

Logo reflects *Rooted in Christ* vision

A new logo for the diocese of Saskatoon reflects the theme of a recently-launched diocesan vision: *Rooted in Christ*.

Designed by diocesan webmaster Cary Molyneux, the logo features three trees, with the trunk of the central figure reaching down, signifying deep roots in Christ. At the same time, the trees are reaching out with dynamic, flame-like branches, signifying our Christian call to reach out to the whole world.

Symbols of strength and life, the trees are coloured green, a colour related to the province of Saskatchewan and illustrating growth, life, springtime and renewal.

The three trees, each with three larger central branches, are reminiscent of the Trinity in which each Christian is baptized – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The triad also represents three levels of our faith connection – the universal Catholic Church, the diocese of Saskatoon and the local parish.

The group of trees signifies our collective strength as Christian people and parishioners of this diocese, recalling the importance of community, and of working together towards a common vision, rooted in Christ and united in our faith.



Newsletter of the Diocese of Saskatoon

Visit us on the web at: www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com

Spring 2009



Precious gifts

Josie Norris (left) and Brady Gauchier prepare to bring forth the gifts with help from catechist Cherryl Schumacher at a Sunday celebration of the Eucharist at St. Anne's parish in Delisle. During the celebration Bishop Albert LeGatt commissioned local volunteers working on the diocesan *Uniting in Faith* campaign to build a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre.

New translations of Lectionary and Roman Missal on the way

As of Pentecost, May 31, 2009, a revised Lectionary containing the scripture readings for Sundays and Solemnities will be officially implemented across Canada – including in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon – although most people probably won't notice the changes, said Bishop Albert LeGatt.

This revised edition of the Lectionary for Sundays and Solemnities replaces the earlier version published in 1992 by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC). Both were adapted from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV).

The 2009 revised edition of the Lectionary becomes the version officially approved by the Catholic bishops of Canada and authorized by the Holy See for liturgical use by Catholics of the Roman rite in Canada.

The new Sunday Lectionary will eventually be followed by revised editions of other materials, including the ritual and weekday volumes and revisions to psalms in the Catholic Book of Worship hymnal.

"The revision was called for by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (at the Vatican) to address certain portions of the text which needed more precise translation," explained Bishop LeGatt.

Changes are also on the way related to a new more-literal translation of the Roman Missal (or Sacramentary) from Latin to English – but these are still being finalized

and will probably be implemented in a couple of years, said Bishop LeGatt.

Once implemented, these changes will be noticeable in the prayers of the Mass and in some of the assembly's prayer responses, he said. There will also be instructions related to the posture at different points in the liturgy.

This is part of a world-wide look at the translation of the Latin texts into the vernacular of many languages after Vatican II, not only English, the bishop noted.

Over the next couple of years there will be catechesis and information sessions about the upcoming changes to the Mass prayers, LeGatt said.

Archbishop Raymond Lahey of Antigonish will be in Saskatoon Tuesday, June 16, presenting information to priests, Parish Life Directors and all those responsible for planning liturgy. Lahey is the CCCC representative on the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) that is working on the new translation.

"Resources for teaching on the liturgy, and explanation of the changes, will also be prepared by the National Liturgy Office, to be used in dioceses once the changes come about," said LeGatt. He said an extensive process of consultation into the translation is currently underway, involving the ICEL and the national bishops' conferences in English-speaking countries around the world.

Diocesan Pastoral Council discusses campaign and vision

Two major initiatives in the diocese of Saskatoon were the focus of discussions at recent meetings of the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC).

The progress of the *Uniting in Faith* campaign to build a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre, and the implementation of the *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision were the focus of DPC discussions in both February and April.

The DPC includes representatives from the seven deaneries in the diocese, as well as from Catholic organizations and groups. A consultative and advisory body, the DPC meets regularly with Bishop Albert LeGatt.

Across the diocese of Saskatoon volunteers are undertaking the *Uniting in Faith* campaign. While some parishes have already reached or exceeded their fundraising goal for the new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre, others have yet to start the campaign, the DPC heard.

About two-thirds of the diocesan goal to raise \$12.5 million for the project has now been reached, reported development officer Don Gorsalitz. Holy Family Parish has now raised nearly all of its \$16 million share of the building which will be its new parish home.

Gorsalitz stressed the importance of engaging the whole diocese in building the Catholic Centre and Cathedral. "It's not a question of whether we're going to be successful. Of course, we're going to be successful; this project is going ahead and we have the capacity as a diocese to do this and much more. But we don't want just 500

families building our diocesan home. We need all of our 20,000 families across the whole diocese to build our diocesan home," he said.

Breaking out of the idea that parishes exist in isolation is a major benefit of the entire process, he said. "We as a diocesan community have to continue building these relationships, and as a faith community continue to provide support for each other."

Challenges of recruiting volunteers, and accomplishing the home visits that are the most effective method to campaign, were also discussed. Reporting how the campaign is being received in their particular parishes and deaneries, DPC representatives agreed that support for the project depends on how well people understand the role of the diocese and their own connection to the diocesan church.

"Often people simply need some more information," said Susan Seidel of Kindersley, who represents Eatonia deanery on the DPC. "The more prayers there are about it, and the more education there is, the Holy Spirit will open our hearts," she said at the February meeting.

Rose-Anne Kielo, a representative of the Saskatoon Rural Deanery on the DPC, described how her parish in Delisle is organizing a number of fund-raising events as a way to permit people of all ages and incomes to contribute. "We want every person to feel part of this *Uniting in Faith* effort," she said at the April DPC meeting.

DPC - PAGE 2



Diocesan celebration

Priests from across the diocese renewed their commitment to priestly service April 6 at the annual diocesan Chrism Mass. Representatives from across the diocese also attended, receiving the sacred oils blessed by Bishop Albert LeGatt, and used in the sacraments over the next year.



Members of the Conquest boys' club carry the cross on Good Friday.



Our Lady of Guadalupe parish members.

Way of the Cross features prayers for justice and peace

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The suffering of Christ was linked to issues of justice and peace during a downtown Way of the Cross Good Friday morning in Saskatoon.

Over 700 people of all ages took part in the two and a half hour walk, following the cross as it was carried by volunteers, singing hymns along the way, and stopping to pray at 14 stations, led by a variety of community groups and representatives in an ecumenical effort organized April 10 by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon Office for Justice and Peace.

At the first station on the steps of the federal courthouse, Catholic Bishop Albert LeGatt, Anglican Bishop Rodney Andrews, and Bishop Cynthia Halmarson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) joined together in a reflection about faith.

LeGatt prayed that the walk through the city, reflecting on the struggles and injustices in the world, would inspire participants “to be faithful in turn to all the poor, the suffering and wounded of our world” and to respond with concrete actions that are “courageous, visionary and self-sacrificing.”

At a medical building, members of the Filipino community reflected and prayed about the food industry, before members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish carried the cross to the third station outside Knox United Church, where Parish Life Director Verna Vandale led a reflection about issues in the inner city.

“It is a great sadness, when we see our people enslaved by poverty, alcohol, drugs and racism. These people are often alone and

Uniting In Faith... for justice

vulnerable, suffering because of who they are,” she said, calling for a Church that will be a living, breathing community that “offers hope, kindness, acceptance and love to all people, regardless of what their circumstances might be.”

Restorative ministry was the theme at the fourth station’s reflection *Jesus meets his mother*. It is in the love of a mother for a child where the mothers of victims and the mothers of condemned criminals can perhaps meet in solidarity, said a representative of restorative justice ministries, standing outside of the HMCS Unicorn building. “This intersection of hearts too is marked by a cross. It is a place of paradox and a place of strength,” she said. “Only in the cross do justice and restoration meet ... Jesus asks us to join in this circle of life, where reconciliation is at the root of all relationships.”

Representatives of St. Michael, St. Patrick and St. Peter the Apostle parishes in Saskatoon carried the cross to a liquor store, leading a reflection about human trafficking.

Saskatoon Native Ministries led prayers about missing Aboriginal women at the sixth station.

Alternative energy was the theme explored by members of the Inter-Church Uranium Committee outside of the CTV building, while a representative of the anti-poverty social action group Equal Justice for All spoke about unemployment outside the Canada Employment Building on 22nd Street.

Members of the Conquest boys’ club carried the cross to the ninth station, praying for youth and the issues that they encounter in schools.

Development and Peace representatives prayed about violence at the tenth station, while University of Saskatchewan campus ministry representatives addressed the issue of affordable housing, and members of the environmental organization Earthcare prayed about the recent financial collapse.

Members of the Powell family representing St. Augustine parish in Saskatoon, carried the cross to the Saskatoon cabinet office to reflect on “who is the stranger.”

At the fourteenth station, representatives of the diocesan Office for Justice and Peace stood at the steps of St. Paul’s Cathedral to reflect and pray about genocide.

“Jesus continues to live and die in our sisters and brothers in the world over,” said one justice and peace spokesperson, reflecting on the concentration camps of World War II, the dropping of the nuclear bomb, the forced famine in the Ukraine, and the Rwandan massacre. “And for the Burmese people; the Palestinian people; the Sudanese people of Darfur; indigenous people throughout the world; the hundreds of thousands of women, girls and boys trafficked for sexual slavery; and the people for whom you would like to pray in silence,” added director Tony Haynes, before the assembled crowd prayed the Lord’s Prayer together to end the event.

The diocesan Office for Justice and Peace is supported by the Bishop’s Annual Appeal.

Diocesan Pastoral Council reflection

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

With “diocesan unity” one of six priorities identified in the *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision, the current focus on the *Uniting in Faith* campaign certainly relates to the vision as well, said DPC executive secretary Diane Cote of St. John Bosco parish.

The other priorities outlined in the *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision are evangelization; life-long faith formation; liturgy and worship; justice and peace; and building and sustaining community.

Ways to highlight and implement the *Rooted in Christ* vision at the deanery and parish levels were explored.

“It starts as a visioning process,” suggested Cote, describing discussions that recently took place at the Saskatoon City Deanery about the diocesan vision. The DPC reviewed methods for reflecting on the vision and coming up with a plan of action for one or two of the priorities.

It is important to ensure the diocesan vision doesn’t “fall off the table” as members come and go on a parish or deanery council, noted Arden Andreas of Lancer, who represents Catholic Connections and the Knights of Columbus on the DPC.

One suggestion was to make the *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision a standing item on parish council and deanery agendas, ensuring regular reports and reflections related to some aspect of the vision will happen at every meeting. - KLY

Canadian bishops send committee to Mexico to investigate allegations

OTTAWA – A committee of inquiry of the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) visited Mexico April 15-19 to look into allegations about five Mexican organizations that received project funding from the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace.

The committee is now preparing a report for the CCCC permanent council. The bishops of Canada will then be notified of the results of the inquiry, after which the results will be made public.

While in Mexico, the members of the committee met with representatives of the Episcopal Conference of Mexico and with senior representatives of the organizations mentioned in the allegations. Prior to the inquiry,

information had circulated which suggested these groups had expressed support for abortion, although the organizations have denied this.

