



A divine citizenship, a factory of hope

by Marnie Wynans

“ Families have a citizenship which is Divine. The identity card that they have is given to them by God so that within the heart of the family, truth, goodness and beauty can grow. Families are a factory of hope.

~ Pope Francis at the Festival of Families, Philadelphia, 2015

It's not very often that one gets the chance to take one's family across the continent to gather with 1.5 million Catholics from around the world with Pope Francis as the special guest, so when we were asked to be one of the families to represent the Victoria Diocese at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, we eagerly accepted. The experience was incredible and inspiring.

When we arrived, we were overwhelmed at the sight of 20,000 men, women and children registering, mingling, and gathering for the opening ceremony. Soon we too were swept up in the excitement, and for the next four days, we listened to priests, cardinals, theologians and lay people full of wisdom, knowledge and expertise on Catholic marriage and family issues while our boys spent the days making friends with kids from around the world while listening to great speakers of their own.

As youth ministers and parents of teenagers, a huge highlight was getting to thank the heroes who have given their lives to evangelizing our teens and showing them that holiness and purity is possible, necessary and even cool. To shake the hands of Jason and Crystalina Evert, Matt Fradd, and Fr. Mike Schmitz with sincere thanks for all they do was an incredible privilege.

Another unforgettable and emotional moment was meeting and embracing Dr. Gianna Emanuela, daughter of St. Gianna Beretta Molla, a living treasure, and now a doctor herself. Churches were open for viewing and veneration of different saints' relics, including St. Gianna's wedding dress and doctor's instruments. We venerated the body of St. Maria Goretti (her bones encased in wax). It was a powerful moment as we prayed for the gift and strength of purity for all our youth through her

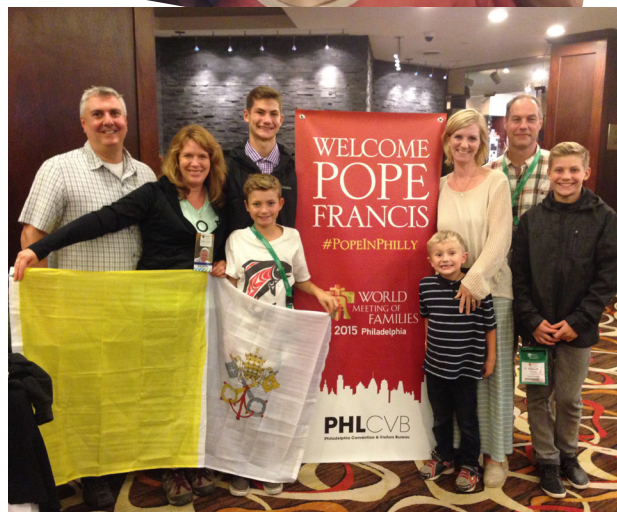
intercession. We also packed food for shelters in West Africa with Catholic Relief Services. In one hour, our group of about 100 people packed 12,000 meals! In the whole week, 200,000 meals in all were packed!

Our Holy Father joined us on Saturday evening for the amazing Festival of Families, a huge street party with 400,000 people from all over the world, all there for the same reason—to celebrate our families, enjoy the performances of famous Catholics such as Andrea Bocelli and Matt Maher, and to listen to and pray with Pope Francis. He moved us all to tears with his simple, loving way and his words of encouragement for imperfect families. He made us laugh with his jokes, prayed for us and gave us his blessing.

The most unforgettable experience, which closed our week, was the Papal Mass with 1.5 million people united in faith and friendship. Families from places like Zimbabwe, Poland, the Philippines, Germany, Jerusalem and Syria celebrated Mass as one true Universal Church, the Living Body of Christ.

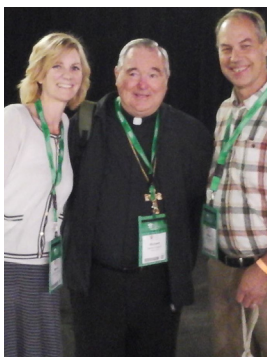
Even while navigating through the crowds, waiting for hours to greet Pope Francis, using portable toilets and being squashed as everyone tried to get the best look at the Pope going by, the Spirit of God was present among us as the joy and fellowship never ceased.

We hope you'll forgive our enthusiasm as we try to express all we learned. We hope to share what we have learned with all of you to help strengthen and enrich the Catholic families of the Victoria Diocese. We truly feel we were given a mission. After all, the theme of this year's World Meeting of Families was *Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive!* ✕



Inside

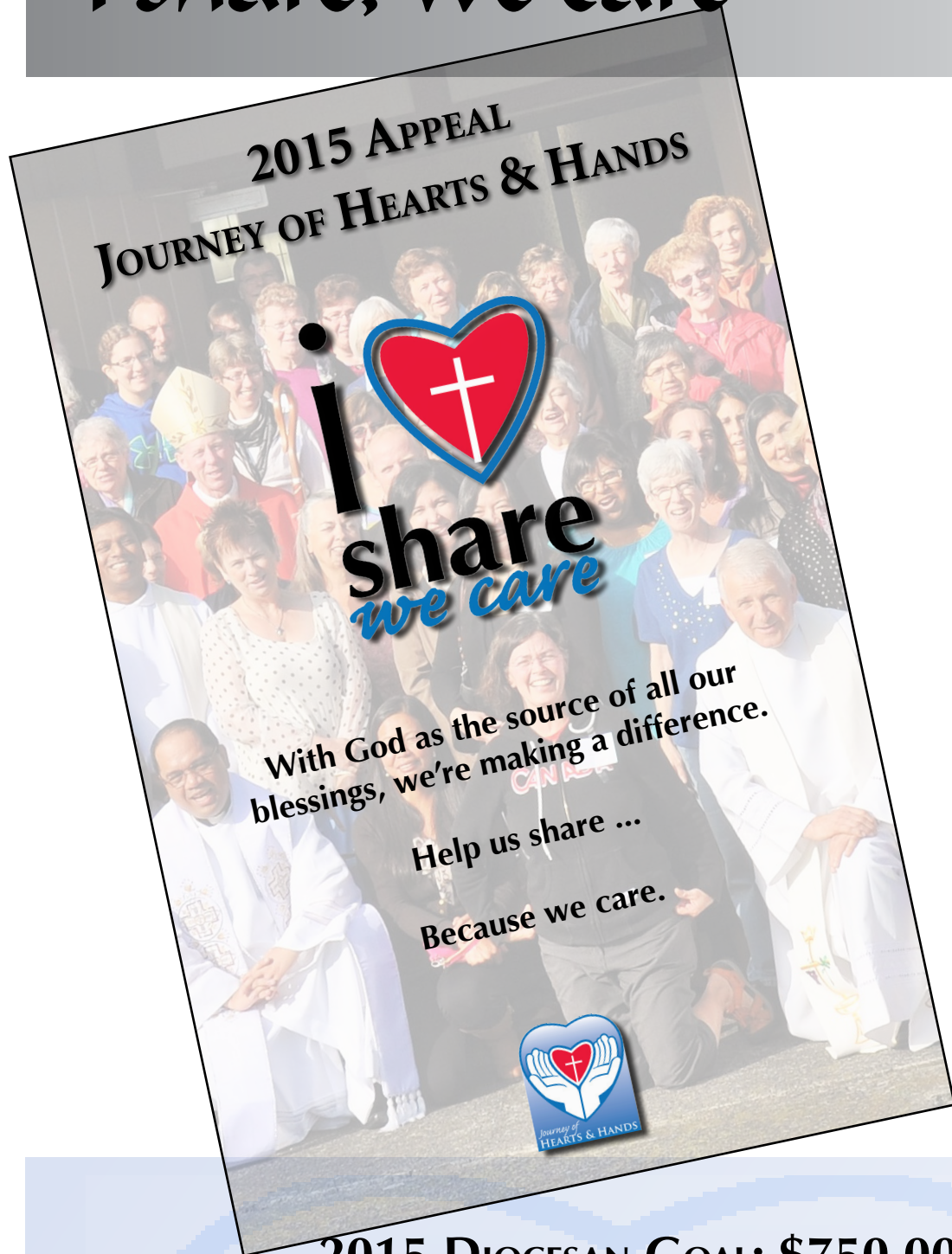
Calendar of Events	4
Connections.....	15
Diocesan News & Events	3
Face the Day	9
Faith Matters.....	18
Impressions	22
Island Catholic Schools	10
National/International	20
Out of the Archives.....	16
Pastoral Itinerary	4
The Campus Mission	15
Vocations.....	17



Read about the Jubilee Year of Mercy on pages 3 and 18



i share, we care



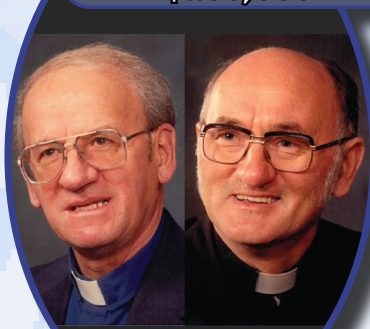
**The 2015 Appeal of
Hearts & Hands is
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for more information!**

2015 DIOCESAN GOAL: \$750,000



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Diocesan News & Events



An invitation to Mercy

by Bishop Gary Gordon

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, all faithful in the Diocese are invited to St. Andrew's Cathedral at 7 PM for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist to open the Jubilee Year of Mercy and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

The Mass will open for our Church and all people a renewed experience as we hear from Pope Francis in *Misericordiae Vultus* (Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee of Mercy):

I have chosen the date of 8 December because of its rich meaning in the recent history of the Church. In fact, I will open the Holy Door on the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. The Church feels a great need to keep this event alive. With the Council, the Church entered a new phase of her history. The Council Fathers strongly perceived, as a true breath of the Holy Spirit, a need to talk about God to men and women of their time in a more accessible way. The walls which for too long had made the Church a kind of fortress were torn down and the time had come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way. It was a new phase of the same evangelization that had existed from the beginning. It was a fresh undertaking for all Christians to bear witness to their faith with greater enthusiasm and conviction. The Church sensed a responsibility to be a living sign of the Father's love in the world. (*Misericordiae Vultus*, § 4)

In this graced time for our Church the opening Jubilee Mass will reflect on the 50th Anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council with Bishop Emeritus De Roo, a Father of the Council, speaking of the beauty and grace of a “new phase of the same evangelization that had existed from the beginning” (*Misericordiae Vultus*).

And I, a child of the Council, invite the whole people of God in the Diocese of Victoria to embrace the Jubilee of Mercy in word and deed, as set out by our Holy Father Pope Francis in *Misericordiae Vultus* § 2:

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

Mary, Mother of Mercy and Mother Immaculate, pray for us that we may all stand with you and the beloved disciple John at the foot of the cross to receive and embrace the supreme act and words of Mercy: “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.” ✠

Canonization ceremony for Blessed Louis and Zélie Martin held during Synod of Bishops on the family

Adapted from Salt & Light TV and www.catholic.co.uk

For the first time, a married couple has been canonized together.

The canonization ceremony for Blessed Louis and Zélie Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, took place during the world Synod of Bishops on the Family in October. The couple was beatified in 2008, and are believed to be the first parents of a saint to be beatified, highlighting the important role parents play in their children's human and spiritual upbringing.

“The good Lord gave me a father and a mother more worthy of Heaven than of earth”.

These words come to us from St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Carmelite nun and youngest daughter of Louis and Zélie Martin. A holy couple, their story has a modern twist.

Louis and Zélie Martin met on the Saint Leonard Bridge in Alençon, France. It was an unexpected encounter. Both had previously contemplated entering the religious life. But as it became clear neither one of them was called to a life of celibacy, they vowed to offer their future marriage to God. When Zélie saw Louis, she heard a voice tell her this man was the one God had prepared for her. This conviction deepened more as they spent time together. They got married three months later on July 13, 1858. Zélie was 27 years old and Louis 35.

Zélie already managed her own lace making business which she started at only 20 years old. She regularly received clients who needed her skillful hand to create or repair pieces of lace. She eventually opened a lace making factory that allowed her to take in apprentices. Her business was thriving. Apart from her leadership and goodwill, Zélie was an anxious woman. This is a character trait she attributed to her difficult childhood.

But if Zélie dealt with worry, Louis on the other hand was a gentle and patient man. His talent lay in clock making. He also held his own shop. Louis got into the trade starting at 19 years of age. Despite his excellent reputation, he retired from the clock making business to dedicate himself to his wife's lace making factory, becoming its client manager and bookkeeper.

Career wasn't everything to them. The couple had nine children, but four of them died in infancy. Louis and Zélie raised five girls, Pauline, Céline, Léonie, Marie, and Thérèse. They raised them in the faith and inspired in them charity and holiness. All of them eventually joined the Carmelites, except Léonie who joined the Sisters of the Visitation.

The Martins did face challenges, namely sickness. It started with Zélie who was diagnosed with cancer. The pain intensified every day, without any hope of a cure, until she died at the age of 46. Through her suffering, Zélie held fast to prayer and patiently accepted God's will and wisdom.

Some years after the death of his wife, Louis also fell ill. He had periods of forgetfulness or hallucinations and attacks of paralysis. After several episodes, he was taken to an asylum. He stayed there three years before going back home. Despite his evident weakness, he showed great strength, patience and perseverance.

Louis and Zélie Martin call us to a total submission to God's will and providence. God was first in everything they did. Their unity of heart showed itself in their work, their family life and in their generosity towards friends and neighbours. ✠

What is the Ordinariate?

by Fr. John Laszczyk

There's a church on West Burnside Road, hidden among the trees. It is an old church, yet still quite beautiful. The name of the church is St. Columba and it is an Anglican Church, which is no longer in service for the Anglican diocese. However, a sign on the road will inform you that inside, at designated hours, you will find the Fellowship of Blessed John Henry Newman (which may be shortened to John Henry Newman).

Who are these people? You may remember that in 2012 approximately 15 members of the Anglican Church became Catholic and, under Pope Benedict XVI, through his Apostolic Constitution (*Anglicanorum Coetibus*), the members of the Ordinariate, as they are called, were permitted, and indeed encouraged, “to retain their own Eucharistic celebration and other Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition, which have been approved by the Holy See, so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church, as a precious gift nourishing the faith of the members of the Ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared.”

