live in shacks made from woven palm fronds, which provide little protection from wind and rain. Br. Blaise has taught the men to make adobe and concrete bricks

that are then used to build solid homes. They also operate a gravel pit which supplies the raw materials for the bricks.

Gracias, gracias, gracias ... everywhere we went we were thanked, merely because we were in the presence of the courageous and hardworking OMI missionaries. We were privileged to see their work first-hand, and we left hoping that some adventurous spirits will carry on the Oblate legacy. Adios, mi amigos! Vayo con Dios. ✠

Mary-Anne, Nancy and Pat will be giving a talk about their trip and the work of the Oblates on Tuesday, March 3 at St. Patrick's Church (Victoria) at 7pm. If you wish to support the work of the Oblates, please visit their website at www.oblatemissionassociates.ca. For more information, please contact Nancy Stuart: nancy-stuart@shaw.ca.



Pope Francis’ “New Year’s Resolutions”

<http://www.rappler.com/move-ph/46933-new-year-resolutions-pope-francis-quotes>

He preaches against gossip, reminds us to finish our meals, and even tells us not to fear marriage. Described as the “world’s parish priest,” Pope Francis goes beyond abstract theology, and gives us advice we can use daily. What lessons from him can we bring into 2015?

The website rappler.com compiled 10 of the Pope’s most memorable quotes in the form of “New Year’s Resolutions.” This is their “Pope Francis” list:

Don’t gossip

It’s one of our hobbies. For Francis, it’s also one of the most evil activities. The Catholic leader denounces gossip as “murder.” He feels so strongly about it that in less than a year as pontiff, Francis has preached against gossip in at least 6 different instances. He says when we gossip, we “are doing what Judas did,” and “begin to tear the other person to pieces.” “Every time we judge our brother in our hearts or worse when we speak badly of them with others, we are murdering Christians,” Francis says. “There is no such thing as innocent slander.”

Finish your meals

No leftovers, please. Named after a 12th century saint who lived in poverty, Francis slams a “culture of waste” that neglects the plight of the hungry. Nearly 870 million people suffer from chronic malnutrition, says the Food and Agriculture Organization. The Pope says: “We should all remember ... that throwing food away is like stealing from the tables of the poor, the hungry! I encourage everyone to reflect on the problem of thrown away and wasted food to identify ways and means that, by seriously addressing this issue, are a vehicle of solidarity and sharing with the needy.”

Make time for others

Tending to 1.2 billion members, Francis seems too busy for anything else. That is, until he calls up strangers. Or entertains a random biker. Or sends a handwritten letter to a Jesuit he has never met. The Jesuit who got the letter, Fr James Martin, says Francis inspires him “to be more generous in my own life with my time.” Martin says: “If the Pope can find time to be kind to others, if he can pause to say thank you, if he can take a moment make someone feel appreciated, then so can I. So can we.”

Choose the “more humble” purchase

Take it from the head of state who rides a 29-year-old Renault. In July, he warned against luxurious lives that seek “the joy of the world in the latest smartphone, the fastest car.” “Cars are necessary,” he says, “but take a more humble one. Think of how many children die of hunger and dedicate the savings to them.” The Pope preaches against materialism. “Certainly, possessions, money, and power can give a momentary thrill, the illusion of being happy, but they end up possessing us and making us always want to have more, never satisfied. ‘Put on Christ’ in your life, place your trust in him, and you will never be disappointed!” He calls for a “sober and essential lifestyle.”

Meet the poor “in the flesh”

Sure, we donate to charity. But this is not enough for Francis. Commitment to the poor, he says, must be “person to person, in the flesh.” Known as pro-poor even when he was archbishop, he explains more in the book *On Heaven and Earth*, which was published three years before he became pontiff. “It is not enough to mediate this commitment through institutions, which obviously help because they have a multiplying effect, but that is not enough. They do not excuse us from our establishing personal contact with the needy. The sick must be cared for, even when we find them repulsive and repugnant. Those in prison must be visited.” He calls for long-term commitment. “Hospitality in itself isn’t enough. It’s not enough to give a sandwich if it isn’t accompanied by the possibility of learning to stand on one’s own feet. Charity that does not change the situation of the poor isn’t enough.”

Pope Francis Gives Thanks for Apostolic Journey to Asia

Source: Vatican Radio (www.news.va)

Speaking to pilgrims gathered in the Paul VI Hall because of the rain, the Pope recalled his journey mentioning the wealth of cultural and spiritual traditions of the Asian continent.

He described his visit as a joy-filled encounter with the Catholic communities in the nations he visited and spoke of the occasion he had to encourage inter-religious dialogue a the service of peace, unity and social development.