The committee of inquiry is chaired by Archbishop Martin W. Currie of St. John’s, Newfoundland, and Bishop François Lapierre, PMÉ, of Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. Assisting them are Msgr. Mario Paquette, PH, CCCC general secretary, and Msgr. Carlos Quintana Puente, CSS, from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops where he is executive director of its Secretariat for the Church in Latin America.

The visit to Mexico provided an opportunity for the committee to investigate the specific issues raised by the Mexican allegations as well

as letting it see first-hand how Development and Peace approaches its work with its partners in the global south.

Development and Peace was founded by the Bishops of Canada in 1967 as their official agency for development work and emergency

relief in the global south. It is also the Canadian branch of *Caritas Internationalis*. The CCCC website is at: www.cccb.ca

Episcopal Corporation of Saskatoon Operating fund revenue and expenses

For year end June 30, 2008

	2008	2007
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Bishop’s Appeal	\$1,107,952	\$1,078,572
Parish assessments	961,953	942,380
Investment income	176,491	365,657
Donations	771,493	738,859
Brazil collections	146,558	17,012
Ministry	228,077	123,773
Sundry	874,179	188,355
	<u>4,266,703</u>	<u>3,454,608</u>
EXPENSES		
Pastoral services	1,134,128	955,838
Outreach grants & donations	* 6,178,973	937,142
Clergy and vocations	435,934	392,207
Brazil mission	146,355	138,187
Administration and chancery	1,536,419	912,399
Parish support	161,986	123,441
	<u>9,593,795</u>	<u>3,459,214</u>
Revenue less expenses before the undernoted:	* (5,327,092)	(4,606)
Loss on disposal of property	(7,818)	150,375
Loss on disposal of investments	(260,033)	-
Unrealized gains in the market value of investments:	25,384	311,766
REVENUE, LESS EXPENSES:	<u>(5,569,559)</u>	<u>457,535</u>
FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR:	<u>6,871,714</u>	<u>6,414,179</u>
FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR:	<u>\$ 1,302,155</u>	<u>\$ 6,871,714</u>

* A donation of \$5,452,027 was made to the Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation.

With funding from the Bishop’s Annual Appeal,
this newsletter is published twice per year
(spring/summer & fall/winter)

by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Editor: Kiply Lukan Yaworski, Communications Coordinator

Phone: 306-242-1500 or 306-651-3935

or toll free at: 1-877-661-5005 Fax: 244-6010

Mail: 100 - 5th Avenue North, Saskatoon, SK S7K 2N7

Email: communications@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

Web page: www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com

Are not our hearts burning within us?

BY LEAH PERRAULT
DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL SERVICES

One of the daily readings in the week following Easter recalled the story of the disciples encountering the risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus. As I stood in prayer with the staff at the Catholic Centre, listening to the reading, I found myself laughing at just how often Christ walks among us unnoticed by us, his followers.

We are busy people, in a culture of busy people. Busy people are productive, contributing to important efforts, offering their gifts for sharing, driving kids and grandkids to soccer, dance and catechism, and who knows what else! Despite the great joy and life we find in our faith, the parishes, ministries and people that make up our diocese are rarely a refuge from the busy life.

The *Uniting in Faith* Campaign is well underway where it isn't looming large as the next big project to tackle. Some parishes



Touching the Cloak
Leah Perrault

have exceeded the highest goal, while others are still grappling with the challenges. In all cases, the campaign is calling on the time and energy of our people and bringing

out the deepest concerns and issues of our people. This has been a surprising time of blessing for us, as we cannot respond to concerns and questions that are not voiced. Many parish volunteers are reporting back that the time taken to visit the parish families is bearing fruit far beyond the dollars generated for the campaign.

Many parishes in the diocese are also responding to the restored order of initiation, in the final stages of confirming young people from ages seven to thirteen. Some parishes have begun the *Steps in Faith* program for adolescents, bringing creative solutions to youth catechesis and ministry. Wadena, Humboldt, Macklin areas (among others) are working hard to respond to the needs of our young people. Eleven city parishes are preparing to welcome teams of young people who will be converging in Saskatoon for the Catholic Christian Outreach Impact mission this summer.

This spring, the Canadian Association for Parish Nursing Ministry is hosting their annual conference in the diocese and One More Soul Canada is hosting a national Theology of the Body conference. Plans are well underway for a Marriage Conference to be hosted by the diocesan Marriage Task Force in March of 2010. The Lay Formation, Foundations and Rural Catechetics programs add to the learning opportunities available to us right here in the diocese. If we can make the time, there is no shortage of opportunities to be formed in faith.

With all these things to do, not to mention all the worthwhile programs and efforts underway in our parishes, workplaces, communities and families, it is no small miracle if we can recognize Christ walking alongside us. Our diocesan vision, unveiled last fall, calls us to be people *Rooted in Christ*. Only when we feel our hearts burning inside us, in the midst of all that we

are called to do, will we be able to be and become the followers of Jesus.

As we continue to journey together as a family of faith, I invite you to call the Catholic Pastoral Centre if our walking with you would be helpful. Further, as we unite in faith as a people rooted in Christ, I encourage you to call your neighbouring parishes and friends to support and inspire one another.

This Easter season, our challenge is to see Christ in and to be Christ for one another. We are called to firmly root ourselves in the God who loves us unconditionally, so that we can tend to aging parents, care for our children, reach out to the suffering and grow in our faithfulness. Indeed, Jesus is walking among us, breaking open the scriptures in the activities and appointments that keep us busy. He can minister to and with us in our busy lives, not only when we manage to escape them.

Forty hours of prayer for life over 40 days of Lent

For one hour a day over 40 days, prayers for life were offered on the street outside Saskatoon City Hospital.

From Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday an average of between 12 and 15 people participated in the prayer walk for life, calling for an end to abortion.

Dubbed "Exodus 2009," the event was organized by Elaine Millette, Denise Hounjet-Roth and Carol Tokaruk of Saskatoon, as a way to share in the "Forty Days For Life" prayer movement happening across Canada and the United States. In larger centres, round-the-clock prayer vigils are organized for 40 days – a commitment beyond the resources of the Saskatoon pro-life community, said Millette.

"We didn't know what the response would be," she said of the Lenten project, describing how organizers ensured that at least two were booked to pray the hour from 4:30 to 5:30 each day. In the end, the smallest number that came out on any given day was seven, and the most was 23. Friendships were formed among some

of the regular "prayer warriors," she noted. "For some of them it was quite a personal thing to come out. One woman said 'I don't want to sign up, but I have to sign up, this is something I have to do.' I felt like that too."

Challenges included some bitterly cold weather, as well as negative and sometimes angry feedback from a few passers-by, Millette said. "But there was definitely more positive than negative," she stressed, adding that some conversations revealed to her the need for more prayer. "I know that prayer can change hearts."

Organizers are already looking ahead to next year. "We're definitely going to do this again," she said of the Lenten project, suggesting next year it might take place at Royal University Hospital, where abortions are also performed.

Members of the Saskatchewan Pro-Life Association took part in a pro-life March on the Legislature in Regina May 7, and a national convention will be held in Saskatoon this October. Visit the website at: www.saskprolife.com



Prayers for life were offered outside Saskatoon City Hospital in Lent.



"Be of the same mind, having the same love... that was in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:2,5

Dear Friends,

This report marks a wonderful milestone: we celebrate 25 years of the Bishop's Annual Appeal in our diocese.

Each fall since 1984, you have been asked to share and participate in ministries such as those listed here. Each year, you have responded with faithful generosity.

This success is noted not only in numbers and dollar signs, although these are tangible measures. More importantly, we acknowledge the services provided, the programs developed, and the ministry shared in faith and love with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

For this I congratulate you, I salute you and I thank you.

This allocations report indicates the disbursement of your gifts among the faith education programs, ministries and services designated in the 2008 Appeal. The total pledged to date is \$1,438,555. Parish Sharing Incentive rebates have been issued to

48 parishes (having exceeded their parish guidelines) for their own initiatives. BAA expenses for administration and educational materials remain at 6% of the total pledged.

To those who support the Appeal through prayer, those who share their financial gifts, and those who serve as volunteers for the BAA in their parish communities, I offer my heartfelt thanks. May God bless you always.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Albert LeGatt
Most Rev. Albert LeGatt
Bishop of Saskatoon

Bishop's Annual Appeal
100 - 5th Avenue North
Saskatoon, SK S7K 2N7
Phone: (306) 242-1500 ext. 242
Toll Free: 1-877-661-5005
E-mail: baa@saskatoonrcdiocese.com



All gifts are used exclusively for the ministry of the Bishop's Annual Appeal

BAA ANNUAL REPORT

2008 ALLOCATIONS

Catholic Christian Outreach	\$ 5,000
Catholic Deaf Ministry	\$ 8,000
Catholic Family Services	\$ 50,000
Communications	\$ 74,000
Ecumenism	\$ 23,000
Education of Laity for Ministry	\$ 17,000
Education of Priests & Future Priests	\$ 65,000
Friendship Inn	\$ 30,000
Grants in Support of Rural Ministry	\$ 40,000
Hospital Chaplaincy	\$ 40,000
L'Arche Saskatoon	\$ 5,000
Lay Formation Program	\$ 137,000
Liturgy Commission	\$ 10,000
Marriage & Family Life	\$ 15,000
Ministry Development	\$ 62,000
Native Religious Ministry	\$ 67,000
Newman Centre/Campus Ministry	
- St. Thomas More College	\$ 5,000
Office for Justice & Peace	\$ 9,000
Priests' Pension Fund	\$ 130,000
Resource Library	\$ 30,000
Rural Catechetics	\$ 114,000
St. Paul's Hospital	
- Spiritual Care	\$ 7,000
St. Peter's College	\$ 25,000
Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation	\$ 5,000
Scripture Resources & Small Christian Communities	\$ 28,000
Support of Life	\$ 8,000
Teen-Aid	\$ 36,000
Youth Ministry	\$ 48,000

PARISH SHARING INCENTIVE \$ 233,808

Administration \$ 84,219*

TOTAL RECEIVED TO April 15, 2009 \$1,411,027

* Amount projected to June 30, 2009

Aboriginal Stream Advisory Committee wraps up years of ground-breaking work on unique formation program

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The first participants in a ground-breaking Aboriginal Lay Formation program will be missioned in June.

The Aboriginal stream of Lay Formation was created as a joint project of three Roman Catholic dioceses: Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Keewatin-Le Pas.

Aboriginal Lay Formation happens in conjunction with formation offered collaboratively by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and by the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon. The three streams – Aboriginal, diocesan and eparchial – provide faith formation, spiritual development and an experience of Christian community to all participants.

The three streams run concurrently, one weekend a month from September to June over two years. Participants from all three streams spend time together for some sessions and presentations, and also meet in their individual groups to explore faith and

Uniting In Faith...

to provide faith formation

spirituality in the context of their own traditions and cultures.

