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Year-end results



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Bishop Gary's Lenten Message



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Our Servants of Mercy



The Diocesan Messenger

A Publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Spring 2016

“This is a time for all of us, together as Christians, to proclaim the powerful work of tenderness.

It is a marvellous way forward, and it is delicate and it is beautiful, like the blossoms emerging on the cherry trees in Victoria.

It is delicate, and it is beautiful, and it cannot be stopped.”

~ Bishop Gary Gordon
Homily of the Opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Photo credit: Connie Dunwoody

Pope Francis's Lenten Message

☪ I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.

~ Matthew 9:13

Mary, the image of a Church which evangelizes because she is evangelized

In the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, I asked that “the season of Lent in this Jubilee Year be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 17). By calling for an attentive listening to the word of God and encouraging the initiative “24 Hours for the Lord”, I sought to stress the primacy of prayerful listening to God’s word, especially his prophetic word. The mercy of God is a proclamation made to the world, a proclamation which each Christian is called to experience at first hand. For this reason, during the season of Lent I will send out Missionaries of Mercy as a concrete sign to everyone of God’s closeness and forgiveness.

After receiving the Good News told to her by the Archangel Gabriel, Mary, in her *Magnificat*, prophetically sings of the mercy whereby God chose her. The Virgin of Nazareth, betrothed to Joseph, thus becomes the perfect icon of the Church which evangelizes, for she was, and continues to be, evangelized by the Holy Spirit, who made her virginal womb fruitful. In the prophetic tradition, mercy is strictly related—even on the etymological level—to

the maternal womb (*rahamim*) and to a generous, faithful and compassionate goodness (*hesed*) shown within marriage and family relationships.

God's covenant with humanity: a history of mercy

The mystery of divine mercy is revealed in the history of the covenant between God and his people Israel. God shows himself ever rich in mercy, ever ready to treat his people with deep tenderness and compassion, especially at those tragic moments when infidelity ruptures the bond of the covenant, which then needs to be ratified more firmly in justice and truth. Here is a true love story, in which God plays the role of the betrayed father and husband, while Israel plays the unfaithful child and bride. These domestic images—as in the case of Hosea (cf. *Hos* 1-2)—show to what extent God wishes to bind himself to his people.

This love story culminates in the incarnation of God’s Son. In Christ, the Father pours forth his boundless mercy even to making him “mercy incarnate” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 8). As a man, Jesus of Nazareth is a true son of Israel; he embodies that perfect

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Thank you!

*Together we have exceeded our goal
 for the Journey of Hearts & Hands 2015 Appeal,
 with more than \$918,000 pledged.*

We are so grateful for your generosity and deeply appreciate all of the support from our clergy, parish appeal teams and parishioners. You have helped ensure that we can continue supporting important ministries and services in the Diocese of Victoria—activities that allow us to accompany each other with tenderness in this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

It is in Jesus Christ that we see the face of mercy; God sent His Son to show us mercy, forgiveness, salvation, healing and compassion. The Holy Father is urging the world, urging the Church, to *get going*. The urgency of the proclamation of mercy and forgiveness in the midst of the enormity of the darkness on the earth—the darkness of our environment, and those who are lonely, isolated, hurting, ill, or anguished—can only become changed by the power of God’s mercy. And so we are all invited, as the Church, to get going, to literally become His instruments of mercy.

Thanks to your donation, our pastoral priorities will be able to *get going*.

Your donations will support:

- Local parish projects
- Pensions for retired priests
- First Nations home missions and pastoral ministry within the Diocese, particularly in the Cowichan Valley and the West Coast of Vancouver Island
- Religious education and faith formation throughout the Diocese
- Island Catholic Schools, as we continue to grow future leaders and complete the Catholic Schools Plan to provide *Strong foundations for a bright future*.

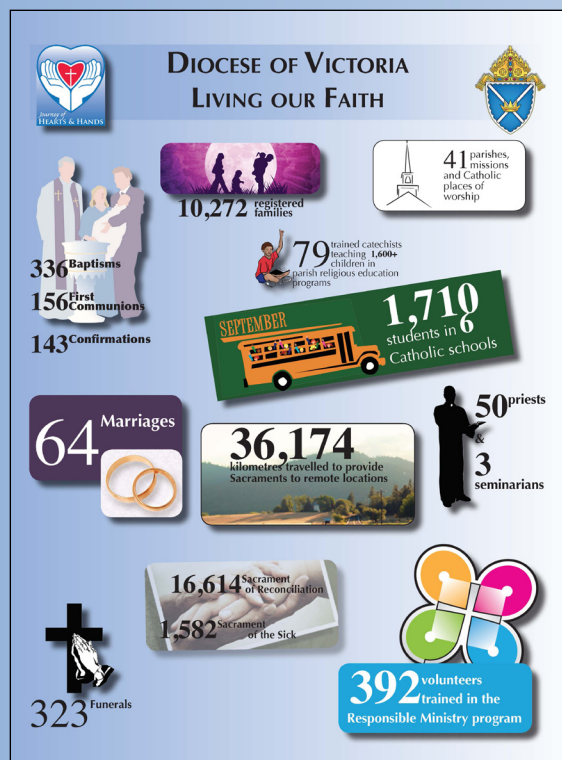
Performance by Parish

Eleven parishes achieved or exceeded their goals:

- Christ the King, Courtenay
- Holy Cross, Victoria
- Korean Community
- Our Lady Queen of Peace, Esquimalt
- St. Andrew’s Cathedral, Victoria
- St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy
- St. Edward the Confessor, Duncan
- St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino
- St. Jean Baptiste, Victoria
- St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria
- Trinity Catholic, Nanaimo

Eleven more parishes achieved or exceeded 70% of their goals:

- Church of the Ascension, Parksville
- Our Lady of Grace, Salt Spring Island
- Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford
- Saanich Peninsula Parish
- Sacred Heart, Victoria
- St. Francis Xavier, Mill Bay
- St. Louis de Montfort, Lake Cowichan
- St. Patrick’s, Victoria
- St. Peter’s, Nanaimo
- St. Rose of Lima, Sooke
- St. Theresa’s, Port Alice



DIocese OF VICTORIA
 LIVING OUR FAITH

- 41 parishes, missions and Catholic places of worship
- 10,272 registered families
- 336 Baptisms
- 156 First Communion
- 143 Confirmations
- 79 trained catechists teaching 1,600+ children in parish religious education programs
- 1,710 students in 6 Catholic schools
- 64 Marriages
- 36,174 kilometres travelled to provide Sacraments to remote locations
- 50 priests
- 3 seminarians
- 16,614 Sacrament of Reconciliation
- 1,582 Sacrament of the Sick
- 323 Funerals
- 392 volunteers trained in the Responsible Ministry program



2015 APPEAL
JOURNEY OF HEARTS & HANDS

i share we care

With God as the source of all our blessings, we’re making a difference.

Help us share ...
 Because we care.



2015 DIOCESAN GOAL: \$750,000

- Religious Education and Faith Formation: \$50,000
- Retired Clergy Pension Support: \$100,000
- Home Missions: \$75,000
- Island Catholic Schools: Growing Future Leaders: \$325,000
- Parish Support: \$150,000
- Arts & Culture: \$50,000

*Thank you again for your generous support
 of our Diocesan Appeal.
 May God continue to bless you
 and your families
 as we journey through 2016 in merciful hope.*

For more information about the Appeal results, visit www.rcdvictoria.org/i-share-we-care-progress.php

Crossing the road

by Bishop Gary Gordon

When we were children, our parents exhorted, “Be careful crossing the road!” They told us this because they were concerned for our safety. Crossing the road can be dangerous, but it can also be life giving. This second kind of crossing over is described in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

This Parable is the answer Jesus gives to the Lawyer who seeks to know *which is the greatest Commandment?* and is also presented as a bit of a leading question so he can appear good to Jesus by asking “Who is my neighbour?” The Lawyer thinks he already knows the answer and that his image will be improved if Jesus agrees.

Indeed, interpretation of this story most often focuses on the medical care and attention the Samaritan traveller provides to the poor victim of vicious crime who was left for dead on the side of the road. That this care was provided by a person who might normally see the victim as a natural enemy is truly the heart of the Parable.

☪ Lent is an invitation to a new springtime of encounter with the Face of Mercy—Jesus—and to allow his penetrating gaze to heal us all and set us free to be the children of God we are meant to be.

But this tale contains something more fundamental and far more difficult to grasp than blood and bandages: crossing over, crossing the road, approaching and going near to the broken body of the victim, was a seemingly simple action, yet it required great courage, intention and tenderness.

The first two people, a priest and a Levite, saw the victim yet piously remained on their own side of the road. They took in the scene at a glance, then averted their eyes without acknowledging the person in trouble. In doing so, they maintained the traditional barriers and walls built into the fabric of society in Jesus’ time. Let us not be too quick to judge those who kept the prescribed distance and indifference to the beaten man, because that judgment is also a barrier and wall of separation. Growing in love of neighbour knows no separating distinctions.

But the Samaritan? He saw the victim, was filled with compassion, and strode boldly across the road! He saw this helpless stranger as a person in need, not as an enemy he might have feared. Did he know what it would mean to cross the road, to cross over and help? Maybe, and maybe not—yet he was willing to take the risk by overcoming the invisible and seemingly impermeable barrier of indifference.

It is also possible bandits were still lurking on the road, waiting for another victim. This adds a whole new level of barrier: fear. To really understand what’s going on in the Parable, we need to understand that the relationship between Jews and Samaritans was not good. In fact, it was terrible: they were hostile toward and always suspicious of one another. Samaritans were both religiously and ethnically distinct from Jews; it is likely that the Good Samaritan had experienced the same kind of degradation and hostility as the traveller who was robbed and beaten on the road. Maybe he knew only too well what it was to be in need. Perhaps he winced, remembering; maybe his bones ached in sympathy. In any event, his compassion exceeded his fear, and he crossed the road without hesitation.

And it cost the Samaritan time, energy and money to look after this suffering person.

☪ He approached him and dressed his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. He then hoisted him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, where he cared for him. The next day he took out two silver pieces and gave them to the innkeeper with the request: “Look after him, and if there is any further expense I will repay you on my way back.”

~ Luke 10: 34 – 35

“He approached him and dressed his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. He then hoisted him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, where he cared for him. The next day he took out two silver pieces and gave them to the innkeeper with the request: ‘Look after him, and if there is any further expense I will repay you on my way back.’” (Luke 10: 34 – 35)

It’s also true that not every one who crosses the road is intent on doing good. It seems that from time immemorial many individuals and societies have sought to expand or seek new hunting areas and resource-gathering places.

How many roads, walls or fences, built up over centuries, still need to be crossed? How many of those barriers are cruelly crossed in pursuit of power, might or greed? How many more simple barriers exist, such as gated communities, which unintentionally create margins of those ‘on the right side’ and those ‘on the other side’? A collision of people and cultures as old as original sin, dating back to Cain and Abel, has resulted in great divides, greater self-protective walls and self-preserving fear, all of which fuels war and violence.

Yet in the story of the Good Samaritan, Christ introduces a new meaning and intention for crossing roads, for crossing the barriers of time and history: crossing over invites us to repair, to heal, to save, to redeem, to build communion and be tender with the stranger among us and one another.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan also presents the necessity of accompaniment: if good works and ministry to alleviate suffering are to have the full impact of creating communion and overcoming isolation, we must cross over and go with the person who is in need. The Parable tells us that the victim was ‘half-dead’ and this indicates the incredible depth of anguish and pain the victim experienced. It is very important that all who consider the wonderful mercy of this Parable also understand that this Good Samaritan did not offer death as a solution to suffering. Nor did the Samaritan seek out the bandits to exact retribution.

Any of us who are involved with the welcome and settlement of refugees knows that programs of housing, education and health care, as important as these are, are only part of a more fundamental need: to cross over in love and accompany the stranger; to provide a sanctuary for the soul; and to offer cultural security to the best of our ability.

The Year of Mercy is most profoundly about God’s grace, mercy and love that subdue the overwhelming darkness of fear, suspicion and evil that create barriers of division and exclusion. The Good Samaritan reveals to us, as he did to the stranger before him, the face of Christ and the way of the Church, which is always *Mercy*.

The approaching season of Lent and the Jubilee Year of Mercy is a ‘reset button’ for the Church’s life; we are invited to cross over, to cross the road to truly see, and most importantly, to listen and be vulnerable to, another’s reality. In this Year, the Good Samaritan shows us the way of compassion and Jesus’ Parable shows us the depth of the meaning of ‘love your neighbour’. May we, too, be willing to risk the tender gift of accompaniment and mercy with the stranger among us, and with our neighbour. Lent is an invitation to a new springtime of encounter with the Face of Mercy—Jesus—and to allow his penetrating gaze to heal us all and set us free to be the children of God we are meant to be. ✠



Calendar of events

February

5-7 Camp Homewood Retreat: Grades 7-12. For more information contact: broset@telus.net.

7 Our Lady of the Rosary, Victoria: 3:30 – 8 PM, Holy Family Group. Doors open at 3:30pm, the discussion starts at 4pm, and potluck dinner begins at 5:30pm. For more information contact Kristy de Bree at (250) 590-7004 or email her at bedevil.debree@gmail.com.

12 Holy Cross, Victoria: Calling all Catholic singles aged 30 to 50! Holy Cross Parish is hosting a Mix and Mingle for Singles in the Parish Hall beginning at 7:30 PM. Tickets will be \$20. Space will be limited so hurry and RSVP by calling or emailing Holy Cross Parish at: (250) 477-5321 or office@holycrossvictoria.com.

13 Holy Cross, Victoria: Pastoral Care Outreach Training session 1: *Healing Ministry of Christ*. 9 AM – 2 PM. Fr. William Hann will be the morning presenter. For registration, please call the parish office 250-477-5321 or email: office@holycrossvictoria.org

15 Theology on Tap: 7 – 8:30 PM, The Guild, 1250 Wharf Street, Victoria. More info: www.totvic.ca.

18 Holy Cross, Victoria: "The Theme of Mercy in Scripture" presented by Les McKeown, Holy Cross Parish 4049 Gordon Head Road, on Thursdays, February 18 to March 16, 7 – 9 PM. Register: office@holycrossvictoria.org or 250-477-5321. (Co-sponsored by St. Joseph the Worker and Holy Cross Parish)

25-27 St. Edward's, Duncan: We are pleased to announce that our 2016 Lenten Mission will be given by Fr. Joachim Ostermann OFM. The theme of the mission is *Mercy and the Modern Sciences: Faith and Science in the Franciscan Tradition*. The dates are: Feb. 25th from 7 – 8:30 PM, Feb. 26th from 7:30 – 8:30 PM and Feb. 27th from 10 – 11:30 AM. All sessions will be held in the worship area. On Thursday and Friday evenings after the sessions there will be time for light refreshments and fellowship in the church hall.