Highlighting some of the salient moments of his journey, the Pope said that in Sri Lanka he canonized Saint Joseph Vaz: “a great missionary whose example of charity continues to inspire the faithful in their service to the poor and in respectful relations with the followers of other religions.”

And mentioning that Sri Lanka still suffers the effects of a prolonged civil conflict, Pope Francis said that during his meeting with religious leaders he asked that “we work together as agents of healing, peace and reconciliation.”

His main reason for visiting the Philippines, the Pope said, was “to be close to our brothers and sisters who were affected by the devastation of the Typhoon Yolanda”.

In Tacloban, “the region hardest hit by the typhoon, I paid tribute to the faith and to the capacity to rebuild of the local population,” he said.

And he did not neglect to remember the young woman, Kristel, who was killed in an accident at the site of the Mass in Tacloban.

Stop judging others

In the same way he denounces gossip, Francis condemns prejudice. He reminds “intolerant” Catholics, for one, to respect atheists. “If we, each doing our own part, if we do good to others, if we meet there, doing good, and we go slowly, gently, little by little, we will make that culture of encounter: we need that so much. We must meet one another doing good.” Francis urges us “to keep watch over ourselves.” “Let us not forget that hatred, envy, and pride defile our lives!”

Befriend those who disagree

What can we do to our worst critics? We can take our cue from Francis. In November, Francis surprised Mario Palmaro, a traditionalist who wrote the article, *The Reason Why We Don’t Like This Pope*. “He just wanted to tell me that he is praying for me,” says Palmaro, who is gravely ill, in an article by the Catholic News Agency. Francis does this in line with what he calls a “culture of encounter.” He said in July: “When leaders in various fields ask me for advice, my response is always the same: dialogue, dialogue, dialogue. It is the only way for individuals, families, and societies to grow, the only way for the life of peoples to progress, along with the culture of encounter, a culture in which all have something good to give and all can receive something good in return. Others always have something to give me, if we know how to approach them in a spirit of openness and without prejudice.”

Make commitments, such as marriage.

Don’t be afraid to say “forever.” Francis advises the youth, for instance, not to fear marriage. The Pope says: “Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion; in a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of ‘enjoying’ the moment. They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, ‘forever,’ because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes that you are incapable of responsibility, that you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you and I pray for you. Have the courage ‘to swim against the tide.’ Have the courage to be happy.”

Make it a habit to “ask the Lord”

Bothered about the future? Pray, the Pope urges us, especially the youth. “Dear young people,” he says, “some of you may not yet know what you will do with your lives. Ask the Lord, and he will show you the way. The young Samuel kept hearing the voice of the Lord who was calling him, but he did not understand or know what to say, yet with the help of the priest Eli, in the end he answered: ‘Speak, Lord, for I am listening’ (cf. 1 Sam 3:1-10). You too can ask the Lord: What do you want me to do? What path am I to follow?”

Be happy

The true Christian, says the Pope, exudes great joy. He says keeping this joy to ourselves “will make us sick in the end.” So important is joy to him that his first apostolic exhortation, the first major document he wrote on his own, is titled *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). “Sometimes these melancholy Christians’ faces have more in common with pickled peppers than the joy of having a beautiful life,” Francis says in a homily. “Joy cannot be held at heel: it must be let go. Joy is a pilgrim virtue. It is a gift that walks, walks on the path of life, that walks with Jesus: preaching, proclaiming Jesus, proclaiming joy, lengthens and widens that path.” Francis says, “The Christian sings with joy, and walks, and carries this joy.” This joy, he reminds us, should translate to love of neighbor. ✠

In Manila, he said, “I asked families to cherish and protect the family in its fundamental role in society and in God’s plan.”

He said that it was a reason for consolation and hope to see so many numerous families who welcome each child as a gift of God: “they know that every child is a blessing.”

And commenting on the fact that some affirm that having too many children can be a cause of poverty, Pope Francis said “we can all say that the main cause of poverty is an economic system that, at its center, has replaced man with the god of money.”

“An economic system that excludes children, the elderly and young people who cannot find work, creates the throwaway culture that we live in today,” he said.

“We have become used to seeing people who have been discarded. This is the main reason for poverty, and not numerous families,” he said.

And Pope Francis mentioned his meeting in Manila with young people during which he challenged them to build a society of integrity and compassion for the poor.

Compassion for the poor, he said, also implies “the rejection of all forms of corruption because corruption steals from the poor,” he said.

Concluding, Pope Francis said he urged the Filipino to persevere in their precious witness to the Gospel on the great continent of Asia. ✠



XIV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops

by Bishop Gary Gordon

“The future passes through the family.”