An Aboriginal Stream Advisory Committee worked on behalf of the three bishops to develop the program. Saskatoon Bishop Albert LeGatt and Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie of Keewatin-Le Pas presented committee members with certificates of appreciation at a recent celebration held to mark the conclusion of the committee's work.

Kathy Hitchings, one of the Lay Formation coordinators, briefly described the history of the Aboriginal Lay Formation program, which had its beginnings in a Native Dialogue group that began in 2004.

"We always had aboriginal people coming to our Lay Formation program, but we wanted to be more welcoming and sensitive to their needs," Hitchings said. "As we were gathered to listen and learn



Members of the Aboriginal Stream Advisory Committee gathered recently to mark the end of their work in establishing an Aboriginal Lay Formation program. Standing (l-r): Mona Goodman, Germaine Lafond, Agnes Pelletier, Leah Perrault, Michael Averyt, Donna Kristian, Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie, Ivan and Kathy Hitchings; seated (l-r): Bishop Albert LeGatt, Gayle Weenie, Sr. Bonnie Komarnicki, SSML, Irene Sharp, Cecilia Morin and Sr. Marijka Konderewicz, SSML. Committee members who were unable to attend included: Vivian Whitehawk; Fr. Bill Bernard, CSSR; Harry Lafond; Frank and Jenny Munroe; Fr. Bill Stang, OMI; Verna Vandale; Sr. Cecile Fahl, SMS; Dr. Cecil King; Sr. Ethel Detz; and Bishop Albert Thevenot of Prince Albert.

and pray together, the idea of having an aboriginal stream of Lay Formation came forth."

The idea certainly grew out of the successful collaboration between the diocese and the eparchy of Saskatoon, in which Eastern Rite Ukrainian Catholics journey alongside diocesan Lay Formation participants in a unique, jointly coordinated program, she noted.

In January 2005, the bishops of Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Keewatin-Le Pas gave their support to the idea of developing an Aboriginal Lay Formation stream, and the advisory committee was established to develop the program. An intense period of planning was launched, with committee members considering how the program would work: "looking at topics, looking at presenters, looking at prayer, looking at community life," Hitchings recalled.

Vivian Whitehawk was hired as coordinator of Aboriginal Lay Formation and the first two-year program began in the fall of 2007, with 11 participants in the Aboriginal stream, 13 in the Eparchial program, and 20 in the Saskatoon diocesan program. Of that original combined Lay Formation group, 35 are expected to graduate in June.

Throughout the first two years of the program, the Aboriginal Stream Advisory Committee has continued to provide support and consultation, Hitchings said. Although there have been a few "wrinkles and hiccups" along the way, the shared program has been overwhelmingly positive, she said.

"When we look at the level of respectful sharing; the way attitudes have shifted and changed among people; the way the learning has helped us to really come to know each other in new and wonderful ways; the shared friendship; the shared faith; the shared prayer – it has been a wonderful, wonderful experience," Hitchings said.

"I think formation in our program has always been a kingdom experience. We bring people together and the whole point is to be in a place where they can relax, and God can work in them to become fully who God intends them to be," she said.

Blessings of the Aboriginal Lay Formation program were shared by committee members during the March 26 celebration, with several noting how it provides much-needed encouragement and support to Aboriginal people as they live out

their Catholic faith. Others observed how the program has broadened understanding among committee and team members, and among all those participating in the program.

Aboriginal Lay Formation is "a way of sharing, of building spirituality and of building up the church community," said Germaine Lafond, who participated on the advisory committee along with her husband Harry Lafond. The experience provides a way for aboriginal people to "take ownership" of their faith, and bring their gifts to the church, she added.

"The blessing that I've seen as I walked in this last year with Lay Formation is the whole unfolding of God right there in front of us as we walked together in respect, dignity, and love," said team member Mona Goodman.

"It opened me up as a person to want to help my people. We really need help in our communities," said committee member Cecilia Morin. "I feel like we're all one, united together for God."

Committee member Gayle Weenie, expressed appreciation for all the work done by the Lay Formation team in making the program a reality.

Bishop Albert LeGatt said the Lay Formation program is one part of a much larger picture that includes reconciliation among peoples and healing of the hurts caused by residential schools. "A lot of the things we talk about in terms of greater understanding, greater respect, greater cooperation – we are seeing that happening at Lay Formation," observed Bishop LeGatt, noting that participants will also take that new understanding back to their parishes and local communities.

"This gives me hope," Archbishop Lavoie said of the program, noting that it is unique in Canada.

For more information about Lay Formation (which is supported by the BAA) contact the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 242-1500.

Program participants share blessings with children in parish and community

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

For Myrtle Ballantyne and Betty Highway, the blessings of the Aboriginal Lay Formation program are making a real difference to children in their community of Pelican Narrows.

The two women have grown in faith and understanding, prayer and community as part of the inaugural class of the Aboriginal Lay Formation program offered in Saskatoon, participating one weekend a month for nearly two years. It's a huge commitment that demands time away from their families, but both say it's been worth it.

"It has helped me a lot, to understand more about my faith," said Highway. In turn, the program is helping the women to reach out and share their faith with children in their community.

Highway and Ballantyne are among those at their home parish of St. Gertrude who recently helped establish a catechism program, now offered to seven different age groups on weekday afternoons. Ballantyne and Highway teach the Grade 2 program, presenting lessons, scripture and learning activities.

Highway and Ballantyne also lead a children's liturgy program during Sunday Mass at St. Gertrude – something which is drawing more children to church. Up to 70 children are participating each week, said Ballantyne.

"Before this, on Sundays, some of the kids didn't come to church. Now, with activities and a program for them, they want to be there," said Ballantyne. Parents have also come up and expressed appreciation for what the children are learning, she added.

"With this Sunday activity, there's more interest in learning about the meaning of our Lord and Saviour," Ballantyne said.



Myrtle Ballantyne (left) and Betty Highway of Pelican Narrows say Lay Formation is making a difference in people's lives.

"We are making a difference," added Highway. "Walking around the community we can see these kids: they wave at us, with a smile on their face. They remember. What we teach them helps their inner spirit."

Highway also holds regular after-school gatherings in her home, where youngsters can come and watch a DVD, spend time with their friends and enjoy a snack. "Without this, they're just moping around with nothing to do. It makes me happy to be able to do this."

Needed supplies for the after-school outreach were recently collected by fellow Lay Formation participants – a spontaneous response to hearing stories the women were sharing about their experiences in reaching out to children in the community.

Support that one gets from others in the program is an important part of the Lay Formation experience, said

Highway, reflecting on how the late Steven Ballantyne encouraged her to undertake the program and to stick with it.

"That was how I got involved. When I wanted to give up he'd say: 'finish what you started.' He inspired me, and really, really encouraged us all."

The Aboriginal Stream of Lay Formation is a joint project of three dioceses – Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Keewatin-Le Pas. The Aboriginal Stream, which began in September 2007, joined the existing Lay Formation Program shared between the diocese of Saskatoon and the eparchy of Saskatoon. Participants from all three streams will be commissioned in June.

For more information about Lay Formation contact Kathy Hitchings, Mona Goodman or Vivian Whitehawk at the Catholic Pastoral Centre in the diocese of Saskatoon: 242-1500 or toll free 1-877-661-5005.

Wishart parish celebrates 100th anniversary of first Mass

One hundred years ago, the first Mass was celebrated in Wishart, Saskatchewan.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish in Wishart will celebrate this 100th anniversary Sunday, June 21.

Bishop Albert LeGatt will preside at a Mass with confirmations, beginning at 2 p.m.

A parish supper and program will follow. Supper is \$15 per plate, and the deadline for tickets is June 1.

Contact Glen and Chris Hall at 306-576-2440. Everyone is welcome. If you have ever lived in Wishart please join the celebration.



Brian Zerr (right) and Emily Mann of Christopher House met with L'Arche Founder Jean Vanier during a summer gathering in Calgary.

- Photo courtesy of L'Arche Calgary/George Webber

L'Arche marks anniversary

BY MARGARET SANCHE

L'Arche Saskatoon recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of the opening of its first home, Christopher House. In the home, people with and without intellectual disabilities share their lives together.

Christopher House is home to four core members and three or four assistants, who are supported by an "extended family" of part-time assistants, volunteers and friends.

In addition to monthly *Friends of L'Arche* gatherings, there is a L'Arche prayer night each Wednesday at Christopher House. The prayer nights are ecumenical and open to all, with singing, reflection on the Sunday gospel reading, and prayer for one another and for the world.

The L'Arche Saskatoon craft group meets one Sunday afternoon each month at St. Stephen's Anglican Church. Anyone can bring a craft or project they are working on, or else help with some of the crafts being done by others. In October, the craft group completed 50 hand-made sock dolls that became table centerpieces at a CHAS conference in Saskatoon. The unique dolls were sold to conference participants and proceeds donated to L'Arche. The craft group also prepares materials for rosary-making by students in Catholic schools.

One of the benefits of L'Arche is the opportunity to participate in regional and international L'Arche events, such as the L'Arche Alberta Winter Games in February, in which members of our community participated, or the L'Arche International Assembly, held every three years in different areas of the world.

In October, 2008, the L'Arche Saskatoon Community Leader, Wyndham Thiessen,

Uniting In Faith... in community

represented L'Arche Saskatoon at the International Assembly in Kolkata, India. During the gathering, L'Arche Saskatoon was formally received into the L'Arche International Federation and presented with a colourful banner of welcome.

The spirit of L'Arche founder Jean Vanier's way of living the gospel can be found in his writings; in the many L'Arche communities around the world, whether Christian ecumenical or multi-faith; in Faith and Light groups; in Intercordia (a for-credit program available to students at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon); and in many books, articles and educational materials. A new resource for church youth groups was recently developed by Amy Bunce of L'Arche Saskatoon: *Choosing our Future – A Bible Study with Jean Vanier*. It includes a leader's guide, DVD, and action cards.

For information about these and other L'Arche resources, as well as information about becoming a L'Arche assistant, visit the websites www.larche.ca or www.larche.org

For more about L'Arche Saskatoon, go to www.larchesaskatoon.org or call Wyndham Thiessen at 262-7243.

L'Arche Saskatoon receives basic financial support from the Saskatchewan government, but supplementary funds are required each year. Individuals, parishes, lay organizations and congregations of religious in the Catholic community are among the supporters of L'Arche Saskatoon.

L'Arche Saskatoon is one of the organizations in the community supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Volunteer creates and donates rosaries

Olga Proznick says that making rosaries is a way to keep her hands busy – while doing something for Mary and for others.

Over the past 50 years she has made some 37,000 rosaries of various designs, skillfully bending the wire into chains connecting brightly coloured beads, or intricately working cord into knots for prayer.

"God made our hands, we should make use of them," she says with a smile.

"She doesn't have any spare time, she wants to be doing something all the time," adds her husband Fred. The couple have lived in Saskatoon for the past 37 years, and attend St. Philip Neri parish.

