



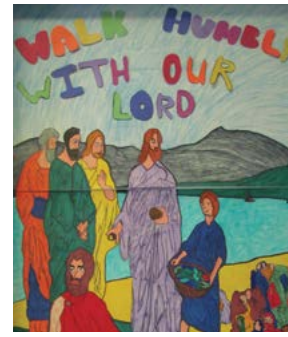
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Appeal in Action



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Archbishop Gagnon's Installation in Winnipeg



See Page 12

Catholic Schools Week



The Diocesan Messenger

A Publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

February 2014

A Homewood Away From Home

by Terri-Ann Wynans

The 12th Annual Diocesan Youth Retreat at Camp Homewood on Quadra Island was a rousing success! More than 150 youth and chaperones from around the Diocese gathered January 31– February 2 for a weekend of faith, fun and great food!

Ken Yasinski and the Face to Face Ministries team from Saskatchewan led youth from Parishes in Campbell River, Courtenay, Port Alberni, Parksville, Nanaimo, Duncan and Victoria to a deeper appreciation of their Catholic faith. The 2014 theme iBelieve was echoed throughout the weekend in prayer, song and message. Participants were encouraged to choose godly ways to live their lives—pray, attend Mass, make wise choices and surround themselves with other faithful people.

All participants sang, played, enjoyed camp activities, and celebrated the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist together. A particular highlight mentioned by many of the youth was the time of Eucharistic Adoration on Saturday evening.

Co-ordinators Bonni Roset of Campbell River and Terri-Ann Wynans of Port Alberni would like to thank the Diocese, the Catholic Foundation of

Vancouver Island and the Campbell River Knights of Columbus for their financial support of this retreat. We also extend a special thanks to Fr. Jan (Campbell River), Fr. Stephen (Notre Dame), Fr. Mel (Ascension), Fr. Sean (St. Francis Xavier), and Fr. Dan (Franciscan Friary) for joining us during the weekend to celebrate Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. ✠



SARHS Jail-N-Bail Event a Success ... Bar None!

by Diane Chimich

St. Andrew's Regional High School is sending a group of 15 students to an impoverished community outside Lima, Peru. These students will be spending 12 days over spring break building a school. The High School is working with *Developing World Connection*, a registered charity and non-profit organization, to sponsor the building of a new school facility in an impoverished community in Peru. The village itself is called Jicamarca and is located in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho just outside of Lima.

The goal of this trip is to develop the students' leadership skills while allowing them to see first-hand how two-thirds of the world lives. It will give them the opportunity to really make a difference and become educators on world poverty by sharing their experiences when they return.

On Saturday, February 1, 2014, a group of amazing volunteers offered their time and reputations to assist this group in raising the funds to purchase supplies for this project. Eleven individuals stepped up and agreed to be "jailed" at the Bay Centre in order to raise the "bail" money for their release. Close to \$10,000 had been raised for this project (as of press time), and the School and students extend their thanks to all who participated or supported the event.

www.standrewshigh.ca/spotlight.php for more information about the Jail 'N Bail Event and Peru Trip! ✠



SARHS Principal Andrew Keleher, ICS Superintendent Joe Colistro, CTV's Hudson Mack and Fred Keizer (on behalf of Fr. William Hann) enter the "jail" to raise their "bail"

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Imagine that ... Archbishop Gagnon Installed in Winnipeg

by Char Deslippe

Photos: Andrew Sikorsky Photography

Imagine sitting in your office in Victoria on a bright October afternoon, perhaps researching materials for a presentation or homily, and having the phone ring, interrupting your work. Suddenly, your life is in a complete tailspin! Such was likely the situation when the Apostolic Nuncio's Office reached Richard Gagnon inviting him to accept the appointment by His Holiness Pope Francis as Archbishop of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The usual turnaround time for celebrating such events is two months. Shortly after the announcement was made public, Archbishop-Elect Richard left for Winnipeg to meet with Consultors and the Most Reverend V. James Weisgerber, who, upon turning 75, had offered his resignation as Archbishop. In less than two weeks from that initial call the date was set—the installation of the Most Reverend Richard Gagnon as the 7th Archbishop of Winnipeg would be celebrated on Friday, January 3, 2014, at 7:30 pm in St. Mary's Cathedral.

Having worked with Archbishop Richard over a nine-year period, I have come to appreciate and respect the gifts he has been cultivating for service to the Church. Certainly he taught all of us about faith and trust, and he possesses a certain tenacity; that is, persistence, determination and perseverance that will serve him well in his new post. When he gathered the Pastoral Centre Staff to share news of his appointment, my first thoughts were how well suited he is to shepherd the clergy and laity of the Archdiocese. He is warm and welcoming of all people and genuinely loves to hear their stories. I knew I would miss his counsel and I wanted to be part of the celebrations in Winnipeg.

So it was that on January 2, Cynthia Bouchard-Watkins, Leah MacKenzie, my husband Bob and I managed to make early morning WestJet flights to Winnipeg. No amount of warning could have prepared us for the bitter-cold -43°C temperatures that we experienced at touchdown! By contrast, the people we met couldn't have been warmer. We enjoyed a tour of the Pastoral Centre and a quick walk through a tunnel to a shopping centre for extra film—just in case! Having been exposed to that secret (underground tunnels) we knew why the locals take the cold in stride! Fortunately our hotel was directly across the street from the Cathedral so we were able to make short work of getting to and from the celebration.

Finding words to do justice to the Liturgy for the Installation of Archbishop Richard is almost impossible. It was an experience that touched every sense ... the incredible sound of trumpets and voices raised in hymns of praise ... the sight of nearly 40 Bishops, Archbishops, clergy and religious from across the country ... the smell of incense ... the words spoken in tribute and Archbishop Richard's homily ... and finally the feeling that each person in the packed Cathedral had a unique relationship with the new Archbishop. I felt a deep joy in having the privilege of being part of it all. The two-hour liturgy ended too soon! More than 600 people crowded into the hotel ballrooms following the service and Archbishop Richard made a point of taking time to meet each of them and pose for a photo.

As Archbishop Richard begins his new ministry, we thank God for what he contributed to the Diocese of Victoria and assure him he will not be soon forgotten. We are grateful for his leadership and ask the Holy Spirit to continue to guide his every thought, word and deed ... as we patiently await news of the appointment of our 17th Bishop! ✠



L to R: Bob and Char Deslippe, Archbishop Richard Gagnon, Cynthia Bouchard-Watkins and Leah MacKenzie



In Proportion to Our Blessings



by Mike Patterson, Appeal Coordinator

Congratulations to all! We have met the goal for the *Journey of Hearts & Hands In Proportion To Our Blessings* 2013 Appeal!!!

We are deeply grateful for the key role that our clergy, parish appeal teams and parishioners play in our Diocesan Appeal's success; and for the spirit of collaboration and participation evident among the People of God in our parish communities. We thank you for the support you have given in establishing this program for our Diocese and Parishes.

Performance by Parish

Four parishes exceeded their goal:

- St. Andrew's Cathedral
- St. Jean Baptiste
- St. Joseph the Worker
- St. Rose of Lima

11 more parishes exceeded 70% of their pledge goal:

- Church of the Ascension, Parksville
- Holy Family, Ucluelet
- Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford
- Our Lady of Victory, Gabriola
- Saanich Peninsula Parish
- Sacred Heart, Victoria
- St. Edward the Confessor, Duncan
- St. Patrick's, Victoria
- St. Francis Xavier/Our Lady Queen of the World, Mill Bay
- St. Peter's, Nanaimo
- Trinity, Nanaimo

Prayer to be a Good Steward

O Lord,

I know that at the end of my life You will ask me to account for the talents and gifts You have bestowed on me. May I be able to reply that I made a difference on behalf of Your kingdom on earth.

I know, O Lord, that you seek a response from me, expressing my love for You. In carrying out my response, may I find joy in being of service to Your creation, Your Church worldwide, my diocese, my parish, and my family.

Calling on the Holy Spirit for guidance, may my response to You bring me gladness of heart, knowing that the image of Your Son is growing stronger in my soul, as I become a good steward of Your gifts.

Amen.

What Did Your Appeal Donations Support in 2013?

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

- Diocesan Youth Conference
- Pizza Talk Youth Survey in June
- Youth Ministry Leaders Workshops in Courtenay and Victoria
- Youth Ministry Resources and training available to assist Parishes

Office of Religious Education

- Subsidy for 2013 Diocesan Conference
- Catechist's Course in Courtenay and Victoria
- Sacramental Preparation Workshop Materials
- Resources for K – 12 Religion Curriculum

Social Justice

- Elementary school curriculum development
- Support for World Food Day
- Support for Share Lent Campaign and other Development and Peace initiatives

Parish Outreach

- North Island Catholic Communities (St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy; St. Theresa's, Port Alice; St. Mary's, Port McNeill; and Our Lady of Assumption, Alert Bay) – monthly subsidy for operational costs
- St. Louis de Montfort, Lake Cowichan – monthly subsidy for operational costs
- St. Ann's, Duncan – monthly subsidy for operational costs
- Holy Family, Ucluelet and St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino – monthly subsidy for operational costs

Island Catholic Schools

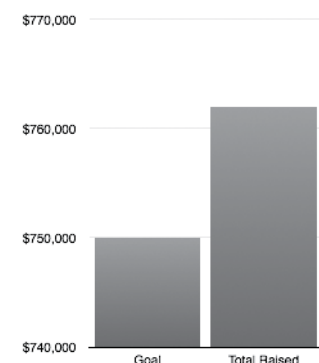
- St. Joseph's Elementary School, Victoria – major expansion and seismic upgrade will be completed in July 2014
- Queen of Angels, Duncan – support for operational needs
- St. Joseph Elementary School, Chemainus – support for operational needs
- John Paul II, Port Alberni – support for operational needs

First Nations Ministries

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

Retired Clergy

- Retirement benefits for 12 priests
- 2 priests are more than 90 years old
- 3 are between 85 – 89
- 2 are between 79 – 84
- 3 are between 70 – 79
- 2 are between 65 – 69



Organization	Goal	Total Pledged	Total Paid	# of Families	# of Pledges	Average Pledge	% of Goal Pledged	% of Goal Paid
Christ the King Parish	81,000.00	42,905.00	31,170.00	950	144	297.95	52.97%	38.48%
Church of the Ascension	46,000.00	36,756.00	30,001.00	671	171	214.95	79.90%	65.22%
Diocese of Victoria BC	0.00	40,920.00	40,920.00	3	7	5,845.71	0.00%	0.00%
Holy Cross Parish	44,000.00	29,342.00	20,772.00	470	82	357.83	66.69%	47.21%
Holy Family	1,000.00	960.00	360.00	25	6	160.00	96.00%	36.00%
Holy Family/Notre Dame Parish	39,000.00	25,915.00	19,550.00	690	88	294.49	66.45%	50.13%
Our Lady of Assumption	1,000.00	550.00	550.00	8	4	137.50	55.00%	55.00%
Our Lady of Fatima Parish	19,000.00	8,700.00	8,425.00	176	29	300.00	45.79%	44.34%
Our Lady of Grace Parish	16,000.00	5,680.00	5,280.00	211	20	284.00	35.50%	33.00%
Our Lady of the Rosary Parish	33,000.00	30,394.00	25,997.00	528	78	389.67	92.10%	78.78%
Our Lady of Victory Mission	1,000.00	805.00	805.00	44	5	161.00	80.50%	80.50%
Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish	14,000.00	8,965.00	5,825.00	112	34	263.68	64.04%	41.61%
Our Lady Star of the Sea	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
Saanich Peninsula Parish	50,000.00	39,030.00	27,365.00	447	138	282.83	78.06%	54.73%
Sacred Heart Parish	37,000.00	33,565.00	25,865.00	563	136	246.80	90.72%	69.91%
St. Andrew's Cathedral	111,000.00	142,135.00	104,975.00	1,459	342	415.60	128.05%	94.57%
St. Ann's Parish	3,500.00	1,170.00	395.00	9	5	234.00	33.43%	11.29%
St. Bonaventure	1,000.00	350.00	350.00	42	3	116.67	35.00%	35.00%
St. Edward the Confessor Parish	45,000.00	35,820.00	25,980.00	530	127	282.05	79.60%	57.73%
St. Francis of Assisi	1,000.00	400.00	400.00	10	4	100.00	40.00%	40.00%
St. Francis Xavier Parish / Our Lady Queen of the World	24,000.00	17,995.00	11,570.00	139	46	391.20	74.98%	48.21%
St. Jean Baptiste Parish	5,000.00	6,885.00	5,935.00	18	22	312.95	137.70%	118.70%
St. Joseph the Worker Parish	50,000.00	62,798.10	45,086.10	865	189	332.27	125.60%	90.17%
St. Joseph's - Tahsis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Joseph's Mission - Mayne Island	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Joseph's Parish	12,000.00	5,580.00	3,325.00	87	22	253.64	46.50%	27.71%
St. Leopold Mandic Parish	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Louis de Montfort	3,500.00	2,250.00	2,070.00	41	15	150.00	64.29%	59.14%
St. Mary's	1,000.00	300.00	300.00	18	3	100.00	30.00%	30.00%
St. Mary's Parish	16,000.00	2,805.00	1,980.00	127	12	233.75	17.53%	12.38%
St. Patrick's Parish	70,000.00	51,764.00	36,214.00	472	147	352.14	73.95%	51.73%
St. Patrick's Parish, CR	48,000.00	28,360.00	23,050.00	823	95	298.53	59.08%	48.02%
St. Peter & Paul - Gold River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
St. Peter's Parish	49,000.00	44,068.00	33,413.00	792	98	449.67	89.93%	68.19%
St. Rose of Lima Parish	15,000.00	25,695.00	18,785.00	159	31	828.87	171.30%	125.23%
St. Theresa's	1,000.00	650.00	650.00	12	3	216.67	65.00%	65.00%
Trinity Catholic	37,000.00	29,195.00	22,675.00	427	95	307.32	78.91%	61.28%

Report Totals for 37 Organizations:

\$762,707.10

\$580,038.10

10,928

2,201

\$346.53



Calendar of Events

February

06 -Mar 13 **St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** A study on The Gospel of John led by Dr. Les McKeown. It will examine: The Prologue, The book of Signs, The book of Glory and The Epilogue. For more information or to register email stjwoffice@shaw.ca or call 250.479.7413. This course is co-sponsored by St. Joseph the Worker and Sacred Heart parishes.

15 **St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** 9 am – Noon, Pastoral Outreach Care Training. For more information contact the office by email to stjwoffice@shaw.ca or call 250.479.7413.

22 **St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** 9 am – 3 pm, *Elders of the Church* Retreat. Topics to be covered include the role and mission of elders in the church; becoming an elder; Christ's call to the healing ministry; a Scripture reflection on Martha and Mary; contemporary reality; and a reflection on the Prodigal Son. For more information or to register email stjwoffice@shaw.ca or call 250.479.7413.

25 **Union Club, Victoria:** 7:10 am – 8:40 am. Association of Catholic Leaders breakfast. Deadline for registration is February 18, 2014, but please register early if possible. Keynote speakers for this event are Jack Ong and Pollyanna Shur. Their topic will be *Striving for Holiness in the Workplace—and Falling Short*. Cost is \$28 per person. For more information or to register please email victoriabcac@gmail.com or telephone Tim Dumas at (250) 857-5817.

28 **St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria:** 7 – 9 pm, Parish Lenten Mission—*Living Fully the Catholic Principles of Ecumenism*. Guest Bishop Donald Bolen, Bishop of Saskatoon, will explore how we engage common mission and help give flesh to “real but incomplete communion” as we harvest the fruits of our ecumenical dialogue. For more information contact the office by email to stjwoffice@shaw.ca or call 250.479.7413.