These folks are fully Catholic. They are not Anglicans nor are they the Anglican Ordinariate or Anglican Use or Anglican Use Ordinariate. They are simply Catholics, members of the Ordinariate. Their Ordinary in North America is Msgr. Jeffrey Steenson and although he is not an ordained bishop he has the authority of a bishop for all his people. We have been fortunate to have him visit the Diocese of Victoria several times.

Any Roman Catholic can worship with them and receive Holy Communion if properly disposed. Membership—that is, belonging to their parish—is a little more problematic but it is possible for regular Catholics to be associate members. To be a full member, however, you must be baptized into the Church community, or be a Catholic who is completing his / her Sacraments of Initiation or a Catholic who is being reconciled to the Church or a former member (or one's spouse) of the Anglican, Episcopalian or Methodist Church.

If you would like to experience their Eucharistic Liturgy (Holy Mass) then you are invited to attend St. Andrew's Cathedral on Saturday, December 5, 2015 at 9:30 AM as they share their liturgy with the larger Catholic community. ✠



Calendar of events

November

7 St. Peter's, Nanaimo: 9:30 AM – 3 PM, 'The 5 W's of Meetings', a CWL S'Mores workshop covering such meeting topics as ordinary amendments, resolutions, when to table, etc. Bring a lunch. Refreshments will be provided.

14 St. Edward's, Duncan: Diocesan Conference 'Proclaiming Jesus through Communities of Shalom and Mercy' with Fr. Ray Carey, 8:15 AM – 3 PM. For more information contact your parish office.

15 Our Lady of the Rosary: Holy Family discussion and potluck dinner. Doors open at 3:30 PM, the discussion starts at 4 PM, and the potluck dinner will begin at 5:30 PM. For more information contact Kristy de Bree at (250) 590-7004 or email bedelia.debree@gmail.com

19 Mount St. Mary Hospital, Victoria: Annual Christmas Craft Fair, 10 AM – 3 PM. This juried, traditional Christmas Fair features unique gifts for all, handmade quilts and crafted items, Christmas decor, baking, jams and jellies, greeting cards, jewellery and collectables, quality chocolates, a raffle, and a White Elephant Sale. Admission is free. A hot turkey lunch and refreshments will be available.

21 Sacred Heart Parish, Victoria: Come Celebrate Sacred Heart CWL's 75th Anniversary on Saturday November 21st at the Parish Hall at 2:00 PM for High Tea. Tickets are \$20 and are available at the Parish Office (250-479-1611) or lidiamoodie@gmail.com (250-479-6495). Everyone is welcome.

21 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Come celebrate the Feast of St. Cecilia at Our Lady of the Rosary Dinner and Live Music. Cocktails at 6 PM with Supper at 6:30 PM. Tickets are \$15 for 15 yrs or older, \$10 for children 7 to 14 years, and wee ones 6 yrs and younger are free. Tickets are for sale after Sunday Masses, at the parish office or contact one of the choir members.

21 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM. CWL Diocesan Day of Reflection, 'The 12 Days of Christmas', presented by Fr. Mel Bayron and Kathy Fadum. Lunch will be provided; donations welcome.

28 Men's Faith & Fellowship Forum: Saturday morning breakfast, Horseshoe Club of Victoria, 620 Kenneth Street. Breakfast will be followed by a presentation. Visit www.ffaf.org for more information.

28 Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria: Fundraiser for World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland. Enjoy an evening of authentic Polish cuisine, dancing, entertainment, a silent auction and more!

Tickets are \$30 per Person and may be purchased by contacting Kelly Bourke at (250) 479-1331, extension 230. All proceeds to World Youth Day pilgrimage and the Diocesan Youth Conference.

Weekly events

Wednesdays

St. Patrick's, Victoria: Moms and Tots (Dads are also welcome) meets from 9:30 – 11 AM in our Parish Centre. Children are kept busy while the parents gather in a separate room to talk about parenting and lots of other things in a faith-based environment. If you are interested in joining the group which starts in September, or want more information, please contact Pauline Scherr at 250-592-9424 or email at pischerr@shaw.ca

Fridays

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

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

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: YDisciple is a Catholic program to help teenagers take ownership of their faith. We meet from 7 – 8:30 PM 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 – 4:30 PM, 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 9:30 AM 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.

Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria: Victoria Chinese Catholic Community (VCCC) regular meetings with faith sharing, prayers, potluck, Mass or special presentations by expert speakers, 3:30 PM. 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. For more information phone (250) 893-9938 or email Ben Chow at benchow@shaw.ca.

Catholic Underground at St. Patrick's Parish: Catholic Underground is an initiative which engages youth in both their culture and their faith, held in the basement at St. Patrick's at 7 PM on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the month. Grades 10 – 12.

Sundays

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

Pastoral Centre Reception Volunteers Needed

Please consider sharing your time and talents a few hours every week (or two) to answer the phone and perform other related receptionist duties at the Pastoral Centre. A pleasant disposition, willingness to learn something new, and spirit of service is helpful. Please forward your resume, along with an endorsement from your pastor, to:

Cynthia Bouchard
Pastoral Centre
4044 Nelthorpe Street
Victoria V8X 2A1
or via email to chancery@rcdvictoria.org

Your generosity would be greatly appreciated and eternal benefits are guaranteed!

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



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Pastoral itinerary

November

- 5 **Vancouver:** Providence Health Care Society Meeting
- 6 **Vancouver:** Meetings of Catholic Independent Schools of BC with Superintendents and BC Bishops
- 7 **Penelekut Island:** Meet with First Nations community
- 8 **Victoria:** Mass at St. Andrew's Cathedral (11 AM)
- 13 **Duncan:** Faith Formation day with Parish, Pastoral Centre and Schools staff, with Fr. Ray Carey at St. Edward's Parish
- 14 **Duncan:** Diocesan Conference, with Fr. Ray Carey, 'Proclaiming Jesus through Communities of Shalom and Mercy' at St. Edward's Parish
- 16-18 **Parksville:** Clergy Study Days / Professional Development, with Fr. Ronald Knott
- 20-21 **Victoria:** Diaconal Formation Weekend
- 20 **Victoria:** Mass for deceased Clergy and Religious of the Diocese at St. Andrew's Cathedral (12 noon)
- 21 **Courtenay:** Mass, Feast of Christ the King at Christ the King Parish (5 PM)
- 22 **Hornby Island:** Mass, Feast of Christ the King at Holy Cross (11 AM)
- 30 **Victoria:** Mass, Feast of St. Andrew at Sacred Heart Parish (11 AM)

December

- 3 **Vancouver:** Mass and Ordinations, concelebrating with Archbishop Michael Miller at Holy Rosary Cathedral
- 8 **Victoria:** Mass to celebrate 50th Anniversary of the closing of Vatican II and opening of Jubilee Year of Mercy at St. Andrew's Cathedral (7 PM)
- 9-11 **Edmonton:** Meetings with Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops
- 12 **Victoria:** Mass, in honour of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish (7 PM)
- 13 **Victoria:** Solemn opening of the Holy Door of Mercy at St. Andrew's Cathedral (11 AM)

January 2016

- 11-15 **Vancouver:** Attend Retreat with Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops
- 17 **Victoria:** Opening Service for Week of Christian Unity at Christ Church Cathedral
- 24 **Victoria:** Closing Mass, Week of Christian Unity at St. Andrew's Cathedral
- 29-30 **Comox:** Retreat Master for Catholic Students Association Retreat



St. Joseph’s Hospital joins FEED Comox Valley– pilot program to source vegetables locally

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

Food, Environment and Economic Development (FEED) Comox Valley is one of eight J.W. McConnell Family Foundation projects to increase the supply of local farm vegetables in public institutions across Canada.

The pilot project started six months ago at North Island College’s Comox Valley Campus, and St. Joseph’s Hospital was delighted to join in this initiative this summer.

Droughts, combined with an unfavourable US exchange rate, threaten the resiliency of US dependent supply chains; however, they also make it increasingly viable for BC vegetable farmers to support the institutional food market.

FEED Comox Valley demonstrates local food can supply public institutions. Food is grown locally and distributed by Vancouver Island Farm Products Ltd., a group of Vancouver Island farmers passionate about feeding local residents island-grown food.

The model gives small farm businesses the opportunity to bid on food supply contracts at taxpayer-funded institutions. It also aligns with the spirit of the BC Government’s Small Business Accord, aimed at improving small business access to government contracts.



Jane Murphy, St. Joseph’s Hospital’s CEO, stated, “For over 100 years, our values have been deeply rooted in serving the community. FEED Comox Valley is helping us build relationships with our local food producers.”

Matching institutional demand with local supply just makes so much sense in agricultural communities. Throughout this summer, St. Joseph’s patients, residents, visitors and staff enjoyed the fresh potatoes, corn, tomatoes and cucumbers received from our local farmers. ✂

Bellelle Guerin Award

Press Release

Caroline Keller, a member of St. Peter’s Catholic Women’s League (CWL), was awarded the Bellelle Guerin Award for her exemplary work for the League at the October 2 Interim Diocesan meeting in Victoria.



The Bellelle Guerin Award and Pin is presented to individuals who have worked tirelessly to keep the vision and dream of Bellelle Guerin, the first president of the CWL, alive in Canada by dedicating themselves to the work of the League in their parish, diocese and province.

Caroline was honored with the award for her dedication for the past 30 years in various executive positions, including President and Secretary at the parish level and chairing Communications and Community Life on the Diocesan level. Always first to volunteer when needed, Caroline has organized funeral receptions and for 17 years coordinated CWL Sunday coffee hour. True to the spirit of the award, Caroline has continuously demonstrated her love of the League through her words and actions. ✂



L to R: Agnes Geiger, CWL Provincial Education and Health Chair, Caroline Keller, Award Recipient and Ann Devlin, CWL Life Member

John Paul II school in Port Alberni celebrates its 10th Anniversary

by Cathie Gogo

“Wow,” and “thank you” to all the parishioners, alumni, current student body and families who were able to join us for our glorious 10th Anniversary Celebration of John Paul II Catholic School in Port Alberni, BC.

Mass was beautifully celebrated by Bishop Gary Gordon, Fr. Stephen Payne and Fr. Peter Switzer. We were graced to have Kathy Korman, former principal of John Paul II and her husband, Jim, with us. Kathy took us through the history: how John Paul II Catholic School came to be with the blood, sweat and tears of the many volunteers, most notably Mrs. Marge Norell and Mr. Joe Dol.

We were blessed to have the voices of the John Paul II choir, led by Mr. Gordon Higginson and Mrs. Marnie Wynans. We would also like to thank the many hands that came together to make this special celebration possible. Blessings to the Catholic Women’s League and Knights of Columbus, Heather Graydon, Carol Fiorilli, Cathy Cooper, Taylor Cooper, Eva Battaro, Gilda Baron-Toaldo, Nicole Ritchie, Dale Gross, Michelle Clarke, Nicole Startup, Melissa Turner, ‘our’ fabulous Mrs. Marge Norell, our wonderful students and our incredible staff.

We most certainly appreciate the support we have received and look forward to many more years of providing quality Catholic education to children; after all we are ‘Second to None’. ✂



CREATE A CLIMATE OF CHANGE

See story, page 6

devp.org 1888 234-8533 @devpeace

CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR
Development and Peace

Create a climate of change

by Christine O’Leary and Nancy Stuart,Victoria Development and Peace Diocesan Council

Early in the morning of September 26, 2015, we met at the Pastoral Centre in Victoria to drive together to Church of the Ascension in Parksville to learn about the Development & Peace (D&P) Fall Education Campaign ‘Create a Climate of Change’. It was a beautiful sunny, crisp Fall day as we headed up-island, a compelling reminder of the gift of creation, especially these islands that we are blessed to call home.

Inspired by and promoting Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si, Praise be to you*, the campaign draws attention to the effects of climate change, our responsibility for it, and sets out concrete, practical ways that we can change for the better.

The workshop, facilitated by the Diocesan D&P Council team, and attended by 30 representatives from the Diocese, started with examining our current response to sustainable action, and continued on with an examination of the devastating effects of climate change in three countries in the global south: Ethiopia, the Philippines and Honduras. We viewed three short video presentations featuring residents of these countries giving personal accounts of the effects of climate change on their families, livelihoods and communities. Ethiopian farmers struggle with droughts; Philippine families endure devastating typhoons that destroy their homes, livelihoods and families. People in the Honduras live with hurricanes and the effects of gold mining that pollutes their water and encroaches on their land.

Sr. Marina Smith SSA travelled to Ethiopia this past summer, and gave personal witness to the difficulties faced by the people there, and how Development and Peace is working to assist them. Her photo presentation provided powerful testimony of the situation, but gave hope by the aid that Development and Peace provides through partnership with organizations working there. Working through a case study of the Philippines and personal reflection, the message was made clear to all participants: the people of the global south suffer the most from the effects of climate change, but contribute the least to the problem. As residents

of North America, we must take action by changing our lifestyles, communities and countries.

Although we may be proud to call Canada home, our reputation in the world community with regard to climate change has not been exemplary. By our lifestyles, economic dependence on fossil fuels, and our government’s withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, we have a serious obligation to change. One way is ask our government to support a binding treaty to tackle climate change at COP21, the Paris climate negotiations, in December 2015. Watch for a postcard petition to sign on this topic in your parish, or go online and sign the petition at www.devp.org/en/education/fall2015/action.

By working together we can be agents of change. ✂



Sr Marina Smith SSA, speaking to the Development & Peace Fall meeting about her experience in Ethiopia this past summer

St. Joseph’s General Hospital Board welcomes Leah MacKenzie as new Board Director

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

Leah MacKenzie joined the St. Joseph’s Hospital Board of Directors in September as a representative of the Diocese of Victoria.

Leah was born and raised in the Fraser Valley and is proud to be a farmer’s daughter. She completed her business degree at Simon Fraser University in 1990 and worked for a small Victoria accounting firm until 1999 when she moved from public accounting into the not-for-profit sector. Throughout the years, Leah has held various positions in the charitable sector.



Leah MacKenzie

Leah is currently the Chief Financial Officer for the Diocese of Victoria. The Diocese of Victoria consists of 40 parishes and mission churches, six schools, a charitable foundation, a senior’s housing facility, and provides First Nations outreach, youth ministry, university, hospital and prison chaplaincy programs.