Originally from Wynyard, SK., Olga was living in Craik with her young family when a visiting priest came through the community, promoting devotion to Mary. "The priest said: 'love my Mary, like I love her' ... and I began to think about what I could do to give thanks for her blessings."

When the family moved to Naicam, the president of the Christian Mothers organization, Mary Draude, put out a call to anyone interested in making rosaries. "The idea grabbed me," Olga says. The first rosaries were a bit rough, she adds with a laugh, but she hasn't stopped since. Her friendship with Mary Draude has also continued, and even today she helps to pay shipping costs for rosaries that Olga sends away for distribution.

At first the supplies to make the rosaries were provided, but eventually Olga began to purchase the materials on her own. "I just kept on going from there," she describes, noting she now makes most of the rosaries with a plastic cross and medal, because that is less costly than the metal variety.

Over the years, Olga has sent her rosaries to missionaries in Africa and to India; given them to different priests and sisters to share in their ministry; and for a time she would also take them to St Paul's Hospital. She also sent a batch of rosaries to Pope John Paul II when he was preparing his first papal visit to Poland – in memory of her own father, who was also from Poland.

Eventually the cost and effort involved in distributing the rosaries on her own became too much. Olga now distributes them through Our Lady's Rosary Makers in



Olga Proznick displays bundles of her colourful handmade rosaries.

Louisville, Kentucky, which provides an information, supply and distribution network for thousands of volunteer rosary makers across the United States and Canada. The rosaries are sent to missionaries, hospitals, schools and prisons. It's much easier than doing it on her own, she says.

Olga says she is thankful for all the blessings in her own life, and the way that prayer has helped her – for instance in recovering from spinal meningitis after a doctor said she might never walk again. "That was in September, and in January I went back to work," she recalls.

"Some people need more prayers than others," she says with a smile.

She plans to continue making the rosaries – and hopes more people will see the value of prayer. She acknowledges that it seems like people had more time to pray when she was growing up. "Perhaps people need shorter prayers, these days," she said. "We all need prayer."

- KLY

Rural deanery gathers to "bridge gap"

Uniting In Faith... Parish - Deanery - Diocese

About 25 parish council members, pastors and parish life directors from across the Saskatoon Rural Deanery gathered at Bethlehem High School March 21 for a retreat day to *Bridge the Gap* between busy lives and love for God.

The day was facilitated by Leah Perrault, director of pastoral services, at the invitation of deanery chairperson Bernard Hamoline.

"We've been struggling to find energy in the deanery," said Hamoline, when asked why he came for the day. "And I was ready to try something different for inspiration."

Through a series of reflections, discussions and activities, Perrault invited those gathered to consider how meeting as a deanery could be life-giving for its 11 parish communities while also providing consultation to the bishop and Catholic Pastoral Centre.

Perrault invited them to consider the words of Nobel Physicist, Max Planck, who said, "When we change the way we look at things, the things we look at change."

Perrault said that at the end of the day those gathered were seeing the deanery in a different light: rather than being another meeting, the deanery can be a community of faith that can inspire energy for the work we share in serving our parishes.

The deanery will be "gathering" (rather than meeting) in the fall, with a new outlook on their shared future, she said.

Viscount parish receives accessibility grant

BY BARB DALE
ST. ALPHONSE, VISCOUNT

St. Alphonse Parish in Viscount recently received a \$50,000 federal grant from the Enabling Accessibility Fund.

The goal of the fund is to promote vibrant communities that benefit from the participation of people with varying abilities in everyday life activities, according to a September 2008 press release. The fund assists communities in making buildings and facilities more accessible for people of varying abilities, and increases opportunities for everyone to participate socially and economically.

St. Alphonse Parish is one of 163 organizations

across Canada approved for the grant for small projects enabling accessibility.

The parish plans to build an entrance on the west side of the church that will have a lift for access from the ground level, up to the main level of the Church and down to the auditorium. In addition, accessible wash-rooms will be built in the auditorium. Construction began Feb. 1, 2009, and must be complete within one year.

In the fall of 2007, St. Alphonse Parish established a building fund so that donations could be collected and proceeds from fundraisers could be used for the purpose of improving accessibility. The parish is close to meeting the targeted goal for the project.



Parish celebration held for Verna Vandale

Verna Vandale (right) wraps up in a healing shawl presented to her by parish council chair Cecile Smith on behalf of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. After Sunday celebration of the Eucharist April 26, the parish community gathered at St. Mary School to honour Vandale for her service and leadership as Parish Life Director. The program included an honour song, traditional dancers (including the guest of honour's daughter and four-year-old granddaughter), entertainment, a potluck, and many words of appreciation and friendship. The newest parish in the diocese of Saskatoon, Our Lady of Guadalupe integrates First Nations culture and spirituality into celebrations and parish life.

Volunteers at prison reflect on experience of providing ministry on Ash Wednesday

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Three volunteers who provided pastoral ministry in a Saskatoon prison Ash Wednesday recently reflected on the challenges and rewards of the experience.

The pastoral care volunteers from parishes around the city joined diocesan Restorative Ministry coordinator Dianne Anderson at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre to mark the start of Lent with a liturgy in the prison chapel, followed by distribution of ashes to men throughout the prison.

"We went together through all the buildings to offer ashes, explaining the prayer and the symbol as we went along," said Anderson. "Those who chose to take the ashes would line up and we marked them with the cross, and said the words of blessing. Almost all of the men wanted to participate – I'd say 95 per cent. They didn't refuse. It was very moving."

For Cathy Kary of Holy Spirit parish, coming to the Correctional Centre to provide ministry was prompted by a learning process, and a personal invitation. "In the past I had the opportunity to tour the centre and hear Dianne Anderson speak about the needs in prison ministry," said Cathy, describing how her heart went out to prisoners and their families as she learned more about the justice system.

Her moment of commitment came when she was approached about helping with the Ash Wednesday celebration. Kary's first reaction was "Who me?" and to ask where God was leading her. "Yes, there was fear and yet there was something inside that said 'please go and see.'"

Welcomed at the Correctional Centre by Anderson and prison chaplain Peter Oliver, Kary said she

"... I was in prison and you visited me..." Matthew 25:36

Volunteers are needed to help with Prison Ministry in our diocese

Contact Dianne Anderson of the Restorative Ministry Office
Catholic Pastoral Centre: 242-1500; Toll free: 1-877-661-5005
E-mail: restorativeministry@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

felt comfortable and safe, and joined in the liturgy with some 30 men who chose to attend the celebration in the prison chapel. "It was so touching to hear their prayer intentions for their families and for themselves," she said.

"Then we went down many corridors and I took turns distributing ashes and listening to these men ask for prayers and for Bibles," she said. "It gripped my heart when I heard a young man ask us to pray for his unborn child and the mother."

Kary noted that there are many ways to bring Jesus to those in prison – such as providing Bibles and other spiritual books, donating needed clothing, or remembering the men at special seasons, as happens at Easter with parishes collecting donations of chocolate rabbits to distribute to inmates. Prayer is also vital, she said.

"This experience has shown me that we must pray for our prisoners, their families (they all have a mom), for the many people who work in the justice system and for our governments to provide education and rehabilitation," Kary said. "An experience like this can change attitudes in our society. It did for me. By the way, God works in mischievous ways if you let him!"

Those struggling with addictions or serving time in prison still deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, stressed volunteer Marge

Copeland of St. Peter the Apostle parish. "Whether it is a wrong choice made in life, or the circumstances of life that have placed some people into prison, I feel it is not for me to be their judge."

Distributing donated gifts to prisoners at Christmas, and distributing the ashes at the beginning of Lent were both positive experiences for Copeland. The experience of ministering in the prison has also opened her eyes to injustices and to problems within the system, she said.

"Our law is placing people into an institution that is very over crowded, with little to absolutely no training or rehabilitation to better equip them on release so they do not re-offend," Copeland said. "What we are doing is locking them away in an institution that is little more than a warehouse with very little hope or chance to break the cycle that has put them in prison to begin with. It is 'out of sight, out of mind.'"

While a fortunate few may have strong family support systems to help them on release, many do not, she pointed out. "Life has truly blessed me, with a strong faith, a loving family, good role models and a wonderful mentor," Copeland said, adding she has also been strengthened and blessed by her experience of centering prayer over the past few years. "I realize how fortunate I am, and find it rewarding



With images of the Stations of the Cross posted along the prison fence, inmates joined Dianne Anderson in an outdoor way of the cross Holy Thursday at the Saskatchewan Correctional Centre. On Easter Sunday, Anderson and volunteers delivered chocolate rabbits to the men in prison, thanks to donations from parishes.

- Photo courtesy of diocesan Restorative Ministry Office

Uniting In Faith... for Restorative Ministry

and a real privilege to be able to share any gifts that God has given me with others."

For William Fletcher, of St. Philip Neri Parish, the Ash Wednesday celebration was his second time helping at the Correctional Centre. "I must say I was comfortable being with the guys. The chapel was filled with men who chose to be there," he said. "I was impressed and touched by the faith and reverence they showed."

The service led by Anderson was simple but powerful, he said. "With devotional music playing in the background, Dianne invited the men to come forward and receive the ashes. They hesitated at first, seemingly not sure what this symbolic action meant, or what they might be committing themselves to."

Anderson's encouraging and welcoming words, and her explanation about the meaning of Lent and the ashes, was a powerful witness he said. "She encouraged the men to surrender their lives and make a commitment of faith," he said, describing her message about Lent being a time to remember the

suffering and death of Christ and then at the end of the 40 days to rejoice on Easter Sunday when we celebrate his resurrection.

"They all lined up to a man and received the ashes with reverence. I am certain that some hearts were touched and that seeds were planted there," Fletcher said.

"I left with a strong conviction of the value of prison ministry. I had seen it in action and I witnessed the meaning and importance of this ceremony for the men," he said.

"They, like any of us, have a longing for spiritual nourishment. Despite past mistakes or offences, they are loved by God and the Son of God gave his life for them. This message of forgiveness, salvation and hope is the great gift of prison ministry."

Fletcher said he was honoured to be part of the outreach happening at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre. "The ministry is important if these men are to have hope for their future and an opportunity to change their lives based on personal knowledge and experience of the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ."

St. Paul's Hospital celebrates success of recent campaign

By JACQUIE BERG

A celebration to mark the successful completion of an *Embracing the Future* capital campaign that raised over \$10 million was hosted March 31 at St. Paul's Hospital.

"Through the generosity, commitment and compassion of our donors, we surpassed our goals and have already begun to put those funds to work," said campaign chair Alain Gaucher.

The St. Paul's Hospital *Embracing the Future* campaign focused on three priority areas: a Urology Centre of Health; a nuclear medicine department with state-of-the-art equipment; and an MRI for access to the highest level of diagnostic testing.