~ Pope Francis

Dear Friends in Christ,
In light of the Extraordinary Synod in Rome last fall and of the upcoming Synod of Bishops to be held October 4 – 25, 2015, on “the vocation and the mission of the family in the Church and in the contemporary world,” we are planning for Diocesan-wide reflection and dialogue on this very important topic. This is an opportunity for understanding deeper the Church’s vision of the family and through reflection and responses, to provide feedback to the Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops for the upcoming Synod of Bishops in Rome this October.

The following events and actions are planned for your active participation. Both a short and a longer version of the reflection questions from the Extraordinary Synod are accessible on the Diocesan website for parishes and others to access. <http://www.rcdvictoria.org/>

Pastors are encouraged to make these questions known to their Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners for reflection and dialogue. Please submit written responses to the Pastoral Center by March 6 to the attention of Glen Palahicky.

There will be three Diocesan gatherings facilitating reflection, dialogue and feedback:

- St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria, on Tuesday, February 10th from 7 – 9pm
- St. Peter’s, Nanaimo, on Tuesday, February 17th from 7 – 9pm
- Christ the King, Courtenay, on Sunday, February 22nd from 4 – 7 pm

For planning purposes, please register by phone or email to the Pastoral Center by phone: (250) 479-1331 or Email: gpalahicky@rcdvictoria.org or jeoreilly@rcdvictoria.org

This is a graced opportunity for all of us to realize a little more deeply who we are as Church.

In Communion,

Most Reverend Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria ✠

What is the Synod of Bishops?

The Synod of Bishops is a permanent institution of the Catholic Church. It was established by Pope Paul VI in 1965, shortly after the close of the Second Vatican Council, to continue the spirit of collegiality and communion that was present at the Council. The Synod is an assembly of bishops from around the world who assist the Holy Father by providing counsel on important questions facing the Church in a manner that preserves the Church’s teaching and strengthens her internal discipline (*Code of Canon Law*, Canon 342).

When does the Synod of Bishops meet?

The Synod of Bishops meets at the request of the Holy Father, when he considers it necessary or opportune to consult with the world’s bishops.

What are the meetings of the Synod of Bishops called?

The Synod of Bishops can meet in a *General Assembly* (or *Session*) on topics that pertain to the entire Church; these kinds of sessions can be either *Ordinary* or *Extraordinary*. The Synod of Bishops can also meet in a *Special Assembly* (or *Session*) on topics that pertain to a limited geographical area. For example, Special Assemblies have been held in recent years on topics concerning the Middle East and Africa.

What is an Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops?

A General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops is called “Ordinary” if its topic is “for the good of the universal Church” and seems to require the “learning, prudence and counsel” of all the world’s bishops (*Ordo Synodi Episcoporum*, 4).

What is an Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops?

A General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops is called “Extraordinary” when it is convened to deal with matters “which require a speedy solution” (*Code of Canon Law*, Canon 346 §2) and which demand “immediate attention for the good of the entire Church” (*Ordo Synodi Episcoporum*, 4).

Who are the heads of the Synod of Bishops?

The President of the Synod is the current Holy Father, Pope Francis. The Synod also has a General Secretary, who is currently Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri.

Source: www.usccb.com

Questions on the Lineamenta, Adapted Short Form

I Better Identifying the Reality

During the extraordinary Synod in 2014, there was an effort to better determine the reality of families today and to identify the challenges the Church must deal with when accompanying families along their journey of life. The following questions attempt to contribute a deeper reflection on this reality in our own Diocesan context.

How does the Church:

- Address the challenges posed by the wider secularized culture, a society marked by relativism, and the proliferation of common-law unions and the consequent rejection, on the part of many, of the model of family formed by a man and woman united in marriage and open to life? and
- Foster the sense of the presence of God in the lives of families?

In our pastoral activity, what are our best practices – practices that have had an impact and that could be examples to other communities – in our efforts towards:

- Reaching those who are distant from the Church (or who feel that they are), and being present as Church to families in extreme situations, while also working to prevent these situations?
- Pastorally accompanying couples in the initial years of family life?

II Bringing About Pastoral Conversion

The Synod clearly opted for a pastoral approach that accents the positive: accompaniment, mercy, and the goodness of the Good News. It thus echoes the call of Pope Francis to all involved in the Church when it invites them to a pastoral conversion.

Understanding that no one is beyond the mercy of God, how can the faithful express a friendly attitude and offer trustworthy pastoral guidance to those who struggle to conform with the Church’s vision of human sexuality and her teaching on chastity?

III Proclaiming the Good News

Too often, the teaching of the Church is understood as a set of rules imposed from without or as a code of conduct considered by many to be out of touch with modern reality. The participants in the extraordinary Synod, on the other hand, saw in this teaching a source of personal fulfilment and a path of vitality and hope. How can we concretely translate this conviction into a language that will reach men and women today? This reflection is behind the following questions:

How can couples be helped to develop a familial spirituality to assist them in overcoming weaknesses inherent in marital relations, and better form them into true communities of new life and love in relationship with Christ?