Leah also serves on the executive committee for a non-profit insurance reciprocal, a youth running club, and is a member of the Canadian Catholic Financial Administrators. Leah is married and has two daughters at university. In her spare time she enjoys running, cycling, yoga, fitness training, reading, and travelling.

Board Chair, Mr. Chris Kelsey, stated, “We are excited to have Leah join us at the Board table and look forward to her insight and guidance as we move closer to the transition of acute care services to the new Comox Valley Hospital and to the future role of St. Joseph’s.” ✂

The Jenny Daniels Memorial Concert

The Arbutus Choir has been performing the sounds and songs of Christmas for seven years to support the Thembaletu Children’s Shelter in remote KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, where hundreds of Zulu children impacted by HIV/AIDS have found a home with the Zulu Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.

The Sisters use the money raised for food, shelter, education, cultural and recreational activities for the children.

The concert will take place on Wednesday, December 9, 2015, at St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church on Burnside Road, at 7:30 PM. Admission is by donation. Charitable tax receipts will be issued for cheque donations made to the Parish and directed to the Thembaletu Orphanage. We welcome cash donations, but regret we cannot give out receipts for cash.

Come to the concert. On December 9, start your journey toward the Christmas crib. ✂

Mount St. Mary Hospital introduces Jane Bowers, Director of Fund Development

By Sara John Fowler, CEO, Mount St. Mary Hospital

On behalf of Mount St. Mary Hospital it is my pleasure to announce the appointment of Jane Bowers to the position of Director of Fund Development.

We are excited that Jane has joined us to promote awareness of Mount St. Mary Hospital and lead fundraising initiatives that will enhance the quality of life of the residents who live with us.

Jane brings to the Mount St. Mary Team an energetic vision for a successful fund development program supported by her impressive career achievements. Jane joins us following a decade of leadership with the Children’s Health Foundation of Vancouver Island (formerly the Queen Alexandra Foundation) and brings expertise in major gifts, annual campaigns, planned giving and special events. Jane has a Bachelor of Commerce with Distinction from the University of Victoria and is a Certified Fund Raising Executive.



Jane Bowers

Jane joined the Mount St. Mary Team on October 5, 2015, and can be reached at: jbowers@mtstmary.victoria.bc.ca or at (250) 480-3138 ✂



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Sacred Heart Council 15445 serving Sacred Heart Parish—Saanich North and East
Fr. Brabant 4th Degree Assembly serving Greater Victoria
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www.kofcvictoria.bc.ca

Pilgrimage to Paris a highlight for Saint Vincent de Paul centennial year celebration

by Margaret MacIntyre

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP), Vancouver Island is celebrating a century of service in 2016 and exciting plans are being made to ensure it is a very special year.

An extraordinary amount has happened since the early days when the first conference of the Society on Vancouver Island was formed in 1916 at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Victoria. It has grown into 13 Conferences and many projects including six thrift stores; a Social Concern Office offering emergency food, clothing and programs; the Frederic Ozanam Centre for people with disabilities; and four housing projects.

The whole of 2016 will be dedicated to centennial celebrations. Over the course of the year, each Society Conference throughout Vancouver Island will plan its own events to publicize the aims, values and works of SSVP in their local parishes and communities. It is opportune that the National Annual General Assembly of the Society is being held in Vancouver in June, 2016, making it possible for those attending the AGA to make a trip over to Victoria where they will be toured around SSVP venues and enjoy some Victoria attractions. In September there will be a special Centennial Retreat at Bethlehem Retreat Centre in Nanaimo and the year will culminate with a Celebration of the Eucharist presided over by Bishop Gary at Sacred Heart Parish, followed by a banquet. It is a great joy for the Society that its latest housing project, Rosalie's Village for young mothers and their children, will also be finished by September and so a tour of the buildings can be a part of this special centennial event.

Perhaps the highlight of the centennial year will be the pilgrimage to Paris: In the Footsteps of St. Vincent. It will happen March 14 – 22, 2016, and the cost will be between \$3,400 and \$4,000 inclusive, depending on numbers. Pilgrims will

be visiting Paris, Lisieux, Chartres, Paray le Monial, Taizé and Lyon. During the three days in Paris, they will visit the tombs of Society patron, St. Vincent de Paul, founder Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and Blessed Rosalie Rendu, who did so much to develop the fledgling Society. Notre Dame Cathedral and Sacré Coeur Basilica along with the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre and other famous landmarks will also be visited (Please see more details in the flyer in this issue or phone 250-727-0007 for more information).

Everyone is encouraged to participate; preference will be given to Society members on Vancouver Island, but we are hoping to interest members, family and friends across Canada. ✂

For more information or to donate please contact SVDP at (250) 727-0007 or go to the website: www.svdpvictoria.com



2nd annual 'Dawg Days of Summer' and Staff Appreciation BBQ

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

To many of us, dogs are a big part of our lives. At St. Joseph's, this annual event is a novel and enjoyable way to celebrate our furry family members, the waning days of summer and to come together to have some fun.

In recognition of the outstanding work our staff, physicians and volunteers play each and every day in fulfilling St. Joseph's mission, the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation very generously sponsored the food and beverages for the staff BBQ. Of course, the excellent food was prepared in-house by our wonderful Nutritional Services' staff.

Fr. Anthony Divinagracia, Pastor from St. John Divine Anglican Church, Comox, provided a blessing of the dogs. Following the blessing, event participants and their four-legged friends paraded from the Healing Gardens to the front doors of The Views, where many of our residents and their families joined our event participants for the contest judging. Prizes were awarded for the Friendliest Dogs, Dog/Owner Look-Alikes and Best Dog Costumes. We had many winners!

Donations received through this event are directed to our wonderful supporters at the Pacific Assistance Dog Society (PADS), St. John's Ambulance Service Dogs and the SPCA. These organizations arrange and support the visiting pets for our residents at The Views.

We enthusiastically look forward to next year's event. ✂



CWL fighting the porn pandemic

by Christa Grillmair, Communication Chair, Diocese of Victoria CWL

The Catholic Women's League (CWL) Councils of the Diocese of Victoria are launching an awareness campaign to help their members arm themselves with the information necessary to help in the ongoing battle against the serious addiction of pornography that is affecting those as young as eight years of age.

With the popularization of books such as *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and the movie that followed, what was once done in secret is now part of popular culture, empowering a whole generation to view pornography as entertainment rather than an addiction.

Pornography is addictive, damages relationships and harms society. By conducting information seminars, the Councils are hoping to give added ammunition to members to recognize the addiction in family members and encourage them to seek help.

The CWL of Canada has a long history of standing up against pornography. In 2003, they presented a Resolution to the Government of Canada urging them to expedite the implementation of a national strategy to eliminate computer-based child pornography and to increase funding to enable law enforcement agencies to enforce this national strategy. Each year, CWL members across Canada continue their fight against pornography with awareness campaigns and urge members of parliament to implement clear and protective legislation to fight the porn pandemic that harms families and society as a whole. ✂

For more information contact: Christa Grillmair, Communication Chair, Diocese of Victoria Catholic Women's League, (250) 585-7148, cgrillmair@shaw.ca



Errata

In the September 2015 edition of the *Diocesan Messenger* we incorrectly identified Sr. Patricia Donovan SSA as Provincial Leader of the Sisters of St. Ann ('Sisters of St. Ann celebrate Jubilarians, page 17). Sr. Patricia is the assistant to the Province Leader; Sr. Marie Zarowny SSA is the Province Leader.

Fundraising Dinner

We're going to Poland for World Youth Day—and we're working hard to get there! You can help by joining us for an evening of traditional Polish food, entertainment, and a silent auction.



November 28, 2015, dinner at 7 PM

Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall
4635 Elk Lake Drive, Victoria

Cost: \$30

For tickets contact: Kelly Bourke
(250) 479-1331 extension 230

Proceeds to World Youth Day Pilgrimage and the DYC



Seeding the Future

by Sr Sheila Moss SSA

“What is evangelization today?
... Helping people fall in love with God.

In November 2014 those persons who consecrated their lives to God through vows received a special letter from their ‘brother’ Pope Francis announcing the opening of a Year of Consecrated Life. Many of us felt grateful for the love and challenge the letter displayed but we weren’t sure what it would mean practically.

In the Diocese of Victoria it didn’t take us long to decide we wanted to make this the opportunity for us to get together to share our faith, our concern for the needs of the world and to strengthen the bonds among us. We started with a Franciscan-thrust meeting first at the Poor Clares’ Monastery in Duncan and then at the Franciscan Friary in Victoria. The gatherings were both informative and inspiring and enabled us to know one another and our different congregations better. The Sisters of St. Ann offered to organize our third meeting to be held in Victoria and using resource persons in the style of a conference. The committee who did the organizing chose the hope-filled theme ‘Seeding the Future’, a theme which responds to one of Pope Francis’ goals for this Year “to embrace the future with hope.”

Though the intent was to offer this conference for the Diocese of Victoria, it became clear that interest in the gathering extended beyond these Islands and the 72 men and women of vowed life and a few of their associates who registered, some were from the Archdiocese of Vancouver, from Prince George, and a few from the North (North West Territories) and the USA.

When she opened the conference Sr. Marie Zarowny SSA, Province Leader of the Sisters of St. Ann, expressed her joy at seeing the enthusiastic response to the invitation to attend the conference and she warmly welcomed everyone. She then called on Bishop Gary Gordon, on behalf of the Diocese of Victoria who cosponsored the conference, to say a few words. Sr. Joyce Harris SSA, who guided the process of the conference, added her welcome, especially greeting the two keynote speakers, Margo Ritchie CSJ and Sean Sammon FMS.

Margo Ritchie CSJ started her ministry as a teacher, moved into facilitation and Spiritual Direction, was part of the congregation leadership team and more recently, inspired by the writings of Ilia Delio OFM, is doing work in the area of evolutionary consciousness. She is currently living in Toronto.

Sean Sammon FMS is a Marist Brother who has held various leadership roles, including that of Superior General for his congregation and President of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men in the US. Br Sean has wide experience as a lecturer and a writer. We look forward to his soon-to-be-published book on the future of religious life.

The opening prayer began with the song *Like Incense Rising* which was quickly picked up in chorus by all. Readings from Scripture were followed by quiet reflection and a responsorial psalm. In the Intercessional Prayer the needs of the world were lifted up with trusting hearts.

Guided by a PowerPoint summary, Br. Sean led us through a brief history of religious life. With often humorous anecdotes from his own life, Sean stressed that religious life did not disappear at Vatican II, but did change its address, moving from the hierarchical to the charismatic Church. Recognizing that we are now in a transition stage which can create a feeling of being ‘lost at sea’ he suggested the steps necessary for genuine renewal to occur.

Sr. Margo led the participants in a reflection on what religious life is about. She believes that the focus has changed from *doing* to *being*, that we are called to release spiritual energy into our universe and that this reality has brought with it a whole new language. The emphasis today is less about issues and more about relationships, with each other and with all that is.

Throughout the gathering there was evidence of happy moments of meeting old friends and making new ones. The group sharing was honest and deeply reflective. As the conference drew to a close we shared on one final question, “What is evangelization today?” and concluded it is helping people fall in love with God.

Great appreciation was expressed on behalf of the group by Sr. Patricia Shreenan SSA and Friar Dan Gurnick OFM to Br Sean and Sr Margo for their dynamic presentations, their life-based insights and their hope-filled suggestions as to how we can move together into the future, planting seeds as we go. Sr. Valerie Swenson OSB thanked the Sisters of St. Ann for hosting the conference.

Bishop Gary spoke of how meaningful the sessions were for him as he learned first hand about consecrated life. Thanking everyone for attending the conference, he praised the Religious for the years of service offered throughout the world and for their Gospel presence and caring. Sr. Marie Zarowny SSA thanked the organizing committee for all their work; the Diocese, the CWL and the Knights of Columbus for their financial support; and then thanked everyone for their active participation in the conference process. To her question of whether we should do it again she received a very positive response. The spontaneous comments of the participants throughout the gathering indicated that the conference had opened us to fresh insights into Gospel living today and strengthened our unity and commitment motivating us to “radiate the joy and beauty of living the Gospel and following Christ to the full” as the Holy Father asked of us. ✂

Waiting in the wilderness

By Jean Allen

“Nothing can happen, nothing can become alive, nothing can grow, nothing can come to epiphany and nothing can be made whole until God says, ‘Now.’ Through waiting we come to realize how small we are ... and how great He is.

Every year during Advent, the wild, passionate and totally committed John suddenly arrives on the scene, crying out, “Prepare the way of the Lord!” Scripture doesn’t really say how long he was in the desert but some authorities believe that John went out into the wilderness as a boy. So, what was he doing all that time besides hunting locusts, sewing together animal skins and discovering the best places to find wild honey?

Probably waiting.

Waiting can be grindingly boring or full of aching grief. At times it can be filled with frustration, anxiety, stress and at other times we get busy until we suddenly realize it has been a very long time since we thought much about the Lord. We become conscious of the fact that we have lost our spiritual center and then we begin to ‘wait’ ourselves back to him. Waiting has as many tones, shapes and nuances as there are people who are in waiting. But what happens to us during waiting?

If we are open to the dynamics of waiting, we can receive the gift of detachment.

The word ‘detachment’ can sound cold, as if you don’t care and emotions can’t touch you. God’s gift of detachment does not make us “I don’t care” detached; it gives us the grace to be “My God is perfectly in control” detached. We all long to have a deep and immovable trust that whatever happens, the Lord is in control and the only thing we really want is for him to be the creator and lover of our lives.

Our heads know we should be that trusting, but we are human. When the world, our bodies and the people around us are so capable of letting us down so easily, frequently and painfully, it’s no wonder we struggle to find the ability to trust the Lord. However, He doesn’t chastise us for our lack of trust; He simply sets about forming trust within us, and that formation is the pilgrimage called ‘waiting’.

Waiting eventually strips us of all the devices we use to try to make things happen. Waiting is the only thing that will utterly convince us of our own poverty because

once God holds something back there is nothing on earth or in the universe that can release it. Nothing can happen, nothing can become alive, nothing can grow, nothing can come to epiphany and nothing can be made whole until God says, “Now.” Through waiting we come to realize how small we are—and conversely, how great He is. And don’t try the old trick of saying to God, “OK, I’m small and You’re great. Now please give me what I desire.” He is the potter, you are the clay, and He knows exactly where you are in the process of formation. He reads your heart, not your lips.