27 Men's Faith and Fellowship Forum, Victoria: 8 – 10 AM. Horseshoe Club of Victoria, 620 Kenneth Street. Breakfast, followed by a presentation. Visit www.mffaf.org for more information.

March

14 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Parish Lenten Mission, beginning with Mass at 6:30 PM. "Seeking and Finding Mercy in Everyday Life Events through the Gospel" with presenter Phil Jennings. More info: (250) 479-7413 or email sjtwoffice@shaw.ca.

15 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Parish Lenten Mission, beginning with Mass at 6:30 PM. "God's Mercy through the Firmament" with Presenter John Blakeslee – Astronomer. More info: (250) 479-7413 or email sjtwoffice@shaw.ca.

Pastoral itinerary

February

1 Victoria: Mass and Reception – Celebration of Consecrated Life – St. Andrew's Cathedral (3 PM)

4-5 Vancouver: FISA (Federation of Independent Schools Association) 50th Anniversary Conference

5 Vancouver: FISA Conference Closing Mass – Holy Rosary Cathedral (2 PM)

6-8 Whitehorse: Attend Ordination and Installation of Most Rev Hector Vila as Bishop

10 Victoria: Ash Wednesday – Mass with St. Andrew's Regional High School staff and students – Sacred Heart Church (11 AM) Mass – St. Andrew's Cathedral (7 PM)

21 Victoria: Rite of Election Mass – St. Andrew's Cathedral (5 PM)

23-25 Victoria: Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops' Conference

March

2 Toronto: Attend meetings of Catholic Health Alliance of Canada

4-8 Waterloo: Conduct Parish Mission – Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

10 Victoria: 'Idea Fest' panel discussion on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, UVic, Elliott Building, Room 167, 4:30 PM

13 Victoria: Pastoral visit at William Head Institution

16 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: 7:00pm Parish Reconciliation Service. More info: (250) 479-7413 or email sjtwoffice@shaw.ca.

April

15-16 St. Patrick's, Victoria: CWL Spring Clothing Sale will be held from 9:30 AM – 2 PM in the lower level of the Parish centre, 2060 Haultain Street. Clean Women's Men and children's clothing and shoes as well as household linens are available. Ample parking is available and the centre is wheelchair accessible.

16 Sacred Heart, Victoria: Used Clothing and Attic Treasures Sale, 9 AM – 2 PM in the Parish Hall, 4040 Nelthorpe Street. Clothing & accessories, bedding & linens, housewares & attic treasures. Everyone welcome. Free admission, wheelchair accessible, all proceeds to charity.

23 Men's Faith and Fellowship Forum, Victoria: 8 – 10 AM. Horseshoe Club of Victoria, 620 Kenneth Street. Breakfast, followed by a presentation. Visit www.mffaf.org for more information.

May

6-7 St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria: Marriage Preparation Course, Friday, May 6th, 2016 – 7 – 9 PM and Saturday, May 7th, 2016 – 9 AM to 6 PM. Call parish office to register: (250) 479-7413.

Weekly events

Wednesdays

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

Fridays

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

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

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

17 Victoria: Chrism Mass – St. Andrew's Cathedral (7 PM)

24 Victoria: Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper – St. Andrew's Cathedral (7:30 PM)

25 Victoria: Good Friday Service – St. Andrew's Cathedral (3 PM)

26 Victoria: Easter Vigil Mass – St. Andrew's Cathedral (8 PM)

30 Chemainus: Confirmation Mass – St. Joseph's Parish (10:45 AM)

April

7 Victoria: Easter Mass for students & staff of St. Andrew's Regional High School – Sacred Heart Church (11 AM)

16 Victoria: Confirmation Mass – St. Peter's Parish (5 PM)

17 Mill Bay: Confirmation Mass – St. Francis Xavier Parish (11 AM)

23 Victoria: Confirmation Mass – Our Lady of Fatima Parish (7 PM)

24 Duncan: Confirmation Mass – St. Ann's Parish (11 AM)

28 Toronto: Catholic Missions in Canada annual fund raising dinner

29-30 Richmond: Attend 105th Annual State Convention of the Knights of Columbus BC & Yukon State Council

Saturdays

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

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

Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria: Victoria Chinese Catholic Community (VCCC) regular meetings with faith sharing, prayers, potluck, Mass or special presentations by expert speakers, 3:30 PM. Please note meeting dates may not fall on First Saturdays of the month; please contact Ben for more information. Meetings will conclude with a potluck supper. For more information phone (250) 893-9938 or email Ben Chow at benchow@shaw.ca.

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

Sundays

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

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

Please visit www.rcdvictoria.org to view the online Calendar of Events for the most current information



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Diocesan News & Events



Creating a climate of change

by Christine O'Leary

On Sunday, November 29, 2015, representatives of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, along with members of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, participated in the People's Spark March for Climate Justice, organized by UVIC students. A few thousand people gathered on the lawns of the Legislature in Victoria, while similar demonstrations were held in Duncan, Parksville, Nanaimo and Campbell River. All over the world, on the eve of the COP21 global climate talks, an estimated 785,000 people in 2,000 events in 175 countries rallied to show their support for our political leaders meeting in Paris, with hope and prayers that an agreement would be reached to limit global warming to 2°C.

Speakers representing First Nations, and student organizers from the University of Victoria spoke eloquently and honestly, voicing everyone's concern for the environmental impact of global warming, and what we all need to work on to reduce it. First Nations' speakers reminded us that we should only take what we need from the land, a mindset based on their traditions that preserve and protect the environment.

A week earlier, Nancy Stuart, a parishioner of St. Patrick's church in Victoria, spoke to a crowd of about 100 people gathered at the Ambrosia Event Centre in Victoria for the Victoria forum and rally for a Real Climate deal, at the invitation of Ken Wu. Nancy referred to the Pope's encyclical *Laudato Si'*, pointing out its most important tenets. Her speech firmly stated the faith community's concern for the environment, and emphasized how the world's people are part of one community, caring for our common home.

People the world over rejoiced when the climate talks resulted in an agreement to work towards limiting the global rise in temperature to 1.5°C. There is still much work to be done, with a further agreement open to signing in April.

The Development and Peace 'Creating a Climate of Change' theme continues throughout the 2016 Share Lent campaign, during which we have the opportunity to learn more about the effects of climate change on the Global South and to financially support those most affected.

Events to mark the 50th anniversary of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace in 2017 will be celebrated beginning this year on Ash Wednesday (February 10). Watch for more details in the months to come, and visit www.devpo.org to learn more. ✠



At the March on the lawns of the legislature in Victoria, BC

A ten-dollar miracle

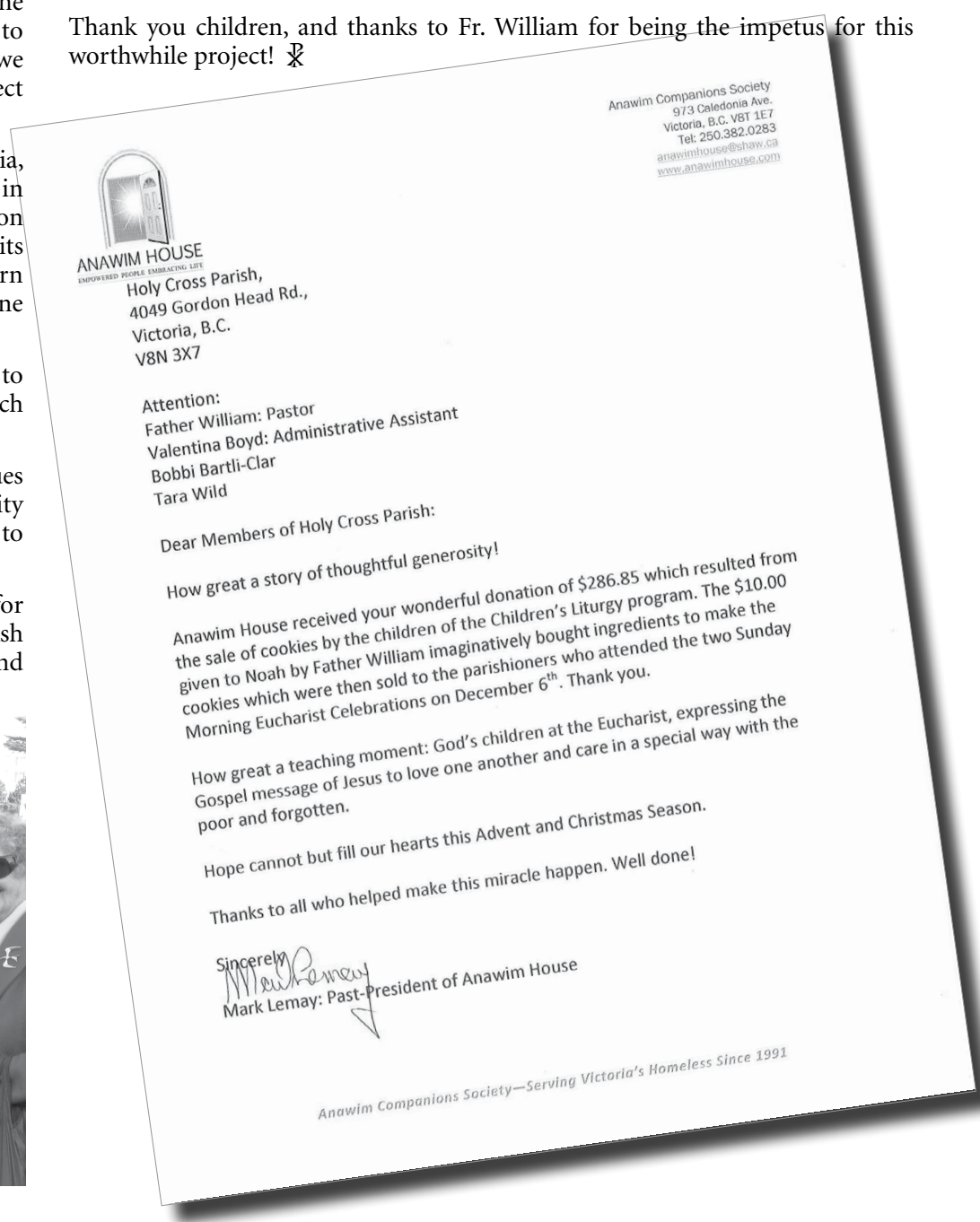
by Giacinta Bewley

We all know the story of how Jesus fed a multitude with only five loaves of bread and two fish. That was a miracle. During the 2015 Advent season at Holy Cross, we had our own small 'miracle'. Fr. William Hann, our Pastor, gave \$10 to a group of youngsters from the Children's Liturgy group and challenged them to transform it into something more.

The children put their minds together and came up with the idea of a bake sale. Together with their Children's Liturgy leader, they made some delicious shortbread cookies and sold them in the time between the 8:30 and 10:30 Mass. The kind generosity of our parishioners was also inspiring, as they opened their hearts and wallets to turn that \$10 investment into \$283!

The children then decided to donate their earnings to Anawim House, a local charity geared towards helping homeless men get back on their feet. We hope this story inspires more acts of charity!

Thank you children, and thanks to Fr. William for being the impetus for this worthwhile project! ✠



In the December 2015 edition of the *Diocesan Messenger*, the photo caption on page 6, *Ascension CWL welcomes new members*, was incorrect. The correct caption is: *Nancy Horsfield, CWL President, with Fr. Karam Albaran.*

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Sr. Lucy DuMont (Sr Mary Fidelis) SSA **March 11, 1930 – January 2, 2016**

by Sr Mary Ellen King SSA

Lucy Rose DuMont, also known as Sr. Mary Fidelis, was the fifth child in a family of six children (5 girls and 1 boy). Although born in United States, her family lived on a farm in the district of Bridesville, B.C. where Lucy was raised. Her parents were both immigrants to Canada. Her mother, Rose, was born in Germany and her father, Hugo, in France. According to Lucy her parents were hard working, courageous people of deep faith. Although she had little formal religious instruction she learned from both parents that concern for others was the essence of a true Christian life.

Going to Church was an important event for the family and Lucy remembered monthly Mass in the local church as well as other occasional trips in a Model A Ford over dusty roads to attend Mass in a larger settlement. Bridesville was a very rural area with a one-room school, Roch Mountain, where Lucy attended elementary school with her siblings. She completed her secondary education as a boarder at St. Ann's Academy, New Westminster and graduated in 1949.

Lucy regarded everyone's life call as a mystery and she generously responded to her call to religious life by entering the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Ann in Victoria in January 1950. She received the holy habit and the name, Sr. Mary Fidelis, in August 1950. Two years after entering she made her religious profession by taking the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in February 1952.

Educational achievements for Lucy include a BA Seattle University, a BEEd University of Calgary, Credo Program Certificate from Gonzaga University, Theology Diploma from Newman College, Edmonton and certificates in Pastoral Care from Ottawa and Edmonton, as well as numerous workshops, conferences, and courses in spiritual direction and creation-centred/cosmic spirituality. Lucy was very grateful for these educational opportunities that enabled her to broaden her vision and to free her spirit.

As a teacher from 1952 to 1971, Lucy served in many areas of British Columbia including Kamloops, Kuper Island, Mission City, Prince George, Vancouver and Victoria. In January 1971 she moved to Penticton to care for her mother, who died in 1974. During this time Lucy worked in the parish and laid the groundwork for her second career in parish ministry and pastoral outreach. After the death of her mother Lucy had a Sabbatical Year during which she followed the Credo program at Gonzaga University in Spokane. She then went to the Nelson Diocese and together with another Sister developed a Lay Ministry Program for the diocese. The next eight years Lucy worked in Kamloops in dual roles of hospital chaplain and parish ministry.

In 1986 our novitiate was moved to Edmonton and Lucy was asked to be part of that program. While in Edmonton she attended Newman College and worked in Pastoral Care at the Edmonton General Hospital. On returning to British Columbia in 1990, Lucy worked for three years in pastoral care at Mount Saint Joseph Hospital in Vancouver before returning to Victoria and beginning her long involvement with the pastoral care ministry at Mount St. Mary Hospital.