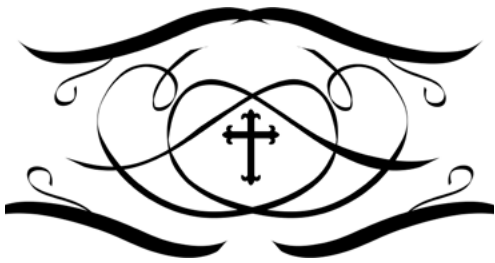
March

17 - 21 **Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford:** Spring Break Camp, 9 am – 2 pm daily. Cost for the Spring Break Camp is \$60 per child, but if you register your child for both the Spring Break Camp and the summer camp (which will be held July 14 – 18), before March 5, 2014, you will pay only \$100 for both weeks. For more information and registration please email olor@shaw.ca or call the office at 250.478.3482.

April

26 **Church of the Ascension, Parksville:** Annual Pro-Life dinner, 6 pm. Guest speaker Annette Turgeon of the Respect Life Ministry at St. Andrew's Cathedral will give a presentation based on the bioethical questions young adults must address today. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this dinner and presentation. Attendance is by donation to Pro-Life Ministries at Ascension Church. For more information contact Jerry Loughead by email to loughead@shaw.ca.

26 **Sacred Heart, Victoria:** Christian Charities Spring Clothing and Garage Sale, 9 am – 2 pm. All proceeds will be donated to charities. For more information please email sacredheartchurch@shaw.ca or call the office at 250.479-1611.



VCCC news...

There will be no Mass nor meeting on February 1st and March 1st, 2014 as Fr. Mak will not be available. On March 18, 2014, however, we are fortunate and most grateful that Fr. Anthony Ho of Vancouver has agreed to come and say Mass at 8 pm at Our Lady of Fatima Church. Reconciliation in both Mandarin and Cantonese starts at 7 pm. No potluck this time, but all are welcome! Let's pray that Fr. Mak will be able to come to our April 5, 2014 gathering. For further information or to confirm date and time of activities please call 250-893-9938 (English), 250-298-7926 (Cantonese) or 250-507-8985 (Mandarin).

天主教华人团体欢迎你！

二零一四年二月一日和三月一日之首星期六活动因麥神父未能前來，聚會決定取消。但是在三月十八日，溫哥華之何庭耀神父會前來為我們在花地瑪聖母堂辦告解（晚上七時開始）和開彌撒（晚上八時開始）。盼望四月五日麥神父能如期前來開彌撒。誠邀你和你的親友同來分享共融之樂！如有其他疑問或核實活動日期和時間，請致電250-893-9938 (英文), 250-298-7926 (粵語) 或 250-507-8985 (普通話) 查詢。

Miscellany

Wednesdays

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

Fridays

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

Saturdays

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

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

Sundays

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

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Religious Classes for Children and Preparation for First Communion and Confirmation for children from Kindergarten to Grade 6. 9:40 am – 10:25 am every Sunday. For more information contact Marie Peeters at (250) 542-4483.

Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: Holy Families Group on the last Sunday of every month. This is an opportunity for married couples to share their faith and discuss marriage and family concerns in an authentically Catholic setting. And there's a potluck dinner! For more information contact Bonnie Landry at (250) 743-1982 or email onthisrock@shaw.ca.

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

Upcoming Events

July 4-6 **Camp Barnard, Sooke:** Save the date for the 2nd Annual Diocesan Family Conference: *The Body of Christ—Building Each Other Up In Love*. Cost is \$140/couple with children two years old or younger, \$240/family with children three years and older. Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis—watch for further information in your parish bulletin. See also advertisement on page 23 of this paper.

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

2nd Annual Diocesan Family Conference

by Marnie Wynans

The Body of Christ: Building Each Other Up in Love

Summertime: a time to relax and sit in the sun, put your feet up and read a good book, swim in the lake and play with the kids, and deepen your faith ... yes that's right, in the summer, you can deepen your faith while relaxing in the sun!

This July 4 – 6, plan to join families from all across the Diocese to relax, play and grow closer to God and your family all in one weekend!

Last year, 200 moms, dads, kids, teens, babies and grandparents from across the Diocese of Victoria played, prayed and were inspired by Bishop Gary Gordon and the fellowship of other Catholic families.

This year, the event has been extended to two nights at a larger facility, Camp Barnard in Sooke, a 250-acre Scout camp featuring a lake with canoe rentals, an around-the-lake trail and full kitchen facilities and bathrooms. Cabins are available or you may bring your own RV or tent. Meals are provided: please bring your own dishes and utensils.

Formation activities for the kids and teens will be provided while the parents are nurtured in their own faith. Fr. Dean Henderson will be Chaplain for the weekend to celebrate Mass, hear Confessions and will also be one of the speakers.

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to renew your faith and friendships, make new ones and lasting memories with your family. Parishes will be receiving registration forms in the near future. Save the date and watch your bulletins for more information. ✕



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Taking the Pulse: Mid-Year Evaluation of Year One Our Journey of Faith Sacramental Preparation Programme

by Char Deslippe and Jim O'Reilly, Office of Religious Education.

Meetings were held with parish Sacramental Preparation Coordinators and Catechists on January 11 at Christ the King parish in Courtenay and on January 19 at St. Patrick's parish in Victoria to evaluate Year One of the *Our Journey of Faith* Sacraments of Initiation preparation programme. This was a follow-up to a detailed programme evaluation form which was sent out to Pastors Sacramental Preparation Coordinators and Catechists before Christmas.

Generally the feedback is that the programme model and materials have been well received and are working well. Specific parish situations have required some minor adaptations.

Catechists agreed that the model and outline for lessons provide a helpful framework and are easy to use. Engaging parents to attend the sessions with their children has proven to be easier in some locations than others, but the results have shown many positives such as greater commitment, as well as bonding with other parents and the community. Maintaining contact with parents through simple phone calls and emails reinforces a sense of mutual commitment.

The two catechist evaluation discussion sessions provided excellent recommendations which we are incorporating in this report. One significant suggestion related to reinforcing (through a seasonal letter to parents) the specific programme learning outcomes. Parent meetings are scheduled periodically to review concepts being covered and learning outcomes. Having the seasonal letters outlining these items and inviting questions and or clarification will be prepared and made available for incorporating in the programme.

Reinforcing faith concepts at home through assigned written questions was seen as challenging given the busy lives families experience. For catechists too, sometimes it is hard to cover all of the outcomes adequately. One very practical adaptation was to have "cookie talks" at home. A "cookie talk" is chat time with a child and can happen anytime: after school over a glass of milk with cookies, in the car on the way to soccer practice or a music lesson. Catechists can help parents facilitate these "cookie talks" by sending a few points and a couple of questions from the Sunday lessons home after the catechism class. Parents can then go over them with their child during the week. These "cookie talk" points can be prepared well in advance by the catechist.

Building community among families was seen as a great outcome of the model, and a very practical suggestion was to allow more lead time for "bonding" and friendships to naturally "gel". This could happen more effectively if the *Rite of Enrollment* were placed later in the calendar year allowing a period of six weeks for getting to know each other before celebrating the *Rite of Enrollment*.

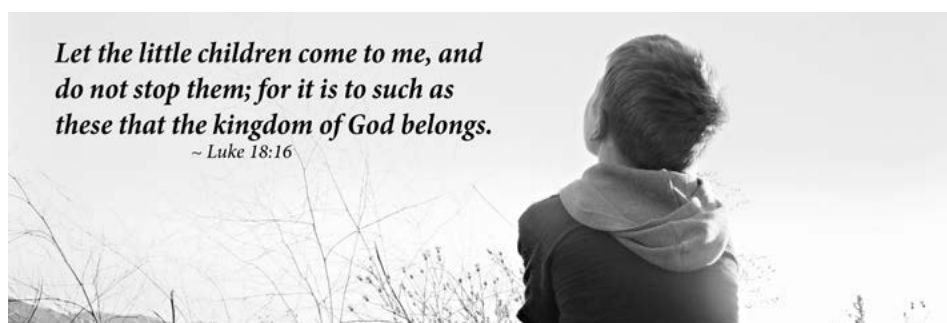
Catechists enjoy the ongoing work of evaluating and refining the *Our Journey of Faith* sacramental preparation programme, as well as the opportunity for sharing their own lesson delivery methods.

With regard to some very practical notes:

1. Establishing a clear cut-off date for enrollment was identified as a critical step to ensuring the group bonds. A pastoral approach in consultation with the pastor is extremely important in dealing with late-comers.
2. Providing page numbers for the *Our Faith Journey* binder was recognized as a need.
3. Supplying a bibliography on the website of approved additional support resources was viewed as helpful.
4. A contact list will be prepared for all catechists as our sessions reinforced the value of networking and mutual support.

We will incorporate these important recommendations as we now begin to prepare the Year One and Year Two Binders covering the next Liturgical Cycle for Years A and B.

We sincerely thank all Sacramental Preparation Coordinators and Catechists for taking the time to share their valuable insights to support those in the Diocese entrusted with this important work. ✠



Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.
~ Luke 18:16

Pre-Lenten Mission with Fr. Richard Veras

by Fr. Alfredo Monacelli, Pastor of St. Edwards Parish, Duncan BC

St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Duncan, BC will be hosting a pre-Lenten Mission from February 25 – 27, 2014. Our special guest speaker will be Fr. Richard Veras from St. Rita's Parish in Staten Island, New York.

Fr. Veras was ordained in 1996. He discerned his vocation to the priesthood through his involvement with the Catholic lay movement, Communion and Liberation, which has a great emphasis on the importance of Christian education. Fr. Veras has written two books for Servant Books that are based on the freshman and sophomore religion lesson plans he developed at Archbishop Stepinac High School. The first book is called *Jesus of Israel: Finding Christ in the Old Testament*. The second is a commentary/reflection on the Book of Revelation, *Wisdom for Everyday Life from the Book of Revelation*. He is a regular contributor to *Magnificat* Magazine. He has received a number of awards from the Catholic Press Association for his *Magnificat* articles as well as a CPA award for his first book, *Jesus of Israel*. (Source: www.zoominfo.com/p/Richard-Veras/264002712)

Both books by Fr. Veras have been used over the past two years' adult faith formation sessions at St. Edward's. Some comments by participants last year using Fr. Veras' first book included:

- *The material and sessions supported my personal faith development and relationship with Christ more than I realized.*
- *Very insightful book, a real gem!*
- *It was great to learn more of our faith, which we didn't have earlier in our lives.*
- *This book is the best I have ever studied.*
- *Excellent little book.*

Theme of the Mission: Discovering Christ in our Faith Journey.

Have you ever wondered one of the following thoughts?

- How we can find Christ in Holy Scripture and how we can incorporate our finding Him into our daily lives? Or ...
- How does reading the Old Testament and the New Testament together complement our understanding of Christ Jesus? Or ...
- How is Sacred Scripture relevant to us today?

Christianity is a daily journey of faith; it is our personal and collective journey with God. Sacred Scripture reflects this journey on many levels; from the beginning of creation in Genesis, to the final triumph of God over evil in Revelations; from the original sin of Adam and Eve to everlasting life through the Salvation and Redemption offered by Jesus' sacrifice, passion, death and Resurrection; and from the original Patriarchs saying yes to God, through the history of the Hebrew people, to the beginning of The Way of Christ with the Apostles; and finally to today's Church through Sacred Scripture, Holy Tradition and the teachings of the Church. ✠

Schedule of Events

Tuesday, Feb 25	St. Edward's	6:30 – 7 pm	Welcome and Mass
		7–8:30 pm	Presentation
Wednesday, Feb 26	St. Edward's	6:30–7 pm	Mass
		7–8:30 pm	Presentation
Thursday, Feb 27	St. Claire's Chapel	9 am	Mass at Poor Claire's
		9:30–11 am	Presentation
	St. Edward's	6:30–7 pm	Mass
		7–8 pm	Presentation
		8–9 pm	Reception

Knights of Columbus Offers 30 Bursaries

The Knights of Columbus of BC/Yukon State Council is once again offering 30 bursaries in the amount of \$500 each through its Bishop Thomas J. Lobsinger Memorial Bursary Program. Applications are now being accepted for the 2014 fiscal year.

This program is available to all Catholic students who are enrolled or entering into their second or higher year of post-secondary education in the Province of British Columbia. Applications must be received on or before the deadline of June 30, 2014. Interested and qualified students should request a bursary application in writing to the State Bursary Chairman at the following address:

Michael Gernat, State Bursary Chairman
4311 – 31 Street
Vernon, British Columbia V1T 5J8

For general information and the Terms of Reference, please visit the website www.kofcbc.org, choose Documents & forms, scroll down to Useful documents – Bursary 2014. ✠



Une fête pour célébrer Noël en français

Par : Réal Roy, Co-président Comité paroissial de pastoral

Le 8 décembre dernier, le Comité de pastoral de la Paroisse St-Jean-Baptiste de Victoria organisait une petite fête de Noël dans la salle paroissiale « Nouveaux horizons ».

Avant la fête il y avait eu la messe du deuxième dimanche de l'Avent célébré par le Père Benoit Laplante, curé de la seule paroisse francophone du Diocèse de Victoria. Tous les paroissiens avaient pu découvrir pour la première fois cette année la crèche installée devant l'autel.

Après la célébration tous étaient invités à partager un repas qu'avait organisé Isabelle du Comité de pastoral. Les paroissiens avaient apportés toutes sortes de salades délicieuses, de viandes froides succulentes, du pain et même une lasagne ! La salle avait été préparée par Hector avec des décorations de circonstances qui soulignaient le temps de Noël. René du Comité de pastoral avait prévu aussi des activités pour les jeunes et les moins jeunes comme des chants de Noël et une remise de cadeaux par nul autre que le Père Noël.

La fête fut une réussite et le Comité de pastoral tient à remercier tous ceux et celles qui ont aidé à la réalisation de cette fête. Vous pouvez voir d'autres photos en plus de celle ci-contre sur la page Facebook de la Paroisse (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Paroisse-St-Jean-Baptiste/464444777006434>).

Par la suite, deux messes furent célébrées par le Père Benoit pour Noël. Une première messe fut célébrée le 24 décembre à 22 :30 avec plusieurs participants remplissant l'Église St-Jean-Baptiste. Mais comme à chaque année, le Père Benoit a aussi célébré la messe du matin de Noël le 25 décembre à 10 :00 avec une assistance presque aussi importante. Plusieurs étaient les paroissiens de St-Jean-Baptiste, mais nous étions heureux aussi d'accueillir des visiteurs dont une famille avec deux adolescents venus pratiquer le français qu'ils apprenaient dans le programme d'immersion à l'école. Quelle excellente manière de pratiquer le français ! En effet si vous passez par l'Église St-Jean-Baptiste le dimanche à 10 :00, vous pouvez être sûr que vous trouverez des gens qui seront heureux de vous parler français en buvant un café et en mangeant des biscuits après la célébration dominicale dans la salle paroissiale.

L'invitation est lancée pour la nouvelle année qui commence. Et surtout n'oubliez pas de venir nous voir sur la page Facebook ou encore à l'Église St-Jean-Baptiste sur la rue Richmond.

A celebration of Christmas "en français"

By Réal Roy, Co-president St-Jean-Baptiste Parish Council

On December 8, 2013, the St. Jean-Baptiste Parish Council organized a celebration of Christmas in the Parish Hall, "New Horizons," ahead of the celebrations on December 24 and 25.

Before the Potluck, Fr. Benoit Laplante celebrated Sunday Mass in French. All parishioners discovered the new crèche for this year Christmas celebrations installed in front of the altar.