Let’s get back to John. For years John waited. He waited, listened and waited some more. He learned the power of the God who could move the wind and shift the sand. He listened to a Voice that sounded like locusts and discovered less and less need to feed on his own inner voice. He drank of the Spirit who was like honey to his parched soul and knew that inner direction was no longer his to decide. He watched an empty horizon until he lost his own desires and became filled with God’s desires. He pondered twisted roots and the miracle of a blade of grass in a waterless land and knew that the Messiah had come. John learned to wait. He learned to listen and see in ways he never had before. And then, through the distant and lonely cries of a wild animal in the night, God whispered to him, “It is time. Go!” Then John rose up with fire in his soul and before he even came to God’s people, he was compelled to cry out to the wilderness, “Prepare the Way for the Lord! Make His path straight. Build a highway for our God!” He could not contain the fullness of all that he had been waiting for. He had to shout it out even when there was no human to hear.

Whatever God has in store for you, whether it’s filling your valleys, straightening your paths or smoothing your roughness, the Pilgrimage of Waiting is breathtaking. God will take your breath away—and then fill you with His own.

Worth its wait in gold. ✂



by Bonnie Landry

Being a human is really hard. Mostly what makes it hard is all the other humans you have to deal with. Imagine how easy your job would be if you didn't have to deal with customers, staff or bosses. Imagine how easy family life would be if you didn't have to deal with the children.

To be in relationship is the hardest thing we do. It's hard because we can't change another person. We can't change their behaviour, ideas or attitude. We can only change ourselves, and even that's pretty hard. So here's what we are left with:

- we must contend with the humans in our life;
- we can't change them;
- we can only change our attitude towards them; and ...
- that includes our children

It isn't actually possible to compel a person to think or behave any particular way. What we want from others (most particularly our children) is that they desire to behave the way we want them to. By bribery or force, we can have some sway over the way people behave, but it's kind of irrelevant. We can, however, 'disciple' others. Generally we use the word *discipline* in a punitive way. But to discipline actually means to 'disciple'; to teach, to show, to guide.

When we are raising children and things go sideways (every day) we feel a deep need to do something. *Do something*. A child is misbehaving, melting down, or we are trying to get them to do something we want them to do, and they are steadfastly resisting our wish. We have a deep need to respond, so our 'go-to' usually surfaces in the form of a carrot or a stick. "If you do this, I will give you this." "If you do this, you will get this." We can and should respond, but it doesn't need to be a choice between these two things. Prayer is always an option—and it's powerful.

We can also just pause for a moment before we respond. Taking a few minutes to ponder the situation (it's hard not to pounce, I know) gives us the breathing space to not react. And, believe it or not, not reacting is *doing something*, and the way you'll know this, when you choose not to react, is because it takes a lot of effort! In fact, it frequently takes more effort than responding. It's much more likely that our responses will be loving and Christ-like if we take that moment to breathe before we respond.

Here's a little scenario. Let's call it the sibling 'you've-got it-I-want-it' battle. It starts at an early age and it goes on for years. Without thinking about it, we can just start shouting ineffective messages like "stop that!" or "you two stop fighting!" or "I'm gonna come in there, then you'll be in trouble!"

We just want it to stop. We want it to stop because it's irritating and noisy. But there's another reason we want it to stop that is less obvious in the moment.

We love them.

We love them and we want them to grow up to be thoughtful, considerate, good and kind people. Our lives are invested. That's the far-sighted, real-life, long-term, Christ-centered and actual reason we are so reactive to our own kids' behaviour. It's because we love them.

It's the reason we care so much when it's our own kids fighting and why we don't care nearly as much when it's someone else's children. We just aren't as invested. The outcome is not as vital for us, not such a reflection of us; we are not responsible for how those other children turn out.

If we can bear in mind that far-sighted *reason* why we are reacting to their behaviour negatively, perhaps we can also bear in mind the importance of far-sighted *responses* to their behaviour.

“We love them and we want them to grow up to be thoughtful, considerate, good and kind people. Our lives are invested. That's the far-sighted, real-life, long-term, Christ-centered and actual reason why we are so reactive to our own kids' behaviour. It's because we love them.

Maybe we can reflect on this daily, perhaps as a part of our examination of conscience we can ponder this idea; maybe our daily prayers can include something to the effect of praying for us to be aware of the reasons we are reactive, and to remember to pause before responding.

But here's the big question. *How do we respond?* First: we need to actually go where the eruption is happening. Yelling from another room just won't solve any problems! This small journey is where the pausing, the breathing, the prayer, happens. Entering the room with a "Whoa, what's going on here?!" in a friendly tone will probably garner a little attention. Then perhaps take the object of desire for a moment (politely): "Here, I just need to hang on to this (truck, dolly, plastic lid...) for a minute until we figure this out. I'll put it right here where it's safe (and out of sight) for a moment or two." You can insert yourself between the two tiny squabblers. *Warning: you could get hurt if they are still trying to hit each other.* "You two are pretty upset. Let's get a little snack and a cuddle then we can talk about this. You might be hungry, and it's hard to be nice when you're hungry."

Freaking out might continue to happen for a few minutes: they're still decompressing. The frustration needs to spend itself a little. It's okay. Just go about getting the snack, put it out, say "Okay, cuddle time." Once the emotions have subsided, and some pleasant interchange has happened, *then* is the time to complete the morality tale, and develop a plan to avoid it. "You guys love each other, I know that. But it's easy to forget that when you are having so much fun with something. Sometimes we act like we love the thing even more than our brother/sister! Isn't that crazy? Don't worry, grown-ups do it too sometimes. I'm pretty sure we can figure out a plan to be loving to each other and have fun with the (truck, dolly, plastic lid...). But let's snuggle for a while first."

Yes, being human is hard, especially hard when we have all those unreasonable people to deal with. Children and adults. But, through the example of Christ and his disciples, and through the untapped grace of sacraments and prayer, we've got this.

Pray for others. Especially when they are really annoying you. That's when we all need it most. ✂



Rosalie's Village will help house vulnerable women

Press Release

Forty-two safe, affordable homes for single mothers with children and other vulnerable women are coming soon to Saanich. Construction is underway on Rosalie's Village, a new rental housing development funded by the B.C. government, the District of Saanich, the Capital Regional District and community partners. The four-storey building will include a 37-space daycare, a community kitchen and tenant access to on-site supports including employment and life skills training. Rosalie's Village is situated where residents will have easy access to health services, a number of restaurants, a shopping centre and Brydon Park.

Project partners and funding include:

- The B.C. government is arranging construction financing of close to \$10 million.
- The District of Saanich through the Affordable Housing Fund will contribute \$172,262.
- The Capital Regional District will provide \$630,000.
- The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Vancouver Island will provide up to \$1.6 million through fundraising and the land valued at nearly \$1.3 million.

Construction is expected to be complete by summer 2016. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Vancouver Island will manage and operate the building.

"We are excited to celebrate the construction progress of Rosalie's Village. This will be a beautiful affordable housing building and we can't wait for it to become a home for the women and children who need it most," said Saanich Mayor

Richard Atwell. Charlayne Thornton-Joe, chair of the CRD Regional Housing Trust Fund, also attended the recent 'celebration of construction' held on October 22, 2015. "This project is an important piece of CRD's commitment to increasing affordable housing in this region and we are proud to provide \$630,000 towards this development. Rosalie's Village will provide safe, quality and affordable housing for women and children for many years to come," she said.

In addition to Mayor Atwell and Ms. Thornton-Joe, other dignitaries were present at the celebration, including the Hon. Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, and Angela Hudson, Executive Director of Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Vancouver Island. Rosalie's Village is on the Traditional Territory of Esquimalt, Songhees, Malahat, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Pauquachin and Tseycum First Nations.

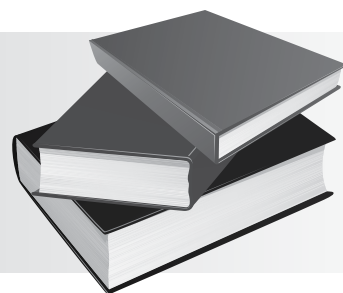
The development includes 18 two-bedroom units, 20 one-bedroom units, and three Family Emergency Shelter units for women and children. All units will rent at rates ranging from shelter rate to below market. The facility is non-smoking, welcomes small pets and features a community garden, a large community kitchen on main floor, separate common spaces for women with children and for the single women and washers and dryers in all family units.

There will also be a daycare on site, called 'Mary's Place Daycare' with 12 spots available for children under 3 and 25 spots for children aged 3 to 5. ✂

For more information about this exciting project, visit www.rosaliesvillage.ca.



Island Catholic Schools



New curriculum announced for BC schools

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent

On August 28, 2015, the Ministry of Education announced a three-year plan to launch the new Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum in all BC schools. The Kindergarten to Grade 9 Curriculum is optional this year and mandatory next year while the Grade 10 to 12 Curriculum will be optional in 2016/17 and mandatory the following year. Professional Development to support the implementation process is being provided by the Ministry to public and independent school teachers across the province

“The new curriculum gives students the opportunity to learn the basics while pursuing their own interests and passions. Personalized Learning is at the heart of the change.” (Hon. Mike Bernier, Minister of Education, August 28, 2015). The

new curriculum can be accessed on the Ministry website <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca>.

Maureen Dockendorf, Superintendent of Numeracy and Literacy for the Ministry of Education, will be speaking to Island Catholic School teachers at their professional development day on November 12, 2015. ✂

Losing their locks for love

by Simon Di Castri, Principal, St. Joseph's Elementary, Victoria

The Tour de Rock cycling team rolled in to St. Joseph's Elementary in Victoria on October 1 to a raucous welcome from staff and students.

Seven students, including two young ladies, and teacher Jamie Zwicker took up the challenge and lost their locks. It takes courage to do that, particularly for the girls, but all rose to the occasion to support the cause of cancer research.

Mena Westhaver, whose son Jack conquered leukemia a few years ago, and whose youngest son, Jake, had his head shaved to raise funds, said, “as a parent it is heart-warming to see kids do courageous, brave things for other children. Watching Jack shave Jake's head demonstrated how much love falls between brothers—and how much love is in our school community! Kids are amazing people; I was humbled to witness their actions.

And how did Jake feel about it? He was determined to raise money for “kids with stinkin' cancer—and for my brother, Jack.”

This small, dedicated group of volunteers raised over \$11,500 for the Tour de Rock's efforts to raise money and awareness for childhood cancer. A great big thank you to all who participated, and all those who supported them—well done! ✂



Long service awards for Island Catholic Schools teachers

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent

At the Diocesan Schools' Conference held on October 2, staff members employed by Island Catholic Schools for 10, 20 or 30 years were recognized for their long service, dedication and commitment. Congratulations are extended to the following people:

10 Years

Danielle Nelson, Philip O'Reilly, Kevin Mennie, David Enns, Paula Guzman, Joan Scheunhage, Colleen Duncan, Brenda Bella

20 Years

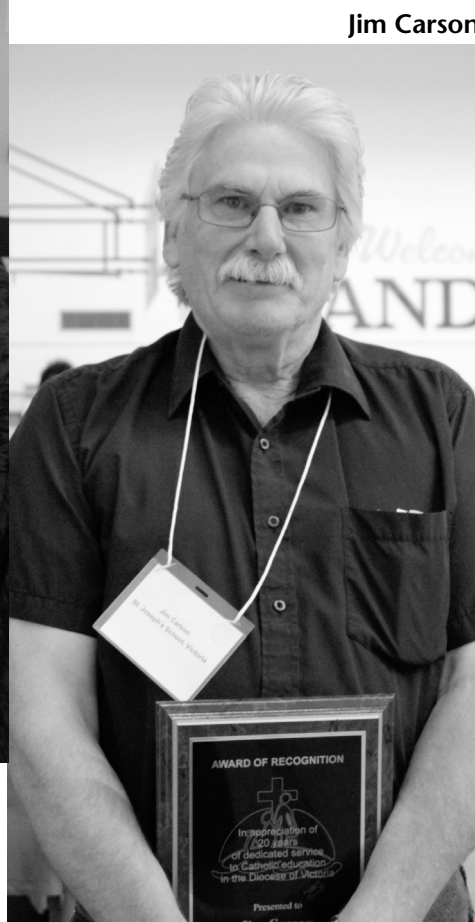
Jim Carson

30 Years

Frances Harber ✂



Frances Harber



Jim Carson

Feeding the Hungry

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent

On October 16, 2015, Island Catholic School students celebrated World Food Day. Students brought bags of non-perishable food items to school to donate to St. Vincent de Paul and local food banks. The amount of food collected was truly amazing! For example, St. Patrick's school filled a 5-tonne truck, and in Port Alberni, John Paul II students collected 1,506 items, weighing 1,676 lbs—an average of 13 items/student and 15 lbs/student. In addition, students at St. Joseph's Victoria donated 555 pounds of potatoes that they had grown over the summer, and dug up earlier in the fall.

Students gathered in their school gymnasiums that day for the Liturgy of the Word. Once the donated food was loaded into trucks, the students went on their walk to promote the importance of the day and of sharing food with others. We had a very successful day! ✂



St. Patrick's is getting ready!

by Deanne Paulson, Principal

Protecting our community

A major focus for school improvement will be emergency response to potential natural disasters, especially earthquakes. More than 1,200 earthquakes are recorded in British Columbia each year. Most are too small to be felt, but an earthquake capable of causing structural damage is expected to occur about once every ten years.

St. Patrick's takes safety seriously!

The Ministry of Education protocol for schools in session is to seek cover until notified to evacuate. Last year, St. Patrick's School in Victoria installed an early warning system monitored by a team of professionals at UBC. This system is designed to notify us of the need to seek cover. To support the protocol, heavy-duty Lifeguard structure desks have been installed in the intermediate wing of the school. The desks have three sides, a floor and internal handles; they are designed to house two people and protect them from materials falling from ceilings or upper floors.