A Sabbatical year (1996-97) that included four months at the Desert House of Prayer in Arizona moved Lucy into another stage of her life—a balance between reflective solitude and active pastoral care ministry. After her Sabbatical Lucy served as the local coordinator at St. Ann's Residence for one year (1997-98) and then moved to the Heritage House and continued her pastoral work at Mount St. Mary. Illness brought an end to her ministry and she spent some time as a patient at St. Ann's Residence before moving to Rose Manor, an independent living facility where the gift of life was restored to her. Walking became a part of Lucy's daily routine and also provided her with many opportunities to form caring relationships with people she met on the street. Although she could no longer fulfil responsibilities as a staff member at Mount St. Mary she continued to support the hospital by raising thousands of dollars during the annual Walk-a-thons. She also continued to accompany the dying, their families and the staff, maintaining close relationships with former staff and other women, especially through her book clubs.



Sr. Lucy Rose DuMont SSA

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace in Seattle played a significant role in Lucy's life. Her older sister, Louise, was a member of this Congregation and while visiting her, another member of the group used a therapeutic process to relieve the chronic pain that Lucy experienced most of her adult life. This led to further related treatment in Victoria that greatly contributed to a form of pain management enabling Lucy to remain active for many years. This Congregation also provided many days of relaxation on the Oregon Coast where Lucy spent her annual vacation with her sister and other members of the CSJPs.

Lucy gradually moved into a rhythm of life that freed her spirit and enabled her to share with others the fruits of her reflective life style. Her openness to a variety of religions and spiritualities helped her to affirm the other. In the fall of 2015 she was diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus, which spread rapidly. She accepted her condition with great serenity and waited quietly as her body weakened. She was moved to hospice for the last days of her life. Many members of her religious community and our Franciscan brothers gathered around her to participate in her final anointing. Her sister, Louise CSJP, arrived from Seattle to spend the last day with her. All was complete and she slipped quietly into her new and transformed life of eternal light. ✠

'The Walking Nun' raised thousands for Mount St. Mary Hospital

by Sara John Fowler, President & CEO, Mount St. Mary Hospital

Sr. Lucy DuMont SSA was missioned to Mount St. Mary Hospital through the 1990s and the first decade of 2000 in Pastoral Care. Many staff have worked at Mount St. Mary for upwards of 20 years and worked with Sr. Lucy during that time. Sr. Lucy became an avid walker in 2006 following a lengthy and potentially debilitating illness.

Following her 'retirement' she continued to volunteer at Mount St. Mary by providing Pastoral and Palliative Care support to residents and families. She was also on the Mission Team and volunteered in any area she was needed and extensively in fundraising initiatives with a goal to improve the quality of lives of our residents. Her recent achievements include Team Captain of the Marythoners since 2006.

During the past 10 years she was often the top pledge earner for the Royal Victoria Marathon's, now the GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon's, CHEK Charity Pledge Program, and she most certainly was the top pledge earner of the Marythoner Team. She initially challenged herself, and others, and walked the half marathon, then more recently the 8K race. She not only raised tens of thousands of dollars which directly benefitted Mount St. Mary residents, but she also was a visible champion of our programs and services. She was often heard to say, "Whatever I can do for the residents ..." Sr. Lucy's approach to life and living fully, to sharing one's gifts with others was instantly recognizable when meeting her, and was well understood by the Mount St. Mary family. Through her training for the annual October Race, Sr. Lucy was not only an ambassador for Mount St. Mary Hospital, but it also provided opportunity for her to form caring relationships with people she met on Victoria's streets. She will be missed by all who came to know her.

Mount St. Mary Hospital is honoured to accept donations to the Sisters of St. Ann Legacy Fund in Memory of Sr. Lucy DuMont SSA. ✠

Please contact Jane Bowers, Director of Fund Development at (250) 480-3138 or jbowers@mtstmary.victoria.bc.ca for further information.



Centering Prayer: discovering the inner room

by Charlie Allen

Let me tell you about someone whose life was transformed by the power of Centering Prayer (CP). Joe was a very busy man with a bustling family and a demanding job. He told his priest that his life was a three-ringed circus and there was no way he could find 20 minutes twice a day for CP. Fr. Pennington responded, "Where there's a will, there's a way."

Joe agreed, so he started arriving at his office 20 minutes early every morning, and when he returned home, after greeting the family, he took a bath and focussed on CP for 20 minutes in the tub. This went on for about three weeks and his wife began to notice that his demeanour had changed: from carrying the world on his shoulders to being upbeat and happy. She became suspicious, and wondered if he was having an affair at the office. One evening when he came out of the bathroom, she was waiting and demanded to know what was going on. Joe then told her about CP, and she decided she would try this peaceful remedy, in the tub, while he prepared supper for the family!

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

G.K. Chesterton wrote: "It is rather as if a man had found an inner room in the very heart of his own house, which he had never suspected; and seen a light from within. It was as if he had found something at the back of his own heart that betrayed him to good."

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

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

Centering Prayer is a method of getting in touch with this indwelling presence, which is a personal, gracious, and a healing presence. ✂

Six Centering Prayer Workshops (Based on the Fr. Thomas Keating OCSO DVD series) will be held at St. Joseph the Worker parish during Lent:

Mornings beginning Saturday, February 13, 2016, 10 AM – 12 PM

Evenings beginning Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 7 – 9 PM.

To register for workshops at St. Joseph the Worker call (250) 479-7413 or email charlieballen@gmail.com

Lights...camera...action!

by Connie Dunwoody

Each month during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, we are posting a new video on the Diocesan website that features Bishop Gary talking about a specific work of mercy, from a location within the Diocese.

In December, Bishop Gary spoke about 'Sheltering the Homeless' at Rosalie's Village, where they are constructing housing for women and children. January's video showcased the 9-10 Club at St. Andrew's Cathedral: 'Feed the Hungry'. February's video was filmed at St. Joseph's Hospital in Comox, with Bishop Gary talking about why it is important to 'Visit the Sick'.

Jane Murphy, President & CEO of St. Joseph's General Hospital, said, "Visiting the sick is a vital part of the healing process. Hope and faith are the gifts we bring when we visit a bedridden friend. We let the person know that he or she is cherished and not forgotten. Anyone who has been sick will remember how important such visits are."

“What would be our desire if sick? We would all hope that when we are aged or grossly infirmed that one would come and care tenderly for us.” ~ Matthew 7:12

The current month's video is on the home page, with a link to the Year of Mercy video page. You can also read more about the Jubilee Year of Mercy on our website, and find links to resources for this Jubilee Year.

We're filming all over the Diocese ... keep an eye out for us! ✂

Videos can be accessed on the Diocesan website:
www.rcdvictoria.org.



Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy

by Cathie Gogo

At John Paul II School in Port Alberni, Madeline Kanigan-Joseph had an idea to commemorate the iconic leader Dr. Martin Luther King's American holiday: grade 7 and 8 students would display his words on the back of their shirts, and discuss how his words are still as relevant today as they were back then.

We are grateful for Dr. King, and thankful that we are able continue to share the legacy of his life and words. ✂



A place to belong and give back

by Colin Tessier

“What makes Ozanam so special is not only the impact felt in the lives of the participants but also in the difference that's made in the wider community through their volunteerism.”

The international mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP) is to serve Christ in the suffering, the poor, and the marginalized by bringing them love, respect, aid and development, hope and joy, in a more just society.

The SSVP of Vancouver Island works toward this mission in numerous ways through the provision of a variety of programs and services. One of the most unique and impactful programs offered is called the Frederic Ozanam Centre, a social inclusion program that works with adult individuals with developmental disabilities. The inspiring participants within this program face numerous challenges in their lives, most requiring 24-hour care, but their positivity and courage consistently shine through. The Ozanam program has a capacity of 50 participants at any given time, and there is no time limit associated with the program. For 30 hours per week the participants find a place to belong, to be loved, and build meaningful relationships. As Tim Imhoff, Program Supervisor says, "It's a family atmosphere, we really do become family."

What makes Ozanam so special is not only the impact felt in the lives of the participants but also the difference that's made in the wider community through their volunteerism. In addition to working through a personalized program plan, including self-identified goals, each participant gives back to the community by volunteering their time and energy to many worthwhile activities. In doing so they help to create a loop of service and caring that allows us to accomplish our mission on an even deeper level. Through their generous spirits, the participants of the program actually become actively engaged in helping the suffering, poor and marginalized; they help us to create a more loving, hopeful and just society. What an inspiration!

Some of the favourite volunteer opportunities include helping at a local elementary school with grade two and three students, supporting learning and reading activities; gleaning produce and sorting bread for food bank clients; making soup and cookies for programs at a local neighbourhood house; and a fan favourite, joining the staff at the Beacon Hill Petting Zoo to greet customers and help with other aspects of the operation. These activities help to dispel stereotypes in the wider community and have a real impact on the people and organizations they support.

When we help people who are experiencing tremendous obstacles and challenges in life to find purpose, love and family, we are serving Christ. When those same people go out and help others in the community, the Kingdom rejoices and lives change for the better.

We're only able to offer programs like Ozanam because of the support from our community. Thank you to each of you who donates or volunteers time with Saint Vincent de Paul. ✂

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



Do you want chips or an apple?

by Maria Campos

I remember that one of the issues that caught my eye the most when I came to live in Canada was listening to some parents say that they would let their children choose which religion they want to practice when they reach the age of maturity.

Maybe having a mixed marriage, not having a strong faith foundation or simply the materialistic modern life that we are immersed in, has become a problem in some marriages. For some people, religion can be an uncomfortable commodity, and maybe in an effort to avoid a confrontation in their marital life, parents fail their responsibility of educating their children about religion by simply letting them choose which religion they want to practice—if they want to practice any religion at all.

When I moved to Canada I was enlightened by the great health education system. Beginning at an early age at school and continuing through adulthood, people are continually being educated about the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of regular exercise. So I wondered why it was so important for some parents to educate children about the importance of eating healthy food, going to soccer, hockey, baseball or swimming practices, yet they gave a minimal importance to their faith. Many children do not want to do any exercise at all, and even as we listen to the children's complaints, we drive them to these exciting sports lessons. These sports take up a lot of time, money and energy, and in many places, parents volunteer countless hours, spending weekends at competitions and games. We do this because we love our children.

When children are growing, parents offer them healthy snacks, reserving 'junk food' for parties or special treats. I once met a child who would not eat any sweets, chips or ice cream, because she was taught that it was the right thing. If parents and teachers do not educate children about making healthy eating choices, it is more likely they will choose chips over an apple. Oh! But what a difference it makes when they have been educated in the importance of eating healthily. Then children will think twice about choosing the chips.

If we wait for our children to choose between the chips and the apple when they reach 19 years, it may be too late. By then they would have already lived and learned an unhealthy life style with chips and no exercise, and the habit of loving what they eat and what they don't do (exercise) will already be ingrained in them.

I believe the same thing happens with religion. If parents do not live, teach and show love for our faith to their children, then children will form their own, less spiritually healthy habits. By the time they reach 19 years old, they will be young adults with weak hope, fragile love and apathetic faith because they did not learn from an early age the foundations of our beautiful faith. It would be as if parents had given their children chips and no apples and TV time instead of exercise.

I invite you to read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church, IV. Structure of this Catechism, 14*: Those who belong to Christ through faith and Baptism must confess their baptismal faith before men. *Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9*

What about you? Do you want chips or an apple? ✂

Remembering Reid

by Andy and Denise Kyfiuk

As many of you know, our 15-year-old son passed away on December 22, 2015, while snowboarding with us at Mount Washington. We want to thank all of you for the love and kindness you have shown Reid and our family upon his passing. The outpouring of good will has been welcome and comforting.

We specifically want to thank the hockey community for helping us include so many people in the celebration of his life. We also thank Reid's schools and their student bodies for their respect and efforts to honour him. We thank our Kyfiuk and Yuha families for accompanying us, and we thank all the people who opened up to us with their own experiences.

We also very intentionally thank the media for their respectful coverage and helping to show what a wonderful soul Reid is; we thank the Search & Rescue team for helping us care for him. We thank all of the people whom we know, and those we don't know, from our Victoria and Powell River communities, for being beside us. We especially thank all of the people from around the world who have prayed with and for us.

We have been mentioning a certain prayer throughout this event—from the time Reid first went missing, and then when we learned of his death. This is because without even realizing Reid was in trouble some of us were praying it, likely right when he passed away. This prayer is the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the fact that we were praying it is very important to Reid's entering heaven with Jesus' personal assistance.

In these situations, people often ask, "What can we do to help?" Many people would respond by saying, "Please give to a certain charity," but we are asking people to learn more about the Jubilee Year of Mercy (rcdvictoria.org/jubilee-year-of-mercy.php) and pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for Reid (kofc6165.org/forms/ChapletofDivineMercy.pdf).

This prayer honours our son and his wonderful life; it assists the person that is praying; and supports all of the souls that need prayers and are being forgotten. Ultimately we seek to bring intelligent worship back into society for all religions. This would be, for us, an answer to prayer.

We can't be with Reid the way that we used to, but he isn't gone; he just doesn't live here anymore. Please help him change the world. ✂



Reid Kyfiuk in October 2015

Island Catholic Schools public speaking competition

by Theresa Vogel, President-elect, Rotary Club of Royal Oak/Centennial

Do you recognize the names Sr. Marie Angèle SSA, or Fr. Honore Timothy Lempfrit OMI? They were pioneers of education in the then-new Diocese of Victoria in the early 1860s. It is through their legacy that students from the Island Catholic Schools and Christ Church Cathedral School compete in the Island Catholic Schools Public Speaking Competition.

This year will mark the ninth year of the ICS Public Speaking Competition. For its first six years, the Competition was hosted at St. Andrew's Elementary and was spearheaded by Christine James, librarian and teacher at that school. With her leadership and under her direction, she saw to the establishment of this springtime competition. It is fully supported by the curriculum, creates a sense of community by having all ICS and Christ Church Cathedral Schools present, and creates a rich venue for networking amongst the students themselves. With the closure of St. Andrew's Elementary, St. Joseph's Elementary in Victoria offered to host the yearly competition, and have ably done so for the past two years.

Each school nominates a total of four students to speak in the competition: two in the Junior Sr. Marie Angele SSA Division (Grades 4 and 5), and two in the Senior Sr. Honore Timothy Lempfrit OMI Division (Grades 6 and 7).

Last year, ICS was fortunate to receive the financial support of the Rotary Club (Royal Oak/Centennial). With that funding secured, and in recognition of our social justice commitment in the Gospels, Island Catholic Schools was then able to incorporate the donation of a pair of goats to a needy community in the name of the winning participant. It added yet another aspect of importance and prestige for the competitors.

Participating schools include John Paul II (Port Alberni), St. Joseph's (Chemainus), Queen of Angels (Duncan), St. Patrick's (Victoria), Christ Church Cathedral School (Victoria), and St. Joseph's (Victoria).