St. Paul's Hospital Foundation Board chair, Karen Pitka, made a special presentation to donors Les and Irene Dubé. "It may be said that the *Embracing the Future* campaign really came about as a result of the Dubé's \$1 million gift for the Urology Centre of Health," stated Karen Pitka. The Urology Centre of Health, offering improved detection and treatment of urological diseases, is now in development, while the Dubé's additional matching \$1 million dollar donation secured Saskatoon's third MRI. The MRI at St. Paul's Hospital is now booked 16 hours a day, five days a week.

Todd Rosenberg, chair of St. Paul's Hospital Board, applauded the campaign committee and the over 5,000 individuals who supported the cause. "This outstanding level of support ensures the legacy of 'excellence in care' continues for our



Alain Gaucher, Irene and Les Dubé at the recent celebration.

century-old beacon of hope and healing."

Other major benefactors were also recognized, including Cameco (\$1.5 million) and Rawlco Radio (\$1 million).

A \$750,000 contribution from Areva Resources has already been put to great use with the implementation of a renal telehealth program providing access to health care in remote communities by allowing technology to be utilised to transfer data for physician visits.

"Telehealth visits will provide access to excellent renal care in areas where this was previously very difficult without traveling long distances," said Dr. Joanne Kappel, head of nephrology for the Saskatoon Health Region.

Another benefactor in the campaign, the Kinsmen Telemiracle Foundation, provided a \$500,000 contribution, applied towards equipment for the urology centre.

Melanie Hilkewich, a SPH employee who works in diagnostic imaging, expressed thanks on behalf of the staff and also shared a moving account as a parent whose child benefited from improved detection thanks to the acquisition of campaign equipment.

What is role of parish nurse?

By MICHEL THIBAUT
ST. PHILIP NERI, SASKATOON

For over 2000 years, Christian faith communities have reached out to the ill, the broken, the scorned, and the suffering – offering them healing through touch, through the kind of listening that empowers, and through prayer. Throughout the ages, these communities of faith provided the care, comfort, compassion and hope that came to be known as "health care."

Parish nurse ministry is one expression of Christ's healing ministry.

This ministry at St. Philip Neri parish in Saskatoon had its beginnings when two Registered Nurses, Deb Bauche and Ethna Martin, enrolled in the InterChurch Health Ministries parish nursing training course in March 2003.

In November 2003 they completed the practicum portion of their course at St. Philip. With the encouragement of parish priest Fr. Les Paquin, and convinced that this service would meet needs in the parish, the nurses enlisted the support of others in the parish community. In April 2004 a proposal was presented to parish council to hire a full time parish nurse. Bauche and Martin were each hired to a half-time position.

Parish nurses do not ordinarily provide hands on care, perform procedures, administer medications or seek to replace any existing health services. Instead, parish nursing pursues a concept of health that, moves beyond merely combating disease, and encompasses a broader vision: a commitment to whole health—body, mind, and spirit.

Services provided by the parish nurses at St. Philip Neri include: health education; church bulletin information; prompting health checks; and providing advice on

A conference for anyone interested in any aspect of **Parish Nursing** will be held in Saskatoon **May 21-24:**

Bridging Spirituality and Health

Park Town Hotel, 924 Spadina Cres. East

Brochure and registration information:

www.capnm.ca/AGM_2009.htm

Contact: Elaine Hesje, Registrar, 652-4524

health-related issues, symptoms and conditions such as blood pressure, weight management, blood sugar levels, addictions, medic alert programs, advanced health care directive and living wills. They have organized blood pressure clinics at the church, and organized men's and women's health brunches.

Parish nurses also meet with anyone who wants to talk about a health concern with a caring professional. They provide health information and support for patients and their families prior to, during and after hospital stays; and make home, hospital and nursing home visits. They also accompany people to hospital appointments and advocate for them within the health services system, as well as providing information and support about moving into long term care. They provide information, prayer and support when dealing with chronic illness, accident, and terminal diagnosis; as well as providing referrals to community resources and assistance.

They also assist with coordination of liturgical services for the benefit of those in need of healing, pray with the sick, and connect the community with the sick and suffering through congregational prayer.

A national parish nursing conference will be held in Saskatoon May 21-24. Visit the website at: www.capnm.ca/AGM_2009.htm

Prayer vital part of pastoral care

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The role of prayer and sacraments in providing pastoral care to those who are sick, suffering or imprisoned was explored at a diocesan workshop held March 21 in Saskatoon.

The importance of the first few minutes of a pastoral care visit was also addressed by Nancy Buttinger, diocesan coordinator of Catholic hospital chaplaincy at Royal University and Saskatoon City hospitals, who led the workshop along with Blake Sittler of the diocesan office of Ministry Development, Saskatoon City Hospital chaplain Rev. Bernard de Margerie and Madeline Oliver of Holy Spirit parish.

Eighty people participated in the day-long workshop that included role playing, practical suggestions, discussion, and a chance to listen and pray with each other in a pastoral way.

Sittler described his experience in a chaplaincy program in Edmonton, where he learned how offering to pray with someone could bring a pastoral visit to a deeper level.

"Sometimes we can open it up and be a conduit to a deeper form of prayer," he said, admitting it can be frightening to engage in that kind of intimacy, in which one shares in another person's "whisper to God."

Prayer also provides a connection to the broader Christian community, he noted, describing how as part of prison ministry, the Saskatoon parish of St. Anne's will regularly include inmates' prayer intentions in liturgies. "A bond is created. These guys have a connection to St. Anne's: they know there are people out there praying for them."

Pastoral ministry should begin with a zeal to share and to encourage the patient in his or

Uniting In Faith...
to care for the suffering

her life of faith, said de Margerie, noting "we are missionaries." At the same time, the ministry calls for a great spirit of respect and humility, he stressed, advising those involved in pastoral care to tread lightly. "We connect for the first time with some reserve, because there is a heck of a lot we don't know."

He suggested that pastoral visitors should listen more than they talk. "Praying along hospital hallways is also great. That means: praying for people, before and after we visit," de Margerie said.

"A real problem is that we visit our patients too quickly," he added, noting the pressure of time constraints and quick patient turnaround in hospital.

Even so, he suggested pastoral visitors should not be too quick to propose the reception of the sacraments.

"It is important that the patient himself make the decision to receive or celebrate a given sacrament," de Margerie said, providing insights into how to discuss and approach the sacraments of communion, reconciliation, the anointing of the sick, as well as the provision of final prayers when death is near.

"Sacraments are not magic tricks, they are not to be understood in a materialistic or mechanical way," he said. "They are actions of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit for the spiritual nourishment, the spiritual growth of the person who receives them in faith and desire."



Blake Sittler, diocesan office of Ministry Development; Nancy Buttinger, coordinator of Catholic hospital chaplaincy at Royal University and City Hospital; Rev. Bernard de Margerie, chaplain at City Hospital; and Madeline Oliver, pastoral associate at Holy Spirit parish (l-r) led the diocesan pastoral care workshop March 21.

The difference between a social visit and a pastoral visit was outlined in a handout discussed by the group, and illustrated through a role-playing session led by Buttinger. Focusing on what the person thinks and feels, listening with compassion, and letting the patient take the lead were among the marks of an effective pastoral visit, according to discussion that followed scenes enacted by workshop leaders.

"We must always recognize that we're entering into a sacred space when we come into their home, into their room and their lives," Buttinger said of the first few minutes of any pastoral visit. "For instance, we would always ask permission to come in."

Paying attention to what is being said and not said, and to what is being revealed by body language, is part of active listening, she said. "It's not intended to be a two-way conversation. The whole focus is on the person that is in front of you... listen to the heart."

Bob Williston briefly described a new

"ministry of care" manual being prepared for parishes through the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS). Plans are to launch the new resource at the CHAS convention in October, he said.

During the workshop, participants also received a brief introduction to Restorative Ministry in the diocese of Saskatoon, which provides pastoral care and outreach to prison inmates, to crime victims, and to their families.

"We're as concerned about victims of crime as we are about those coming to prison," said Peter Oliver, chaplain at Saskatoon Correctional Centre and at the Regional Psychiatric Centre. He also introduced Dianne Anderson, diocesan coordinator of Restorative Ministry. "We're about healing relationships. The skills you are learning here today are what we need," Oliver said, noting the similarities between pastoral care to the sick and pastoral care to those in prison, and to victims of crime.

Pastoral care volunteers reflect on workshop; meaning of ministry

Pastoral care volunteers participating in a March 21 workshop in Saskatoon as well as at a February volunteer appreciation event recently reflected on the experience - and on the nature of their ministry.

As a volunteer visitor in spiritual care in the diocese, it's good to have the sort of review provided by the session, said participant Adele Longstaff, reflecting on the workshop sessions. For instance, she said she appreciated the comparison between a social conversation and a pastoral conversation discussed in one of the presentations.

Providing pastoral care ministry is a way to return something for all of the blessings she herself has received, volunteer Adele Longstaff said. "I have been comforted myself and have seen the comforting effect that people who offer spiritual care and bring the Eucharist have had on members of my family when they were hospitalized. Knowing that you are being prayed for by others is a real gift."

Terry LePage of St. Augustine parish in Saskatoon said the parish team felt the workshop was beneficial to their ministry.

"We were called to renew our commitment to serve the sick and shut-ins, in a spirit of openness, respect, and dignity," LePage said. "We were reminded of our call to mutual respect and love as we enter that sacred space which is the hospital room, or home, of the sick, the lonely, and the grieving," she said.

"Our call to this ministry opens us to many situations where we encounter Christ in those we serve: we are challenged to be also the presence of Christ to them," added LePage.

The rewards and challenges of pastoral care ministry were also described at a Feb. 11 Pastoral Care Appreciation evening in Saskatoon by two volunteers from Holy Spirit parish, Marie Martens and Lois Thomas.

The volunteers take part in spiritual care ministry at Saskatoon City Hospital.

"We have often wondered if we are worthy and if we have the skills to perform this ministry with the love and care it deserves," said Martens. "Through prayers to the Holy Spirit and realizing that Jesus walks with us every step of the way, this ministry has become a blessing."

As volunteers, Martens said that she and



Volunteers Lois Thomas (left) and Marie Martens of Holy Spirit parish spoke at a February appreciation evening..

Lois Thomas try to extend a spirit of friendship and community to every patient they meet: "especially to those who have fallen and are bruised, and need to be told that they are still beautiful; to those who are waiting for a placement in a nursing home and are fearful and uncertain about what the future holds; to those who are suffering from cancer and need someone to listen ... to those who

need someone to pray with, Catholic and non-Catholic; to those who are lonely."

Lois Thomas said that her own experience journeying with her husband through illness and palliative care showed her the impact that spiritual care providers have on patients and families.

"This is not a ministry that I ever envisioned myself in," she said, describing how a few months after her husband died she was approached by Fr. Bernard de Margerie about volunteering at the hospital. Eventually she did decide to try the ministry as a way to give back the care and support received during her husband's illness.

"This ministry has touched my heart and my spirit in many ways," Thomas said. "While I'm doing my best to minister to a patient, very often they are ministering to me."