In accordance with the Catholic Schools Plan, this school year will see substantial seismic upgrading to the gym and the three-storey intermediate wings. These areas of the school have the highest concentration of students and lowest level earthquake performance. The intent is to begin the work in April 2016 and have the seismic upgrade completed for September 2016. These installations and improvements will support our cutting-edge earthquake response plan.

Are you prepared for an emergency?

Planning ahead will reduce the stress of an emergency. Always have a Grab & Go Kit ready in the event that you have to evacuate your home. The kit should meet your basic needs for about 6 hours. Be sure to include copies of important documents, cash and extra keys for house and car. Add extra water, a week's easy-to-prepare meals and items to build a shelter for a Shelter-in-Place Kit. Make sure everyone in your home knows where the kits are kept.

Make an evacuation plan with at least two escape routes out of your home. Make sure everyone in your home knows the safe meeting place and the name of your out-of-area contact person.

Register for a free two-hour Emergency Preparedness Workshop to enable your family to cope for up to seven days without outside assistance. For registration information, visit your municipal government's website. ✂

Lord, you are our refuge.
Hold us secure in Your loving arms.
Amen.





A CELEBRATION 50 YEARS IN THE

Bishop Gary Gordon concelebrated a special Mass with current and past pastors at Sacred Heart Church on Saturday, September 5, 2015, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the first Mass celebrated at the church's current location on Nelthorpe Street.

Fr. Alfred Alilio initiated the year-long celebration in May 2014 to mark the 50th anniversary. He appointed a committee to organize the celebration. The committee's first met in June 2014 and many ideas were generated.

However, before the celebration year was kicked off in September 2014, Fr. Alfred Alilio was transferred to another parish and Friar Daniel Gurnick was appointed pastor. In July 2015, Friar Daniel Gurnick was assigned to be the chaplain for hospitals and Fr. David Hogman was appointed pastor. Thus, three pastors were involved in the 50th anniversary celebration!



The Year of Celebration project was undertaken by Marilyn Turner, Claire Holmes and Ben Pires, and included a variety of events between September 2014 and September 2015.

- An invitation to participate was issued to 1,600 individuals who were baptized and 1,290 who were either Confirmed or received the First Communion, or both, since September 1965.
- A weekly, two-page 50th Anniversary bulletin prepared by Ben Pires was inserted into the parish bulletin.
- 'Fond Memories on the Vine' — a collection of photographs capturing personal memories at Sacred Heart beginning in 1965 was posted on a simulated grapevine that had a section for each decade, along with information about various parish ministries.
- In October, 2014 a 'Sacred Heart' theme hymn contest was undertaken by Rafael Oei, the parish's musical director. This contest was promoted throughout the Diocese of Victoria and across Canada, with prizes funded by the Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island. Helen Krauch was the winning composer.
- A special souvenir 50th Anniversary photo album and directory was produced. The process was managed by Marilyn Turner, Claire Holmes and Elizabeth Olcen, Ben Pires and many volunteers.



MAKING: SACRED HEART PARISH



- A talent show was held in January 2015, organized by Gilbert Santos, featuring Friar Daniel Gurnick, who set the tone with the *Christian Rockin Rollers*, showcasing his guitar, 'Br. Acoustic' and his drums, 'Sr. Congo', 'Sr. Ashiko', 'Sr. Bongos', 'Sr. Roxy', 'Br. Peru', and 'Br. Djembe'. Philippine-born pastors Fr. Dino Villadiego, Fr. Vince Borre and Fr. Alfred Alilio brought the crowd to its feet with their performance, and Bishop Gary Gordon, who was walking Merlin, did not miss it when he dropped in to see what was going on.
- A 'Friendship Dinner' was held in February 2015 coordinated by Judith Ravai and Bernie Shaw. It was held at the Philippine Bayanihan Community Centre, and fed the needy. Parishioners donated more than \$1,200 towards the meal and other items. The meal expenses were \$561, leaving a balance to be used towards more such events.



- In May 2015, a Living Rosary was prayed in front of the statue of Mary in the courtyard. Each person represented a bead in the rosary; each decade was prayed in a different language; and a candle was lit in front of each person as each prayer was said.
- Also in May, the Newcombe Singers, under the direction of Peter Dent, performed at Sacred Heart church. The concert, with admission by donation, was organized by Isme and Peter Liem, parishioners of Sacred Heart.
- In June 2015, a Strawberry Tea was held, coordinated by Jim Haffey and enjoyed by all.
- The Year of Celebration was concluded with Mass and a potluck dinner on September 5, 2015, coordinated by Miriam Podmoroff with assistance from Marilyn Turner. ✠

Photos courtesy of Andrew Shires and Katherine Oei





Catholic Students' Association Retreat



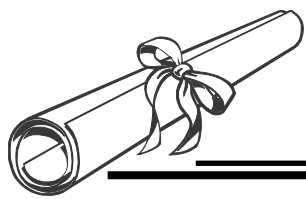
Above: UVic Alumna Bronwyn Lawrie is received as a Postulant at Vespers at Squamish's Queen of Peace Monastery of Contemplative Dominicans on October 9, the memorial of Blessed John Henry Newman



Centre: The Vocation 'Live In' weekend with the community of Dominican sisters included the 'vocation road trip team' from the Diocese of Victoria with Sr. Elisa RVM of St. Ann's Duncan, Chantal Castelino, team leader of UVic CCO (not pictured), and UVic students: Abbra, Nicole, Sarah (Catholic Students' Association president), and Ada (Catholic Students' Association vice president)

Bottom right: UVic students with new novice Sr. Elizabeth and new postulant Bronwyn Lawrie





The Campus Mission

by Fr. Dean Henderson

With the celebratory graduation and departure of many of our active Catholic Student Association members last spring, we're seeing new students arrive and begin (albeit sometimes tentatively) a Catholic community life on campus. Like many in our culture, prior to any form of commitment to the Catholic Church, young people will ask if we (the representatives of the Church) can be trusted. If the answer is yes, they may prove open to our friendship, curious about our joy in Christ, and seek to know and experience deeper friendship with God for themselves. Exemplifying that process of evangelization, three out of four of last year's Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) mission staff have returned to UVic—Rob, Chantal and Laura—and we've welcomed Melissa who hails originally from Smithers, BC.

Discernment is a process, a conversation with Christ, and I am excited to continue to discover God's will in a more focused manner during my time as a postulant."

CCO missionaries have cultivated friendships with many more than this, but about 60 students have been incorporated into numerous faith studies. Our annual fall retreat on Thetis Island the last weekend of September included a number of 'old timers' as well as notable newcomers, some from as far away as Nigeria and France. A particular grace, as we celebrated a Saturday Mass in memory of the Canadian Jesuit Martyrs, was that our two new friends from France came from the same school as those fearless saints some 400 years ago. As always, the weekend was a beautiful occasion to build loving community while drawing closer to God the Father's merciful heart. This year we were somewhat unusually close to parity for female and male students; an answer to the prayers of some of our keen women disciples, I suspect!

New this year is the resumption of the Newman House as a haven of discernment for young men within the Holy Cross Parish rectory. This is a wonderful development of mutual sharing in ministry between the chaplaincy, parish, Pastor, Catholic Students' Association and Parish Council, and I hope to see much fruit as a result.

Turning our thoughts to vocations: we have much to be grateful for. A UVic alumna has recently professed in a community of cloistered Benedictines in Colorado. Two of our alumni of Newman House are in Seminary, one in Nebraska, and the other at St. Joseph's in Edmonton; and one graduate and alumna of Bethany House for women (active just one year) has just entered Queen of Peace monastery of contemplative Dominicans in Squamish, as a postulant. This was witnessed by a van full of discerning campus women on a 'vocation road trip' with CCO's

Chantal at the wheel, Sr. Elisa RVM from St. Ann's Duncan in the navigator's seat, and five other students interested in a discernment weekend. Just prior to her entrance to the monastery and commencement of a courtship with Jesus amongst the Dominican sisters, I asked her what's transpired thus far in her faith.

I wasn't raised in the Church and had a rather dramatic conversion in my third year at UVic. Through the Catholic Students' Association and Bethany House, I had a profound encounter with God's all-encompassing, all-consuming love and mercy. Struck by the witness of a local seminarian, I wondered, "As a future priest, he's giving his entire life to God and His people. How could God be calling me?" I started praying about the possibility of religious life, spending time in Adoration, and talking to priests and religious about their lives. After a lot of nerves, and a few false starts, I stumbled upon Queen of Peace Monastery and fell in love with the Dominican charism and how these sisters preach God's love with such joy. Discernment is a process, a conversation with Christ, and I am excited to continue to discover God's will in a more focused manner during my time as a postulant.

Another alumna with a sense of a religious vocation is venturing on a year-long mission with CCO as she continues to discern different communities of religious life.

On the male side of religious life, a young member of our Diocesan family, nurtured by his family and a vibrant Catholic youth community, continues his novitiate with the Franciscans as a brother. To this joyful list of people in formation must be added our seven diaconal candidates and many young couples hearing God's call to holy matrimony and family life.

Our prayers are being answered but we need to increase them with joyful anticipation that many others are being called to follow Christ in deeper profession. Bishop Gary has asked that I take some coordinating leadership in vocation promotion and awareness in the Diocese to which I humbly consent—while at the same time recognizing I'm not sure what to do. I'm eager to learn from Fr. Sean Flynn's accumulated wisdom in this area, with thanksgiving for his foundational work. I'll be meeting in November with a newly formed team including a lay married couple, a religious sister, and a young social media-savvy high school student to begin formulating plans to stimulate the whole Diocese to seek Christ's calling in all our lives. The mission on campus, by the grace of God and lots of work, is thriving.

Deo Gratias! ✠

(See photos, page 14)



Connections

by Amber Santarelli

Remembrance Day is just three years from its centennial anniversary of peace. Recently I was pondering what it means to me. What for me stands out is the word gratitude, to be thankful for a gift and the importance of that gift.

I am grateful to all the soldiers, volunteers, medics, nurses, families at home, women in factories, resistance and underground fighters, for Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire who stood to let the world know of the Rwandan genocide, and for all the others who stood against atrocities inflicted on humankind. I hail the frontline workers in Syria, UN peacekeepers around the world and the men and women who oppose the radical threats in the Middle East, for their sacrifices and gifts to our world. I am likewise grateful for anyone who stands up to fight for our rights and freedoms, so that all may be free from persecution. I say once more, thank you.

Everyone is affected by the consequences of war, before, during and for generations to come. Our world has not yet found a way to live in peace, so now we call on our bravest souls to go into battle. There have been many heroic and courageous acts achieved by citizens from around the globe. Carrying the banner of Jesus, spreading light and love, they take this mighty stand.

These are people who spend sleepless nights and gruelling days absorbing the horrors of the battle. Do we realize or are we really capable of realizing or comprehending what was done and the sacrifices they have made? Why would they put themselves in danger then relive what they have experienced everyday? War kills not just the physical self, but the innocence of the soul as well. If it were not for these people of great courage and selfless sacrifice where would we be?

It is because of them we know freedom. For this immeasurable gift, I am immensely grateful.

I ask each of you to honour these brave souls by wearing a poppy in a show of gratitude, to take the time to be silent in a gesture of respect; all it takes is two minutes on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Pray for all the peoples of our planet that true peace may be found. ✠

"We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude."

~ Cynthia Ozick

REMEMBRANCEDAY
WE WILL NEVER FORGET!



Out of the Archives

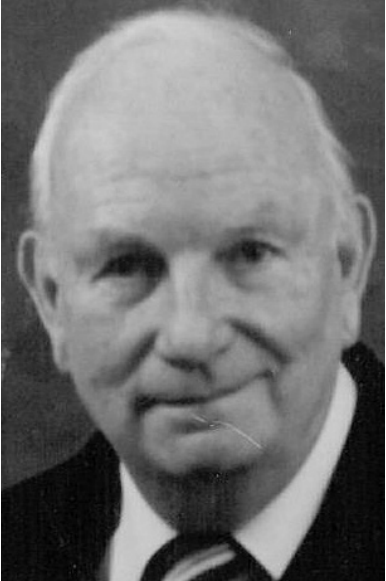
by Theresa Vogel

By this time, many of you may be wondering what that woman in the Archives is up to—the priests connected with Sacred Heart Parish are not so much ‘archival’ as they are ‘very much in the front of memory’! No tricks intended. The Rt. Rev. (Msgr.) Carl Albury was included because he was charged, in 1936, to establish the Sacred Heart Mission. While we cannot be sure what Bishop John MacDonald had in mind for the mission, Msgr. Albury was eulogized, repeatedly, at the time of his passing in 1982, as the most gifted administrator of parishes in the Diocese. In fact, one commentator stated that Msgr. Albury could “...stretch a dollar the farthest!” He was an inspired spiritual leader and a talented administrator for a young mission.

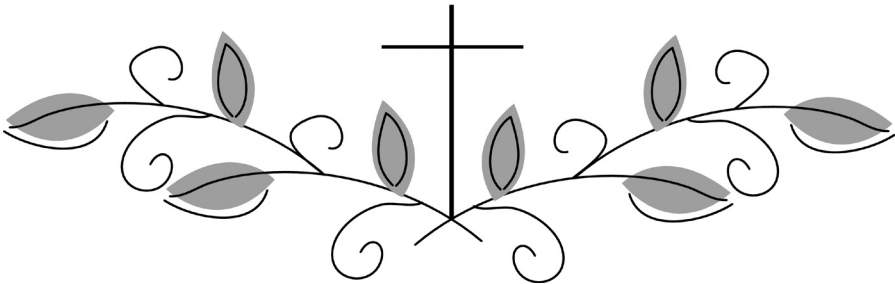
Ireland-born and Victoria-raised Donal Kevin Lehane bears the distinction of being the first parishioner from Sacred Heart to be ordained a priest. He served the parish for four years, and is remembered as a kind and gentle soul. Oh, don’t let the lack of cassock and collar in the picture divert you—in his youthful priestly days, Fr. Lehane favored blue jeans and lumberjack shirts.



Rt Rev (Msgr) Carl Albury



Fr. Donal Kevin Lehane



Time to prepare

by Anela Nicholson

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and that means that it’s time to start considering Christmas. When you think about preparing for Christmas, what comes to your mind? Maybe you think of the list of people you want to send holiday greetings to, or the house that needs decorating. For us young adults, it might mean finishing our last exams and assignments so that we can spend Christmas break relaxing with our families. However, there’s much more to preparing for Christmas than buying the perfect gift and wrapping it with a bow. We have to prepare not only our homes, but also our hearts.