After Mass, everyone was invited to share a meal organised by Isabelle from the Parish Council. Parishioners had brought all sorts of delicious salads, succulent meat, bread and even a lasagna! The parish hall had been prepared by Hector with appropriate decorations for this time of the year. René of the Parish Council had also planned activities for the young and the not-so-youngs with Christmas French songs and gifts distributed to the children by Santa.

The celebration was a success and the Parish Council wants to thank everyone involved in this celebration. You can see more pictures on the Facebook page of the St. Jean-Baptiste Parish (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Paroisse-St-Jean-Baptiste/464444777006434>).

Afterward, Fr. Benoit celebrated two Christmas Masses. At 10:30 pm on Christmas Eve, many filled the church for a Mass in French. But as in previous years, Fr. Benoit celebrated also a Christmas Mass on the morning of December 25 with almost as many attendees as the night before. Many who attended the morning Mass were parishioners, but we were very happy also to welcome some visitors, including a family with two teenagers who attend a French immersion program—what an excellent way of practicing French!

If you pass by St. Jean-Baptiste Church at 311 Richmond Avenue on a Sunday at 10 am, you are sure to find a Francophone community of Faithfuls happy to speak to you in French (or English if needed) while drinking coffee and eating some cookies in the Parish Hall beside the Church after Mass.

The invitation stands for this coming year 2014. Don't forget to come and see us on Facebook or at St. Jean-Baptiste Church on Richmond Avenue. ✠



Le Père Benoit Laplante avec des paroissiens de St-Jean-Baptiste célébrant Noël pour les enfants. Isabelle Boutin (à l'extrême droite) avait organisé la fête.

Fr. Benoit Laplante with St. Jean-Baptiste Parishioners celebrating Christmas with the children. Isabelle Boutin (far right) organized the celebration.

Christmas Concert Raises Funds for African Orphanage

by Lorraine Calderwood-Parsons

The annual Christmas concert held on December 11, 2014, at St. Joseph the Worker parish in Victoria, featuring the Arbutus Singers, proved once again to be a great success. About \$7,450 was raised to help support the Thembaletu orphanage in South Africa, which is run by a Zulu order of nuns, the Daughters of St. Francis of Assisi.

This concert is an event looked forward to by many in the Greater Victoria area. As always, the choir put on a show that proved to be exceptionally entertaining, with Christmas fare enlivened by humour.

This was the second year the event was dedicated to the late Jenny Daniels who worked as a secretary at the parish for many years. Jenny held the Thembaletu project close to her heart.

A good portion of the funds was raised by students of St. Joseph School after they heard a talk by two retired teachers, Jackie MacIntyre and Judy Morgan, who were part of a group of Canadians who visited and worked at Thembaletu early in 2013.

Thembaletu (which means *Our Hope* in English) is located at the Assisi convent about two hours drive south of Durban. Some of the children are placed there temporarily in the hope they will be adopted by extended family but many stay at the orphanage for years. Most of the children have had parents who have been affected in some way by the HIV/AIDS epidemic widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. A few of the children are themselves HIV-positive.

Sr. Andrea Khanyile, who heads the orphanage, sent a message soon after the New Year, expressing gratitude for the support from Canada.

"I thank you for all the effort that you take to help us at this shelter. I thank all other people who generously share all that they have to help these needy children. May God reward you abundantly." ✠



The Arbutus Singers perform at St. Joseph the Worker Parish to raise funds for the Thembaletu orphanage in South Africa

Applications for CWL Bursary Available Online

by Evelyn Rigby, BC & Yukon CWL Communications Chairperson

At this time of year many graduating students and others are looking for financial assistance to help with their further education. The BC & Yukon CWL Provincial Council is once again happy to announce two \$500 bursaries: the Molly Boucher Bursary and the Life Member's Art & Culture Award. Completed Application Forms and other information requested must be submitted to the BC & Yukon Provincial Chairperson of Education and Health by March 31, 2014; because letters of reference are required along with your parish priest's signature it is advisable that applicants start working on these now.

A second bursary, funded by the CWL Life Members of BC, is for someone involved in, or entering the field of art and culture. Applicants may be interested in the article written by Taryn Goodwin of Vancouver Island, a former winner of this award, who used this bursary to help finance her studies. Taryn's article along with the criteria and application forms for both bursaries can be accessed from the CWL provincial BC & Yukon website: www.bcyukoncwl.com.

All levels of the Catholic Women's League of Canada offer bursaries with different criteria. For example, the National Bursary Fund provides financial assistance to CWL members with a minimum of three consecutive years of service to pursue studies within Canada in adult faith formation and/or youth ministry.

Other bursaries are provided by a number of parish councils. The Victoria Diocesan CWL offers the \$500 Freda Smith bursary. For more information about these and others contact your local CWL council. ✠

Pope Francis Affirms Mandate of Saint Vincent de Paul Society

by Margaret MacIntyre, Member & Volunteer Services, Saint Vincent de Paul Society

“No to an economy of exclusion and inequality ...”

Saint Vincent de Paul Society has a long and proud tradition in the Diocese of Victoria, and is currently at the cutting edge of Social Ministry with its ambitious housing projects, centre for persons with disabilities, busy thrift stores and well-used emergency services, including food hampers. More than ever, today the Society is called to renew its spirituality and practical efforts in service of the most vulnerable members of our communities.



Pope Francis has issued a clarion call to all Christians to reject an economy-obsessed society “where the powerful feed upon the powerless.” He suggests that we have deified the marketplace, giving it free reign to dictate our priorities and lifestyles, and urges us to reclaim a more “truly human purpose” for our lives than being just consumers. It hurts to realize that we have become deadened by consumerism and indifferent to human need which is all around us. We get “forgetful, distracted and carried away by the limitless possibilities for consumption ... offered by contemporary society.”



Saint Vincent de Paul Society offers Christians a way to change the focus of their lives and make a difference in society. It is a society of lay people mandated by their baptism to love and serve their brothers and sisters in need. Pope Francis is calling for a reform of the role of lay people in the Church, urging them to reach out beyond the internal needs of the parish to become Good Samaritans in society.

Society founder Blessed Frederic Ozanam would completely agree with this; a primary thrust of Saint Vincent de Paul is a twin focus on charity and justice.

The Society is concerned not only with alleviating immediate need but also with identifying the injustices that cause it: “Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveler who has been attacked. It is justice’s role to prevent the attack.” (Blessed Frederic Ozanam) Catholic lay people are rooted in Christ whose love and compassion flows through them to those they touch. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society puts the spiritual health and growth of its members high on its agenda. As Pope Francis tells us, the power of our works comes from our connection to Christ.

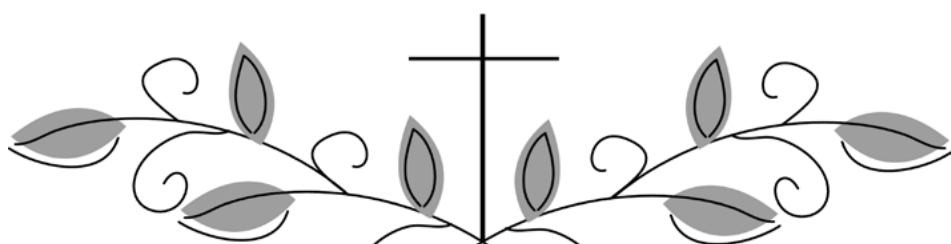
“Now is the time to open up our hearts and our lives to a closer relationship with Christ, and to the needs of the poor.”

Another priority for Society members is personal, face-to-face contact with those they serve. They seek to affirm the person, not only to alleviate need. No vulnerable person comes outside the scope of service, as the definition of “poor” is very broad, including the elderly, the sick and disabled, youth at risk, refugees and those in prison. One of the slogans of the society is “to become better, do a little good,” and Frederic Ozanam’s vision was for “everyone devoting themselves to the general good, and above all to the defense of the weakest.”

The Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul Society are undergoing a renewal and resurgence in response to the message of Pope Francis and Frederic Ozanam. Now is the time to open up our hearts and our lives to a closer relationship with Christ, and to the needs of the poor. More members and volunteers are needed, especially to serve the hungry at the Social Concern Office. Members are Christians of any denomination who wish to belong to Saint Vincent de Paul Society, embracing its mandate to grow spiritually and serve the most vulnerable. Volunteers are people of generous heart who wish to join Vincentians in their work. People of all ages, genders and cultures are invited to participate. Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by the great needs in society and our own insignificance. The message left to us by Nelson Mandela is that every person is called to make a difference, to live to their fullest potential in working for a just, compassionate and truly human society: “There is no passion to be found playing small, in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living ... It always seems impossible until it’s done.” ✠

All quotations from Pope Francis are taken from *The Joy of the Gospel: First Apostolic Exhortation*

Photo: Relevant Magazine, March 26, 2013



Annual Funded Charities benefit from Knights of Columbus donations: Four charities received a combined total of \$8,000.

Front row: Grand Knight Gerry Taylor; Salvation Army Major Norman Hamelin
2nd Row: SOS Executive Renate Sutherland; Knight Jerry Loughead; Deputy Grand Knight Wayne Sapieha
3rd Row: Kirsten Emmanuel, Crossroads Pregnancy Centre; Nicole Bancov 893 Beaufort Squadron Air Cadets; Knight Jim Enright



Funds from the 2013 Parksville Sandcastle Competition were disbursed to The Arrowsmith Community Justice Society, \$500; Oceanside Stroke Recovery Centre, \$500; Camp Goodtimes (BC Cancer Society), \$300; RCMP D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, \$500; and, the Qualicum Beach Middle School Mountain Bike Club, \$250.

Left side, bottom to top: Marilyn Henderson, Suzanne Rizzuto (Oceanside Stroke Recovery Centre), Grand Knight Gerry Taylor, Knight Jim Enright, Parksville Mayor Chris Burger
Right side, bottom to top: Kathleen Falvai (Oceanside Stroke Recovery Centre), Deputy Grand Knight Wayne Sapieha, Bill Newell (Oceanside Middle School Mountain Bike Club), RCMP Cpl. Jesse Foreman, Linda Cherewyk (Arrowsmith Community Justice Society)

Photo credit: Oceanside Star, Brian Wilford

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Bearing Witness: Courage Transforming Injustice

by Yvonne Zarowny

“The Lord hears the cry of the poor.” (Ps 34:17)

“Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters, you did to me.” (Matt.25:40)

As part of the 2013 D & P fall program, Canada was visited by four bishops: one each from Madagascar, Congo, Peru and the Philippines.

These four represented the numerous countries in which global mining and exploration corporations registered in Canada are taking the immense wealth of their countries in a manner that is disrespectful of God’s Creation. They do not share the great wealth extracted with the people of these countries, increasing poverty while devastating their ecosystems. Each bishop carried the same “cry” from their people: “Please help us achieve just relationships with “Canadian” global mining corporations operating in our country.”

To do this the bishops asked we urge our government to change our laws to respect both their people and their environment. A step towards this is the establishment of an independent ombudsman to investigate complaints concerning these “Canadian” global corporate activities.



Janet Gray (L) and Angelica Choc

All four bishops made it clear neither they nor their people are “anti-development.” They are asking for our help to achieve “just” development that respects all God’s Creation and is for the common good. Currently, 75% of the world’s mining and exploration corporations are registered in Canada. Canadian citizens support these corporations through generous tax subsidies, grants and a market regulatory framework that favours them.

On March 1, the Church of the Ascension Social Justice Committee is hosting two speakers recently returned from two countries where global corporations registered in Canada are having negative impacts.

Janet Gray spent November 5 to December 4, 2013 in Guatemala as part of a KAIROS team there to meet with local people impacted by the activities of “Canadian” global extractive corporations. They also



Phil Little (R) and Melo Moreno SJ

met with representatives of these corporations willing to meet with them.

She will share her first-hand experience of what is occurring in a number of Guatemalan communities; the reactions of local peoples; why they want our help and the kind of help they are asking of us.

Phil Little, a former Oblate missionary in Peru and religious educator in Toronto, spent from November 10 to December 18 in Honduras. Phil was there in response to a request from his friend, Fr. Ismael Moreno SJ, commonly known as Padre Melo.

Padre Melo is director of the Jesuit-owned independent radio station “Radio Progreso,” director of their Human Rights Center in Honduras as well as involved in traditional ministry such as prison visits.

In 2009 a violent military coup overthrew the democratically elected government of Mel Zelaya. Since the overthrow, human rights abuses have increased dramatically. Padre Melo’s life is constantly threatened. The Zelaya government required global corporations to pay fair taxes, and to honour human rights and environmental protection regulations. This enabled more to benefit, in a sustainable manner, from the mineral wealth being extracted from their country.

Phil will share his first-hand experience of Padre Melo’s various ministries, as well as how the Honduran people are responding to these challenges.

The context for this day of sharing will be prayerful reflection on how we are treating Jesus by how we are treating the “least of our brothers and sisters.” We will also reflect on how we are called, with God, to respond “to the cries of the poor.” Opportunities for asking questions as well as constructive action will be provided amongst song and food.

You are invited to join us March 1 at the Church of the Ascension Hall in Parksville, BC. Following Mass at 9 am, the hall doors will open at 9:30. The event will end by 3:30 pm. Admission is by donation. Coffee, tea and refreshments will be waiting for you. A soup will be provided for lunch, however, we ask people to bring a bag lunch and anything they would like to share.

We hope you will join us for a day of prayerful witness, sharing, fun, laughter, and constructive action so all have life with dignity for the full continuum.

For more information contact: Yvonne at 250.752.3870; Malcolm at 250.752.2437; or Tess 250.752.8576. ✂

Pro-Life Dinner in Parksville

by Jerry Loughead

Parksville Ascension Parish’s Pro-Life Committee will be hosting the annual Pro-Life Dinner on April 26, 2014, in the Church hall at 6 pm. Our guest speaker, Annette Turgeon of the Respect Life Ministry at St Andrews Cathedral, will make a presentation based on the bioethical questions young adults must address today. “Is everything that is possible to do, ethical to do; and if something is legal in society, does that mean it is just?”

Mark your calendars and plan to attend this dinner and presentation. The cost of the program is by donation to the Pro-Life Ministry at Ascension Church.

For more information contact Jerry Loughead by email to loughead@shaw.ca. ✂

Planning for the Future Role of St. Joseph’s General Hospital

by Jane Murphy, President & CEO

With a goal of continuing to be of service, St. Joseph’s General Hospital in Comox has begun planning for its future role. The Diocese of Victoria, owner of the hospital, has indicated support in exploring a future role that would continue to serve the community and region in the areas of health and seniors’ services.

With the opening of the Comox Valley Hospital as part of the North Island Hospitals Project, scheduled for the fall of 2017, acute care services will transfer to the new hospital. Remaining on site at St. Joseph’s will be the 125 residential care beds in The Views. Currently, the hospital is working closely with the Comox Valley Hospice Society to develop four hospice beds in The Views and this service would also be part of the ongoing services offered on the site.

Mr. Chris Kelsey, Hospital Board Chair, states: “This is an excellent opportunity to identify other programs and services that will complement residential and hospice care to continue to meet the needs of the Comox Valley and region. The St. Joseph’s General Hospital Board of Directors has established a Future Role Task Force to oversee this important work. We are very appreciative that Island Health has representation on the Task Force and is providing support for this planning.”