Thomas said she cannot help but be inspired by the way in which so many patients accept their suffering with such humility and dignity. "This ministry has helped me accept some very difficult illnesses in my own family over the past couple of years. You realize that you are not alone."

CHAS prepares annual Catholic health convention to be held Oct. 26-27

BY SANDRA KARY, CHAS

Preparations are underway for the 66th annual convention of the Catholic Health Association of

Saskatchewan (CHAS), which will be held Oct. 26-27 in Prince Albert.

The 2009 convention theme *Circles of Care: People Caring for*

People highlights the message that friends, family, volunteers, and health care providers all work together to create a strong circle of care for each other.

Keewatin-Le Pas Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie will present the keynote address: *The Wellness Circle: Twelve Spiritual Steps to Healthy Caring*. Archbishop Lavoie has spent his life serving the northern communities of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, empowering people through Christopher courses, Marriage Encounters, and adaptations of the Twelve-Step Program.

The convention's inspirational

speaker will be Dan Jelinski. His leadership development business, *Wisdom Speaks*, focuses on enhancing personal success, living intentionally, and making a difference, underpinned with the proclamation of gospel values in the workplace.

This convention will also host 'learning circles' (breakout sessions), offering a variety of topics complementing the theme. Speakers will include: Joy Mendel, bioethicist for St. Paul's Hospital and for CHAS; David Sax from Catholic Family Services in Regina; and Leann Keach and Gwen Knoll from Providence Place, Moose Jaw.

During the convention a revised Parish Ministry of Care Manual will be launched.

This manual will offer a more comprehensive resource tool for those interested in starting, or further developing an existing Ministry of Care program. The project team will highlight this manual in a breakout session.

A unique aspect of this convention will be the venue - St. Mary High School, providing an opportunity for those involved in Catholic health care and in Catholic education to interact. For further information, contact 306 655-5330 or cath.health@sasktel.net.

Spring into Action: Gardening for the Soul

Hospital visitors are needed!

Have you ever considered volunteering at Saskatoon City Hospital or Royal University Hospital

Don't hold back!

Contact: Nancy Buttinger at 306-292-5531 or E-mail: hospitalchaplaincy@gmail.com



Pastoral care volunteers were honoured at an appreciation evening Feb. 11.

Pastoral care volunteers honoured during event; speaker stresses value of Catholic health care

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Pastoral care volunteers were honoured and blessed for their ministry in hospitals, care homes, prisons, and parish communities at an appreciation evening that also focused on the need to protect and support Catholic health care.

Volunteers from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon were blessed by Bishop Albert LeGatt during a prayer service that opened the event Feb. 11 in Saskatoon. Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, also attended the celebration at St. Anne's parish hall, held to mark the World Day of the Sick on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

"Thank you for the gifts that you give – a gift of your time, of yourself, of your care and compassion. You really are continuing the healing ministry of Christ," LeGatt said in his words of greeting to the volunteers during a program that included speakers, prayer and entertainment.

LeGatt noted that the bishops of Saskatchewan recently met with Premier Brad Wall to discuss Catholic health care in the province. The bishops brought the message that a "Patient First" review that is examining exactly what patients experience in the health care system must include a look at spiritual care, pastoral care and the ethics within the system.

"Technology is good, hands-on care for the healing is good – but the heart and spirit and soul are essential also," LeGatt told the volunteers. "You are part of that."

It is vital to increase awareness and support for the gift of Catholic health care and Catholic education in the province, said guest speaker Nestor Trach, chair of the Catholic Health Corporation of Saskatchewan, which operates nine Catholic health care facilities on behalf of the Saskatchewan bishops.

Trach described the work of **Catholic Connections**, a group recently established with a broad membership in the Catholic community, including Catholic health groups, Catholic school districts, dioceses, the eparchy, Knights of Columbus and Catholic Women's League. The group is working to proactively support both Catholic health care and Catholic education in Saskatchewan.

Trach said that his experience in both Catholic education and Catholic health care have convinced him of the need for such a support group. Trach was a teacher and principal in the Catholic school system in Humboldt for 34 years. He was also a member of the St. Elizabeth Hospital board in Humboldt when that facility gave up its Catholic status and became a publicly-owned facility in the Saskatoon Health Region after months of controversy and a poll of area residents that showed 69 per cent wanted a public rather than a Catholic facility.

"It became clear that there were no guarantees and nothing was sacred. The fact that a building had a cross on the front did not mean it would remain a Catholic facility," Trach said. At the same time, Catholic education is under attack, he added, describing a legal case before the courts



Sandra Kary of CHAS and Nestor Trach of the Catholic Health Corporation of Saskatchewan spoke at the event.

Uniting In Faith...
to care for the suffering

challenging the right of Catholics and other denominations to operate separate schools. "Although the act of 1905 guarantees the right, it is being challenged."

Trach explained that Catholic Connections' role is to develop communication strategies informing the public about the value of Catholic health care and Catholic education and to help recognize the threats to their continued existence. Complacency and inattention within the Catholic community can be as damaging as any outside forces, he noted.

Speakers are available to inform groups about Catholic Connections and the benefits of Catholic health care and Catholic education, he added.

"There's a reason why we have Catholic health and Catholic education facilities," Trach said. "We commit to promote and defend human dignity, to attend to the whole person, to care for the poor and vulnerable persons, to promote the common good, to act on behalf of justice, to be the stewards of the resources, and to act in communion with Christ," he added, describing the gospel vision behind Catholic institutions.

Trach concluded by asking the volunteers for prayers. "If we're to build community and support Catholic health and Catholic education I ask you to pray. We ask Jesus to help us carry out the role of healer: the healer that he was; to help us carry out the role of teacher: the teacher that he was."

During the program Sandra Kary, executive director of the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS), briefly described her organization's work to support Catholic health care across the province and thanked volunteers for their role in Catholic health care.

"You are paid in the warmth of a smile, the touch of a hand, a moment of shared laughter or maybe even tears," Kary said. "Your reward is that you make life richer for someone else, and in that you grow richer as well."

Nancy Buttinger of the diocesan hospital chaplaincy office noted that a review of spiritual care services in the Saskatoon Health Region is also underway, and encouraged volunteers to share concerns and joys of volunteering in the region.

Richmond Foundations: Theology of Johnny Cash

Many are familiar with the songs of Johnny Cash. But those who hum along to "Ring of Fire" or "Folsom Prison Blues" are not always aware of his deep faith.

A Foundations evening entitled *The Theology of Johnny Cash* was held March 26 at St. Mary's parish in Richmond, presented by Blake Sittler of Saskatoon. Sittler works for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon in the offices of Ministry Development and Marriage and Family Life, but he also spends some of his free time traveling around to various churches and prisons in the province, spreading the gospel according to "the Man in Black."

"What I like about Cash and his message is that he wasn't some white picket fence saint," said Sittler. "In his life, Cash made lots of mistakes and hurt a lot of people, including himself. In the end though, Johnny Cash tried to make things right; to come to terms with his demons."

Cash had many personal hardships including the loss of his oldest brother when he was only a young boy, a drug addiction, a failed marriage, and an ego that often isolated him from help. Yet, at the end of his life, Cash was not a prophet of cynicism or regret but of gratitude.

"Cash was grateful for his faith...he wrote a book about St. Paul, made a movie about the life of Jesus with his own money, and recorded dozens if not hundreds of gospel songs," explained Sittler.

Sittler's presentation includes music videos from the Cash television series archives as well as scenes from the movie,



Blake Sittler recently led a diocesan Foundations session at St Mary parish in Richmond, exploring the theology of singer Johnny Cash.

Walk the Line. Sittler's presentation has also been accompanied by up to eight different guitarists.

"Whether in a church basement or a prison chapel, there is always someone who is able to play a few of Cash's songs," said Sittler.

"I've had local choir members strum some basic chords on a mandolin, an Australian friend lead with his acoustic, and once had two Aboriginal guitarists break into improvised guitar solos. It's fun".

"I love presenting this in prisons because the guys just love Johnny," added Sittler. "They hear in Cash's music both real life struggles and hope for redemption and an honest life...his music tells them that faith is the tool of a strong man."

Parishes or groups interested in booking a Foundations faith enrichment session can contact coordinator Marci Deutscher at the Catholic Pastoral Centre 242-1500 or toll free: 1-877-661-5005 or by e-mail: foundations@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

Families connect in program of friendship and support

Family-to-Family Ties is a mentorship program offered through Catholic Family Services, in which volunteer families are matched with families in need of support and friendship.

Coordinator Jenna Harder said the program helps participants break through social isolation and find someone to walk with them through particular challenges or stages of parenting. "It really is about building connections with the community," she said.

Volunteer families are always needed.

Those who step forward as mentors may be looking for a chance to volunteer as a family, or to broaden their understanding of what others in the community are dealing with, she noted.

"It might be that as parents they want to instil some of those values of volunteering into their children," she said. Participation can bring a new awareness about issues that others are facing in the community.

Families also discover they have many things in common, she added. For instance, if both have pre-teen children, they realize that many of the issues they face as parents are the same, she noted.

Matching participant families with volunteer mentors – whether individuals or families – is done with careful screening and consideration for the needs and expectations of both, said Harder.

Once the match is made, ongoing support is provided through regular communication, as well as through regular Family-to-Family Ties events and programs, she added.

"We don't expect our volunteers to be counsellors. They are not expected to fix problems," she said. "They are there to help participant families grown and improve strengths in the areas they want to work in."

The program encourages families to commit to a match for a year, to allow a relationship to form.



Jenna Harder coordinates Family-to-Family Ties for Catholic Family Services.

At the same time, the program is flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances, she added. Some matches might come to a natural conclusion, others might continue for several years, she said.

"Regular communication allows us to support volunteers and participants during a match. I connect with them regularly, and do lots of home visits," she said. Harder noted that Family-to-Family Ties also has other ongoing programming to support families, such as a Collective Kitchen program; *Growing with Reading and Nutrition*, a program including cooking and reading activities; and teen and young parent support.

For more information about Family-to-Family Ties, contact Harder at 306-244-7773.

Catholic Family Services is one of the many groups in the community supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Steps in Faith reaches out to youth

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A program for youth that combines catechesis, faith in action and a public re-affirmation of faith within the parish community will be phased-in across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon over the next three years.

Aimed at students in around Grade 8, *Steps in Faith* is being established to address the need for life-long faith formation after Catholic Christians receive the initiation sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

The need for ongoing faith formation is recognized more widely than ever, now that children in the diocese of Saskatoon are confirmed at the same celebration in which they receive first communion, usually in about Grade 2, noted Agnes Rolheiser, chair of the diocesan committee working to implement *Steps in Faith*.

"This reaffirmation of faith at the Grade 8 level is another step celebrating a gradual maturing in

Uniting In Faith... for ongoing faith formation

faith that is nourished and supported by the parish community," said Rolheiser, stressing the importance of family and parish involvement in the formation of young people on the verge of a new phase in life.