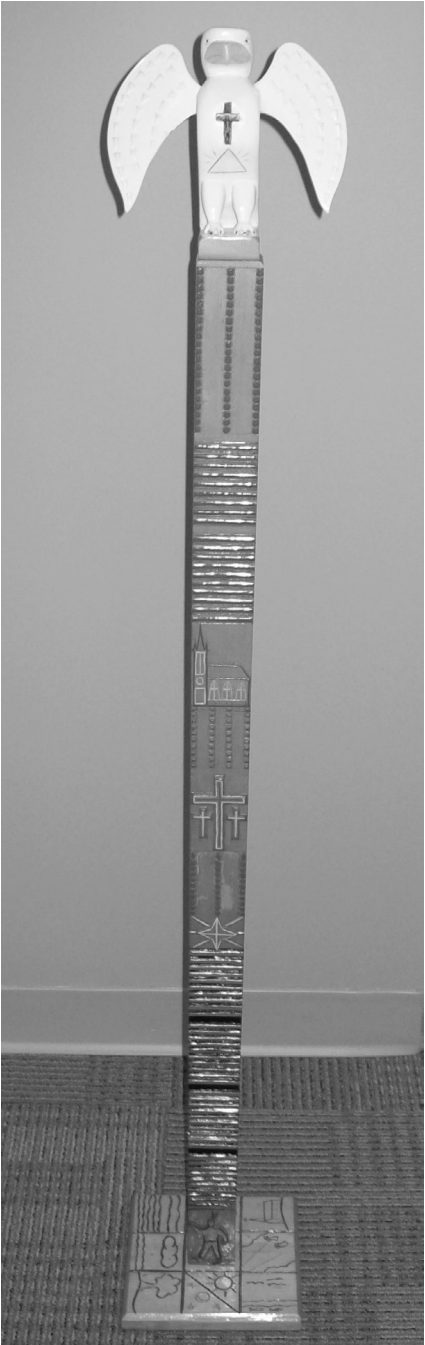
It’s important not to lose sight of the Nativity as we journey through Advent. We are preparing for the ‘God with Us’ moment, when all of Creation stops and pays homage to a tiny child lying in a manger. By allowing ourselves to slow down, we are able to gaze in wonderment at the newborn before us, who will grow up to save the world from sin.

Mother Church gives us four weeks to allow us to prepare all the aspects of our life for the joyful season of Christmas; we call this time of preparation ‘Advent’ from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning *arrival*. So how can we, as Catholic young adults fully participate in Advent and prepare for Christmas?

First of all, we can be sure to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ by making a good confession. It can be a very humbling experience, but so was being born in a manger. We need to have our sins forgiven and our hearts transformed into something beautiful so that we can enter fully into the joy of the season, and offer our pure hearts as a gift to the Christ Child. As you prepare to receive this

On to the challenge for November which is a ‘what’ with a bit of a ‘who’ attached. This particular item is on display at the Diocesan Pastoral Centre. It dates from February 14, 1963, and was presented to ‘Siem le Pleet’ in a (up until then) one-of-a-kind ceremony. Remember this? Know what it is? Know who was involved?

Send in your reply to the Diocesan Archives, or tvogel@rcdvictoria.org. I certainly enjoy your reminiscences, and even those who take me to task for calling their memories ‘archival’! ✂



Sacrament, give it some deep thought, and remember that it is truly Christ who hears and forgives your sins.

Secondly, during the season of Advent we can help prepare our hearts by making extra time for prayer. Lent isn’t the only time of year that we can make a spiritual resolution. Something as simple as saying a single decade of the Rosary or reciting the Chaplet of Divine Mercy every day in Advent can help you spiritually prepare for Christmas, and help you draw closer to Christ by centering your focus on Him.

Thirdly, make time this season to do some good deeds for others. One of the best ways that I prepared for Christmas last year was carolling at a seniors’ home, and visiting with the residents. By doing good deeds, no matter how small, you offer a special gift to the Newborn King, and make others’ lives just a wee bit brighter during this special season. Just like we hear in the traditional story of the Little Drummer Boy, the seemingly smallest gift is oftentimes the most sincerely appreciated.

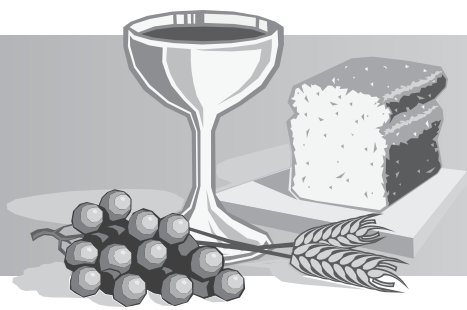
Finally, we have to remember exactly what we are celebrating so that we don’t get swept away by the worldliness of it all. If we lose sight of the fact that Christmas is the celebration of Christ’s birth, then the fact that Advent is the time to prepare ourselves and our surroundings for Him will mean nothing at all.

It’s important not to lose sight of the Nativity as we journey through Advent. We are preparing for the ‘God with Us’ moment, when all of Creation stops and pays homage to a tiny child lying in a manger. By allowing ourselves to slow down, we are able to gaze in wonderment at the newborn before us, who will grow up to save the world from sin.

As we prepare to enter into the Advent season, let’s remember the true ‘reason for the season’, and reflect it in all of our Christmas preparation as we strive to transform not only our homes, but also our hearts. ✂



Vocations



by Bishop Gary Gordon

A work of the whole people of God

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Fr. Dean Henderson as Vocations Director, and Fr. Paul Szczur as Formation Director, for the Diocese of Victoria.

As Vocations Director, Fr. Dean will create a committee to focus on awareness and promotion of vocations to the ministerial priesthood, and the consecrated life for women and men. Fr. Paul, as Formation Director, will focus on the many details of the application process with candidates for seminary formation. He will also facilitate the formation and dialogue with seminaries and candidates through the lengthy discernment process leading to Holy Orders.

“We used to have Mass and a pastor, but we don’t any more. Can you help us?”

As I travel throughout the Diocese I am always pleased to hear the expressions of gratitude that come from parishioners for the availability of the Sacraments, especially weekly and daily Liturgy of the Eucharist. I’m also privileged to hear the heartfelt comments of appreciation and love for the ministerial priests who serve our communities.

I am very grateful for the leadership provided by laity in leading communities to gather and worship in the absence of an ordained minister. I am so grateful for the many people who participate and witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by accompanying the vulnerable and fragile among us, bringing to them the consolation and merciful comfort of Jesus.

As I travel the Diocese I am also aware of the communities that do not have a resident ministerial priest and do not have regularly scheduled opportunities to celebrate Holy Eucharist and other Sacraments. The question is often framed: “We used to have Mass and a pastor, but we don’t any more. Can you help us?”

As a missionary bishop in the far north of Canada I heard this question often, and it was a great challenge to provide outreach and service in remote locations. To my amazement, here in the Diocese of Victoria I have discovered remote locations of Catholic faithful who are far more isolated than any place I experienced in the north. It is important for me to note the isolated places are both urban and rural when I consider the poverty of isolation that many individuals and families experience in the circumstances of life in our present society.

The challenges of serving the peripheries continue to fill my missionary heart, and I am convinced that the Lord will raise up from our own families the missionary-disciples who have the courage, love and wisdom to go without fear to the existential and geographical peripheries as leaven in the dough, accompanying the isolated into new life in the grace of God’s merciful Holy Spirit. With God’s help the whole people of God working and praying together will be able to go forward leaving no one behind or feeling left out from God’s merciful gaze and the compassionate embrace of our mother the Church.

Pray to the Lord of the Harvest that He send labourers into the harvest. ✠

The four vocations

by Fr. Varghese (Sajan) Srambickal VC

God’s first call for every person is to simply follow Him. You were created to be in relationship with God, and that is His greatest desire for you. As your relationship with God grows, He will continue to draw you deeper into this relationship, and call you to become more like Christ, to love Him more, and to love others through service. In all these things, you will experience God calling you to a particular vocation.

The Catholic Church recognizes four main vocations: Priesthood, Religious Life, Marriage and Single Life. God calls everyone to follow Him. Here is a brief outline of the four vocations:

Priesthood

A Catholic priest is a male ordained minister of the Church. Because they give their lives in total service to the Church, priests embrace the gift of celibacy and commit to a life of prayer. They proclaim the Good News, teach the Catholic faith, minister the Sacraments, work to build up their local faith community and lead their faith community in worship. Most priests will minister in a parish setting, while others may serve as chaplains to universities, hospitals, prisons, the armed forces and other industries.

Religious Life

A religious priest, brother or sister (nun) commits his or her life to sharing in the life and mission of their religious community. Religious priests, brothers and sisters embrace the call to poverty, chastity and obedience, and nurture their call through a life of celibacy, faith, prayer and service. Religious priests, brothers and sisters serve in areas such as education, health care, parish, youth ministry, aged care, spirituality, pastoral ministry, social work, amongst the poor and as a

contemplative, and many will serve as missionaries in other cultures. Depending on the religious order, they may dress in ‘normal’ clothes or in a habit.

Marriage

A married person lives a vow of faithful love to a spouse through the sacrament of marriage. Husbands and wives share a self-giving, love-giving and life-giving relationship with their spouse, and are committed to helping their spouse grow to human and Christian maturity. They seek to form a family home, and are together the first teachers of their children in Christian faith and values. Married people may serve in their parish community or in the Church in a number of different ways.

Single Life

A person called to single life comes to believe that remaining single is the true and right way to faithfully live his or her baptismal call. Single men and women embrace the gift of celibacy while living alone, with a family or with others who are single. They are able to devote time and energy in service of others, and may serve in their parish community or in the Church in a number of different ways.

In each vocation, the person lives a life of faith and prayer to continually grow in relationship with God. The Church recognises that each vocation is equal in the sense that no vocation is better or less than any other. However, because God calls you to a particular vocation - whether marriage, priesthood, religious life or single life - that vocation is the best one for you, and the one that will ‘fit’ you best and make you the most happy. ✠

Source:

www.srambivc.blogspot.ca/2008/03/four-types-of-vocation-in-catholic.html



Prayer for Vocations

Holy Father,

Bless your church with holy and faithful priests, deacons, brothers and sisters.

Give those you have called to the married state, and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world, the special graces that their lives require.

Form us all in the likeness of your Son so that in him, with him and through him we may love you more deeply and serve you more faithfully, always and everywhere.

With Mary we ask this,
through Christ our Lord,

Amen.



Faith Matters



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

The Jubilee Year of Mercy begins December 8. What is mercy and what does mercy look like?

Mercy does not readily spring to mind as a word common to the average person's day-to-day vocabulary. It's another of those old fashioned sounding words. Browsing the Oxford Dictionary we discover the following entry for 'mercy':

Middle English: from Old French merci 'pity' or 'thanks', from Latin merces, merced – 'reward', in Christian Latin 'pity, favour, heavenly reward'.

What's our take-away here? 'Mercy' has clear connections to gratitude—in other words, a recognition of thoughtfulness or an acknowledgment of a caring attitude.

'Pity' is included in the definition as being an original variation on the meaning, and may seem out of place. However, if we consider the roots of 'pity' we discover two Latin words, *pietas* 'dutifulness' and *pius* 'reverent', those qualities of being conscientious; showing deep respect; showing kindness to (literally, from the Latin, *favor/favere*); or obedience (literally 'to hear', one whose behaviour shows he has heard correctly).

To sum up, 'mercy' equates with thoughtful, caring behaviour. In other words, a person who shows mercy is one who shows deep respect, is attentive to others, and is conscientious about doing the right thing for others.

"But what about *justice*?" I hear you say. Well 'justice' certainly is a *very* familiar word to us. Everyone wants justice! Where does the word come from? Again, from in the Oxford Dictionary:

Late Old English iustise 'administration of the law', via Old French from Latin justitia, from justus (from jus 'law, right').

Clearly, we didn't need the dictionary to understand the essential connection between justice and the law. Our litigious culture is quite attuned to fairness, and by that is meant 'observing and following the laws'!

So do we have a conflict here between mercy and justice? Judging by the headlines in our daily newspapers and the political chatter on the Internet, you'd surely think so—conservatives and liberals, hawks and doves!

Let's dig a little deeper.

If we look at Pope Francis' Bull of Indiction for the Jubilee of Mercy (*Misericordiae Vultus*) ... wait, maybe we should unpack 'Bull of Indiction'! 'Bull' is from Latin, *bullā*, 'bubble' for the round shape of the wax or lead seal used on documents indicating its authenticity and the authority of the writer. 'Indiction' from *indicare*, Latin, 'to proclaim'. Essentially the Pope, in his capacity as spiritual leader, is proclaiming the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

And while we're at it 'jubilee' has an interesting background. The yobel, the sound of Hebrew ram's-horn trumpet, was used to announce the Hebrew Jubilee Year. For the Hebrews, seven was a number representing holy completion, as God rested from completing His creating on the seventh day, the Sabbath. The Sabbath, the holy day, was a day of rest and prayer dedicated to God. Every seventh year (the sabbatical year) fields were left to rest, and debts were released. And at the end of seven cycles of seven years (or seven sabbatical cycles, every 50 years) there was a very special year, the Jubilee year, pre-eminently a time of joy and universal pardon.

Getting back to Pope Francis and the apparent tension between mercy and justice, in paragraph 20 of his announcement of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, he tells us that these are not "... two contradictory realities, but two dimensions of a single reality ..." Where things go awry is if we emphasise one dimension over the other. With too much of a focus on the law we become unbearably severe, without compassion—in a word, legalistic.

We all want justice for ourselves; this is where the problem lies. We have to look beyond our own interests, what's fair to me, and seek God's will, which also includes the wellbeing of my neighbour. This is where true justice lies.

Pope Francis reminds that besides Mercy and Justice, there's a third element in the equation, Faith. He reminds us of that zealous enforcer of the law, Saul, who literally and spiritually had his world turned upside down when, on the road to Damascus, he encountered the Risen Lord. The new man, Paul, encountered Truth, Beauty, Goodness, essentially Love personified. It was no longer all about Saul and the Law, but now it was Paul at the service of God's Call.