The Future Role of St. Joseph’s Task Force was struck and began meeting earlier this fall. The Task Force is comprised of St. Joseph’s Board members, members from the community at large, an Island Health representative, and Comox Valley Division of Family Practice representative:

- Cynthia Davies St Joseph’s Board Member (Task Force Chair)
- Chris Kelsey St Joseph’s Board Chair
- Jon Pascoe St Joseph’s Board Member
- Sandy Dreger St Joseph’s Board Member
- Audrey Craig Community Representative
- Dr. Jill Toews Community Representative
- Jim Bennett Community Representative
- Dr. Margaret Manville Division of Family Practice Representative
- Grant Hollett Corporate Director, Planning & Community Engagement, Island Health Representative
- Jane Murphy St. Joseph’s President & CEO

The Task Force is undertaking the process of identifying key groups that may have an interest in the future role of the St. Joseph’s site. A work plan is being developed by the Task Force that will outline the specific steps to achieve the goal of clarifying the future role by the fall of 2015. The next piece of work for the Task Force will be the development of a consultation framework to identify the best ways to seek and obtain input from the community and stakeholders. Upon completion of the consultation framework, anticipated in February 2014, the Task Force will begin to engage groups to obtain their perspectives into this important process. ✂



St. Joseph's Chemainus Epiphany Feast

by Bern Muller, Principal, St. Joseph's School, Chemainus

Students and staff returned to school dressed in royal attire to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany on January 5, 2014, at St Joseph's School.

We began our day with our Epiphany Mass celebrated by Father Robert Mmegwa. At the Offertory, children presented their personal spiritual gifts to Jesus. Each student had written out what their gift for Jesus would be—such as trying to be kind, to be more helpful, or to be compassionate and understanding. They had wrapped these gifts in special boxes and at Mass, they symbolically gave their treasure to Jesus. Three students from the school were baptized as part of the Mass. Afterwards the Parent Auxiliary generously provided all students, staff and visitors from our parish community a turkey feast complete with vegetables, mashed potatoes and gravy.

It was a very special day for our students. The school wanted to hold a grand Epiphany feast to honour



this special Feast Day to help the children understand the significance that Christ came for all people, for all nations. Pageantry, symbolism, rich costumes, royal music and a banquet set for 180 people made for a very memorable experience. Our students will definitely remember the meaning of the Feast of the Epiphany and how Jesus was born for each and every one of them.

What follows are some of their thoughts on the event.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day. Then, on January 6th, we celebrate Epiphany. Epiphany is about the three kings meeting the newborn king. The three kings brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold represented riches, frankincense was like perfume, and myrrh was similar to anointing oil. The three wise men traveled from far away following a special star. They followed the star until it stopped

and shone brightly over the manger where Jesus was born. They saw the baby and then presented the gifts they had brought for him.

At our school we dressed up like the three kings and queens. We wrote on a piece of paper the gifts that we would like to give to Jesus. Then the whole school had a huge feast in the gym. We had turkey and potatoes and vegetables. It was really good!

Our school celebrating Epiphany is a wonderful way to remember the birth of Jesus.

~ Quinn, Grade 7

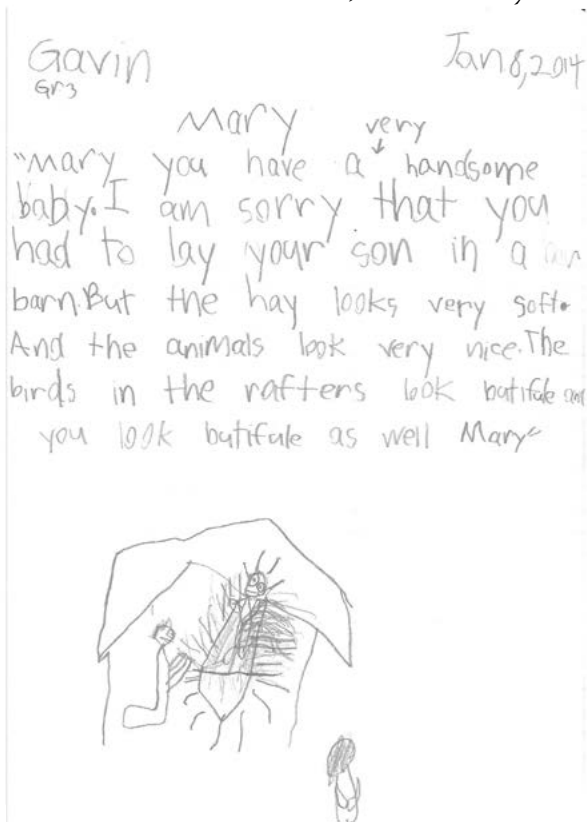
One night in a far away land, three wise men were studying when a peculiar star appeared. But this was no ordinary star, this star meant that something was coming. Something that would change the world.

The familiar story of the wise men is a classic when it comes to Christian Christmas, but there is a little more to it than three men giving gifts to a baby. The three wise men were some of the first people to notice that a king was born—a very special king. They knew that Christ was born. So they traveled (knowing the prophecy of Isaiah) with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. As they traveled, they went to the palace where King Herod lived, thinking that the king would be born in a palace fit for royalty. But to no avail. Once they continued traveling they came across a stable in the little town of Bethlehem where the star had stopped and there they found the little king.

He was born in a stable, a place for the animals, to show he was humble.

~ Hannah, Grade 7

When Jesus was two or three years old, he got a very special visit. The three magi, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, brought him gifts of precious jewels, metals, and fragrance. We call this special event Epiphany. The three magi traveled vast distances to get to Jesus which shows us that God is never too far away to get to. We dressed up like royalty and had a feast, which reminds us that like the three magi, we can always find Jesus, no matter the circumstances. No matter what, God will always be there to wrap his loving arms around us. ✠



ICS: More Than Just A School

Cassidy Graham is a Grade 12 student at St. Andrews Regional High School. Prior to attending St. Andrews, Cassidy attended St. Joseph's Elementary School in Victoria. Cassidy almost did not attend St. Joseph's; she is Autistic and has special needs, and the school was not sure if they could accommodate those needs.

Fr. William Hann went to bat for the tiny, determined scholar. The school admitted her, and she has flourished in the ICS schools since then. What follows is a letter of gratitude from her grandparents to Fr. William, along with a poem that Cassidy has written about her experience in our Catholic school system.

Dear Fr. William,
I think back to when Cassidy was leaving Saanichton Elementary School in Grade 5. Gina [Cassidy's mother] registered her at St Joseph's for Grade 6, and she was nearly refused entry because the school was concerned they could not accommodate her Special Needs.

We will never forget that you responded to my letter and spoke to Mr Leeson on behalf of Cassidy, and she was able to attend grades 6 and 7 at St Joe's. She went on to St Andrew's and has had a wonderful experience there. She loves school, her teachers, and her classmates. She takes part in whatever she can, and has excelled where no one thought she ever could.

We are so thankful that you helped her win admittance to both Catholic Schools. She has proven her abilities many times over, and her teachers have spoken highly of her. As Gina said [in a separate email]: "I would like to submit a beautiful poem that Cassidy wrote in her religion class. For a child with Autism who has a very hard time expressing her emotions and who is often accused of not understanding humanity and people in general or how the world works, I found it inspiring and hope you will too." This will show you that you were right to help her.

She enjoys all of her classes, and participates fully—she has learned so much from the Religion Class, and Science! She has won "most diligent" awards in Science and Art. She will complete grade 12 this year ... We can't wait to attend her graduation as she's achieved so much.

Thank you for all you did.

Diane & Chuck Duncan

Building a Civilization of Love

Building a civilization is like building a city and love is like a feeling

But building a civilization of love you have to express it

And you have to know how strong that civilization is you have to help out, keep strong

You have to tell people to build a civilization but do it with love

Because love is always the answer you go from a young child

To teenager to grown up adult and marriage is important because you want to find someone you love

Show how you really love them and then you have a family and your civilization gets bigger

You have to raise kids and you help out around the house

Because as you grow your small civilization gets bigger and bigger and bigger

But then you come close to the end and your big civilization gets smaller and then you are sitting there

Your kids are holding your hands and their love helps you to stay strong

And then when your kids grow up they start building a new civilization

They show the love you gave to them

And that is the end and the key to building a civilization of love.

~ Cassidy Graham, Grade 12 student at St. Andrew's Regional High School





Anonymous Donor Benefits John Paul II School

by Leah MacKenzie, Chief Financial Officer, Diocese of Victoria

During the Christmas holidays, John Paul II Catholic School in Port Alberni was blessed with a kindness from an anonymous donor. A sizeable donation was made in recognition of the extraordinary service that Marge Norell and Joe Dol have given to the school. This donation was an answer to prayer and most gratefully received.

John Paul II was opened in September 2005, utilizing the former Smith Memorial School building. Hours of labour by Marg and Joe, plus countless other volunteers went into the school to update the classrooms, office area, gym, bathrooms, hallways and playground.

“A ... donation was made in recognition of the extraordinary service that Marge Norell and Joe Dol have given to the school.

In September 2010, a large converted space was opened as our Mini-Miracles Family Center. This centre includes facilities and programs for children in Infant/Toddler, Group Daycare, Preschool and After School Care. We give heartfelt thanks for the amazing support from our volunteers, parents, staff, students, Knights of Columbus (Port Alberni and Qualicum/Parksville), CWL (Port Alberni and Qualicum/Parksville) and Holy Family/Notre Dame parishioners. Receiving such a generous donation in recognition of Marge and Joe's extraordinary efforts will allow the school to continue to offer excellent Catholic education in the Alberni Valley.

The donor elected to donate publically listed securities (shares) that they had held in their portfolio for several years. Through discussions with their financial advisor and the Diocesan Finance Office they were able to maximize the gift to the school, keep their donation anonymous and benefit from the Canada Revenue Agency tax ruling that has a zero inclusion rate for capital gains on shares donated to charities. This meant the donor experienced no capital gains, and received a charitable tax donation receipt for the full value of the shares. Careful and thoughtful planning by the donor resulted in a tremendous gift for John Paul II for which we are extremely grateful. ✂

What is Planned Giving?

The Catholic Church has been there for you and your family during the most important moments of your lives. You want to be there for the Catholics of tomorrow as they start their journey of faith. By supporting our Planned Giving Program, you can ensure that the active works of the Diocese, your parish or school continue and grow both for today's needs as well as those of our children and grandchildren.

Simply put, "Planned Giving" is the donor-centered process of planning charitable contributions, whether currently or in the future, that meets your goals and balances personal, family and taxation considerations.

What options are available to a donor?

There are eight methods of Planned Giving which cover present and deferred donations:

1. Cash donation
2. Gifts in kind
3. Publicly listed securities
4. Bequests
5. Life Insurance
6. Registered Plans
7. Residual Interest Trust
8. Charitable Remainder Trust

These options are to be reviewed while noting the generous Federal and Provincial income tax provisions that exist to significantly lower the donor's income tax, thus maximizing the value of your donation.

For more information about how to make a donation in this or a similar way, contact your financial advisor or Leah MacKenzie at leahm@rcdvictoria.org, or call Leah at (250) 479-1331. You may also visit the Diocesan webpage at www.rcdvictoria.org/planned-giving.php.

Prior to making a donation or gift, we recommend that donors receive independent professional financial advice concerning the possible financial, taxation and legal consequences of doing so.

Business as ... Usual?

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

It was hard to get excited when they pulled down the primary playground at the beginning of construction last year at St. Joseph's Elementary School in Victoria. It was even harder when they reduced the main play areas at the back, chopping our usable playground space by more than half. To say it was difficult and hard on everyone when they reduced the parking lot, cutting it in half and closing one of the entrances, is an understatement. Challenging? Yes. Frustrating? Certainly (try waiting 30 minutes to get out of a school parking lot!).

Worth the grief? Absolutely!! Keeping our eyes on the prize, we could somehow get through all that as we kept imagining the new building as it slowly rose from the mud and the muck of what had been our playgrounds. And now we are almost there!

The building is almost complete, and it is a beautiful space. The architects paid particular attention to the use of natural light, which floods the building and gives it an airy feeling. Sloping ceilings also contribute to this feeling of lofty space. When entering via the new main entrance, a generous gathering area welcomes visitors with the new Learning Commons, a combination of library and computer lab prominently visible as the intellectual hub of the school. Two large kindergarten rooms front the north pod, with access by both classes to the small playground out front. The main entrance corridor offers two lanes of traffic, one to the Admin Block in the old wing, and the other to the six new classrooms and the Special Education room in the south pod. Much of the interior has been painted, and flooring is being installed as I write this. If there were ever any doubts about why we embarked on this crazy mission, all doubts have now been dispelled—nothing worthwhile comes easily, and that is certainly borne out with this building project. In the end we have a beautiful new building to take us into the twenty-first century, and a seismically renovated "heritage" building to remind us where we came from!

“Keeping our eyes on the prize, we could somehow get through all that as we kept imagining the new building as it slowly rose from the mud and the muck of what had been our playgrounds. And now we are almost there!

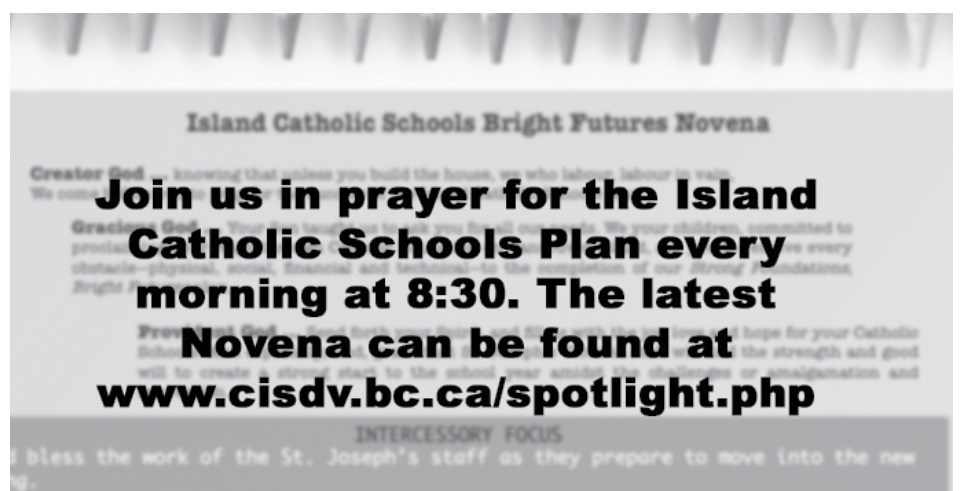
However, we are still not quite at the finish line. There are a few hurdles left to cross, a few obstacles to overcome, and some inconvenience still to get through. The next phase is to move all the classrooms out of the old building and into the new. That means moving eight classrooms and the Library over to the new building, and then establishing them there. No small feat! The construction crew will then move their staging area to the gym entrance as they begin the seismic upgrade of the old wing, which involves reinforcing the concrete block with rebar and concrete.

It has been a difficult process getting through the construction while school is still in session, and we lost a few families as a result. However, the vast majority of our community rose to the challenge and shared the pain and excitement that such a project brings. Come September 2014, we will have a completed new building, a seismically up-graded old wing, a field "to die for," and playgrounds aplenty for our students, who have been extraordinarily patient in getting their facilities back. With any luck, the parking lot will revert to what it was, with parents able to park and visit if they choose, restoring that sense of community that we so treasure, and that makes this school such a special place.

Thanks to all who have shouldered the burdens of construction, the disruption of orderly lives and learning, the inconveniences of grid-locked parking lots and staggered pick up times—I am sure that by September, it will all seem worth it, and any unhappiness will be but a distant bad memory!