So if you're looking for something to do on May 11, you are most welcome to attend at St. Joseph's Victoria and hear the best of what our students offer. You won't be disappointed! ✂

Rotary Club and public speaking

Hey, aren't Rotarians those guys who are working on wiping out the disease polio? Yes, the 1.2 million men and women worldwide who are members of Rotary are the people who started, in 1988, to work on eradicating polio. And, this may be the year! As 2016 opens, only two countries in the world (Pakistan and Afghanistan) are not yet declared free from polio, so that means that Rotarians just won't quit.

Rotary Clubs have so many more interests, activities, accomplishments and goals alongside the 'End Polio Now' campaign, in fulfillment of their motto *Service Above Self*. For the Royal Oak/Centennial club, youth leadership, education and literacy are priorities, and those interests are why the Club is delighted, once again, to be sponsoring the Public Speaking Competition among Island Catholic Schools and their associates. For us, the cultivation of confident and articulate public presenters is a real investment in the future. A person who can stand in front of a group and 'pitch' the details of a plan or project is the kind of individual who will be held up as a leader in government, community and human service. So, kids, start practicing now, and we'll see you on May 11!





Each year the Church of Ascension hosts a family skate at our festively decorated local arena. Year after year many families, new and old, join together in fellowship, taking time out from busy schedules to just enjoy some Holiday skating fun, and plenty of hot cocoa. This year over 75 Grandmothers, Grandfathers, Moms, Dads, teens and children joined in this Christmas tradition. *Photos provided by Laura and Katie Gaetz*

Building for success

by Olivia Pearse

Externally, it's a whitewashed portable. Within, it's a square space with a scent of fresh paint and second-hand furniture. Black boxes and props of varying sizes inhabit it: a vintage sofa, a lamppost, all placed on a paint-stained carpet. Rows of stitched-up costumes from every era, fabric and colour crowd one of its walls. Two sets of stage lights in either corner frame it. Awaiting action, two black curtains hang down its middle. It is the theatre of St. Andrew's Catholic Regional High School.

“I think theatre did that . . . because they gain confidence and they perform in front of an audience, and these students who maybe were really shy or didn't have very many friends all of a sudden are confident.”

St. Andrew's theatre program is inspiring and matchless. With some wood, nails, a bunch of teenagers, and an old portable, St. Andrew's theatre director and drama teacher Laura Angrove produces a worthy-of-acclamation theatre production every year. Angrove proves that much can be accomplished with little.

When asked about challenges directing St. Andrew's theatre program, Angrove's first response was, “I don't have a theatre.” Lighting, sound, movement of set, use of space, is not easily practiced off-stage. The troupe pulls the production together once they get to the rented theatre, in the three to four days of rehearsal that precede opening night. Angrove continues to reassure her students saying, “You guys are amazing; you're learning this in one day and every other high school has the whole year to learn [in a theatre setting].”

For the dress rehearsals and performances, Angrove rents theatre space from a local high school. “Budget is a big thing,” she says. Last year the cost was \$3,500 to rent theatre space. Besides from the money made via ticket sales, St. Andrew's theatre program has next to no funds to put into other production costs. Angrove says, “I've been to every thrift store . . . and dollar store.”

Despite the scramble to create the production virtually from scrap, St. Andrew's performances compete with those of bigger, wealthier high schools. Angrove has seen many high school productions, before and after she joined St. Andrew's. She says, “I'm totally shocked . . . I really think we do an amazing job.” It appears the small nature of St. Andrew's theatre program is what makes it so big in the end.

The performance and production teams are each made up of approximately 30 students. The benefit of having a small group of people is they become close. Angrove can provide more individual attention and the students end up helping each other.

She is constantly telling them, “You need to believe in yourself.” “When we get in there [the theatre] and do a dress rehearsal,” says Angrove, “it is terrible because we haven't had much time in the theatre. But I keep telling them, ‘don't worry, it will all come together.’ It always comes together.” She says, “I tell them that every single year and they don't believe me every single year.” Yet by closing night, after the hectic dress rehearsal, last-minute set changes and lighting mistakes, the kids realize Angrove was right.

Throughout this whole process, Laura Angrove demonstrates her knack for discovering and encouraging the gifts in her students. At the end of all her emails she includes this quote from Stanislavski: “Love the art in yourself, not yourself in the art.” Angrove finds the art in her students, then gives them the boost and skills they need to express it well and with confidence on stage. This self-assurance transfers into their personal lives. Angrove says, “I've had students say to me at the end of it, ‘you changed my life.’”

Veronica Harland, an alumna of St. Andrew's, says, “St. Andrew's theatre program has helped me immensely. As a current student of the Canadian College of Performing Arts, Mrs. Angrove helped to shape me into the performer I am now. The program gave me the basic tools and skills I needed for a career in musical theatre.”

After hearing that she has made significant impacts on the lives of her students, Angrove says, “I think theatre did that more than me, because they gain confidence and they perform in front of an audience, and these students who maybe were really shy or didn't have very many friends all of a sudden are confident.”

So if you ever come across a whitewashed portable with a vintage sofa inside, and someone informs you that it's a school's theatre, prepare to be amazed by the quality of what comes out of it. For the St. Andrew's theatre program, with director Laura Angrove, will surprise you. They will prove, as they have in the past, that lots of talented and dedicated people can create a piece of art that will have an inspirational and lasting effect.

Want to see for yourself? Join us for St. Andrew's performance of *Flapper*, March 3rd, 4th or 5th at 7:30 PM at Claremont Secondary School. Tickets are \$10 each, and are available at St. Andrew's school office and at the door. ✂





The Name of God is Mercy

By Glen Palahicky, Director of Religious Education

“And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, ‘Abba, Father.’”

~ Galations 4:6

Pope Francis has recently released a book that records his interviews with Vatican reporter Andrea Tornielli, titled *The Name of God is Mercy*. During this Jubilee Year the Holy Father is constantly reminding us of the importance of understanding God through the lens of mercy. St. John Paul II also spoke deeply about mercy; in his encyclical *Dives in Misericordia* he says: “God, who ‘is love’ (1 John 4:8), cannot reveal Himself otherwise than as mercy.” The constant unconditional love we receive from God is always a gift we cannot earn and always more than we deserve; thus it is merciful.

There are countless ways we as parents, teachers and catechists can show the importance of mercy to our students and children. Our actions are the best way. When we model that we care for others, show gentleness, patience and forgiveness and are active in the corporal works of mercy, it shows and glows. Words are not as loud as actions but they do matter. We can point out to our children and students that mercy is present whenever we pray, especially the Our Father.

At the very start of any prayer, before words are uttered, the Mercy of God is present stirring my desire to raise my heart and mind to God. Prayer is a gift that I don’t deserve. We don’t expect the Queen of England to allow us to ‘call her up’ on the telephone; yet we are invited to call upon the Creator of the Universe! Maybe we don’t experience the mercy of God in our prayer life because we think prayer is something we do, forgetting it is a gift that originates from God’s Spirit within us.

Read again St. Paul’s message to the Galatians in the Scripture quote above. The Spirit leads us to say *Abba, Father*, and amazingly, this reveals not only the truth about God but also about ourselves: we are God’s children. I’m not called *daddy* or *father* by anyone other than my own children; so it is with God. By God’s grace, unconditional love and mercy we are declared God’s children and literally share in God’s Life!

And so, with Pope Francis, we can agree ... The name of God is Mercy. ✠

“Children are our future! The challenges of the secular world do not always support the best preparation and grounding for the children of today . . . Dedicated staff members are committed to educating the “whole” child in Christ-centred communities of learning.”

~ Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent of Catholic Schools



Employment with Island Catholic Schools

There is a need for relief Educational Assistants as well as Early Learning and Before and After School workers required within Island Catholic Schools.

Preference will be given to candidates with the following qualifications:

- Identification with and participation in the life of a Catholic parish
- Commitment to Catholic Education
- Valid training and/or certificate relative to the position
- Successful school experience
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work collaboratively with others.

Interested persons are invited to view our website for application forms and application requirements. <http://cisdv.bc.ca/employment-opportunities.php>

2016 – 2017 Catholic School Registration

by Beverly Pulyk, Superintendent of Catholic Schools

It is that time of year again—the time when parents begin to consider which school they want their child(ren) to attend next year. Please consider a Catholic education for your child; the Catholic schools of our Diocese not only offer an excellent academic education, they do so within a Catholic framework.

The following questions are often asked about our schools.

When did Catholic Schools in BC first come into existence?

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

Where are the schools of the Victoria Diocese located?

There are six Catholic Schools in the Diocese (5 elementary and 1 high school):

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

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

Are there entrance exams?

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

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

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

What qualifications are required of teachers employed in the schools?

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

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

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

Is the BC curriculum followed?

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

Are your schools evaluated?

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

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

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

For more information, please visit Island Catholic Schools’ website: www.cisdv.bc.ca. Individual school websites can be accessed through the ICS website. Should you wish to speak to someone about our schools, please contact the local Catholic school in your area or call the Diocesan Island Catholic Schools Office at (250) 727-6893. ✠



Catholic Schools Proclaim Jesus with Loving Hearts

John Paul II

Catholic Schools Week will be a busy and exciting time at John Paul II in Port Alberni. We will begin the week by leading the Sunday Liturgy at Holy Family Notre Dame Church on Sunday, February 14, 2016. We will kick-off the week in the school with a prayer and spirit assembly at 9 AM on Monday, February 15, exploring our theme of *Proclaim Jesus with Loving Hearts*. In the afternoon on Monday we plan to go around our neighborhood and deliver 'heartfelt notes' to our neighbours, as a belated Valentines wish. On Tuesday and for the rest of the week, different classes will lead morning prayer in the gym with the whole school.

We have a number of other festivities planned for the week. On Tuesday we'll be hosting an 'Are You Smarter than Your Teacher?' contest. On Wednesday we'll have 'Jersey Day', which will include the 'JP II Olympics' in the morning and a Staff/Parent vs. Student floor hockey game in the afternoon. On Thursday we are inviting parishioners to come and share their favourite children's story with our students, followed by a Parishioner Luncheon in our gym. Friday will be 'Formal Day', with everyone coming to school in their Sunday best. We plan to have a sock-hop in the gym in the afternoon, and a family potluck/student talent show in the evening.

It is shaping up to be an exciting and memorable week of celebration!

St. Joseph's Victoria

St. Joseph's Elementary Schools joins Catholic schools across the province in celebrating Catholic Schools Week February 15 – 19. Our theme this year is *Proclaim Jesus with Loving Hearts*.

Come celebrate the Eucharist with us at a school Mass on Saturday, February 13 at 5 PM at St. Joseph the Worker Parish. Our Open House is Monday, February 15 from 4 – 6 PM, featuring tours and a short program of performances. Our celebrations continue through the week with daily prayer services, *FacetoFace* Ministries' school-wide Retreat Day on Wednesday, and House Games on Thursday for Primary and Intermediate students.

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

St. Joseph's Chemainus

This year at St. Joseph's School we will celebrate Catholic Schools Week with inspiring activities for our students. We will begin with a kick off on Sunday, February 14 with a Mass at St. Joseph's Church and pancake breakfast afterward. All week, we welcome new families to our Open House. Tours will be available between 10 AM and 3 PM. Please tell all your friends!

The Swim Club invites all non-club members to join in a fun swim for a small fee of \$3 after school on Tuesday, February 18. On Wednesday, February 17 we will host a Family Dinner and Games Night from 5 – 7 PM. On Thursday, February 18 *FacetoFace* Ministries will lead our school community in a spiritual retreat that will take place throughout the day. On Friday, February 19 our annual variety show will take place at 1 PM. Start talking with your children about the talent they will share with their school. On Sunday, February 21 we will finish Catholic Schools Week with Mass at St. Mary's Church in Ladysmith. Children will lead the ministries and singing, and a Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast will follow.

We encourage parents and parishioners to come celebrate with us!



Queen of Angels

Queen of Angels Catholic School, with a student enrollment of 408 in grades K through 9, is thriving in Duncan. We are proclaiming Jesus with loving hearts through several service projects including World Food Day, helping the Salvation Army pack hampers, collecting warm clothing for the needy, collecting toiletries for the homeless, and supporting a Christmas dinner for Cowichan Tribes. We share our time and talent with each other through our buddy activities between classes; the grade ones and grade nines recently went skating together.

Queen of Angels also has a tradition of promoting Fine Arts. The Intermediate grades are working with a variety of artists within the Artists & Angels program. We have several vocal choirs who will be performing at upcoming festivals. The children learn French, starting in Kindergarten, and there is an opportunity to learn *Hul'qumi'num* through a weekly club.

Our Student Council has sponsored some fun activities. Pajama Day is coming up, but we have also celebrated 1920s Day. The Middle School students enjoyed a Snowflake Dance before Christmas. Any funds raised are given to charity. Our parents and parish supporters continue to be very generous. Through their kindness we are able to provide breakfast for over 60 children every morning. Our motto is *To build in love* and with loving hearts, we are making a difference in the Cowichan Valley.

Catholic Schools Week Activities

- Students will be helping with the various ministries at Mass on Sunday, Feb. 14. School-made Valentines will be shared with the parishioners
- Open House will be from 1 – 5 PM on Wednesday, February 17, with a Kindergarten Information session from 4 – 4:30 PM
- An appreciation dinner will be shared with the staff
- Outreach activities include Valentines for parents, baked goods to be given to Warmland House, an environmental cleanup, visits to a local seniors home, and the assembly of food baskets for the Cowichan Basket Society.
- A series of fun stations will be organized for the students in the gym
- A *FacetoFace* retreat for all grades
- A luncheon for the Elders, Council, and education team from Cowichan Tribes will be hosted by the school
- Special prayers throughout the week

St. Andrew's High

St. Andrew's Regional High School has several activities planned for Catholic Schools Week. This schedule is tentative at press time; please check our school website for up to date information at www.standrewshigh.ca.

- Monday, February 15—Opening Assembly (10:50 AM)
- Tuesday, February 16—*FacetoFace* Ministries, TAG challenge, parent trivia challenge begins
- Wednesday, February 17—VOICE bake sale at lunch, TAG Challenge, parent trivia challenge
- Thursday, February 18—Prayer Experience Workshop, parent trivia challenge, Open House (6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.)
- Friday, February 19—Guest Speaker at St. Andrew's: Ron Belgau (parent evening to follow at Sacred Heart)

St. Patrick's

Welcome to excellence in education!

Come and join the Open House celebration of sixty years of Catholic education at St. Patrick's Elementary School in Victoria. On Tuesday, February 16 there will be a Showcase Assembly from 2 to 2:45 PM featuring Primary and Intermediate Arts and Student Leadership. Following the Assembly, student-led tours will be available until the Open House ends at 5 PM. Be sure to ask about the state-of-the-art seismic safety features.