It is envisioned that the *Steps in Faith* program will eventually expand to include a similar program for high-school-aged youth, possibly in Grade 12.

"Growing in our baptized, confirmed Eucharistic identity is a life-long task," says Saskatoon Bishop Albert LeGatt about the need for such faith formation programs; a need extending beyond youth into adulthood.

The diocese is treading on new ground with the *Steps in Faith* program, which encompasses both catechetics and youth ministry, noted Rolheiser.

At the same time, elements of the program are both familiar and

well-loved from confirmation programs that have been offered to youth in Grade 6 and older. "A lot of people were grieving that young people at this older age would miss these experiences once confirmation moved to a younger age," she noted.

The *Steps in Faith* program will nourish the maturing faith of adolescents through continuing catechesis about the Creed, participation in a service project, prayer and retreat experiences. The program includes a ceremony in the parish, in which youth publicly reaffirm a more mature faith commitment and are blessed by the community.

A number of parishes in the diocese will begin the *Steps in Faith* program this year, while others are planning to implement it in the 2009-2010 catechetical year. "Parishes are implementing this program as they are able. Some may



Youth ministers gathered to discuss the *Steps in Faith* program.

take a bit longer," Rolheiser said at a Feb. 4 meeting of parish associates and youth ministers from city parishes.

The meeting included a presentation from youth minister Myron Rogal of St. Mary's Parish in Saskatoon, which has piloted the program; input from diocesan Youth Ministries coordinator Sarah Farthing; and information about how the Grade 7 and 8 religion curriculum in Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools echoes the parish program in

exploring the Creed. Resources, catechetical materials and retreat options were also discussed.

The diocesan Rural Catechetics department is also working with parishes outside the city of Saskatoon to provide information and support for the new *Steps in Faith* program, which was also piloted last year by parishes in the Macklin area.

Both Rural Catechetics and Youth Ministries are supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Humboldt responds to mission

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Outreach and renewal characterized an Oblate Parish Mission held March 8 to 21 at St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt.

Local volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours to assist the 20-member mission team that came into the community March 8 to begin a mission process that included home visits and the establishment of 34 small faith sharing groups – known as "listening centres" – in Humboldt neighbourhoods.

Hundreds filled the church each night for Great Assemblies that were the highlight of the second week of the mission. The evening gatherings included reflections on scripture, exploration of a theme such as "The Father" or "The Mystery of the Cross" as well as dramas and personal testimonies. Each assembly included a prayer that included a ritual action – such as coming forward to sign an icon of Christ, receiving a lit candle to symbolize a person being lifted up in prayer, or carrying a cross into the city streets.

Celebration of Mass twice a day, Eucharistic adoration, and opportunities for the sacraments of reconciliation and anointing of the sick were other features of the 14-day event.

A four-member LEAP Ministries youth team also worked with the parish community during the mission, visiting schools, providing youth ministry and presenting dramas and personal testimonies.

St. Augustine parishioners responded with enthusiasm and with concrete contributions that included driving members

of the missionary team to hundreds of local homes (often in bitterly cold weather); donating and preparing food for the team; hosting and facilitating faith sharing groups; providing billets; assisting with liturgical ministries; and providing financial support for the massive effort, described local mission coordinator Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers.

The mission has been "exhausting and energizing," Ternier-Gommers said. "As far as our diocese is concerned, we're the largest that has taken on the Oblate Parish Mission: it was massive. The thing is, you spend months preparing – but you don't really know how it all fits together until the whole thing starts rolling." The community's response has been overwhelming, she added. "It mobilized this parish."

Approached after one of the Great Assemblies, several parishioners commented on the mission experience.

"This is the best thing that ever happened to our parish," said one life-long community member.

Another reflected on the fears surrounding the idea of home visits in the



Humboldt Pastor Fr. Emile April



Dale de Seguin, a member of the mission youth team from Radway, lights a candle during a prayer ritual at one of the Great Assemblies.

months and weeks before the mission began, particularly concerns that home visitors might be "pushy" or judgmental. "The visit from the missionaries was wonderful. We talked together, we shared, and we had our home blessed – something that through all the years we've been here, we have never had done," she said. "I just really appreciated how it unfolded."

The music and singing at the Great Assemblies was also described as a highlight – something which song leader Brother Louis Andreas, OMI also noted. "The people are really embracing the idea of singing," he said. "They sang with such volume, I was really touched."

Members of the community prepared some 1,100 servings of food for the mission over the two weeks – with most of the food donated. It was an effort noted and appreciated by the visitors. "The food has been absolutely amazing," said LEAP Ministries member Dale de Seguin.

"Humboldt is very open, very sharing," observed Oblate Parish Mission team member Natalia Schrader. During home visits, the team could also see that "parts of it are also very lonely," she added.

Increased outreach to seniors, shut-ins and those isolated in the community will hopefully be one of the follow-up actions to grow out of the mission, said Ternier-Gommers, describing the benefits of the home visits in gathering information about needs in the parish.

For St. Augustine pastor Rev. Emile April, the Oblate Parish Mission was filled with what he described as "wow" moments.

"Wow – what a fantastic occasion of visiting all the homes, reaching out, inviting, welcoming," he said. "Another 'wow' has been the number of volunteers involved in every aspect of the mission, whether it's the visiting, the driving, the cooking, or



Brother Louis Andreas, OMI

whatever is needed. Another 'wow' is the response to the evening assemblies. The church is just filled up with people who are happy to be there."

April noted that greater participation from young families in the parish is still on his wish list.

One area of the mission that could have a lasting impact is the continuation of some of the "listening centres" that use a Small Christian Community model to share faith and prayer through scripture, he said.

"If we could start with a few who want to meet, who want to discuss their faith, I believe that would begin a little seed of a community that would see more people welcoming newcomers, visiting shut-ins, walking with those who are grieving or suffering from illness," April said.

He expressed a hope that through the experience of the parish mission "we will have learned a bit, ever so gradually, about being a missionary church."



Many local volunteers were helping with the Oblate Mission in Humboldt – including a dedicated crew providing meals to the mission team.

FIND MORE NEWS ABOUT THIS EVENT AND OTHERS ON THE WEBSITE:

www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm

Youth explore mining issues during Diocesan Thinkfast

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Twenty-three youth from Langham, Wilkie and Saskatoon participated in a diocesan *Thinkfast* March 27-28, raising over \$1,100 for Development and Peace.

The 25-hour fast included games, prayer, speakers and information sessions, said organizer Erin Gratton, youth minister at St. Anne's Parish, which hosted the event. The theme for the event was the impact of Canadian mining companies in the global south and the need for a mining ombudsperson.

"Fasting speaks to people because it says that something different is going on," Gratton said of the *Thinkfast* event. "How often do growing teens decide to go without food?"

Fasting is a long-standing sign of protest and solidarity, she added, a dramatic sign that people want a situation to change. "Fasting also speaks to people because they associate fasting with important leaders and world changers like Dr. Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus," she added.

"Those who fast for justice are in solidarity

with those who are hungry every day. The participants responded well to the experience," she said. "We never heard any of them complaining about being hungry. There was no negative feedback at all."

Participant Mitchell Nielsen of Wilkie said *Thinkfast* was a positive and interesting event. "I was also at last year's event, but the presentations this year were all new to me."

Jill Gruber of Wilkie added that in addition to being informative, the *Thinkfast* experience was "a lot of fun."

During an activity based on the "Amazing Race" participants took the role of reporters travelling to Canada, Guatemala, Philippines, and Democratic Republic of Congo (all places known for mining) to gather information on the effects of mining in communities.

In another presentation, youth heard about the need for both justice and charity in walking with those in need throughout the world. Issues around land use, mining, health care and community development were explored throughout the overnight event.

Guest speaker Fr. Les Paquin described the Brazil Mission and the meaning of solidarity.

Development and Peace provincial

Uniting In Faith... for development, peace and justice



Youth participating in a diocesan *Thinkfast* March 27-28 at St. Anne parish in Saskatoon discuss issues surrounding mining.

animator Michael Murphy gave a presentation about this year's Share Lent campaign.

"We watched the movie *Blood Diamond* to show the participants the harsh reality of the diamond trade in parts of the world, specifically Sierra Lyon," added Gratton. The next day, participants also watched a video about the aftermath of the tsunami, and steps taken toward rebuilding.

"We ended with prayer, a commissioning, a chance to sign the Development and Peace petition to the government and a pizza lunch," she said.

Thinkfast leaders included members of the St. Thomas More College Just Youth team, as well as youth ministers from Holy Family, St. Augustine and St. Mary parishes in Saskatoon, noted Gratton.



Thomas McKay (left) of the St. Thomas More Just Youth team organizes an activity during a diocesan *Thinkfast* March 27-28, hosted at St. Anne parish.

E.D. Feehan supports Development and Peace

BY GAYLE BRODIE, GREATER SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Development and Peace has always encouraged young people to get involved in their work to change the world. At E.D. Feehan Catholic High School in Saskatoon a group of energetic and creative Grade 12 students recently took that invitation to heart, with the fall campaign, "Calling Mining to Account."

The journey began when teacher Cheryl Dauvin took her Physics 30 class to see noted biologist, physiologist, lecturer, and nonfiction author Jared Diamond. At his lecture at TCU place, sponsored by the colleges of agriculture and bioresources, the young science students were challenged to take responsibility for the environment and the world.

Building on this initial excitement and concern, the students quickly saw a connection to the Development and Peace fall campaign about Canadian mining practices. Using the D & P website and links, the physics class became educated about the problems with some Canadian mining companies.

Using student-created slide shows, information tables, poster campaigns, and classroom presentations, the class informed fellow students about the issues during the month of November. Their initiatives also went beyond the school's walls with the gathering of signatures for the postcard campaign reaching family and friends.



Physics 30 teacher Cheryl Dauvin and student Kayla Osika next to one of the student-created displays at E.D. Feehan.

- Photo courtesy of E.D. Feehan Catholic High School

The students enthusiastically engaged in many Share Lent activities to raise over \$5,000 for Development and Peace. In addition to traditional activities such as a cake auction and student/staff hockey game, over 60 students and staff took part in a Development and Peace *Thinkfast* April 3 and 4. This was followed by an awareness *Blingfast* Wednesday, April 8.

Youth active in Development and Peace efforts to raise awareness and funds

BY SARAH DAUK, PROVINCIAL D & P YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

Saskatchewan youth have had an active year learning about the work of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), sharing their knowledge with families and friends, advocating for those in the global south, and raising money to fund CCODP partners.

This year's education campaign focused on the effect of Canadian Mining Corporations on food sovereignty in the global south. Mining corporations have caused environmental damage, expropriation, and privatization of indigenous food-producing lands, thus impairing the indigenous peoples' ability to produce their own food. CCODP asked Catholics

to sign a petition addressed to both their MP and the prime minister calling for the government to put an ombudsman in place to regulate the actions of Canadian mining corporations overseas, to ensure that Canadian corporations act ethically and responsibly.