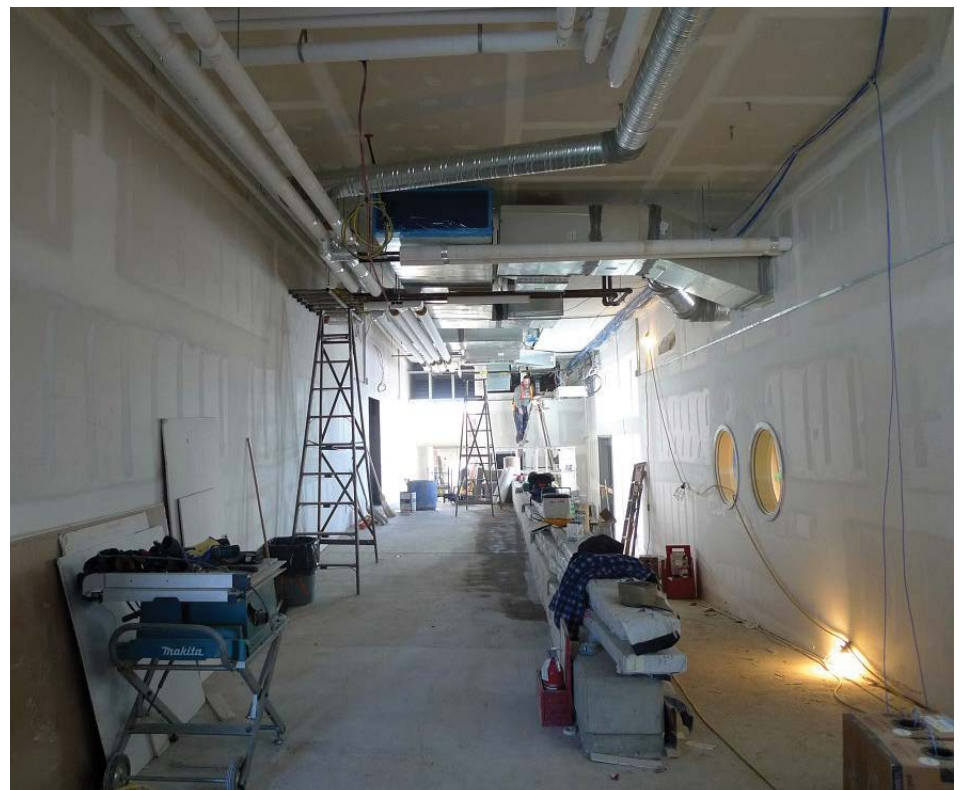
St. Joseph's Elementary, ICS and the Diocese of Victoria extend sincere gratitude to parents, staff and students for their patience and support as we have journeyed through the first phase of construction.

Once the new building is occupied parents will be invited to tour the new facility. An open house for existing and new parents will be held later in the Spring. ✂



St. Joseph Elementary School Renovations

- The new wing will be completed by Spring Break.
- During Spring Break, movement of classrooms from the existing building to the new building will commence and construction crews will begin seismically upgrading the existing classrooms.
- Work on the existing school should be completed by July 2014 and ready for the school's opening in September 2014.
- The field is taking shape and some final work and a fence will be completed later this Spring.
- It is anticipated that the field will be ready as a playing field and heavy foot traffic for September 2014.
- With regards to the sale of St. Andrew's Elementary School, the sales agreement for the site at 1012 Pandora St has been extended to the buyer until June 30, 2014.





Each year during the first week of February, British Columbia celebrates the contribution that Catholic schools make to the Church and society. It's quite fitting that in 2014 this week coincided with the Feast of the Presentation, or Candlemas Day. The beauty of teaching and learning in a Catholic school is that we celebrate the belief that Christ shines forth through his Church into a world that truly needs his light.

The focus for Catholic Schools Week is a year-long emphasis on a particular message. This year that theme is taken from the book of the prophet Micah; specifically Micah 6:8. God told Micah to take a message to the people to do three things if they wanted to be in right relationship with their Creator:

Do justice—Doing what is right or fair means making sure that everyone has enough to live well.

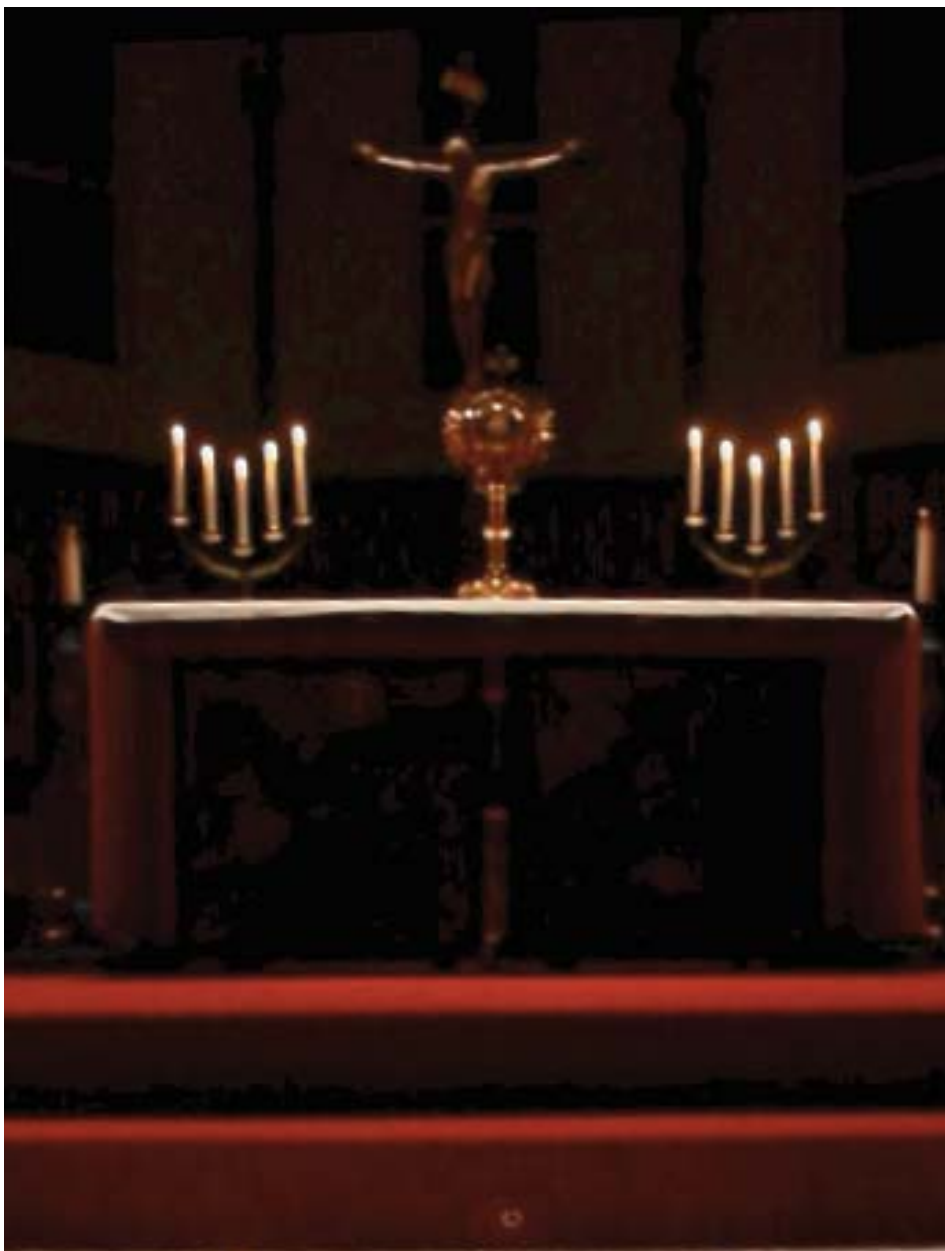
Love mercy—Showing kindness to others and caring about their needs means being kind to people even though we may not even know them; and,

Walk humbly with your God—Humbly means that we are not to be overly proud or think that we are better than other people. We are called to treat all people with respect and kindness.

ICS staff and students invited their family and friends to be part of the week's celebrations through a number of unique activities at each school. We hope you enjoy these photos, and ask for your continued prayers for our Catholic schools. ✠







Nightfever Returns to St. Andrew's Cathedral

by Greg Van Dyk

“I would like those inside the dioceses to go out into the open; I want the Church to be in the streets,” said Pope Francis at the most recent World Youth Day. And a bunch of young university students definitely took the Holy Father literally when they hit the streets in an event called “Nightfever” at St. Andrew’s Cathedral in downtown Victoria.

“Would you like a free candle? The church is open tonight if you’d like to come inside.” The students’ invitation to passers-by on the sidewalks outside the Cathedral was simple enough, but it captured the curiosity of well over a hundred people on the evening of Saturday, February 1. All of these passers-by entered the Cathedral to have their candle lit, where they could then place it in front of the altar where Jesus waited for them in the Eucharist. Peaceful music filled the air, and priests were on hand for Confession or conversation. Many entered a church for the first time; others had not been inside in years.

For all the evening was a blessed experience of Christ’s peace, mercy, and goodness. ✠



Despite lack of snow at Mt. Washington, there was no shortage of good fellowship on the UVic Catholic Students’ Association Winter Retreat at Christ the King Parish in the Comox Valley.

VOCATIONS ROAD TRIP

Men of the Diocese interested in discerning their vocation can join UVic Newman community members with their chaplain on a discernment road trip. Leaving Victoria on March 28 to overnight in Port Alberni and return March 29. En route expect to visit priests and a pub, plan for conversations and Communion, enter into silence, solitude and service.

March 28 – 29, 2014
Victoria to Port Alberni (and back!)

Come and listen for Jesus’ call...

Sponsored by The Diocese of Victoria



Find out more ...
Fr. Dean Henderson
catholic@uvic.ca
(250) 882-2151

Diocesan Youth Conference 2014

by Kelly Bourke, Coordinator, Office of Youth Ministry

The Victoria Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC) will be held on May 23 – 25, 2014 in Victoria. This conference is in its 11th awesome year! Our guest speakers are from *Hearts on Fire* and the theme is *MAKE NOISE!*, drawn from some encouraging words by Pope Francis last year. The conference is for youth from grade 8 to recent grads. You can find out more by visiting Facebook.com/vicdyc, contacting the DYC Co-Chairs at teamdyc@gamil.com, on the web at www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesan-youth-conference-dyc, or connecting with Kelly Bourke at the Diocesan Youth Office at (250) 479-1331 ext. 230 or kbourke@rcdvictoria.org ✠

Have Courage. Go Forward.

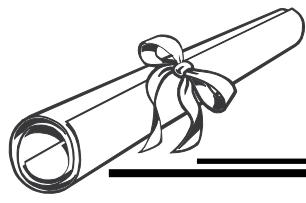


The Diocese of Victoria's 11th
Annual Youth Conference
May 23-25, 2014
St. Andrew's Regional High
School

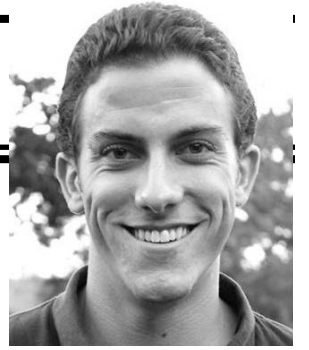
facebook.com/vicdyc

The image of the "Super Pope" drawn by Italian artist Maspal has been approved by Vatican Communications





The Campus Mission

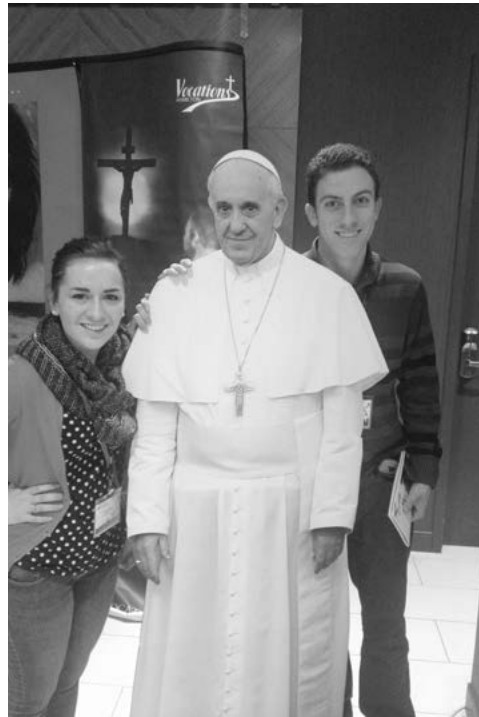


Rise Up Ottawa and 5 Foundational Tenets

by Greg Van Dyk, Uvic Catholic Students' Association President

What do you call over 800 young Catholics from across Canada flooding into an Ottawa hotel for a weeklong conference? Well, the hotel staff attending the crowded elevators probably called it “madness,” but we called it *Rise Up 2013*—the annual conference of Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO), an awesome lay missionary movement sweeping across Canadian universities.

This year's conference featured fantastic guest speakers ranging from lay missionaries to religious sisters, priests, and bishops—not to mention an opening night worship session by popular singer and musician Audrey Assad (this, dear reader, is your cue to head to the computer and Google her). The hundreds of students that gathered in Ottawa also took part in daily Mass and Rosary, and an evening of Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation where lines of people waiting to go to Confession wrapped around the huge conference room.



If that doesn't sound cool enough for you, we also had the largest New Year's Eve party that I'll likely ever attend, learned how to juggle from a nun (the Sisters of Life, of course), posed for photos with an extremely life-like cardboard cut-out of Pope Francis, and even signed a massive letter to the Holy Father himself—committing to being missionary disciples.

CCO and its *Rise Up* conference exists to inspire leaders for the renewal of the world (epic, right?) and they do this by focussing on five foundational tenets of their movement.

L to R: Hailey Cleaves, “Cardboard Pope Francis” and Greg Van Dyk

1. *University students.* CCO focuses on the campus because that's where the future leaders of our society come from—doctors, thinkers, engineers, and teachers, and husbands and wives, too. Contrary to the beliefs of “Negative Nelly,” universities aren't just full of relativist hippies and self-entitled radicals; they're full of folks who radically love Jesus, too!
2. *Heart for the world.* The need for the Gospel is great—and it's up to you to respond to that need. Spiritual poverty is a hidden force of destruction in our world, and it can be hard to know how to respond. You've got to go out there and find the “lost” person and (can you believe this?) love them.
3. *One person at a time.* So you've opened your eyes to look for the “lost,” but you now need to search personally. Make personal connections and relationships, and consider inviting just one person to Mass. By focussing on just one person, we can build them into a missionary disciple of Jesus—someone who then goes out and makes more disciples. This we'll call spiritual multiplication, just to impress the math geeks out there.
4. *The Gospel, clear and simple.* Why so much focus on Jesus? There are more and more people in our culture today who have never heard the Gospel proclaimed clearly and simply. Some of them even fill our churches and ministries. But Pope Paul VI called evangelization the “deepest identity” of the Church. Now that's some deep stuff.
5. *Great expectations.* In 2000, Pope John Paul II described the beginning of the new millennium as the “threshold of hope.” We have to live with that same hope and trust in the incredible things that God will do with us, through us, and often in spite of us. Hope gives us the awesome apostolic zeal to see the entire world brought to Christ.

These five tenets are solid foundations of an effective and energetic movement of evangelization—and one that you'll be hearing more from before you know it. CCO will be setting up a permanent presence in Victoria in September of this year, spreading the Gospel on the University of Victoria campus. And who knows ... you might even see hundreds of Catholic students flood our city if the *Rise Up* conference eventually makes its way to Victoria.

Ready ... set ... pray! ✠



Connections



by Raya MacKenzie

I think I've been getting myself wrong. I think I have been doing it almost as long as I can remember. Ever since I exhibited any aptitude for reading, learning, and scoring well on tests, my family and friends told me I was a “smart one”. My parents praised me and had me recite memorized poetry at dinner parties. I was shy but I loved the *love* I would feel when I performed or achieved the highest grade or won a school award. I thought, “Perfect. I am the smart one. That is who I will become.”