OUR SERVANTS IN THE DIOCESE

Most Rev. Gary Gordon Bishop of Victoria

Ordained by Archbishop James Carney, May 22, 1982, St. Francis de Sales, Burnaby.

Favourite Bible verse

Luke 15:11-32—*The Parable of the Merciful Father*

Interests include ocean, lake and fly fishing with Merlin, and golfing.



Fr. Alfred Francis M. Alilio St. Patrick's, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Ruben Profugo, June 22, 1991, Lucena City, Philippines.

Favourite Bible verse

Philippians 4:13—*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Interests include watching movies, reading, playing basketball and travelling.



Fr. Karam Albaran Church of the Ascension, Parksville

Ordained by Most Rev. Yousif Abba, December 16, 2011, Baghdad, Iraq.

Favourite Bible verse

Colossians 1:28—*It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.*

Interests include reading, travelling, biking.



Fr. Harrison Ayre St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria (Assistant Priest)

Ordained by Most Rev. Gary Gordon, February 7, 2015, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Philippians 2:5-11—*Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped . . . he humbled himself and became obedient . . . at the name of Jesus . . . every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord . . .*

Interests include collecting sports cards, reading, listening to jazz music, watching films.



Fr. Vicente Borre Chaplain to Extended Health Care Facilities in Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Jose C. Sorra DD, March 28, 1979, Virac, Catanduanes, Philippines.

Favourite Bible verse

Mark 10:45—*The Son of Man did not come to be served. He came to serve and to give His life to redeem many people.*

Interests include reading informative books and magazines.



Fr. Luyen Dau CSsR St. Edward the Confessor, Duncan

Ordained by Archbishop Edward J. Gilbert CSsR, May 10, 2008, Washington, DC.

Favourite Bible verse

1 Corinthians 10:31—*Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

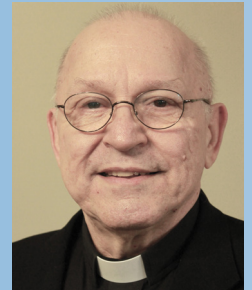
Hobbies include reading history, spirituality and non-fiction; hiking and outdoor recreation.



Fr. John L. Domotor CD, CSS (Lieutenant- Commander, Ret'd) Our Lady Queen of Peace, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Lawrence Graziano OFM, February 2, 1980, Washington, DC.

Hobbies include reading books and cooking.



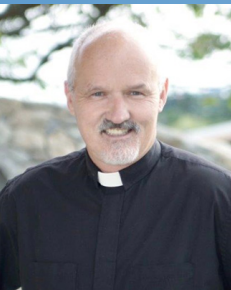
Fr. William Hann Holy Cross, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, August 15, 2004, Victoria, BC.

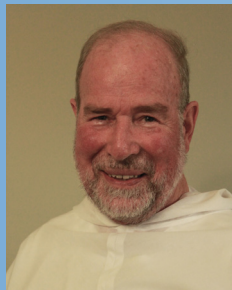
Favourite quote

Thomas Merton—*Mercy within mercy within mercy.*

Interests include holding the tension between *being* (prayer) and *doing* (work and play, especially running).



Fr. Rolf Hasenack OP St. Elizabeth's, Sidney Our Lady of the Assumption, Brentwood Bay



Fr. Dean Henderson Chaplain, UVic & Camosun Vocations Director for Promotions

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, April 15, 2007, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Galatians 2:20—*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. . .*

Interests include recreational squash, keeping up with the family, English ales and cars, great books by the fire, and walks by the ocean. *Benedicamus Domino!*



Fr. Benoit Laplante St. Jean Baptiste, Victoria

Ordained by Msgr. Bruno Desrochers, June 8, 1963, Cathedral Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatiere, PQ

Favourite Bible verse

Luke 4:18-19—*The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.*

Interests include postcard collecting and classical music.



Fr. John Laszczyk St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Remi De Roo, June 16, 1979, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

John 14:1—*Do not let your heart be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me.*

Interests include walking, swimming, reading and movies.



Fr. Alfredo Monicelli St. Joseph the Worker, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, January 28, 2008, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Jeremiah 15:16—*When I found your words, I devoured them; they became my joy and the happiness of my heart.*

Interests include fishing, mushroom hunting and cooking.



Fr. Jose Prakash St. Ann's, Duncan

Ordained by Most Rev. Joseph D'Silva, April 16, 2002, Bellary, India.

Favourite Bible verse

Isaiah 42:1—*"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations."*

Interests include walking, swimming, reading and movies.



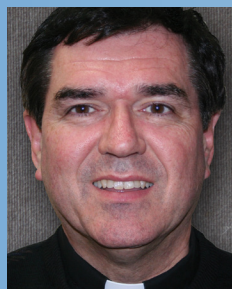
Fr. Ian C. Stuart Hospital Chaplain

Ordained by Archbishop James F. Carney, July 3, 1987, Vancouver, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Philippians 4:4-9 (abridged)—*Rejoice in the Lord always . . . whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious . . . And the God of peace will be with you.*

Interests include 'morning cappuccino', Catholic Education, life-long learning, study of languages and history, Eldercare, Spirit of Aloha!



Fr. Paul Szczur SDS Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford and Polish Community, Sacred Heart

Ordained by Franciszek Cardinal Macharski, May 24, 2003, Trzebinia, Poland.

Favourite Bible verse

Matthew 22:37-40—*'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it: Love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.*

Interests include travelling, soccer, skiing and reading.



TS OF MERCY SE OF VICTORIA



Fr. Phillipus Dal Ha Bae
*Korean Community,
Sacred Heart, Victoria*

Ordained by Most Rev. Daniel Tji, January 16, 1991, Wonju, Gangwondo, Korea.

Favourite Bible verse

John 6:20—*But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."*

Interests include reading and cooking.



Fr. Marinaldo Batista
*Our Lady of Fatima, Victoria
St. Rose of Lima, Sooke*

Ordained by Most Rev. Virgilio de Pauli, December 17, 1995, Mariluz – PR – Brazil

Favourite Bible verse

1 Corinthians 15:10—*But what I am now, I am through the grace of God.*

Interests include fishing, listening to classical music while driving or at home, travelling, and a good wine and conversation.



Fr. Melquiades Bayron
*St. Joseph's, Chemainus
St. Mary's, Ladysmith*

Ordained by Most Rev. Christian Vicente Noel DD on June 29, 2002 in Talibon, Bohol, Philippines.

Favourite Bible verse

John 3:16—*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Interests include reading.



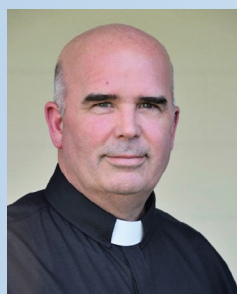
Fr. Sean Flynn
St. Francis Xavier, Mill Bay

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, July 17, 2005, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Luke 5:8—*But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"*

Interests include his long-time wine cellar, and walking along Dallas Road.



Fr. Krystian Golisz SDS
St. Peter's, Nanaimo

Ordained by Most Rev. Stanislaw Smolenski, May 31, 1984, Krakow Poland.

Favourite Bible verse

Philippians 4:13—*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Interests include reading, walking and painting.



Fr. Jan Grotkowski SDS
St. Patrick's, Campbell River

Ordained by Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, May 13, 1989, Trzebinia, Poland.

Favourite Bible verse

Matthew 16:18—*You are Peter and on that rock I will build my church.*

Interests include swimming, biking and hiking.



Fr. David Hogman
Sacred Heart, Victoria

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, June 29, 2013, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

2 Corinthians 5:21—*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Interests include reading and walking.



Fr. Mogomir Kikic
St. Leopold Mandic, Victoria



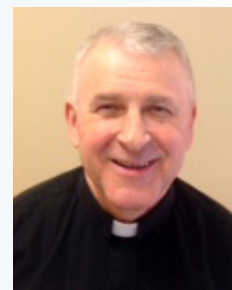
Fr. Josef Kobos SDS
Trinity, Nanaimo

Ordained by Archbishop Bronislaw Dabrowski, April 13, 1977, Trzebinia, Poland.

Favourite Bible verse

John 11:25-27—*"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

Interests include gardening: roses are his speciality.



Fr. Marek Paczka
Christ the King, Courtenay

Ordained by Most Rev. Kazimierz Nycz, May 29, 1993, Trzebinia, Poland.

Favourite Bible verse

John 20:28—*Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"*

Interests include reading, hiking, snowboarding and sailing.



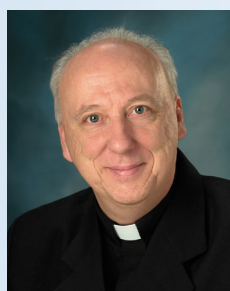
Fr. Stephen Paine
*Holy Family Notre Dame,
Port Alberni*

Ordained by Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, April 19, 2009, Victoria, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

1 Corinthians 15:28—*That God may be all in all.*

Interests include kayaking, hiking, travelling, browsing book stores, buying books, reading.



Fr. Roger Poblete
*Holy Family, Ucluelet
St. Francis of Assisi, Tofino*

Ordained by Most Rev. Raymond Lahey, November 3, 2002, Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

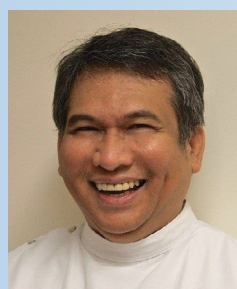
Favourite Bible verse

John 3:16—*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Interests include hiking and reading.



Fr. Dino Villadiego
*North Island Communities:
Our Lady of Assumption,
Alert Bay
St. Bonaventure, Port Hardy
St. Joseph's, Tahsis
St. Mary's, Port McNeill
St. Theresa's, Port Alice*



Fr. John Vines
St. Louis de Montfort

Ordained by Most Rev. Bishop Thomas Lobsinger, May 9, 1998, Mission, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

Prologue to the Gospel of John

Interests include fishing (i.e., boat repair).



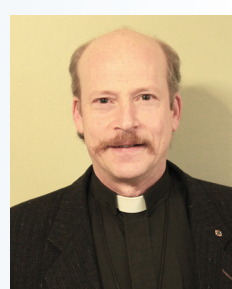
Fr. Scott Whittemore
*Our Lady of Grace, Salt
Spring Island*

Ordained by Most Rev. Eugene Cooney, June 3, 2005, Kelowna, BC.

Favourite Bible verse

1 John 4:10—*Love, then, consists of this: not that we have loved God but that he has loved us and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins.*

Interests include mostly outdoor recreation pursuits, including hiking, backpacking and cross-country skiing (which is now being replaced with ocean kayaking). I also like to read, especially books on our Catholic faith, outdoor recreation, nature and history.



Out of the Archives



“In midnight’s stillness”

by Theresa Vogel

The title of this article is a quote from a Polish Christmas Carol of the same name; it is also the title given to this unique piece which is serving as a backdrop for the Nativity Scene at the Pastoral Centre.

As the result of an inspirational presentation by a fabric artist at the Catholic Archivists conference in September in Saskatoon, SK, I returned to Victoria determined to find some way of honouring the 400 pounds of vestments currently held in the Archives. For such holy objects, the usual eventual disposition is burning or returning to the earth. There had to be a better way of capturing the spirit and memory of every priest and missionary in the Diocese whose garments are now among the treasures in storage.

The first task was to find out if blessing and rededication was possible; finding no prohibition, the next step was to put together a service of blessing and rededication of the fabric. Fr. William Hann kindly presided, and all those workers whose hands would craft new inspiration from old pieces were invited to bless the water with which the garments would be sprinkled.

Fr. William (using Archbishop Charles Seghers’ aspergillum) processed to all the storage sites, blessing the materials and asking all to invoke the memory and spirit of the pioneers of the Diocese.

And then there was the sewing ‘dream team’ of seamstresses and crafters, whose ideas began to spill out almost immediately. The midnight sky was conceived and crafted by this volunteer team who graciously agreed to lend their expertise to our vestment re-purposing project. The ‘darkened hills’, the ‘star of Bethlehem’, and the ‘Town of Bethlehem’ carry the memories and spirit of those priests of the Diocese whose no-longer-used garments have come to the Archives.

The ‘dream team’ includes Moira G. from the the Pastoral Centre, Marylynne R., a parishioner at St. Andrew’s Cathedral, and Thea W., who describes herself as a ‘good Anglican woman’! They are talented artists and dedicated workers, and deserve to pose proudly in front of their work (see photo, right).

The next project is just a dream now, but could soon be a reality! ✂



More than words can tell

by Julie Cormier, PeaceQuest Victoria Coordinator

St. Andrew’s Regional Catholic High School has risen to the challenge, yet another year, to keep their PeaceQuest School title. This challenge means the students, teachers and administration have recommitted to working towards peace and justice through a variety of activities and events. A peace photo contest is one of those activities undertaken by the grade 9 photography class led by teacher Doug Ballam.

PeaceQuest Victoria is the local chapter of a national movement calling for schools and faith groups to mobilize and create peace from 2014 to 2018, as a form of remembrance for the 100th anniversary of World War One. This local initiative, adopted by the Sisters of St. Ann, uses the power of art as a way to inspire and teach peace. As in this photo contest, photography is the powerful tool that provides an experiential-learning opportunity for students to communicate a youth’s perspective of peace and justice while living in a non-war-zone country. This form of learning has propelled a brilliance and depth from the students that continues to surprise Mr. Ballam, as well as the judges who participate in determining a winner based on the level of the photography and the significance of peace. Here are the top three photo winners of the most recent contest. ✂

If you wish to become a PeaceQuest School, contact Julie Cormier, the PeaceQuest Victoria coordinator, for further information at jcormier@ssabc.ca, or visit the website www.peacequest.ca.



1st Place, by Sabrina Bogdanski



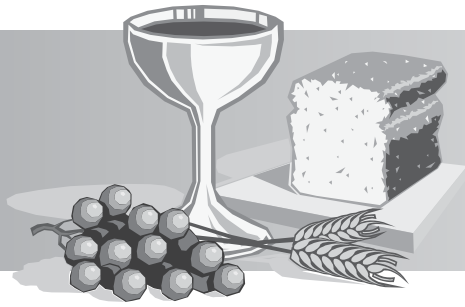
2nd Place, by Genie Burke



3rd Place, by Ava Cooper



Vocations



by Fr. Dean Henderson

Is that you, Lord?