Paul's understanding of justice changes radically. He now places faith first, not justice. Salvation comes not through the observance of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, who in his death and resurrection brings salvation together with a mercy that justifies. God's justice now becomes the liberating force for those oppressed by slavery to sin and its consequences. God's justice is his mercy (cf. Ps 51:11-16). (Misericordiae Vultus § 20)

Pope Francis goes on to say,

Yet this does not mean that justice should be devalued or rendered superfluous. On the contrary: anyone who makes a mistake must pay the price. However, this is just the beginning of conversion, not its end, because one begins to feel the tenderness and mercy of God. God does not deny justice. He rather envelops it and surpasses it with an even greater event in which we experience love as the foundation of true justice. (Misericordiae Vultus § 21)

Love is really what it is all about. We are all sinners and rather than holding up the Ten Commandments to measure others up against them, we must never forget that we stand in the shadow of the Cross upon which Christ took on our sins, paid the debt we owe, freely, lovingly. The Cross is our yardstick,

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness. (Misericordiae Vultus § 2)

In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, beginning December 8, 2015, we can truly, with joy, contemplate this inexhaustible mystery of Mercy if we recognize that we, together with all of humanity, while totally undeserving of God's Mercy, are first of all loved by God—each one of us. Therefore we have nothing to fear other than failing to respond with our love, by seeking and doing God's will and being merciful to each other. Anything less would not be justice. ✠

"I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me"

Press Release, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

I*Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me*, the Pastoral Letter now being released by the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), comes at a critical time for the staggering and unprecedented number of refugees and displaced persons now present in our world. It aims at making Canadian Catholics more aware of the current situation, while also challenging them to make a difference in the lives of refugees through prayer, support, and the sponsorship of families. The Pastoral Letter is in continuity with recent statements of the CCCB, including:

- *Responding as Catholics to the Refugee Crisis: An Open Letter to Catholics* by the then CCCB President Archbishop Paul-André Durocher, September 8, 2015
- Statement of Support for Joint Fundraising Campaign for Syrian Refugees by the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, CNEWA Canada, and Aid to the Church in Need Canada, September 17, 2015
- Resolution by the Catholic Bishops of Canada on Refugees, CCCB 2015 Plenary Assembly, September 18, 2015.

Welcoming the stranger, as Jesus teaches us in Matthew 25:35, is not an option for Christians but a Gospel requirement. When we do this, "we open our doors to

God," as Pope Francis indicates in his 2016 Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

The present Pastoral Letter echoes the call adopted by the Bishops of Canada at their recent Plenary Assembly, and issued to all parishes and religious communities in Canada, to give serious consideration to sponsoring a refugee family. More information on Catholic refugee sponsors in Canada is given below to assist those Catholic organizations that may want further information.

We also invite all our Catholic brothers and sisters in our country to pray, as the Pastoral Letter states, "that our hands and our hearts may unite with our voices in actions that will give a loving welcome to refugees in our country and in our Christian communities."

The document is available on the CCCB Website and from CCCB Publications. Copies can be ordered by phone at 1-800-769-1147, by email at publi@cccb.ca or online at www.cccbpublications.ca. ✠

Contact information for Canadian Catholic organizations sponsoring refugees is on page 19.



Fr. Karam Alraban: pastor and refugee

by Sandi Digras, interviewing Fr. Karam

Fr. Karam is pastor of Ascension Parish in Parksville. As a refugee from Iraq, Fr. Karam has a unique perspective on the current refugee situation. We thank him for his willingness to share his story with us, to give us a better understanding of the issues facing refugees in the Middle East and elsewhere.

I was born in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq. I am part of a Catholic family of four: my parents, my younger brother and me. My family was a practicing family who took me to Church every Sunday. I was impressed by the priest and the way he led us in prayer, and with his pastoral mission. So I had the desire to be a priest from the age of seven. I joined the minor seminary where I lived while I went to middle school and high school. Then I joined the major seminary, where I attended the Pontifical Babel College for philosophy and theology. I graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in theology.

Was the war in Iraq always a factor in your life?

The war in Iraq was not one war, but a series of wars. I was born during the war with Iran, then I experienced the war with Kuwait, then the US economic sanctions for 13 years. That was followed by the US invasion and occupation in 2003. Next came the terrorists who conducted attacks on the people of Iraq. For me personally, and for the Iraqi Christian community, these challenges were not obstacles to our faith, but, as St. Paul said, “for power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). I learned that carrying the cross is a deep experience which always leads to resurrection.

Were the Syriac Christians always in fear of practicing their faith?

As minorities, Christians of all denominations in Iraq, just as throughout the Middle East, identified themselves simply as ‘Christian’. We had to be united because, as a minor community, we were always treated as lower class even though we had a very positive presence in all areas of life in Iraq. Therefore, Christians in Iraq had very limited rights. They were not allowed to celebrate their faith in public; for example, they could not have processions outside of the church. They were subject to frequent and widespread religious-based insults to which they could not reply except at risk of being charged under the law. A Christian in Iraq, even if well educated and well qualified, cannot obtain a good job for the government.

Tell us about the bombing of your church and how that impacted your decision to take your final vows.

In 2010 the terrorist attack on my church, the Church of Our Lady of Salvation, killed 47 people including two priests. Five suicide bombers entered the church, shot many and took the survivors hostage. The police and the army came and stood by outside, taking no steps to stop the killing, saying that the victims were only Christians and were not worth putting the authorities’ lives at stake in order to defend them. When the terrorists ran out of ammunition and grenades, they detonated their suicide jackets. At the time, I was a Deacon, and I was concerned that being a priest was risky, but people came to me and told me that they now relied on me. I felt this was a calling from God, that he wanted me to be His man.

The Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has offered suggestions of ways for Catholics to respond to the refugee crisis. What are your thoughts about the refugees, and how we should respond?

I strongly endorse the initiative of the CCCB which is really thoughtful and continues the journey of mercy that Pope Francis started. From my humble perspective, the fourth point of the CCCB response to the Refugee crisis, *Be Informed*, is an important starting point because people cannot be properly involved or respond without having adequate and accurate information.

Canadians need to be aware of the real situation that refugees face in the Middle East and to understand the historical root of the crisis in order to see the proper way to respond, and also, to understand the negative repercussions to their humanity.

We already see thousands of people dying. We cannot wait for perfect or complete information; now is the time to act.

Do you think we need more information about the problem before making decisions about taking action?

We already know the plight of the refugees, the lack of hope they have of being able to make a reasonable life in their homelands, and their fears of an unpredictable

future. To be more informed about the refugee crisis is to be alive to the meaning of fleeing from your home, leaving your memories behind, not being able to receive education or to find work. The loss of one’s home steals stability and makes you feel that your life’s efforts to build a home and family are erased in a moment.

When your faith is the reason for your persecution, when you don’t feel that you are considered as a human, and when your life and those of your family members are threatened; when we understand these things, then we will know what it feels like to be a refugee.

“When God saved my life in Iraq, I believe it was because He had a mission for me, and that mission was not then being done.

Tell us a bit about the Christians in Iraq and what they face in the present political situation.

Refugees include those persons who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality and so on. In the Middle East, minorities are the most vulnerable people. It is difficult to specify one minority as being more at risk than any other. As long as one is a member of a minority group in Iraq or Syria, he is at risk.

The refugee crisis is neither new nor temporary for Christians in the Middle East. For them, the refugee option is not a matter of finding an alternative country, but of simply finding a country for they feel that they have never had a country that accepted them, and respected them, and made them feel that they belonged.

Christians in Iraq have always been treated as strangers in that country. The problem for Christians of the Middle East is not confined to their countries; it is also compounded by the Western World’s lack of awareness of their situation.

Many people in the Western world are surprised to learn that there are Christians in the Middle East.

To summarize what Christians need in Iraq and the Middle East: “Give them countries for they are strangers in the lands where they now live.” Take them out of that area of persecution because this persecution will not be stopped. They no longer have hope for any solution which will offer them security and a decent life in their countries of origin. I am not speaking of a problem or a crisis; I am speaking of a long standing and enduring history of persecution. This persecution will not be ended by political or military means, nor by the aid provided by NGOs for the problem is cultural. It is rooted in the mentality of the majority of the population in that area. We live our entire lives in fear, even when the country is stable and security is good, because we are the weakest people. The persecution of Christians over hundreds of years has resulted in Christians declining from a majority of the population to a minority.

Will you take an active role in assisting the Diocese to adopt families and advise on how they can resettle?

As a refugee and a pastor, I am aware of the difficulties that they face, therefore I have approached the Knights of Columbus and the Parish Pastoral Council and I have contacted Sponsorship Agreement Holders to see how we as a parish could sponsor a refugee.

What are your impressions of your new home and parish?

What impresses me most are the kindness, thoughtfulness and hospitality of the people. Being here fills me with joy. When God saved my life in Iraq, I believe it was because He had a mission for me, and that mission was not then being done. I believe that mission is to be in Canada, and I will always be grateful to Canada, to the Canadian people and to God for bringing me here. ✠



Fr Karam Alraban

The images and stories filling the media of the current refugee crisis in the Middle East have touched everyone, and the natural response is to want to offer help. In response to the crisis a special collection for Syrian refugee emergency relief has been sanctioned and promoted within the Diocese.

Over \$70,000 has been collected, and the funds continue to come in to the Chancery Office and are being forwarded on to:

- Aid to the Church in Need – Canada (ACN)
- Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA)
- Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP)

Refugee sponsorship is another very real and tangible way to help. The Diocese of Victoria supports sponsoring refugees of all religious traditions from any country. This is a humanitarian crisis and our response is based on Gospel values and the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching: The Life and Dignity of the Human Person; The Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities; The Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; Solidarity; and Care for God’s Creation.

The Diocese of Victoria has entered into a partnership with the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia to enable our Catholic parishes to sponsor refugees through a Memorandum of Understanding under the Anglican Sponsorship Agreement with the Government of Canada.

Please contact the Diocese of Victoria directly for assistance with the Refugee Sponsorship Process. For a more detailed understanding of what can be expected in undertaking refugee sponsorship please refer to *A Guide To Refugee Sponsorship For Vancouver Island*, a refugee sponsorship manual prepared by the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia: <https://bc.anglican.ca/sites/bc.anglican.ca/files/attachments/refugeesponsorshipmanual.pdf>

May our prayers and actions be guided by and be a reflection of God’s infinite care and mercy for His children.

Inquiries should be directed to:
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jeoreilly@rcdvictoria.org;
1 - 4044 Nelthorpe Street, Victoria, BC, V8X 2A1
Phone: (250) 479-1331 Local 236



National & International News



Holy Land Christians Celebrate Our Lady of Palestine

The feast of Our Lady of Palestine on Sunday was an occasion to pray for peace in the Holy Land. About 300 people gathered in Der Rafat for a solemn Mass animated by seminarians of Beit Jala. Because of the current security situation fewer people were able to attend than last year. There were fervent prayers peace and prayers for Patriarch Fouad Twal, who was in Rome for the Family Synod. The celebration was followed by a meal prepared by the sisters of the convent with the help of two families, one Muslim and the other Jewish, who worked together to prepare for the joyous day. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=28674>

Family Synod Final Document: English Translation

The Vatican Press Office today released the English translation of the final document of the Synod of Bishops - the 'Relatio Synodi' of the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: 'Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization'. *Read the original text of the translation (with voting statistics) here:* <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2014/10/18/0770/03044.html#>

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=28672>

Pope Francis Meets World Pilgrimage of Gypsies

Thousands of Gypsies and other Travelling Peoples came to Rome yesterday to see Pope Francis. The World Pilgrimage which gathered together Roma, Sinti and other groups attended the special audience in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall. The day was organised by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples in collaboration with the 'Migrantes' Foundation of the Italian Episcopal Conference and the 'Migrantes' Office of the diocese of Rome and the Sant'Egidio Community. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Blessed Paul VI's visit to the nomadic camp of Pomezia, Italy, on 26 September 1965. Pope Francis mentioned the great changes that have taken place in the Gypsy community since that historic visit, both in the field of evangelisation and in that of human, social and cultural development. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=28665>

Parents, will your children be happy?

Press Release from CCCB

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF) has published its 2015 Message to Families, "Parents, will your children be happy?" While the Synod on the Family is taking place in Rome, COLF proposes a reflection on the formation of conscience. "In this present day and age, Christian parents who dedicate themselves to the education of their children, and hope that they become responsible, generous adults,

cannot afford to ignore this reality. It is primarily the parents' task to train the men and women of tomorrow, so that they are able to choose that which — from the multitude of propositions offered by our society and our culture — is good, beautiful, right, and true. Christian parents know, moreover, that the eternal happiness of their children depends on these life decisions," COLF states in the introduction of its message. The new publication also includes a workshop guide for families, parishes,

groups and movements who would like to deepen their reflection. Printed copies of the 2015 Message to Families can be ordered from www.colf.ca or by phoning (613) 241-9461, extension 161. ✕



Holy Door at Basilica-Cathedral Notre Dame de Québec to open for Jubilee Year of Mercy

Press Release from Notre Dame de Québec

The Holy Door at the Basilica-Cathedral Notre Dame de Québec has been declared a Top Canada Event 2016 by the American Bus Association, a major player in the tourism industry, and consequently made the American and Canadian Top 100 Events list. As a result, the Holy Door is being promoted in the Top 100 repertory which is distributed throughout United States and Canada.

Notre Dame de Québec is currently preparing celebrations for the opening of the Holy Door by Cardinal Gérald Lacroix, on December 12, 2015. The Jubilee of Mercy will be celebrated in all Catholic dioceses in the world and on this occasion, all seven Holy Doors

will be accessible, including the one at the Basilica-Cathédrale Notre Dame de Québec.

Passing through a Holy Door is a spiritual journey that is offered to all Catholics and to any person of good will. To learn more about visit of and pilgrimage opportunities to the Québec City Holy Door, the only one located on the American continent, visit www.notre-damedequébec.org. ✕



Catholic leaders worldwide call for urgent climate action and a major breakthrough at COP21 climate negotiations

From Development & Peace www.devp.org

On October 26, 2015, the presidents of continental groupings of national episcopal conferences representing all regions of the world issued a compelling appeal to the negotiating parties and heads of state that will be in attendance at the United Nations COP21 climate conference in Paris to work for the approval of a fair, legally binding and truly transformational climate agreement. Most Rev. David Douglas Crosby, Bishop of Hamilton and President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops signed on behalf of Catholic leaders in Canada.