And I was the smart one, all throughout elementary and high school. I covered up my anxious need for friendship and love with a devotion to books. Whenever my grades slipped, even if only by half a letter grade, I felt I was losing control of my identity. I did look up from my studies to make one friend, then two more, then many more, but I did not recognize that these friends were the real source of my happiness at school. Instead I attributed the acceptance I felt at St. Andrew's to my position in the academic pecking order. I was loved because I filled a particular role: I was the honour roll student, the Hermione Granger, the smart one.

University was particularly challenging at first because I found myself merely one of many smart people. I adapted to the competitive environment and eventually carved for myself a specific niche in Kingdom Academia: nineteenth-century magazine poetry. Since my second year, I assumed that I would ascend to that coveted rank of smart ones everywhere, the Ph.D. Last semester, my Honours supervisor helped me prepare my applications for my Master's and numerous government grants. She mapped out my career before my eyes: M.A. Toronto, Ph.D. Oxford. I was on a one-way bullet train to the career I had always seen as the measure of my success.

But I suppose at one point or another we have to be emotionally honest with ourselves. Right around the second week of Advent, I started taking a good long look at the scenes outside my bullet train that could easily pass me by as I rode on in haste. To have an academic career, I would need to move away for my Master's and then again for my Ph.D. After that, I would have to take any position available to me at any university around the world. To gain any tenure-track position at all, I must execute my most perfect work ninety per-cent of the time. My chances of returning to teach at UVic or Camosun would be akin to winning the lottery.

And I love Victoria. I know that as a modern young woman, I am supposed to want adventure. I am supposed to travel a mandatory year in Europe or Asia

before making it big in a glamorous city. But to be honest, I have never wanted that kind of adventure for myself. I *never* have. I dwell instead on the advice Fr. William gave my graduating class in high school: “make a meaningful life.” I love Victoria because I have made all the meaning in my life here. I have a loving immediate and extended family, supportive friends, a kind boyfriend and a welcoming parish community. I *belong* here. I doubt that I can ever replace that feeling I get when the ferry boat or plane nears the Island and the soft evening mist in the trees makes my heart ache. I could, of course, find a new home and a new belonging if I felt that in choosing academia I choose my real dream or my true vocation. But I feel that I have only chosen it as a default setting. I felt I had to be the smart one.

“And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

~ 1 Corinthians 13:13

But I am also so much more than merely smart. I am creative, honest and brave. I am loving. In whatever I choose to pursue, I want to be able to make use of my whole self, not one small portion. I defined myself by my academic success because I saw that achievement as a shortcut to the love I really searched for. It was a way to *earn* love and keep it. We are told again and again in Mass that God loves us for ourselves simply as we are. Though I can memorize and re-quote how much God loves me, it is more difficult for me to internalize it in my soul. To God I am not a letter grade, even if I often have been to myself.

So I have flung myself off the academic bullet train. I may get back on again, if I decide that a life of teaching and research will offer the most meaning for my life. But I will take time to decide. We encourage priests and nuns to carefully discern their vocation. Though I do not feel called to life in a religious order, I believe it is important for me and for other young people to thoughtfully choose their paths in life. Whether religious or lay, we are equally called to serve, to love, and to find meaning. And to do this, we must recognize ourselves as full human beings. None of us can be reduced to just one quality. We are beautiful in spite of—and often because of—our complexities and indecisions.

Above all, we are beloved. ✠



As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us

by Jim Kiernan

The act and attitude of forgiveness is at the very core and meaning of Christian faith. On this point Christian teaching is consistent and inflexible. We cannot expect forgiveness if we do not forgive! For many there is confusion around the notion and practice of forgiveness. It does not mean we should forget injuries done to us. We do not condone those injuries and we may or may not reconcile with the offender even if we have forgiven. And let there be clarity on this point: for serious offences, perpetrators, even when forgiven, must face justice!

Then what does it mean to forgive? When we forgive we choose to practice love by offering compassion and benevolence to someone who has grieved us. It is a gift we offer to those who have hurt us. When we forgive we look to change the relationship between us and the offender.

It is noteworthy that the offender may not even know about the act of our forgiveness and may not choose to accept it if he or she does know. This does not matter because, while forgiveness benefits everyone, it primarily is a transformative act which benefits the forgiver.

Scientific research has demonstrated that many good and powerful benefits accrue when we forgive. Our health improves. We thrive emotionally. We are less likely to be hostile, angry, hateful, anxious or neurotic. We are likely to be more agreeable and happier. In our act of forgiveness we self-nurture.

Forgiveness directly benefits the one we forgive. The family member or friend from whom we are estranged is, in the act of forgiveness, freed from reacting to and defending against our hostile judgment. They are empowered to move beyond the hurt that traps us in reciprocal animosity. We influence others to “be good” and to “do the good.” In practicing forgiveness we generate love and are changed by love.

In this way the practice of forgiveness widens our circle of influence. In living a consistently forgiving life we become a “force of nature” through which we empower others to work at their highest potential. We and they are liberated from the weakness and prison of our resentments. We are made whole and strong.

In following the Divine prescription of forgiveness we heal and grow and connect. It betters all of us in this world and moves us towards eternal life.

Blessed are the peacemakers... ✠

A Twentieth Century Passion

by Michael Hemmings

Dr. A. Peter Gary is a survivor of the *Sho'ah* (Holocaust) of the Jews during WWII. He is also well known in the Victoria and Island community for his numerous presentations to school children in public, private and independent schools over the last number of years, speaking of his experience and using that as a platform to ask all who hear him to remember and to continue to help change the world, to change an aspect of human nature.

Peter is also a composer. He has used these skills and his experience as a teenager during these terrible years to compose *A Twentieth Century Passion*. This unique work will move you to ponder elements of the human spirit that we do not often wish to examine—but we must.

Peter's work reminds us of these dark elements that are part of us, but he also examines the power to triumph or use such experiences to motivate we who live in the present to act with mercy, compassion and decency in our daily lives and, it is always hoped, in national and international affairs.

As people of the Christian tradition, there is a particular poignancy to the Sho'ah in general and to Peter's *Passion* in particular. We are cousins with Jews in faith. The Sho'ah, its history, and how we got there from beginnings over 2,000 years ago are critical to our own understanding of faithfulness and what it means to be a Christian in the post-Sho'ah world.

Dr. Gary will present his Oratorio on Wednesday, April 2, 2014, at 7:30 pm at the Farquhar Auditorium at the University of Victoria—two weeks before the anniversary of Peter's liberation from Bergen-Belsen and his 90th birthday. Please plan to attend!

For more more information, please contact me by email to michael.hemmings@investorsgroup.com or by phone at (250) 818-1119. Alternatively, please visit the website noted below. Tickets may be purchased through the UVic ticket centre at www.uvic.ca/auditorium, or by phoning them at (250) 721-8480.

www.web.uvic.ca/~oratorio/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Oratorio-donation-form.pdf

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOOigKzHNGM ✠

Do You Know ... The Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island?

by the Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island

Do you know our Diocese has a Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island that supports many worthy charities every year? The Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island is a charitable entity with a vision of Islanders living vibrantly the teachings of Jesus. These Islanders are spread over an area of about 95,000 square km in 28 Catholic parishes across Vancouver Island and the islands off the West and East Coasts that are within the boundaries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria.

The Foundation's sole responsibility today is to nurture and shepherd an endowment fund that enables the Foundation to give grants prudently to charitable organizations, institutions or groups to help them undertake spiritual, educational, social and charitable projects and programs that help islanders live vibrantly the teachings of Jesus. The endowment fund is based on income earned from donations given to the Foundation. The Foundation is limited in the money that it can provide each year in grants by the interest earned by the investment of the fund and in accordance with its Trust Deed.

Projects can be capital projects of the Diocese, a parish or a Catholic School. Grants can also be given for establishment, development, support or maintenance of:

- A parish or a parish ministry
- Roman Catholic religious education and the Roman Catholic Faith of the Diocese
- Social Welfare projects
- Catholic school within the Diocese
- Seminarians, Retired clergy and Retired lay workers of the Diocese
- Missionary work of the Diocese

Generally requests will not be considered for:

- Ongoing operating expenses
- Grants to individuals
- Deficit reduction
- Repairs and maintenance
- The entire capital cost of a project

Grant applications are usually submitted by October 31 and May 31 each year to be considered by the Trustees at a scheduled meeting. After the meeting applicants are notified by letter if they were successful and how much will be granted. The Trustees reserve the right to request documented proof that the funds are used in accordance with the intent of the grant.

Over the past 18 years the Foundation has disbursed more than \$2 million for many worthy projects in our Diocese. A few successful projects in the past three years include:

- Diocesan Marriage & Family Council: Family Conference (2013)
- Anawim Companions Society: Counselling Men's Trauma Center (2013)
- L'Arche Comox Valley: Seniors' Circle (2013)
- Three Catholic Elementary Schools [Port Alberni, Chemainus, Duncan] School-wide Retreat with Face-to-Face Awakening (2012)
- The 910 Club, Serving Food for the Hungry (2012)
- Thinkfast 2011, Church of Ascension, Parksville (2011)
- Diocese of Victoria's Returning to Spirit (2011)

The full list of charities supported from 1985 to 2013 can be viewed at the Foundation's website at <http://catholicfoundationofvancouverisland.com/listofgrants.html>.

The interest earned annually has not substantially changed for a number of years and the Foundation cannot fully fund all requests it receives. The early Church was known for its sharing things in common and caring for the least of those within the community. The Foundation is one vehicle that tries to continue this tradition. The Foundation Trustees ask you to please consider financially supporting the work they do. Donations can be given once, on a regular basis or through bequests. Information on donating can be found at <http://catholicfoundationofvancouverisland.com/donate.html>.

The current Trustees are: Fr. Stephen G. Paine, Rose Marie Hague (chair), Charlotte Herkel, Phillip Jennings, Colleen Lissamer, Terence T. Penney, Kerry M. Rowland, and Thomas P.

Siemens. Diocesan support is provided by Leah MacKenzie, Chief Financial Officer for the Diocese of Victoria. Once the new Bishop is named he will be added to the list of Trustees. ✠

Back Row (L to R): Tom Siemens, Phil Jennings, Charlotte Herkel, Terry Penney
Front Row (L to R): Judy Roberts, Kerry Rowlands, Colleen Lissamer, Rose Marie Hague

Absent from the picture:
Fr. Stephen G. Paine





Face the Day



by Bonnie Landry

There are some things that need to be in place to live a well-ordered life. Well—order, for one thing. There are three things that stand out significantly in my mind that aid us in living lives with order. One, cutting out that which is extraneous. Two, developing systems. Three, modelling that which we value.

First: *cutting out the extraneous*. What does “extraneous” even mean? *Unnecessary. Non-essential*. This is not to say that we live in severe austerity or poverty—although for some, it does mean exactly that. But for those of us living out family lives, it means being able to sort out what we need or what brings us joy from that we merely *have*. What we merely own. Having stuff we don’t need, or that doesn’t bring us joy, all that *stuff*, can really weigh us down. We need to pray, to work, to recreate ourselves, to have joy.

What stuff do we need to make that happen, but not weigh us down? Sometimes taking stock of my stuff is all the reality check I need to realize I’m spending more time sorting, storing, maintaining or cleaning the stuff than I am using it to meet my goals. Done in little chunks, perhaps one drawer, or one cupboard, one shelf or closet at a time, assessing stuff and the effect it has on productivity and joy can actually become a manageable task. One of these teeny-tiny areas per week is 52 teeny-tiny areas in a year. 52 teeny-tiny areas is practically a whole house.

That’s pretty good. And it’s pretty simple.

Second: *developing systems*. Well, that sounds pretty technical. But it’s not. It is as basic as, after a meal, the table gets cleared and wiped and dishes go in the dishwasher, the floor gets swept—all these tasks before moving on to other things. That’s a system, a five or ten minute system that means you don’t get new dirt piled on top of old dirt. So is putting away a game when it is finished—a three minute system.

While the water is boiling for tea, the dishwasher gets loaded. Developing a routine of prayer while making the bed. Putting the clean laundry away. Every morning, on the way to the kitchen, a load of laundry gets tossed in. These are all systems,

one, two or five minutes here and there, attached to other activities. Piggy-backing small chores onto daily, expected and necessary things, like meals, gets a lot of little jobs done in the day. For those of us who are not naturally orderly, or who were raised without a sense of developing systems, this can be life changing! These systems are really just the development of good habits. Apparently, once something has been done for thirty days in a row, it becomes a habit. Virtue is the development of good habits, good habits are established by creating systems in family life.

That’s pretty simple.

Third: *modelling that which we value*. Children who have good modelling become adults who are ahead of the game in all areas of life. Even to see parents who are trying to develop a well-ordered life has a huge effect on children. They see that things *matter*. They see that a good life requires thought and intent. Modelling is a powerful tool for kids, how we use our time, our money, our words.

It’s not always easy, to be sure. But it’s pretty simple.

These three things: cutting out the extraneous, developing systems and modelling behaviour, are vital to the spiritual life also. If we streamline our lives by culling out what we no longer need, want or use, we have more time and feel less frazzled. It places us in a better disposition to become who God intends us to be. Developing systems that support growth in the spiritual life add to our prayer life personally, with our spouse and with our children. Adding prayer to meals, and bedtime routines are the most obvious of these “systems.” Streamlining the daily “to do” list means more time to devote to devotion. To observe a vibrant faith and a desire for holiness in their own parents will light a fire under most children without parents saying anything. This quote, attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, sums up the profound effects of modelled behaviour: “Preach the gospel always, and if necessary, use words.” Modelling behaviour is living a life of integrity. It is living a life for God.

And that’s pretty simple. ✂

Come and Get It! RE-Building Our Reception Committee

by Joan Vezina

The hospitality/reception team for St. Andrew’s Cathedral has hosted many wonderful celebratory events over the years—miniature to mammoth sized—thanks to a small core of loving, selfless and committed parishioners. Some have asked for a very well-earned rest and retirement, semi-retirement or what passes for retirement so this vital ministry must be “RE-Built” if the St. Andrew’s family as well as Diocesan community as a whole can continue to celebrate the breaking of bread together when it accompanies the numerous special events that occur over the course of our liturgical year.

“Human beings are built for Community. Being part of a community is essential—not just a nice optional thing to do when we’re not busy doing other interesting things and it’s not a hobby. Community is also a verb, it’s something you do, something you carry, something you are, it’s giving and receiving, without pride and without selflessness.” (*Face the Day*, November 2013 edition of *The Diocesan Messenger*). This is a ministry that nurtures our relationships with each other. While it indeed feeds the body, it also feeds our souls and spirits and strengthens our community as a whole. But do those special occasions in your home, whether small teas, light lunches or magnificent feasts just magically appear? Much planning and preparation goes into every event.

As this New Year commences and with an eye to the Lent/Easter Season already, I am looking for New Labourers for this crucial field of service at St. Andrew’s and I would encourage you to consider your time, your talents (although no special ones are required) and your desire to connect in a closer way to others within this parish community and consider trying us out.


We all enjoy being consumers at these wonderful events—as the standing-room-only crowds at our receptions attest! I find joy and great satisfaction in helping make them happen but it is a “team sport” and team members are greatly needed.

Think you’re too old or too young? Not sure if you have the energy? Not sure if you have the right skill set? Fear not! We encourage “Test Drives” and experienced helpers are always on hand! We need folk willing to assist with any one or more of the following: shopping, assisting with food prep, decorating, flower arranging, room setup, serving, cleanup—in other words, everything that needs to be done in your home for your special occasions—except multiplied ten-fold!