This new-to-me ministry comes with a particular temptation: to approach vocations awareness and promotion like one would approach sales and marketing in the world of commerce. I must be particularly careful because I come from a family of business leadership and started my education in the Faculty of Commerce as did my father before me. With intentional irony, I often say that if I wasn't in the priesthood, I'd be in sales! A priest who succumbed to a 'spiritual sales' strategy in the 16th century marketed indulgences to great effect. But I'd rather not be remembered as another Fr. Tetzel OP, whose efforts fanned the flames of the Protestant Reformation.

Vocations aren't individual life-enhancement methods guaranteed to prevent stress and suffering, even though they will certainly bring abiding joy to those who obey God's call. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy learning from the world of business and leadership and happily serve as Chaplain to the Association of Catholic Leaders whose lay vocation in the 'marketplace' is of profound importance. For example, recently I read the story of how Starbucks initially marketed the 'experience' of consuming a cup of coffee, convincing people to pay far more than they previously did at the local diner. There's something to be learned for the mission of the Church in that story! But the key to ensuring we don't reduce the idea of a vocation (or anything else of the Church) to a 'sales product' is to

communicate transparently the element of suffering that comes with following Jesus Christ and the necessity of filling up what is lacking in his suffering. (Col. 1:24)

Over the Christmas holidays I was inspired by a UVic alumnus friend to obtain a copy of Bishop Fulton Sheen's book *The Priest Is Not His Own*. He summarizes the book's profound thesis: "We who have received the Sacrament of Orders call ourselves 'priests'. The author does not recall any priest ever having said that 'I was ordained a 'victim,' nor did he ever say 'I am studying to be a victim.' That seemed almost alien to being a priest. At seminary we were always told to be 'good priests'; never were we told to be 'willing victims'. And yet, was not Christ the Priest, a victim? Did he not come to die? He did not offer a lamb, a bullock, or doves; he never offers anything except himself ... Pagan priests, Old Testament priests, medicine men, offered a sacrifice apart from themselves. But not our Lord. He was *Sacerdos-Victima*."

While the application of the victimhood, passion, and suffering of Christ is somewhat direct in the vocation of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, surely it also applies to those called to other vocations. Is marriage in Christ not a death to one's individual life as the two become one in the sacrificial service to each other and the children they're blessed with?

Is not consecrated life, at least in part, a death to one's own aspirations through the willing sacrifice in 'poverty, chastity, and obedience'? In fact, is not each of us called to a universal vocation to holiness through our baptismal death to sin through the saving death of Christ the victim?

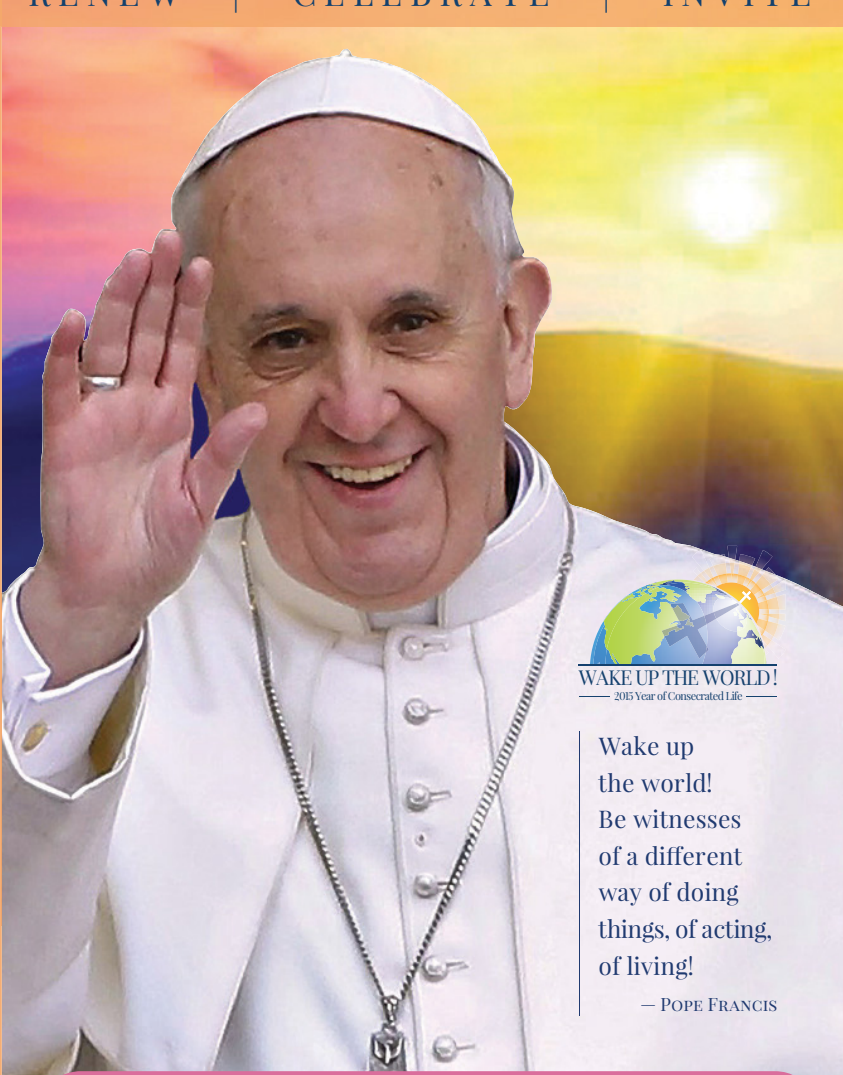
The marketing within the commercial world and the ministry of vocation awareness in the Christian world part company on this point. I thank God that two students recently approached me about discerning priesthood. But if young men aren't willing to follow Christ in his sacrificial love for the world, then they're not yet prepared for a pilgrimage toward priesthood, and they're not ready for true Christian discipleship.


Want to discuss the Church's vocations as a means of self-actualization, personal fulfillment and prestigious comfort? Forget it! Want to discuss abandonment and surrender to the one who suffered and died for you, who calls you to embrace that same priestly victimhood? Give me a call! ✠

Fr. Dean Henderson is the Vocations Director for Awareness and Promotion for the Diocese of Victoria and can be reached at (250) 882-2151 or by email: catholic@uvic.ca

Year of Consecrated Life

RENEW | CELEBRATE | INVITE





Wake up the world!
Be witnesses of a different way of doing things, of acting, of living!

— POPE FRANCIS

The Year of Consecrated Life closed on February 2, 2016. We continue to pray for our clergy, religious, seminarians and all those discerning God's call in their lives.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

G

od forgives not with a decree but with a caress. By caressing the wounds of our sin God is involved in forgiving, in our salvation.

~ Pope Francis, *The Name of God is Mercy*

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Face the Day

by Bonnie Landry



I wrote a book this year. It's available on Amazon now. Gah. Amazon. While it might look like a cheap plug to talk about it here, that's not my goal. Maybe you won't read it. But maybe I can share a little bit of it here and somebody will be encouraged.

My book is entitled *Revolution of Mercy: how kindness changes everything*. While it's intended primarily for Catholic parents, I think the broader audience is anyone who is in relationship with anyone else. So, that's most of us. And by that I mean all of us. So here are some excerpts from Chapter Two, *What is a Family and Why is it so Hard?*

We need to know what a family *is*. We need to know its purpose. We need to know that what we do each day (picking up toys, correcting behaviour, having an inane conversation) corresponds to a Christ-centered goal. It's difficult to cultivate the objectivity needed to respond lovingly to our children when we are wandering about confused and exhausted most of the time.

In short, we need to keep our eyes on heaven, but our feet firmly on the ground.

But what about when the ground beneath us feels shaky and uncertain? Sometimes the daily challenges of family life spiral us downwards and the goal of heaven seems remote. Understanding what God wants of us helps us to gain clarity. Understanding inspires our actions. The long-term goal of Christian parents must be kept fresh in our minds.

Pope Saint John Paul II gave us a rallying cry in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, so often repeated, "Family, become what you are."

This phrase is an appeal to live family life in Christian fullness. We respond with a gut feeling: "Yes, that's what I want, to help my family become what it was meant to be!" Our draw to this rallying cry indicates the need to understand the family's mission more fully. But what does that mean? I often wondered—until I read the *Familiaris Consortio*, which turns out to be the how-to manual we need to 'become what we are', and offers us a path to make sense of a vocational choice that seems, some days, not to make any sense at all.

Let's face it, though. Not that many families with several small children are putting *Reading encyclicals and exhortations* high on their list of priorities.

In *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope Saint John Paul II defines what a family is—its identity. He also defines what a family does—its mission. Understanding the

identity and the mission of a family is essential to achieving our goal as parents. Once we're certain what that goal is, we are better equipped to fulfill it. Life is hard enough with children. Not knowing where we are supposed to be headed is a serious handicap. So we need to look deeply at the identity and mission of the family.

The identity of the family, according to Saint John Paul II, is an 'intimate community of life and love'. Intimate means close, warm and personal. Not just people living in the same home, or living in constant discord: of course we share sorrow and pain, but also deep joy and fellowship and sticky hands. We are called to live in close and warm relationships with our family members. Sometimes closer than you ever imagined! When most of us envision our future—before we have a family—we hope for a beautiful closeness.

☺ There is a universal desire to live family life as an intimate community of life and love.

John Paul II says that the mission of the family is to "guard, reveal and communicate love." The mission reveals what a family does—what it can and should do. To guard something means to keep it from danger, to protect it. It's our mission to guard love—to guard the love we have for our children, and not to endanger the filial love they have for us. It also means to guard the integrity of authentic love—what God intended love to be.

We are called to be merciful, as our Father in Heaven is merciful. The foundation of loving relationships is mercy and tenderness, forgiveness and fidelity to growing in our skill and developing our virtue to accomplish this.

We really need to know where we are going. We really need some directional signs along the way. Our beautiful Catholic Faith, our beloved leaders and Saints have given us so much to enrich our lives and to help us grow in holiness and raise the families we imagined. Mercy is an outpouring of kindness, a generosity of spirit. Mercy is contagious, infectious ... start an epidemic in your own home. Better yet, start a revolution.

A revolution of Mercy. ✂

The season of Lent during this Jubilee year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's mercy.

~ Pope Francis, *The Name of God is Mercy*

Family Records Guide and Estate Planning Materials

"I am going to prepare a place for you and when it is prepared I will come to take you with me so that where I am you may be also."

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

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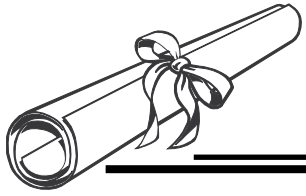
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The Campus Mission



by Fr. Dean Henderson

By the time readers have these pages in their hands, Catholic Student's Week (CSW) will have just concluded across the University and College campuses in Canada. CSW is a national Catholic Student Association initiative that we've participated in for years and on numerous occasions, and UVic has been acknowledged as the campus with the greatest level of participation.

It doesn't surprise me. Our students have a fantastic track record of being involved in varied ways at the local Diocesan level, but also supporting apostolic and missionary activities such as CCO, D&P, Religious Orders, Scarboro Missions, Pro Life Missions, and local missions.

During this particular week, we try to make a concerted effort to 'show and tell' among the wider University community, telling students about the Catholic faith in Jesus Christ, and demonstrating it through sacramental, social and service examples. The week began with our annual retreat in the Comox Valley with Bishop Gary leading us in reflections on the *Merciful Leadership of the Good Samaritan*. The retreat included a visit to St. Joseph's General Hospital, the Diocesan-owned hospital originally founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph. To conclude the week we took up the invitation to do a mini-pilgrimage—walking from UVic to the Cathedral to pray for God's merciful indulgences and humbly cross the threshold of the Door of God's Mercy!

Mercy, the second name of God, as St. John Paul II taught, is needed by the student suffering the effects of chronic ill health or another who carries the weight of grief at the recent death of a family member, or another whose guilt seems almost impossible to bear. God's heart of love embraces a world enmeshed in the

misery of violence, enslaved to addictions and passions, judged insignificant by a culture that values material wealth at the expense of personal dignity. The CCO missionaries, the students of the Catholic chaplaincy and I find ourselves in the midst of the great healing mission of the Church this Lent, and always trying to live under the Mercy of God and offering the same to our neighbours. This will be especially evident on the Universal Catholic Church's joyful fourth Sunday of Lent weekend of encounter with Christ in the Sacrament of Mercy.

Students will be coordinating the *NightFever* event on Friday, March 4, 2016, at St. Andrew's Cathedral from 7 – 10 PM. Beautiful worship music, candle and ambient lighting, the Sacramental presence of Jesus in Adoration and Confession, combined with the youthful and compassionate invitation to the passersby on Blanshard: all this is the young Church in action. People, sometimes in awe, sometimes in tears, usually all surprised at having been invited inside, solemnly walk the long aisle to offer a lit votive candle to symbolize a prayer, a thought, a memory, or a hope before God's loving gaze upon the altar. I have been moved to tears, just seeing the wonder and peace in the eyes of those who had only moments previously been walking past the Cathedral doors outside. Even if they do not realize, they, like us, will have walked through the Door of Christ's Mercy and will have been touched by the Holy Spirit in some significant way. May that be an experience we all share this Lent as we prepare for the Great Feast of the Easter! ✠



Connections



by Anela Nicholson

Several years ago, I remember seeing a picture online that read *Jesus, you are my Valentine*. It struck a deep chord with me, because at the time I was discerning religious life, and for the three years of my discernment, I was enamoured by the fact that I could proclaim that I was, if you will, 'taken' by Christ. Now, years later, I'm no longer discerning that particular vocation, but I still consider myself in love with both him and my faith.

February has traditionally been a month monopolized with hearts, the colour red, and romance. Valentine's Day presents an opportunity to spend quality time with the special person in your life, and show them how much they mean to you.

A relationship is something which grows over time, and which needs to be constantly nurtured in order to make it stronger; our relationship with Christ is no different. If there is one thing that my time of vocational discernment has taught me, it's that it is important to fall in love with both God and your faith in order to become the best child of God that you can be. Instead of fearing God, love Him more than anything, since He created you out of the utmost love in His own image.

As humans, we all desire to be loved by someone, and to be able to shower our love upon someone else. What we might not always realize is that the answer to both of those deep desires is ultimately Christ himself. When you stop and think about it, many of the emotions, elements, and experiences that are present in a serious romantic relationship, such as with a fiancée or spouse, should also be present in our connection with God.