What initiatives in catechesis can be developed and fostered to make known and offer assistance to persons in living the Church’s teaching on the family, above all in surmounting any possible discrepancy between what is lived and what is professed, supporting a process of conversion?

IV Paths of Action

Synods attempt not only to deepen the thought of the Church on particular points of doctrine and practice, but also to propose concrete paths of action and engagement. The goal of the following questions is to elicit suggestions for actions that could be undertaken in the Church following the upcoming Synod. *How can marriage preparation be renewed and improved in order to highlight the vocation and mission of the family, according to faith in Jesus Christ, as a genuine experience of being the “domestic church”?*

How can the Christian community minister to the divorced and re-married, and encourage those living in common-law unions to choose marriage?

What support might the Christian community offer parents in their role as primary educators of their children? ✠

The full version of these questions may be accessed on the Diocesan website at www.rcdvictoria.org/synod-on-the-family.php



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Set the World on Fire!

by Ben Rizzuto and Drew van Bourgondien, DYC2015 Co-Chairs

The planning team is very excited about all of the things coming together to make the 2015 Diocesan Youth Conference to be held May 22 – 24, 2015, an awesome experience for all of you!

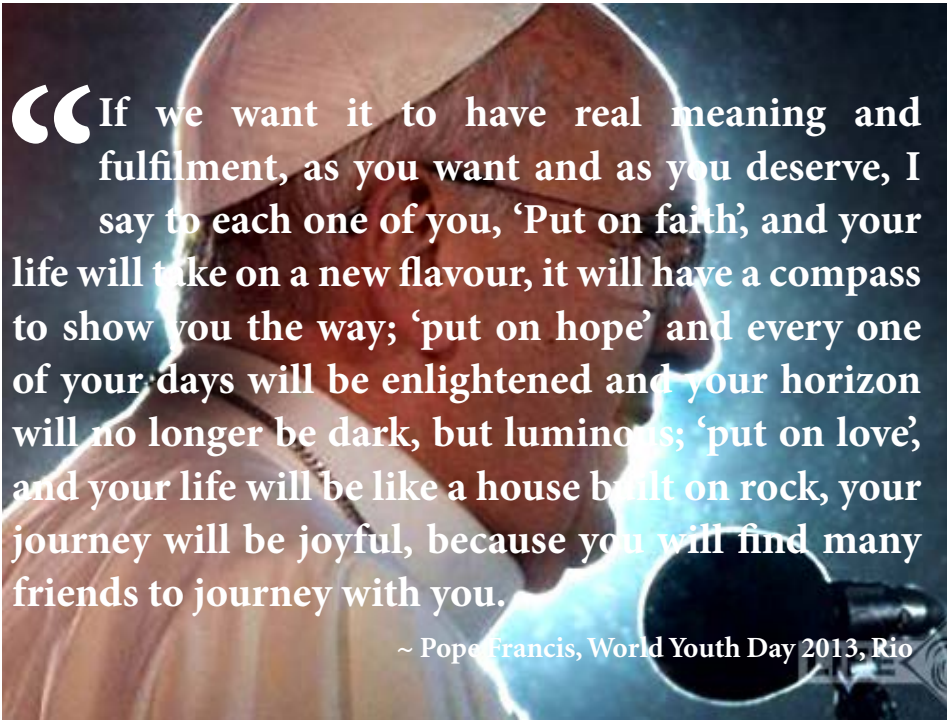
We have a great speaker (Colm Leyne from Saskatoon), awesome games, great food, Mass with the Bishop Gary, a Lip Sync Contest and much, much more! Be sure to check out our Facebook page for news and updates: [Facebook.com/vicdyc](https://facebook.com/vicdyc) or email us at teamdyc@gmail.com.

The Diocesan Youth Conference is open to youths in grades 8 – 12, and recent graduates.

We're looking forward to hosting you at the conference!

“DYC just makes me happy!”

~ 2014 DYC participant



“If we want it to have real meaning and fulfilment, as you want and as you deserve, I say to each one of you, ‘Put on faith’, and your life will take on a new flavour, it will have a compass to show you the way; ‘put on hope’ and every one of your days will be enlightened and your horizon will no longer be dark, but luminous; ‘put on love’, and your life will be like a house built on rock, your journey will be joyful, because you will find many friends to journey with you.”


~ Pope Francis, World Youth Day 2013, Rio

“It is very important to reaffirm the family, which remains the essential cell of society and the Church.”

~ Pope Francis, World Youth Day 2013, Rio

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World Youth Day
Krakow, Poland
July 26 - 31, 2016

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