This is what family and community is all about. “The path to holiness lies in how we act, interact and sacrifice with and for each other. In ‘others’ is Christ—sometimes as the giver, sometimes as the receiver.” Jesus said ‘Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me.’” (*Face the Day*, November 2013 edition of *The Diocesan Messenger*)


This ministry has a great, even urgent need, but the labourers are few. Will you help? All expressions of interest are welcome; contact Joan Ripley by phone (250) 382-2025 or email jvez@shaw.ca. ✂

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Faith Matters



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

*What the world needs now, is love sweet love.
It's the only thing that there's just too little of.
~ Hal David*

All You Need is Love

Everyone agrees that love is the answer, but would everyone agree to the definition of what love is? That is a very different question ... and the most crucial question!

Our popular culture is quite indiscriminate in its use of the term *love*. The all-pervasive media constantly bombards us with TV ads, radio ads, pop-ups, and spam referencing love: "Love. It's what makes a Subaru, a Subaru"; LensCrafters eyeglasses ("See what you love, love what you see.") and Payless shoes ("I ♥ shoes."), not to mention McDonald's ("I'm lovin' it.") and Olay ("Love the skin you're in."). Love has also long been a dominant theme in song (*Secret Love*, Doris Day; *Young Love*, Tab Hunter; *Love is Blue*, Paul Muriat, *A Groovy Kind of Love*, Phil Collins), stories, music videos, and films.

This over-saturation, using the same word for objects and people, without any sense of distinction or degree, actually debases the word and obscures any depth of real meaning.

Perhaps it is our culture's drive for instant results or sound-bite summaries which has impacted the word, or perhaps it is our very language which contributes to this blurring of meaning and confusion over "love". After all English reveals a real limitation in having only one word to describe the many dimensions of this reality. Let us consider one of our "parent" languages, Greek, which has several distinct terms which are most helpful in getting to the "heart" of this matter of love!

Storge (stor-YEH) refers to "affection" in modern Greek. It describes natural affection, a strong type of love, and involves relationship and commitment, like that experienced within the family. It is that love felt by parents for their children, the love of mother, father, brother and sister.

Philia [FIL-ee-yah] means friendship in Greek and refers to fondness and appreciation for the other. It involves virtue, loyalty, and relates to friends, family, and community. Besides the more frequently appearing *Agape*, it is the only other word for love used in the New Testament.

Epithumia [eh-pee-thu-MEE-ah], "strong desire" is a word which appears in the scriptures and can have either a positive or negative connotation reflecting the fact that our energies can be directed positively or negatively. The positive connotation is usually translated "strong desire," reflecting an essential component of a healthy marriage, while the negative connotation is usually translated as "lust," never a healthy option!

Back To Love

by Jean Allen

They were in love. Everything they did was coloured by thoughts of each other and by a desire to be in communion with the other. He would bring her flowers for no reason. She would cook his favourite foods. They composed songs, searched out gifts and read books to each other. Each one longed to know more about the other and every discovery was a treasure.

And then they got married.

Life got demanding. Children were born, finances became a struggle, days dissolved into chaotic exhausting routine and moments of intimacy became rare. They maintained a few habitual modes of communication: a quick kiss hello or goodbye and gifts on anniversaries and birthdays but even these communications often lacked forethought. Mostly they were done because they were expected.

They went through the motions the best they could but often their commitment to each other was defined by a list of obligations fulfilled: "I take out the garbage, I look after the kids, I cook the meals, I go to work, I maintain the home/vehicle, I wash your laundry, I shovel the driveway..." What began as a loving relationship full of communion and communication rooted in mutual love was eroded into a daily grind of two people going through the motions without ever looking at the other's heart.

The scribes and Pharisees constantly challenged Jesus because he and his disciples didn't always follow the traditions of the elders. These traditions were not laws handed down by Moses but were practices added over the years. When one of these traditions began, it was probably started by someone who had a deep and loving relationship with God and wanted to show his or her love by certain actions of purification or sacrifice. Others were inspired to adopt this extra ritual because the one who began it was a holy person and they mistakenly assumed it was the action that caused the holiness rather than the love relationship from which the action sprang. Then, as generations continued the practice, the love within the action was gradually forgotten until it became an empty ritual, something that was expected, an obligation. The communion of love that began it was lost.

Eros [EH-rohs] is passionate love, referencing sensual desire which does not have to be sexual in nature. *Eros* refers to a higher form of love than that of our physical appetites; it references Ideal Beauty. Ideal Beauty is the product of the exploration of ideas through reasoned discourse. Therefore objects, ideas, and persons can inspire as they point to Ideal Beauty, of which they are reflections. *Eros* can also be interpreted as a love for someone whom you love more than the *philia* love.

Agape [ah-GAH-peh] means "love" in modern day Greek. In ancient Greek it often refers to a general affection rather than the attraction suggested by *eros*; *agape* is not common in ancient texts but is used frequently in the New Testament. Christian writers have developed a significant amount of theology based solely on the interpretation of this word to encompass a total commitment, unconditional and self-sacrificial love for another, regardless of the circumstances.

These distinctions are not only helpful but essential for us as Christians. They help us by bringing clarity, perspective and depth to our understanding of love.

Based on our tradition, we hold that Love originates in God—God is Love. Further, God's Word made flesh, Jesus, revealed perfect Love through his words, actions and very being. We also have the witness of the Saints, their great example in their imitation of Christ, their union with Christ—reflecting this same Love powerfully alive and active in them.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind ... You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

(Matthew 22:37 – 40)

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. (John 15:13)

Here we touch on the true meaning of love!

So, at this time of the year, should the word "love" come up in conversation, because ... *Love is a many splendored thing* ... you might try saying, "Could we talk about what you mean by 'love'?"—it just might bring new meaning to the word!

✠

Acknowledgements: "For Marketers, Love Is in the Air" article by Andrew Adam Newman, New York Times, December 27, 2009; "Philosophy of Love," Alexander Moseley, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.iep.utm.edu/love/; Mark Price: http://nebula.wsimg.com/db309026325357963bb547b024b565668?AccessKeyId=73FD1346372A7F9900DE&disposition=0

Just as it is easy to lose the effervescence of first love and continue in a relationship with actions that are devoid of communion with each other, it is very easy to fill our spiritual lives with traditions and prayers that are devoid of true communion with God. That doesn't mean these traditions are in any way bad, useless or meaningless; it simply means that, just as in any good marriage, we need to stop, review all we do and ask ourselves if we are depending on obligatory actions to justify and define us. Do we just keep on doing certain things because that's what everybody has always done? We especially need to spend time discerning whether we rely on our actions to justify ourselves spiritually while judging others who don't seem to be quite as diligent as we are. It is right at that point that Jesus had issues with the Pharisees and scribes. He didn't mind if they wanted to wash their hands all day long but where washing and purification became more important than compassion and love and when all the washing being done was hiding hearts that were judgmental, self-righteous, territorial, resentful and lacking in a true relationship with the Father, that's where Jesus put his foot down.

"That is not communion, people;" Jesus was saying, "that is not a love relationship with my Father. That is a relationship with your own outward righteousness, your own opinions, your own ego and your own external image. You have made the huge mistake of thinking that what you do is what makes you pleasing to the Father." To that mistaken understanding, God says, "Their hearts are far from me."

Whenever Jesus said, "Repent," he meant, "Turn around, come back to the beginning, back to your first love. Come back to me with all your heart."

Come back to your first love and...

"You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called 'My Delight Is in Her', and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." (Isaiah 62:4-5)

Your Beloved is waiting. ✠



Pope's Message for the 48th World Day of Social Communications: Love Your Neighbour

Vatican City, 23 January 2014 (VIS) – “Communication at the service of an authentic culture of encounter” is the title of Pope Francis’ message for the 48th World Day of Social Communications, the only world day established by Vatican Council II (*Inter Mirifica*, 1963), which is celebrated on the Sunday before the feast of Pentecost (which falls on 1 June 2014). The message is dated 24 January, memorial of St. Francis of Sales, patron saint of communicators.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Today we are living in a world which is growing ever “smaller” and where, as a result, it would seem to be easier for all of us to be neighbours. Developments in travel and communications technology are bringing us closer together and making us more connected, even as globalization makes us increasingly interdependent. Nonetheless, divisions, which are sometimes quite deep, continue to exist within our human family. On the global level we see a scandalous gap between the opulence of the wealthy and the utter destitution of the poor. Often we need only walk the streets of a city to see the contrast between people living on the street and the brilliant lights of the store windows. We have become so accustomed to these things that they no longer unsettle us. Our world suffers from many forms of exclusion, marginalization and poverty, to say nothing of conflicts born of a combination of economic, political, ideological, and, sadly, even religious motives.

In a world like this, media can help us to feel closer to one another, creating a sense of the unity of the human family which can in turn inspire solidarity and serious efforts to ensure a more dignified life for all. Good communication helps us to grow closer, to know one another better, and ultimately, to grow in unity. The walls which divide us can be broken down only if we are prepared to listen and learn from one another. We need to resolve our differences through forms of dialogue which help us grow in understanding and mutual respect. A culture of encounter demands that we be ready not only to give, but also to receive. Media can help us greatly in this, especially nowadays, when the networks of human communication have made unprecedented advances. The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God.

This is not to say that certain problems do not exist. The speed with which information is communicated exceeds our capacity for reflection and judgement, and this does not make for more balanced and proper forms of self-expression. The variety of opinions being aired can be seen as helpful, but it also enables people to barricade themselves behind sources of information which only confirm their own wishes and ideas, or political and economic interests. The world of communications can help us either to expand our knowledge or to lose our bearings. The desire for digital connectivity can have the effect of isolating us from our neighbours, from those closest to us. We should not overlook the fact that those who for whatever reason lack access to social media run the risk of being left behind.

While these drawbacks are real, they do not justify rejecting social media; rather, they remind us that communication is ultimately a human rather than technological achievement. What is it, then, that helps us, in the digital environment, to grow in humanity and mutual understanding? We need, for example, to recover a certain sense of deliberateness and calm. This calls for time and the ability to be silent and to listen. We need also to be patient if we want to understand those who are different from us. People only express themselves fully when they are not merely tolerated, but know that they are truly accepted. If we are genuinely attentive in listening to others, we will learn to look at the world with different eyes and come to appreciate the richness of human experience as manifested in different cultures and traditions. We will also learn to appreciate more fully the important values inspired by Christianity, such as the vision of the human person, the nature of marriage and the family, the proper distinction between the religious and political spheres, the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, and many others.

“How, then, can communication be at the service of an authentic culture of encounter? What does it mean for us, as disciples of the Lord, to encounter others in the light of the Gospel?”

How, then, can communication be at the service of an authentic culture of encounter? What does it mean for us, as disciples of the Lord, to encounter others in the light of the Gospel? In spite of our own limitations and sinfulness, how do we draw truly close to one another? These questions are summed up in what a scribe—a communicator—once asked Jesus: “And who is my neighbour?” (Lk 10:29). This question can help us to see communication in terms of “neighbourliness”. We might paraphrase the question in this way: How can we be “neighbourly” in our use of the communications media and in the new environment created by digital technology? I find an answer in the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is also a parable about communication. Those who communicate, in effect, become neighbours. The Good Samaritan not only draws nearer to the man he finds half dead on the side of the road; he takes responsibility for him. Jesus shifts our understanding: it is not just about seeing the other as someone like myself, but of the ability to make myself like the other. Communication is really about realizing that we are all human beings, children of God. I like seeing this power of communication as “neighbourliness”.

Whenever communication is primarily aimed at promoting consumption or manipulating others, we are dealing with a form of violent aggression like that suffered by the man in the parable, who was beaten by robbers and left abandoned on the road. The Levite and the priest do not regard him as a neighbour, but as a stranger to be kept at a distance. In those days, it was rules of ritual purity which

conditioned their response. Nowadays there is a danger that certain media so condition our responses that we fail to see our real neighbour.

“As I have frequently observed, if a choice has to be made between a bruised Church which goes out to the

streets and a Church suffering from self-absorption, I certainly prefer the first. Those “streets” are the world where people live and where they can be reached, both effectively and affectively. The digital highway is one of them, a street teeming with people who are often hurting, men and women looking for salvation or hope.

It is not enough to be passers-by on the digital highways, simply “connected;” connections need to grow into true encounters. We cannot live apart, closed in on ourselves. We need to love and to be loved. We need tenderness. Media strategies do not ensure beauty, goodness and truth in communication. The world of media also has to be concerned with humanity, it too is called to show tenderness. The digital world can be an environment rich in humanity; a network not of wires but of people. The impartiality of media is merely an appearance; only those who go out of themselves in their communication can become a true point of reference for others. Personal engagement is the basis of the trustworthiness of a communicator. Christian witness, thanks to the internet, can thereby reach the peripheries of human existence.

As I have frequently observed, if a choice has to be made between a bruised Church which goes out to the streets and a Church suffering from self-absorption, I certainly prefer the first. Those “streets” are the world where people live and where they can be reached, both effectively and affectively. The digital highway is one of them, a street teeming with people who are often hurting, men and women looking for salvation or hope. By means of the internet, the Christian message can reach “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Keeping the doors of our churches open also means keeping them open in the digital environment so that people, whatever their situation in life, can enter, and so that the Gospel can go out to reach everyone. We are called to show that the Church is the home of all. Are we capable of communicating the image of such a Church? Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ. In the area of communications too, we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and of stirring hearts.

Effective Christian witness is not about bombarding people with religious messages, but about our willingness to be available to others “by patiently and respectfully engaging their questions and their doubts as they advance in their search for the truth and the meaning of human existence” (Benedict XVI, Message for the 47th World Communications Day, 2013). We need but recall the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. We have to be able to dialogue with the men and women of today, to understand their expectations, doubts and hopes, and to bring them the Gospel, Jesus Christ himself, God incarnate, who died and rose to free us from sin and death. We are challenged to be people of depth, attentive to what is happening around us and spiritually alert. To dialogue means to believe that the “other” has something worthwhile to say, and to entertain his or her point of view and perspective. Engaging in dialogue does not mean renouncing our own ideas and traditions, but the claim that they alone are valid or absolute.

May the image of the Good Samaritan who tended to the wounds of the injured man by pouring oil and wine over them be our inspiration. Let our communication be a balm which relieves pain and a fine wine which gladdens hearts. May the light we bring to others not be the result of cosmetics or special effects, but rather of our being loving and merciful “neighbours” to those wounded and left on the side of the road. Let us boldly become citizens of the digital world. The Church needs to be concerned for, and present in, the world of communication, in order to dialogue with people today and to help them encounter Christ. She needs to be a Church at the side of others, capable of accompanying everyone along the way. The revolution taking place in communications media and in information technologies represents a great and thrilling challenge; may we respond to that challenge with fresh energy and imagination as we seek to share with others the beauty of God. ✠



Photo credit: www.vinhhoa.net





Pax Christi Signs Open Letter Calling for UNSC Resolution on Syria

Pax Christi International has joined aid agencies and humanitarian campaign groups in a letter to the Foreign Ministers of UN Security Council Member States calling for a Resolution to open aid to Syria.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24114>

Catholic Trustees Express Solidarity with LGBT Russians

In a statement issued today, the Trustees of Catholics for AIDS Prevention and Support (UK) say they wish to "express solidarity with all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in Russia, and their families, to mark the opening of the XXII Olympic Winter Games, in Sochi. We oppose recent legislation in Russia, Uganda, Nigeria and elsewhere, which seeks to marginalise, exclude and criminalise minorities on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24115>

China: Christian Human Rights Lawyer Completes Fifth Year in Prison

As China celebrated its New Year, a Christian human rights lawyer who has been kidnapped, imprisoned and tortured faced the fifth anniversary of his disappearance on 4 February, 2009.