What do I mean by this? Quite simply, we should treat our relationship with Jesus as we would our relationship with a tangible person. The excitement that we feel when we see our beloved after being apart should be the same excitement we feel when we approach Christ in the holy sacrifice of Mass. The sense of deep longing we experience when we miss our spouse should be the longing which drives us to prayer when we begin to feel separated from God. The way that we enjoy spending time with the one we love should be present in our anticipation of spending an hour in Eucharistic Adoration. The deep love that allows us to be completely open and honest with each other should be present when we prepare to receive the blessed mercy that is present in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Finally, in the way the right person can transform us and our lives for the better, we should allow our Saviour and His love to transform us into the beautiful version of ourselves that He created us to be.

In the Gospel of Mark, we read that we are called to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30) In other words, we should love God with every fibre of our being, and reflect that love of Him to the world around us. But, what if our relationship with Him still needs some work?

The Church gives us a special opportunity each year to work on growing our relationship with Jesus Christ; we call it *Lent*. This forty-day season of penitence and meditation gives us the perfect chance to improve our connection with

Christ, and draw closer to him. One way that we can do this is by making a strong Lenten resolution. By giving up something of significance, or by making a plan to do a specific task during this special season, we help ground ourselves in our faith, and make it easier to fix our eyes right where they should be—on the Cross. We can also help build up our relationship with God by making a conscious effort to pray daily, and to make time every single week to go to Mass. After all, as Fr. Larry Richards once said, "How can you expect to have a relationship with someone if you never spend time with them?" Mass is one the very best ways to spend time with Christ.

It has long been said that the best, most true romance story of all time is the account of the Passion. Jesus Christ is so madly in love with you that he chose to die for your salvation rather than face eternity without you. And unlike any other romance novel, even if his love for you is temporarily unrequited, he just keeps on loving you even more and never gives up on you.

As we approach the season of Lent, may you be encouraged to strengthen your relationship with Jesus Christ by getting to know him more and spending time basking in his love for you, all the while allowing yourself to be open to whatever he puts before you. Fall in love with him, and let him transform you into something beautiful. ✠



Faith Matters



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

Don't give anything up for Lent!

The scramble is about to begin, and the script has become familiar! *How did it get to be Lent? Aren't we were still basking in the afterglow of Christmas?* Then there's the big question, *What will I give up for Lent, Snickers? O'Henrys? All candy? Dessert?*

There's nothing wrong with giving up sweets or what we would classify as 'luxuries' (dining out, 'feasting'), but in 'giving up' we have missed something other than the liturgical calendar facts. We actually have missed some great benefits, graces which open up a whole richer experience.

Focussing on 'giving something up for Lent' is not bad, but it is a little like taking the wrapping off a Christmas present but not opening the box within and sharing in the delight of discovering the present inside—a delight, by the way, which others also will share in, particularly the giver of that gift. For the full effect of the gift we need to move from 'me' to 'we'!

The traditional practices of Lent have been neatly packaged as: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Prayer and fasting we understand, but 'almsgiving' doesn't figure in most contemporary conversations, unless your contemporaries lived in the 19th century.

The 'alms' part of almsgiving has particular relevance to us in this Year of Mercy, for while the word was commonly associated with money donated to help the poor, it comes to English through the Greek *eleēmoysnē*, meaning pity or mercy. Almsgiving then is a practical example of showing mercy to our vulnerable brothers and sisters.

The three Lenten practices are actually beautifully interrelated. True prayer is a not a one-way conversation, but a dialogue between Creator and created, Parent and child, Lover and beloved. Prayer as founded in a mutual relationship, then, entails attentiveness to the other and involves the work of listening, responding, and embracing the heart and mind of the other. With God, who is love poured out for others, it's not too difficult to realize that a relationship based on love demands a response, and a response to God beyond words entails action.

It is helpful then to recall that the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy lay out for us in concrete terms what Mercy looks like in action. Matthew 25:31 – 46 is the quick reference to the Corporal Works of Mercy (feeding the hungry, giving

drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, burying the dead). The Spiritual Works of Mercy come from early on in our tradition and reference the words Jesus used in the Gospels:

- To admonish the sinner: "...there will be more joy in Heaven at the repentance of one sinner than at ninety-nine of the righteous who had no need of repentance." Luke 15:7
- To instruct the ignorant: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation." Mark 16:15
- To counsel the doubtful: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you ... Let not your hearts be troubled." John 14:27
- To comfort the sorrowful: "Come to me, all you grown weary and burdened, and I will refresh you." Matthew 11:28
- To bear wrongs patiently: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you." Luke 6:27-28
- To forgive all injuries: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12
- To pray for the living and the dead: "Father, I desire that they, too, may be with me where I am." John 17:24

In this Year of Mercy, let us let us go a little deeper—let us also recall the 'why' behind the 'what' we give up. The One who is Love has called us into a loving relationship (an invitation to an on-going conversation—prayer), and, though our ever-deepening conscious attentiveness to God (the effort of giving up or fasting from our own needs in order to put God first) we deepen this loving relationship, wanting what God wants, making our heart after His own, and thus being inspired into loving action (almsgiving or mercy) for others. Don't 'give something up' for Lent—give Lent everything you've got! ✠

Mercy's Womb

by Jean Allen

There are many definitions of mercy, most circling around much the same idea. One definition is compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm. I doubt if many people go out to minister to the needy with the attitude that these people are under their power to punish or harm but when it comes to our own inner poverty, a subtle shift happens. There is a sense that we have the power to punish ourselves and that we should do so. We castigate ourselves for all sorts of failures to measure up and we invariably mete out the verdict of 'Guilty as charged'! We would never treat the hungry, dying, naked or imprisoned in that way so how can we convince the poor we meet 'out there' that they are worthy of mercy if we don't believe that the poor one inside of us is worthy of receiving that same mercy? We all act as condemnatory judges of our own faults and failings and if this is the home environment we live in 24/7, how will we find the grace we need to go out and offer true compassionate mercy to others who also desperately need it?

This self-administered justice system is sad because much of what we perceive as failure in our lives really isn't failure at all. There is a bar that has been raised by the world and it has subtly penetrated our world of spirituality. We feel the pressure in whatever we do to be the best, the most dependable and the ones who always have the time and energy to take on the needs of family, Church and the world. When stress, health, finances or personal tragedy keeps us from achieving that bar, we feel we have failed and let everyone down.

Everyone who feels the pressure to be everything to everyone has a common and deep human need: love and approval. But we all tend to reach for these things in the wrong places. The only love and approval that will fill that huge hole in our hearts is God's unconditional love and approval. So, where can we find that love?

Right in the center of His mercy.

However, when we're so maxed out with busyness, stress and beating up on ourselves, finding that love becomes impossible. We only find that our tanks are empty and that we are running on 'mercy fumes.'

The Hebrew word for mercy is *rachamim*, the root of which is *rechem*, which means womb. It is the kind of pity one would have for a child in the womb. This is not a mercy that starts out with all our wrongdoings and failures. This is a mercy that beholds our vulnerability and frailty and completely melts with love. This is a mercy that envelops and protects. This is the mercy we need to accept from God and, in turn, take out to the world. Then those with whom we share bread, clothing and our presence in the midst of their suffering will not only be offered just what they need physically or emotionally; they will also be authentically offered something God longs to pour out on all his people and something everyone is desperate for in the depths of their hearts: love, respect, dignity and approval.

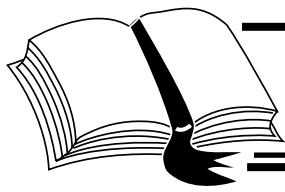
We need to finally grasp that "Lord, have mercy on me," does not mean, "Please don't punish me, God. Please don't beat me." It means, "Come, O Lord, and overflow me with your love that is better, deeper and stronger than a mother's love for the child within her womb. Let me see myself in the apple of your eye. Open my heart to the fact that I am precious, honoured and deeply loved." (Isaiah 43:4)

When we receive Christ's mercy, as he desires us to receive it, we will then be able to go out to others and say to them:

“I have seen what you want;
it is there,
a Beloved of infinite
tenderness.”

~ Consumed In Grace, St. Catherine of Siena ✠





Impressions



By Connie Dunwoody

I didn't recognize it when it happened. In fact, I didn't understand until very recently how pivotal my mom's death was for me. It wasn't the moment she died, not the days of work and mourning that followed, not the hollow emptiness that dogged me for months.

It was there, though. It came with that awful phone call. "Connie, it's Dave. Something terrible has happened."

I went utterly still. *Not one of the children*, I thought. My brother went right to the point, for which I will be forever grateful (I'm a bottom-line kind of person). "Mom's dead." My brain detached from my soul for a long moment. I found my voice, and asked three questions: *What happened?* (there was a fatal car crash; the male driver who hit my mom's car and killed the three women inside it was 17 years old), *Was there drinking involved?* (no); *Were drugs an issue?* (no).

“I think it is in those world-stopping moments that mercy has room to breathe and love is given the opportunity to rediscover its courage and its voice.

And then there was a life-changing pause. It was the kind of scene you see in movies where everything stops, nobody speaks and no one even dares to breathe. It was suspended animation, suspended time—suspended me. It was as though all creation was waiting to see what would happen next. It was an eternal moment punched in the fabric of reality, angels breathing peace, demons eager to condemn, yet no one moved. No one spoke. No sound penetrated my shocked heart, and above that roaring silence, He simply smiled, knowing.

And then He unleashed a torrent of grace. A cosmic, supernatural, indescribable deluge.

There really should be a visual for that because it must have been spectacular. Niagara Falls, but gentle. I imagine it was like an octopus I once unbelievably observed as it changed colour: the rainbow started at the head and repeatedly cascaded down its body in concentric rings until the desired blend was obtained. It happened in an instant. One moment it matched the coral, and the next, the rock.

It was like that for me. One moment I matched my past; the next, I was the colour of grace.

And then it cascaded out of my mouth. I had no choice. Not because I was powerless, not because someone was forcing me to speak; not because I thought it was what I should say, a societal convention I had to follow. No, it was because I was changed. Instantly. In the twinkling of an eye, Mercy happened.

"That poor, poor boy." I said.

I knew my mom's death would change me; all deaths change us in ways we can usually only see when we look in the rear-view mirror. And, in the way that 'death' can be many things to many people, so is grace manifested differently to each of us. But I think at least one aspect is consistent: *Grace* is receiving what you do not deserve; *mercy* is the giving-away of that grace; and *peace* is the result.

When I interviewed Bishop Gary for the September 2014 *Diocesan Messenger*, he said something that has stayed with me: "[You have to] say thanks, and then try to give it away," because, "There is no life like this. When you have a job description which is to simply say 'thank you' and get everybody else saying 'thank you' in a holy way through the Sacraments, and then to give it away, what better vocation is there?"

You just have to give it away. It was never intended to be held, hoarded, reserved for a rainy day. Grace contained is selfishness; it is meant to be received and then whooshed out of our heart, soul, eyes, mouth and hands. It's the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost. It's the conversion on the road to Emmaus. It's a woman drawing water from a well who encounters Christ in a life-changing moment.

It's the Upper Room, the groaning cross and an empty tomb. It's eyes that are suddenly opened; it is recognition. *Lord; it's You!*

Here's something else that's kind of amazing: grace carries us even as we carry it to others. It's tenderness and mercy pushed out to the world *through* us, not *because* of us. It's nothing we do, even though we're the ones engaged in the tasks, in the work. It's Him. It's *all* Him: we carry Him to others even as we are the ones being carried. We take Him to others not on our own strength but with the power of how He changed us.

That moment was my metamorphosis, and honestly, I know I'm still a huge work in progress. I've always been a Christian, I have always loved God, so it wasn't *that* kind of conversion. It's not that I wasn't tender before, but now my eyes see differently. It's not that I didn't have compassion before, but now the quality of that compassion contains mercy. It's not that I was 'bad' and now I'm 'good'. I know I'm hopelessly flawed and still a sinner, and I know I will be both those things for the rest of my life. I'm just profoundly *different*.

I think what happened is, I stopped being quite so worried about *me*. I stopped being anxious about doing the wrong thing or being the wrong person. Instead of glaring inwardly at myself so critically, I turned my eyes outward to truly see what He calls me to do, and—more importantly—who He calls me to be. In that moment, He acted through me and I became mercy, through His grace. A further grace: it not only affected others in profound and mysterious ways; it changed me irrevocably, in an instant. We tend to celebrate milestones, yet I believe life happens in a series of instants. I think it is in those world-stopping moments that mercy has room to breathe and love is given the opportunity to rediscover its courage and its voice.

There are and will be lots of moments. Maybe yours has already happened and, like me, you weren't aware of it at the time. Maybe your rear-view mirror will reveal things to you that you couldn't possibly see then. Maybe, reading this, you nod your head in recognition; or perhaps you have yet to experience this particular awareness. In the meantime ...

When you don't know what to do: *be tender*. When you don't know what to say: *speak kindness*. When you don't know how to act: *choose compassion*. Be in the world in the way He calls *you* to be. Receive the grace and let it cascade out of you as mercy.

Just say 'thank you', and give it away. ✠



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 Words of Pope John Paul II - 'Catechesis Tradendae'





Middle East Christians: Fewer in Number but More Visible than Ever Before

The presence and beliefs of Christians in the Middle East are now more visible and more accessible to the region's people than ever before, according to the founder and Executive Director of Christian TV network SAT-7, Dr. Terence Ascott. Despite the percentage of the Middle Eastern population that is Christian falling by 10 per cent over the last century (from around 14 to four per cent), Ascott said this small minority is sharing its faith today in ways that were "unthinkable" 20 years ago. And they are doing it at a time when violence in the name of religion is causing many in the region to question their inherited beliefs. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29306>

A Conversation with Islamic Scholar Maulana Wahduddin Khan

On 17 January 2016, Professor Edward J Alam and Dr Victor Edwin SJ interacted with Islamic scholar and peace activist, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan at his residence in New Delhi. Dr Alam is Professor at Notre Dame University, near Beirut, Lebanon, where he has taught philosophy and theology for twenty years. Dr Alam shared with Maulana Wahduddin Khan some of his experiences from Lebanon. After the Lebanese civil war, one of the reasons the country returned to normalcy was the tradition of harmonious relations between Christians and Muslims. In Lebanon, March 25, the day which is believed by many to be when the angel Gabriel made the Annunciation to Mary, has become a national holiday, which is celebrated jointly by Christians and Muslims. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29305>

Safeguarding and the Catholic Church in England and Wales

This year will see an increased focus on safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England and Wales with the start of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse, led by Judge Lowell Goddard. In agreement with the Bishops, the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission and the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service the CCN has put together the following update on safeguarding in the Catholic Church in order to ensure that Catholic parishioners are aware of the importance placed on safeguarding in the Church and the safeguarding procedures used across England and Wales. All allegations of abuse reported to the Church in England and Wales are immediately passed on to the police. The Church works closely and cooperatively with the statutory authorities as these allegations are investigated. <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29304>

CCCB President requests invitation to appear before Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying

Press release from CCCB, January 29, 2016

The Most Reverend Douglas Crosby OMI, Bishop of Hamilton and President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), has written to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, and the Minister of Health, the Honourable Jane Philpott, requesting that the Conference be invited to appear before the Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying. In his submission, Bishop Crosby states "that life is a sacred gift to be defended and protected. Our country, for its part, has made great strides over the decades in constructing 'safety nets' that help safeguard human lives from the worst onslaughts of poverty, in wisely agreeing to forego the use of capital punishment, and in challenging and questioning every call to war. These efforts, which we applaud, are in recognition of the

paramount importance of respecting and sustaining the life and inviolable dignity of individuals from conception to natural death."