The statement is a powerful call to put the common good ahead of national interests and to protect our common home and all its inhabitants. The appeal underpins the importance of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*. The signatories "join the Holy Father in pleading for a major breakthrough in Paris, for a comprehensive and transformational agreement supported by all."

The agreement, according to the signatories, should limit global temperature increases to avoid catastrophic climatic

impacts, especially on the most vulnerable communities. Based on scientific evidence, faith leaders recognize that excessive reliance on fossil fuels is primarily responsible for accelerated climate change, and they call not only for a "drastic reduction in the emission of carbon dioxide and other toxic gases," but also for ending the fossil fuel era.

Putting forward a ten-point proposal the appeal draws on the concrete experience of people across continents, and links climate change to social injustice and the social exclusion of the poorest and most vulnerable of our citizens. The Church is witness to how climate change is affecting vulnerable communities and people, and signatories therefore "call for social justice to be placed centre stage."

The appeal was written in collaboration with our Catholic networks CIDSE (international alliance of Catholic development agencies) and Caritas Internationalis, two networks that Development and Peace belongs to, and with the sponsorship of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. ✕



Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders call on the Government of Canada to focus on palliative care instead of euthanasia and assisted suicide

Press Release of the CCCB, October 29, 2015

At a news conference today on Parliament Hill, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) released a joint statement on euthanasia and assisted suicide. The Declaration on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide has been endorsed by over 30 Christian denominations together with over 20 Jewish and Muslim leaders from across Canada. In light of the Supreme Court of Canada’s ruling in R. v. Carter, the joint statement advocates for palliative care, respect for the dignity of the human person, human solidarity and psychological, spiritual and emotional support as the ethical and moral response in end-of-life care.

The declaration states that “The recent Supreme Court of Canada decision has brought this issue to the forefront of public discussion and compels each of us as Canadians to reflect upon our personal and societal response to those who need our compassion and care.” Addressing the underlying importance of human dignity, the signatories affirm that “the sanctity of all human life, and the equal and inviolable dignity of every human being ... is not exclusively a religious belief, although for us it has a significant religious meaning.” The signatories emphasize that “reverence for human life must be “the basis and reason for our compassion, responsibility and commitment in caring for all humans, our brothers and sisters, when they are suffering and in pain... to work to alleviate human suffering in every form but never by intentionally eliminating those who suffer.”

The joint statement insists that Canada’s “health care systems must maintain a life-affirming ethos. Medical professionals are trained to restore and enhance life,” as “any action intended to end human life is morally and ethically wrong.” The signatories to the Declaration urge “federal, provincial and territorial legislators to enact and uphold laws that enhance human solidarity by promoting the rights to life and security for all people; to make good-quality home care and palliative care accessible in all jurisdictions; and to implement regulations and policies that ensure respect for the freedom of conscience of all health-care workers and administrators who will not and cannot accept suicide or euthanasia as a medical solution to pain and suffering.”

The speakers at the news conference included the following representatives: Ms. Julia Beazley, Policy Analyst, EFC; Rabbi Dr. Reuven P. Bulka CM, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, Ottawa; Dr. Aileen Van Ginkel, Vice President, Ministry Services, EFC; Sr. Nuala Kenny, SC, OC, MD, FRCP, a pediatrician and former Deputy Minister of Health in the province of Nova Scotia, also speaking on behalf of the CCCB; Imam Samy Metwally Ottawa Main Mosque/Ottawa Muslim Association; and the Most Rev. Terrence Prendergast SJ, Catholic Archbishop of Ottawa and CCCB representative. The Declaration and its list of signatories can be viewed at the following website: www.euthanasiadeclaration.ca. ✕

Interfaith audience in St. Peter’s Square for 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate

Excerpted from <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=28677>

This week’s general audience was held on the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council Declaration ‘Nostra Aetate’ on the relations between the Catholic Church and non-Christian religions. It was attended by representatives of various religions and participants in the International Congress organized to commemorate the event by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in collaboration with the Commission for Religious Relationships with Jews, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Pontifical Gregorian University.

“We must always seek to leave behind a better world than the one we found.”

Before beginning his catechesis in St. Peter’s Square the Pope greeted the sick and elderly who, due to the weather conditions, were unable to attend the open air audience. Francis also mentioned them in the square and asked for a minute of silence and prayer for them all.

After the reading in several languages of a paragraph of ‘Nostra Aetate’, the Pope welcomed all those present and expressed his gratitude to them for commemorating together the 50th anniversary of this important conciliar document.

“Vatican Council II was an extraordinary moment of reflection, dialogue and prayer to renew the gaze of the Catholic Church upon herself and the world. A reading of the signs of the times in order to bring her up to date, guided by a dual fidelity: fidelity to the ecclesial tradition and fidelity to the history of the men

and women of our time. Indeed, God revealed Himself in creation and in history, spoke through prophets and fully in His Son made man, addressing the heart and soul of every human being who seeks the truth and the way to practise it”.

The upcoming extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy will offer an opportunity for collaboration in charitable works. “And in this field, where compassion is most important, we can join with many people who do not consider themselves to be believers or who are in search of God and truth, people who place the face of others at the centre, especially their brothers and sisters in need. But the mercy that is required of us embraces all creation, that God entrusted to us as its custodians rather than exploiters or destroyers. We must always seek to leave behind a better world than the one we found.”

The Pope concluded by urging all those present to pray for the future of interreligious dialogue, “and to pray for each other, as we are brothers! Without the Lord, nothing is possible; with Him, everything is possible. May our prayer fully adhere to the will of God, Who wants all men to acknowledge each other as brothers and to live as such, forming a great human family in the harmony of diversity”. ✕

Family Records Guide and Estate Planning Materials

November 2 is All Souls Day and throughout this month of shorter, grayer days, the whole Church is invited to consider and give prayerful thought to the joy and hope of eternal life. “I am going to prepare a place for you and when it is prepared I will come to take you with me so that where I am you may be also.”

“Graciously grant peace in our days that by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress as we await the blessed hope and coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.” At every Mass we pray these words just after saying the Lord’s Prayer.

The Diocese is pleased to offer tools to assist with estate planning, so as to be free from distress and joyfully provide a faithful legacy. The *Family Records Guide* and other estate planning tools are available now from the Diocese of Victoria.

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Impressions



By Connie Dunwoody

When I was a child, someone asked me, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” I didn’t really know, and it never quite became clear, so in grade 12, at the end of my high school career, I visited the Guidance Counsellor in our high school. She provided me with a questionnaire designed to identify which career paths would be best for me. It was, as I recall, about 100 multiple-choice questions. I answered them as honestly as my 18-year-old self knew how. The end result? One career. Only one. The career?

Funeral director. *Me?* Be that somber for that long, expressing endless sympathy and consolation? There are people who are exceptionally well suited to that work. I could have done it. But it probably would have killed me.

“Vocations shape us, not the other way around, and it takes courage to unearth what it is that matters, to take a good, long, searching look at ourselves, to discover the best versions of ourselves.

Indeed, for my own eventual Celebration of Life my nephew and each of my nieces has been tasked with a different job designed to put the ‘fun’ back in ‘fun’eral. Like, providing red clown noses for all the attendees. Such as, creating a way for me to sit up and wave when I am long beyond sitting up.

I digress. My point is this: which of us at 17 or 18 years of age, faced with important decisions, really knew (or knows) what we want to do with the rest of our lives? In my experience, to be convinced of what you want to do with the rest of your life at a young age, and to do that thing, is fairly rare.

Recently I observed to a friend, “I can’t believe how much I love my job. This is the one I’ve waited my whole life for. It just feels so satisfying, like I’m finally doing what I’m meant to be doing. I didn’t even know it was possible: I was busy, but I wasn’t satisfied. Sometimes I’d think, *This is kind of fun, but what’s the point of it all?*

My friend smiled gently and quietly replied, “Congratulations on finding your vocation.” And as I realized she was right, a profound and lasting peace settled on me. Ah, this. *This*.

It’s true I’ve rarely taken a job I knew I could do. Where’s the fun in that? I’d apply for a position that interested me, learn everything I could, get bored and start looking for the next challenge. Sometimes those who loved me worried that I was flighty, never satisfied, always moving on. Looking back, I realize that what was missing wasn’t the challenge, it was the *why*. I wasn’t flighty; I was searching.

I think a vocation is less what you do and more *why* you do it. It is purpose, not productivity. It’s a glorious symphony where the work is the score but the performance is spirit. Both are necessary: the execution and interpretation are yours, but without a *why*, the music begins to feel mundane.

It’s more than that, too. It may not even be a ‘job’. It could be loving your family well, volunteering at a shelter, or welcoming the stranger in your midst. It’s the place that feels familiar in the midst of chaos; it’s comfort when life is daunting. It’s about serving something bigger than you, but that without you is somehow less. Your vocation contains notes and tempo that flow in your veins and match your breath and colour your vision and make your heart beat so strongly the song cannot be denied. It is simultaneously contained deep within and bursting out of you. It’s the Spirit breathing life and purpose into your actions. It’s determination and vision and fortitude and courage, and it’s who He designed you to be.

That doesn’t mean there aren’t bad days, and hard work and difficult times: but those days, the Spirit carries you through. The passion sustains you because it’s a connection with something outside yourself but integral to the very core of you. You feel like you’re part of something, shaping something, creating something, building something. Rebuilding something. Rebuilding someone.

Rebuilding you.

Vocations shape *us*, not the other way around, and it takes courage to unearth what it is that matters, to take a good, long, searching look at ourselves, to discover the best versions of ourselves. When we recognize the Composer in the music we leap for joy because that moment is ineffably sweet. Ah, this. *This*.

Your vocational path may not be easy or obvious. It may be laid out before you like the yellow brick road or it may be hidden in a tangled jungle of jumbled notes. It may be unburdened and clear or it may be a slog through worldly mire. It may be all of the above, from time to time. Sometimes it’s lonely but you are never alone: look up and see Who walks with you. Look up and see Who composed your song, Who created the burning *why* and Who invites you to walk by still waters until the tune is clear and the way stretches out before you, a crescendo of certainty. Look up. Maybe you’re where you’ve always been—but now the melody rings true.

Actually, I think the question is wrong. It’s not “What do you want to do when you grow up?” We should instead ask, “Who do you want to be?” At any age. Because it’s not what we do, it’s who we are. It’s the Spirit within.

Ah, this. *This*. ✂



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Parish Vision created and implemented for St. Francis Xavier parish in Mill Bay

by Brian Costello, Parish Pastoral Council Chair, St. Francis Xavier Parish

Until recently, our Catholic parish in South Cowichan was shared between St. Francis Xavier Church (SFX) in Mill Bay and Our Lady Queen of the World Church (OLQW) in Shawnigan Lake. At a parish-wide meeting in February 2013, Fr. Sean and Parish Council presented a Parish Vision, which has a main objective of enabling our entire parish community to worship and celebrate together under one roof at the same time. The Vision culminates with the construction a new larger church, hall and office building on our land to the south of the graveyard at SFX. That church would be the principal sign of our Catholic community here in South Cowichan. It would be a more welcoming facility than either of our existing churches, and better able to support outreach to and evangelization within the broader community.

In a parish survey at that time, there was overwhelming support for pursuing the first three steps towards that Vision, namely:

- to first ensure the feasibility of this plan by pursuing the necessary rezoning of the land that the new church would be situated on, and if successful; then
- to effect the outstanding repairs to SFX, so that it could be our parish's temporary church while we plan, design and fundraise for a new church, and once those repairs were complete; then
- to decommission OLQW church, sell the property and add the proceeds to our parish building fund.

Step 1—Rezoning

After receiving Diocesan approval and signatures, we handed our CVRD rezoning and ALC (Agricultural Land Commission) non-farm use applications to the CVRD in March 2013 and were told to expect the entire process to take about a year. In fact, it took two years to complete the process. However, we now have:

- the “non-farm use” approval of the ALC;
- the registration of a covenant to establish a six-metre vegetative buffer along our east and south property lines, as required by the ALC; and
- the CVRD approved rezoning and OCP amendment bylaws required to implement our rezoning.

As of March 2015 the first step in our plan was complete.

Step 2—SFX repairs

St. Francis Xavier Church was built in 1887 to serve the growing Catholic community of South Cowichan, and has done so for the last 128 years. The church was originally built on a wooden foundation cut from local trees. However, this foundation, which lasted for over 75 years, rotted and the building sagged and settled. In the 1960s parishioners volunteered for the onerous task of establishing a concrete foundation under the church. This was done, over the course of a year, by excavating small sections using picks and shovels, building the foundation forms, mixing the concrete by hand, and pouring one small section of foundation at a time.



With the assistance of a geotechnical engineer from the Diocesan Building Commission, we developed a plan for:

- pouring footings under a couple of cracks in the existing foundation;
- installing a drainage system to route rainwater from the roof and groundwater away from the foundation;
- constructing a retaining wall at the west end of the church to keep soil away from the church siding;
- removing the existing flooring and rebuilding the floor infrastructure in the nave of the church;
- re-roofing the church.

Once we were confident that the rezoning process would be successful, we began pursuing these repairs. As of April 2015 the second step in our plan was complete.

Step 3—Decommissioning and sale of OLQW

Our Lady Queen of the World was decommissioned this summer, and the property has been sold. As of the end of July, the third step in the Vision was complete.

Other than the development of a proposed site plan, there has been no design work done on the new church and hall facility, so at this time we don't know what such a facility might cost to build and operate. This design work and cost determination will happen in a future phase of the Vision.

Our entire parish community is now worshipping at SFX, located at 790 Kilmalu Road (just off the highway) in Mill Bay. We celebrate Mass seven days per week. If you are travelling through Mill Bay and would like to join us and see our 128 year old church and graveyard, our Mass times are Monday at 7:40am, and Tuesday through Saturday at 9am. Our Sunday Masses are Saturday at 5pm and Sundays at 9am and 11am. Visitors are always welcome. ✂