On that day, Gao Zhisheng, twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for defending the persecuted, was snatched by a dozen police officers from his apartment. He has publicly accused the authorities of brutally torturing him behind bars.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24108>

UN Report on Rights of the Child: 'A Lost Opportunity'

Sister Mary Ann Walsh, Director of Media Relations for the USCCB, has described a recent report from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as a "lost opportunity." The UN report was highly critical of the Church's handling of cases of abuse of children. "Sexual abuse of a minor is a sin and a crime and no organization can become complacent about addressing it," said Sr Walsh. She stressed however, that "the Catholic Church has certainly done more than any other international organization to face the problem and it will continue to lead in doing so."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24107>

German and Swiss Bishops Publish First Results of Vatican Family Life Survey

The German and Swiss Catholic Bishops Conferences are the first to publish initial analyses of last year's Vatican questionnaire, sent to dioceses around the world. The German bishops' report praises the participants in the survey, who, they said, "Despite the linguistic style of the questions, which many criticised as being difficult to understand, many individuals and bodies have taken the initiative themselves and have studied the preparatory document for the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops [in 2014] and sent to the dioceses their responses to the questions which it contains."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24097>

Moving Forward Together

by Fr. John Laszczyk, Administrator, Diocese of Victoria

Last Fall we agreed to undertake a pastoral initiative in our Diocese in support of our Aboriginal brothers and sisters. *Moving Forward Together* is a Canada-wide campaign to bring fundamental and lasting change to Aboriginal communities by supporting local and national healing and educational programs in partnership with Catholic, Aboriginal, business and community leaders. Many other dioceses across Canada participated in the *Moving Forward Together* campaign national collection which was held on December 14 – 15, 2013. Due to the timing of our Diocesan Appeal it was deemed best to postpone the campaign collection until early 2014.

A special one-time *Moving Forward Together* campaign collection will be held in the Diocese of Victoria during the weekend Masses on February 22 – 23, 2014.

As a faith community, we are called to avoid the temptation of seeing the difficulties facing many Aboriginal people in and around our Diocese and, indeed, across the country, as a challenge solely for Aboriginal people to work out. We are called to truly live the heart of Jesus' fundamental command to "love one another" (John 15:12), and therefore this becomes a challenge for all of us to embrace. It is in this spirit that we committed as a Diocese to asking parishioners to help build a brighter tomorrow for Canada's Aboriginal people.

Over the years our Diocese has participated in various local initiatives with our Aboriginal communities, including the *Returning to Spirit* Reconciliation Workshops. As well, we have extended support and pastoral ministry to the communities on the West Coast, the North Island, Sooke, and Port Renfrew. St. Ann's Parish, under the leadership of Fr. Jose Prakash and the Religious Sisters of the Virgin Mary, provide pastoral ministry in the Cowichan Valley, Penelakut Island, and the Nanaimo Reserves, for which we are most grateful.

Thank you for your commitment and support in helping to share the love of Our Lord through this undertaking and special collection

The following are suggested Prayers of the Faithful you can use related to the spirit of the *Moving Forward Together* Campaign:

That we may follow in the footsteps of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, Protectress of Canada, and grow in the virtues of patience, respect, and love of others. *We pray to the Lord. R. Lord hear our prayer.*

That we may be open to God's hand in leading us all to live united in the peace of Christ. *We pray to the Lord. R.*

That we may strive for a community that is reflective of the family of God, where all are welcome, healed, forgiven and loved. *We pray to the Lord. R.*

That we may lift our prayers in unison with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters that God's healing and loving hand be our guide in building culturally proud and thriving communities. *We pray to the Lord. R.*

That we may work together in fostering a brighter and more humane world where the peace of Christ is evidenced everywhere. *We pray to the Lord. R.*

That we may find the strength to help bring about spiritual and social change to improve the quality of life for all groups in our communities. *We pray to the Lord. R. ✠*

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER
A Campaign for Healing and Reconciliation



Oblate Seminarians in Peru

by Nancy Stuart

Last year we raised \$14,000 to fund two Oblate seminarians, John Handerson Sihuene Ushihua and Gerson Javier Rios Salhuana, in their current year of study. These two young men are part of a group of six studying for the priesthood with the Oblates in Lima, Peru.

In my article in the February, 2013 edition of the Diocesan Messenger, I explained how I met Fr. Jim Dukowskie who is a friend of Fr. Bill McDonald OMI, pastor of St. Patrick's Church. When I met Fr. Jim in Lima in September 2012 he explained that they had six young men wishing to become Oblate priests, but could only fund four of them. We agreed that I would try to raise the \$14,000 needed for each of the next four years. One year has gone by and we have been able to assist them for their first year—and now the second year is upon us.

Would you be willing to pledge support for the formation of these young Oblate students in Peru? You could give a one-time donation or pledge support of \$50, \$100 or \$500 for the next 3 years, or any amount you are able to manage. If the Holy Spirit moves you to answer this call, please contact me at nancy-stuart@shaw.ca or phone 250-477-6952.

Donations may be sent to:

AMMI Lacombe Canada MAMI
601 Taylor Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0C9

Cheques should be made payable to Lacombe MAMI. Please indicate somewhere on the cheque or in a note indicating that you wish your donation be designated to Oblate Seminarians in Peru. Donors may also make donations on-line through the website: www.oblatemissionassociates.ca or even through credit card by phoning the office, Toll Free: 1-866-432-6264. ✠



Fr. César Taïpe OMI, Director of Formation (centre), with the six young men in formation



Pope Francis Message for World Day of the Sick 2014

Excerpts from the Vatican December 6, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On the occasion of the Twenty-second World Day of the Sick (February 11, 2014), whose theme this year is Faith and Charity: "We Ought to Lay Down Our Lives for One Another" (1 Jn 3:16), I turn in a special way to the sick and all those who provide them with assistance and care. The Church recognizes in you, the sick, a special presence of the suffering Christ. It is true. At the side of—and indeed within—our suffering, is the suffering of Christ; he bears its burden with us and he reveals its meaning. When the Son of God mounted the cross, he destroyed the solitude of suffering and illuminated its darkness. We thus find ourselves before the mystery of God's love for us, which gives us hope and courage: hope, because in the plan of God's love even the night of pain yields to the light of Easter, and courage, which enables us to confront every hardship in his company, in union with him.

He reminds us that we cannot love God if we do not love our brothers and sisters ... the cross of Christ invites us also to allow ourselves to be smitten by his love, teaching us always to look upon others with mercy and tenderness, especially those who suffer, who are in need of help..."

(Way of the Cross with Young People, Rio de Janeiro, 26 July 2013).

The incarnate Son of God did not remove illness and suffering from human experience but by taking them upon himself he transformed them and gave them new meaning. New meaning because they no longer have the last word which, instead, is new and abundant life; transformed them, because in union with Christ they need no longer be negative but positive. Jesus is the way, and with his Spirit we can follow him. Just as the Father gave us the Son out of love, and the Son gave himself to us out of the same love, so we too can love others as God has loved us, giving our lives for one another. Faith in God becomes goodness, faith in the

crucified Christ becomes the strength to love to the end, even our enemies. The proof of authentic faith in Christ is self-giving and the spreading of love for our neighbours, especially for those who do not merit it, for the suffering and for the marginalized.

By virtue of Baptism and Confirmation we are called to conform ourselves to Christ, who is the Good Samaritan for all who suffer. "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 Jn 3:16). When we draw near with tender love to those in need of care, we bring hope and God's smile to the contradictions of the world. When generous devotion to others becomes the hallmark of our actions, we give way to the Heart of Christ and bask in its warmth, and thus contribute to the coming of God's Kingdom.

To grow in tender love, and a respectful and sensitive charity, we have a sure Christian model to contemplate: Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother, who is always attentive to the voice of God and the needs and troubles of her children ... she is the Mother of all of the sick and suffering ... She is the Mother of the crucified and risen Christ: she stands beside our crosses and she accompanies us on the journey towards the resurrection and the fullness of life.

Saint John, the disciple who stood with Mary beneath the cross, brings us to the sources of faith and charity, to the heart of the God who "is love" (1 Jn 4:8,16). He reminds us that we cannot love God if we do not love our brothers and sisters ... the cross of Christ invites us also to allow ourselves to be smitten by his love, teaching us always to look upon others with mercy and tenderness, especially those who suffer, who are in need of help" (Way of the Cross with Young People, Rio de Janeiro, 26 July 2013).

I entrust this Twenty-second World Day of the Sick to the intercession of Mary. I ask her to help the sick to bear their sufferings in fellowship with Jesus Christ and to support all those who care for them. To all the ill, and to all the health-care workers and volunteers who assist them, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

Read Pope Francis' full World Day of the Sick message at www.vatican.va.

Pope's Message for 29th World Youth Day

Vatican City, 6 February 2014 (VIS)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven".

Dear Young Friends,
How vividly I recall the remarkable meeting we had in Rio de Janeiro for the Twenty-eighth World Youth Day. It was a great celebration of faith and fellowship! The wonderful people of Brazil welcomed us with open arms, like the statue of Christ the Redeemer which looks down from the hill of Corcovado over the magnificent expanse of Copacabana beach. There, on the seashore, Jesus renewed his call to each one of us to become his missionary disciples. May we perceive this call as the most important thing in our lives and share this gift with others, those near and far, even to the distant geographical and existential peripheries of our world.

The next stop on our intercontinental youth pilgrimage will be in Krakow in 2016. As a way of accompanying our journey together, for the next three years I would like to reflect with you on the Beatitudes found in the Gospel of Saint Matthew. This year we will begin by reflecting on the first Beatitude: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'. For 2015 I suggest: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'. Then, in 2016, our theme will be: 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy'.

To read the full message, please visit www.vis.va/vissolr/index.php?lang=en.



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Photo by Michael Swan.

'And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me always.' - Exodus 25:30

Photo: Dorothy Loreen prepares altar in St. Fay Trombley's house while Tuktoyaktuk's Our Lady of Grace church is repaired.

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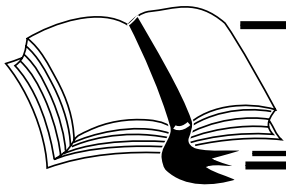
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Impressions

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

~ Philippians 2:3-4



by Connie Dunwoody

The holidays have come and gone; the New Year is upon us. I confess I spent some time recently dawdling through a number of sites that publish information about words from the previous year the survey-taking public would like to see banished. *The Oxford Dictionaries* and *Time Newsfeed*, among others, chose “selfie” as the worst word of 2013. I have to agree to some extent; the word “selfie,” which refers to a photograph taken of one’s self with a Smartphone or camera and then posted to a social media network, tells a tale of self-absorption. As a sometimes-solo traveler I can confess to this fascination myself; sometimes you’re the only one around to take a photo. But Facebook is not just for narcissistic teenagers—many of us fall prey to moments of glorious self-aggrandizement (*I had a good hair day*) or pure delight in the moment that we want to share (*“Bestie” and me at the end of the race!*).

“A phatic expression is one whose only function is to perform a social task, as opposed to conveying information.” ... How many times do we have interactions with others that are less-than? How many times do we involve ourselves in phatic communication with those we love? How often do you ask your spouse or child, “How was your day?” and then give only the most cursory attention to the response?

The Economist had other things to say about “bad” words and phrases, however, that made me think more than twice about what my “giving-up” for Lent might be. I often struggle with this concept: it seems that there are only so many times I can give up the same things—chocolate, wine, candy, sugar—“been there,” as they say, “done that.” (That surely made someone’s list of phrases to give up, in some decade...). What *The Economist* said about particular phrases that annoy people was almost flippant, a passing comment, but it got me thinking:

It is what it is. *This isn’t a logical proposition of the form a = a; that would be silly. It means that an unpleasant fact must be accepted, since it can’t be changed. Much of language isn’t logical proposition, but serves instead a “phatic” function, not to convey information but to signal something else to the listener, like affection, respect or sympathy. This goes for How are you? when passing an acquaintance in the hall, another surprisingly common peeve. This shouldn’t bother people as much as it does. There’s nothing wrong with phatic communication—in fact, our linguistic lives would be unrecognizably weird without it.*

Ah, of course, *phatic communication*. Wikipedia informs, “a phatic expression is one whose only function is to perform a social task, as opposed to conveying information.” I think we all do this. We go through the checkout at the grocery store and the cashier asks, “How are you?” We automatically reply, “Fine, how are you?” We may or may not be fine, but we don’t really put a lot of thought into this muttered response. Neither does the cashier, in all likelihood. I mean, it’s not that they’re unkind people, but this is a conditioned question and an equally conditioned response from us. After all, words are a great defence. Sometimes they protect us from those who would harm us, and sometimes hide us from those who would see us more clearly. “I’m fine...” is not always our most honest truth. Sometimes it means exactly the opposite. (Is there a word for that phenomenon?)

I have a custom of responding to the grocery-store-cashier’s automatic “how are you?” in this way: “I am (*adjective describing how I honestly feel ... why fib?*)... And on a scale of 1 to 10, how are you?” And then I stop talking—and listen.

This has caused a variety of reactions over the years. Some people falter, blush stammer, and don’t know what to say. Some respond with a well-considered number. Some don’t respond with a number at all, but rather with an adjective. Without fail, though, all of them stop what they are *doing* to consider how they *feel*. In that moment we connect and there is a much more meaningful interaction. And there’s an impact beyond the two of us: once when I went into the grocery store I frequented and said to the cashier, “And how are you, on a scale of 1 to 10?” she responded excitedly, “oh, it’s the ‘1-to-10 Lady!’” They talk about those interactions. Which means that I have had an impact on them, that in some small way I positively changed their environment even for a very short period of time.

There’s truth in those exchanges.

How many times do we have interactions with others that are less-than? How many times do we involve ourselves in phatic communication with those we love? How often do you ask your spouse or child, “How was your day?” and then give only the most cursory attention to the response?

Truth is, you have only about 10 to 20 seconds when someone is listening to you before he or she starts to form a response to what you are saying—and more often than not blurts it out, or goes off on a tangent that occurred to them when they were busy not listening to you. This is true: I’m incredibly guilty of it myself. Partly it is because I am afraid I will forget what I want to say before the other person stops speaking (more so, the older I get!). But it’s more that we all get so involved in our own opinion or self-perceived wisdom that we think what we have to say is much more fascinating than what the other person has to offer. It’s a kind of

audible “selfie,” self-absorption gone verbal. In the act of rushing in, we belittle the other person. We do them a disservice when we go tearing in thoughtlessly with our own words, responses, opinions, actions. And in so doing, perhaps we inadvertently expose our own fears of inadequacy.

The most meaningful interactions I have had in my life have been with people who are silent. Who listen. Who care more about what I am saying than they do about their own opinion. I matter so much to them that they are willing to hear what I have to say without interruption; they love me so much that they will hear what I say without judgment. They are willing to quietly peer beneath the mask of my words to see the emotions, feelings, intentions and unspoken yearnings that lie beneath. “Silent” and “listen” are composed from the same letters. Coincidence?

Thus I have decided that what I shall do for Lent this year is to make my interactions meaningful. I will honour and uphold others by spending time in the moment, enjoying every conversation as the gift it is. I will do my best to curb my hasty tongue, and instead listen—be silent—looking into the eyes of the person to whom I am listening to form a connection deeper than words, to give up my self-aggrandizing right to offer my unasked-for opinion. I shall quietly bear the uncomfortable and unaccustomed stillness, and kick phatic communication to the curb in an anti-selfie heave-ho. *The Economist* suggests there’s nothing much wrong with phatic communication: I suggest otherwise. I think our relationships would be so much better if this kind of communication did not exist.

So, this Lenten season—and beyond—I will do my best to listen, as I imagine Jesus listened to those who poured out their hearts to him. As people still do. He is always silent: he is always listening ... and he doesn’t need a scale of 1 to 10 to know your heart.

There’s always truth in that exchange ... ✂



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MATTHEW 25:35

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,
 I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
 I was a stranger and you invited me in."



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