In his letter, the President of the CCCB notes that, only a few years ago, members of Parliament had overwhelmingly supported proposals to make both palliative care and suicide prevention priorities for Canada. Bishop Crosby also points out recent statements and letters which highlight the position of the Church on physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia which he indicates is "a life and death issue": the Submission by the President of the CCCB to the Expert Panel on Options for a Legislative Response to *Carter v. Canada* (October 19, 2015); the joint Declaration on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide by the CCCB and The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (October 29, 2015); and the

letter to The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada (November 4, 2015).

In addition to the CCCB application, His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, has also requested an invitation to appear before the Joint Committee on behalf of the *Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience*. The Coalition comprises the Archdiocese of Toronto, the Christian Medical and Dental Society of Canada (CMDSC), the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF), the Canadian Federation of Catholic Physicians' Societies, the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, and Canadian Physicians for Life. ✕

Link to sign the Declaration
www.euthanasiadeclaration.ca

Vatican official: Pope's post-synod doc will be released in March

Vatican City, Jan 27, 2016 (CNA/EWTN News)

Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on family life following last year's synod will be published in March, says Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family.

In an interview with the Portuguese Catholic agency *Ecclesia*, Archbishop Paglia said that the Pope will release the document in March 2016, and that it will "show that the Church is close to families in all stages of their lives."

"I am convinced that the Apostolic Exhortation will be a hymn to love, to a love that will care for the well-being of children, that is open to wounded families who need strength, that wants to be close to the elder, a love that the whole of humanity needs," Paglia said.

The Italian archbishop is leading a week-long conference for the Catholic clergy of Portugal's Southern ecclesiastic provinces under the title "Family: Centrality, Renewal and Continuity."

The apostolic exhortation will be the conclusion of a multi-year synod process. In 2014 the Vatican hosted an Extraordinary Synod which was in preparation for the October 2015 Ordinary Synod. An estimated 190 bishops from around the world participated in each gathering.

The 2015 synod, which the Pope's exhortation is expected to focus on, was themed "the vocation and mission of the family in the church and the modern world."

The synods were surrounded by controversy, with hot-button topics of ministry to homosexuals and the divorced-and-remarried dominating media coverage.

Discussion in the synod hall also touched on such issues as marriage preparation, pornography, and domestic violence and abuse.

The apostolic exhortation is expected to be based on the final report from the synod, which was released October 24. That report reflected collegiality among the bishops, though two of the 94 paragraphs were included by only a slim margin. ✕

“I am convinced that the Apostolic Exhortation will be a hymn to love, to a love that will care for the well-being of children, that is open to wounded families who need strength, that wants to be close to the elder, a love that the whole of humanity needs.”

~ Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia



The works of mercy on the road of the Jubilee

(continued from page 1)

hearing required of every Jew by the *Shema*, which today too is the heart of God's covenant with Israel: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (*Dt* 6:4-5). As the Son of God, he is the Bridegroom who does everything to win over the love of his bride, to whom he is bound by an unconditional love which becomes visible in the eternal wedding feast.

This is the very heart of the apostolic *kerygma*, in which divine mercy holds a central and fundamental place. It is "the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 36), that first proclamation which "we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment" (*ibid.*, 164). Mercy "expresses God's way of reaching out to the sinner, offering him a new chance to look at himself, convert, and believe" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 21), thus restoring his relationship with him. In Jesus crucified, God shows his desire to draw near to sinners, however far they may have strayed from him. In this way he hopes to soften the hardened heart of his Bride.

The works of mercy

God's mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love, to become merciful in turn. In an ever new miracle, divine mercy shines forth in our lives, inspiring each of us to love our neighbour and to devote ourselves to what the Church's tradition calls the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These works remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbours in body and spirit: by feeding, visiting, comforting and instructing them. On such things will we be judged. For this reason, I expressed my hope that "the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; this will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty, and to enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy" (*ibid.*, 15). For in the poor, the flesh of Christ "becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, and the exiled... to be

acknowledged, touched, and cared for by us" (*ibid.*). It is the unprecedented and scandalous mystery of the extension in time of the suffering of the Innocent Lamb, the burning bush of gratuitous love. Before this love, we can, like Moses, take off our sandals (cf. *Ex* 3:5), especially when the poor are our brothers or sisters in Christ who are suffering for their faith.


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In the light of this love, which is strong as death (cf. *Song* 8:6), the real poor are revealed as those who refuse to see themselves as such. They consider themselves rich, but they are actually the poorest of the poor. This is because they are slaves to sin, which leads them to use wealth and power not for the service of God and others, but to stifle within their hearts the profound sense that they too are only poor beggars. The greater their power and wealth, the more this blindness and deception can grow. It can even reach the point of being blind to Lazarus begging at their doorstep (cf. *Lk* 16:20-21). Lazarus, the poor man, is a figure of Christ, who through the poor pleads for our conversion. As such, he represents the possibility of conversion which God offers us and which we may well fail to see. Such blindness is often accompanied by the proud illusion of our own omnipotence, which reflects in a sinister way the diabolical "you will be like God" (*Gen* 3:5) which is the root of all sin. This illusion can likewise take social and political forms, as shown by the totalitarian systems of the twentieth century, and, in our own day, by the ideologies of

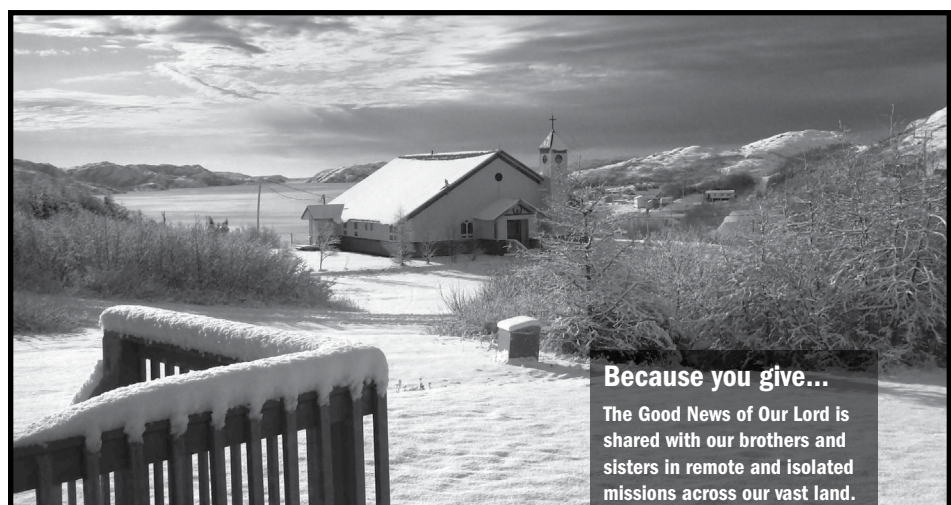
monopolizing thought and technoscience, which would make God irrelevant and reduce man to raw material to be exploited. This illusion can also be seen in the sinful structures linked to a model of false development based on the idolatry of money, which leads to lack of concern for the fate of the poor on the part of wealthier individuals and societies; they close their doors, refusing even to see the poor.

For all of us, then, the season of Lent in this Jubilee Year is a favourable time to overcome our existential alienation by listening to God's word and by practicing the works of mercy. In the corporal works of mercy we touch the flesh of Christ in our brothers and sisters who need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, visited; in the spiritual works of mercy – counsel, instruction, forgiveness, admonishment and prayer – we touch more directly our own sinfulness. The corporal and spiritual works of mercy must never be separated. By touching the flesh of the crucified Jesus in the suffering, sinners can receive the gift of realizing that they too are poor and in need. By taking this path, the "proud", the "powerful" and the "wealthy" spoken of in the *Magnificat* can also be embraced and undeservedly loved by the crucified Lord who died and rose for them. This love alone is the answer to that yearning for infinite happiness and love that we think we can satisfy with the idols of knowledge, power and riches. Yet the danger always remains that by a constant refusal to open the doors of their hearts to Christ who knocks on them in the poor, the proud, rich and powerful will end up condemning themselves and plunging into the eternal abyss of solitude which is Hell. The pointed words of Abraham apply to them and to all of us: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" (*Lk* 16:29). Such attentive listening will best prepare us to celebrate the final victory over sin and death of the Bridegroom, now risen, who desires to purify his Betrothed in expectation of his coming.

Let us not waste this season of Lent, so favourable a time for conversion! We ask this through the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, who, encountering the greatness of God's mercy freely bestowed upon her, was the first to acknowledge her lowliness (cf. *Lk* 1:48) and to call herself the Lord's humble servant (cf. *Lk* 1:38). ✠

During this year of Mercy we are called to fulfil the mission of Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel; to celebrate our faith in Word and Sacrament; to serve those in need; to provide pastoral care and healing; and to guide people to live in faith, hope and love.



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The Diocese of Victoria
is pleased to welcome

Dr. Moira McQueen LLB MDiv PhD

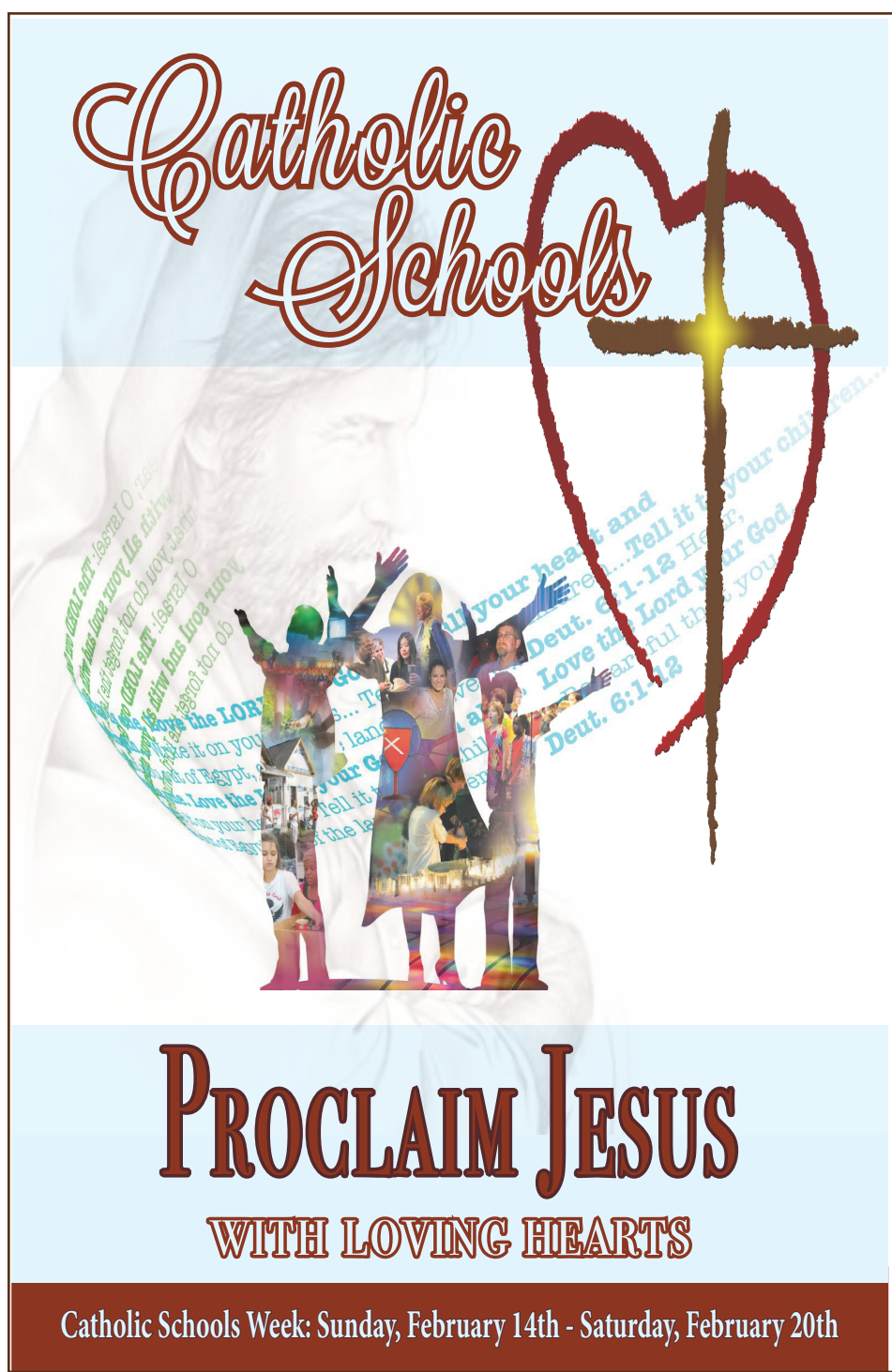
Executive Director of the
Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute

Professor McQueen teaches moral theology in the Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College. In 2015 Pope Francis appointed Dr. McQueen as an Auditor at the Synod of Bishops on the Family, and in September 2014, he appointed her as a new member to the International Theological Commission for a five-year term.

Professor McQueen will be visiting the Diocese of Victoria from April 11 – 13, 2016. She will be speaking about *Current issues regarding end-of-life decision making* to members of the Clergy, as well as hospital staff at St. Joseph's General Hospital in Comox.

Professor McQueen will speak at two parish sessions: one in Courtenay (Christ the King parish) and one in Victoria (St. Patrick's parish). Further information will be provided in your parish bulletins and on line at www.rcdvictoria.org.

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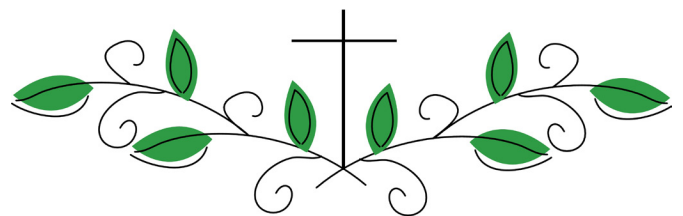


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