Saskatchewan high school and university students participated in activities and actions to raise

awareness and funds for CCODP.

In the Saskatoon diocese, the St Thomas More College (STM) Just Youth Group educated themselves and others by inviting guest speakers to meet with their group, including Stephen Staples of Ceasefire.ca. They also participated in a Carnival of Solidarity and International Week at the University of Saskatchewan, and hosted an

annual high school retreat in February, attended by students from Saskatoon and Prince Albert. The group gathered over 800 signatures this year and raised over \$2,000 for CCODP.

E.D. Feehan Catholic High School in Saskatoon held both a *Blingfast* and a *Thinkfast* and has started a Just Youth Group (see article above).

Holy Cross Catholic High School will hold an annual Box Lunch in early May with proceeds going to CCODP. Students at Bishop James Mahoney, Bethlehem, E.D. Feehan, and Holy Cross high schools took part in the fall campaign, educating fellow students and getting more petitions signed.

High school students from Saskatoon, Wilkie, and Langham participated in a diocesan *Thinkfast* held at St. Anne's Parish March 27 and 28, and the group raised over \$1,000 for CCODP (see article above).

For more information on the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace or how to get involved in your community, visit the website at: www.devp.org or e-mail Sarah Dauk at: sarahdauk@hotmail.com

Michael Murphy retiring

Saskatchewan Provincial Animator Michael Murphy will retire this summer after working for Development and Peace for 16 years in the province, part of a 40-year career in international development.

"As I count down the months between now and my retirement in early August, I look back with great pleasure and satisfaction on my time as animator in Saskatchewan. I have been privileged to serve as a link between some of the finest people that I have ever met, both here in this province and in the countries where we work in the global south," said Murphy. "I would like to thank the teachers, the pastors, the sisters and the bishops who have enthusiastically supported the work of Development and Peace and my work as animator. I would like to thank the good people in the pews who have supported our campaigns including land for the landless in Brazil, the right to access to clean water worldwide, and an end to abusive practices by Canadian mining companies overseas," he said, also extending his appreciation to all those "who have donated so generously to Development and Peace through Share Lent or Share Year-Round. And I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who are the human face of Development and Peace in the parishes, schools and youth groups."



Past and present Development and Peace provincial animators Susan Eaton (right), 1976 to 1989; Sheila Murray (left), 1989 to 1993; and Michael Murphy, 1993 to the present.

Saskatchewan bishops call for careful reflection on nuclear energy

The Anglican, Lutheran and Catholic bishops of Saskatchewan issued a joint statement Feb. 25 urging citizens to become informed and involved on the issue of nuclear development in the province. Here is

the complete text of their joint statement.

The bishops of the Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Catholic churches in Saskatchewan call on

their members and all Saskatchewan citizens to consider with care the issues surrounding the proposed expansion of the uranium industry in Saskatchewan and make their views known to the government of Saskatchewan.

The government of Saskatchewan is exploring "value-added" initiatives to expand the uranium industry in our province, including the possibility of a nuclear power plant being built in Saskatchewan. Bruce Power, the country's only private nuclear generating company, has deemed an area of Saskatchewan (roughly from Lloydminster to Prince Albert) to be a potentially suitable site for such a development. In March 2009 a government-appointed panel is expected to make recommendations regarding such initiatives. It is critical that any recommendations be made only after full and open consultation with the people of this province.

Christian churches affirm that God created the earth and that God continues to establish and preserve a just and ordered life for all creation. Human beings are part of the vast ecosystem of the planet. Choices made by human beings must respect God's creation in its careful interrelationship of earth, water, air and all living things. Exploiting the

www.saskuranium.ca - Site includes the report from the Uranium Development Partnership, and links to get involved.

www.icucec.org - Inter-Church Uranium Committee website
sites.google.com/site/cleangreensaskca - Coalition for a Clean, Green Saskatchewan website

Watch for public meetings in May and June.

earth's resources without regard for the consequences is sinful against God and God's creation, according to Christian belief. Technology and economic development, including mining and power generation, must be subject to critical reflection in light of the impact that such actions have on people and the environment in the present and into the future.

The bishops recognize the global need for urgent action on climate change and the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from coal-burning power plants in Saskatchewan. They appreciate the intention of the government in proposing nuclear power to reduce emissions. At the same time, they see the necessity for careful examination of the costs and benefits of a range of energy options and encourage the government to invite public participation in developing a new energy strategy for Saskatchewan.

The bishops call on Premier Brad Wall, Crown Corporations Minister Ken Cheveldayoff, Environment

Minister Nancy Heppner, Energy and Resources Minister Bill Boyd, First Nations Minister June Draude, Enterprise Saskatchewan Minister Lyle Stewart, and the Government of Saskatchewan to provide adequate opportunities for Saskatchewan citizens to engage in open, informed discussion based on unbiased and complete information before the government acts on recommendations from the nuclear industry or the government-appointed panel.

+ Rodney Andrews, Anglican Bishop of Saskatoon
+ Bryan Bayda, CSsR, Ukrainian Eparchial Bishop of Saskatoon
+ Cynthia G Halmarson, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church
+ Daniel Bohan, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Regina
+ Gregory Kerr-Wilson, Anglican Bishop of Qu'Appelle
+ Albert LeGatt, Roman Catholic Bishop of Saskatoon
+ Albert Thévenot, Roman Catholic Bishop of Prince Albert



Saskatoon Friendship Inn anniversary

Bishop Albert LeGatt serves birthday cake March 13 at a celebration marking 40 years of service and caring at The Friendship Inn. Serving breakfast and lunch every day of the year, Friendship Inn makes a difference in the lives of people who need the nourishment it offers, said director Geselle Doell. "People need somewhere to go, whether it's because they are homeless, lonely or they need a hand up. We all need somewhere to go and I'm so glad we're here for that reason."

How to have your voice heard by government

BY TONY HAYNES, OFFICE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

When contacting government representatives, it is said that one hand written letter is as effective as 100 signed cards.

Postcard campaigns have been favoured by Development and Peace and any other organization with the ability to collect thousands of cards Canada-wide. And it is the method now being used by the Catholic Womens' League and others to protest human trafficking, primarily as it is associated with the upcoming Winter Olympics. Some cards do allow the signer to add a personal comment.

An alternative is to sign a petition sheet. Many governments have strict rules related to accepting petitions. The petition has to be written across the top of each page with no more than 25 signatures per lined page with additional columns for printed names and addresses. Here the ratio of acceptance is said to be 10 signatures having the same importance as 100 signed cards or one hand-written letter.

Personal contact gives authenticity to what you want to convey. Methods include letter writing, e mails, phone calls and personal visits.

What should be included in the contact? It should be brief, stating the topic and your issue. But more important, it should be so written that you are seeking an answer or an explanation of the viewpoint of the person you are contacting. It must be neither anonymous nor insulting.

Here is an example of the essential elements, which can be extended:

Concerning the matter of abortion on demand, I object to my taxes being used for this health service. Please let me know your viewpoint and why you hold to it.

Whatever contact method is being used, it is important that the contents are not a straight copy of an item already in circulation. For instance, here is an alternative to the first example:

Using my taxes for abortions deeply offends my beliefs. I want to hear from you what your beliefs are and why you hold them.

Concerning other methods of contact, using the Internet to gather opinion is suspect, as a person can often "vote" many times, as in nominating a hockey player to an all star team, although there are ways for websites to prevent this sort of multiple messaging from a single source.

Equally unreliable are the "live" interviews aired over television or radio. Unscrupulous interviewers will filter responses over television or on radio, put people on hold until the show is over. Newspaper poll results have been based on the response gained by all those phoning in to place an advertisement.

What remains clear is that it is the personal contact, in whatever form it takes, that will be a true reflection of people in a democracy.

Issue of human trafficking in connection with Vancouver Olympics highlighted

BY ANDRÉA LEDDING

A workshop on human trafficking and how the issue relates to the 2010 Vancouver Olympics was presented Feb. 21 by Virginia Scissons, NDS, at a gathering organized through the diocesan Office for Justice and Peace.

Scissons said one of the keys to ending human trafficking is to stop the demand. "Take the buyers out, and the chain will collapse," said Scissons, whose order Sisters of Zion is one of 16 congregations of women religious in the group UNANIMA which has consultative status at the United Nations and is sponsoring campaigns and educational awareness events. "Sex tourism and sex trafficking are fuelled by the Internet ... and pornography industry."

Each year, four million people are trafficked, 80 per cent of them female. Two million of these girls are between five and 15 years old. Trafficking involve issues of poverty, gender inequalities, and racism, explained Scissons.

Globally, the source countries are usually the poorest ones – South Korea, Vietnam, the Ukraine, South and Central American and African Nations – but Canada acts as a source country as well, particularly with First Nations population as well as marginalized immigrants, and is also a transition and destination country.

There are significant gaps in law enforcement and victim services. Local Saskatoon city police officer Hal Lam attended the workshop, reporting that municipal and national officers are working to educate their forces on how to look for what is largely "an invisible crime". Victims of human trafficking are hidden from the public eye and require new strategies in law enforcement. Many come from countries where police services are corrupt and complicit, so there are additional issues of fear and mistrust even when contact takes place.

The UN has created a Convention Against Trans-national Organized Crime containing the first internationally agreed upon definition of human trafficking. It is the act of having control over another human being for exploitation, and includes recruitment, transport, and transferring. Means of control include force, threat, fraud, and deception. Sexual exploitation is most common, but other areas include domestic service, manual and forced labor, slavery, and organ harvesting.

Child trafficking is defined as anyone under 18, and there is no requirement of fraud or deception, it is illegal across the board.

Nearly 90 per cent of buyers are men, of no typical profile. "We are talking about our sons, our

neighbours, our husbands," said Scissons,

Major sports events create a huge area of demand, speakers reported. During the World Cup in Germany, 40,000 tents were put up – men could even drive right into a

tent, obtain sexual services, and drive back out again.

Patrice Harelkin and Marlene Kuch of the Catholic Women's League briefly reported on their organization's plans to advocate across Canada on the issue,

especially with the upcoming 2010 Olympics and anticipated spike in human trafficking in Vancouver, easily accessible by both land and water.

Speakers recommended the website: www.thefuturegroup.org

I urge our government:

- to deter traffickers and potential commercial sex users through effective public awareness campaigns before, during and after the 2010 Olympics;
- to disrupt trafficking networks and to prosecute traffickers through a coordinated and pro-active law enforcement response at the local, provincial and federal levels;
- to prevent trafficking and to enhance border integrity by identifying victims in transit through border controls and by comprehensive training for border agents;
- to protect trafficked persons by ensuring that sufficient arrangements are made to provide them with safe and appropriate housing, counseling, legal aid, temporary residence status, translation and medical assistance;
- to promote just and fair trade policies so as to work towards eliminating poverty in source countries.

Human Trafficking is taking place today in Canada. These measures are long overdue.

Name: _____

Address: _____

To: _____
(Your Member of Parliament)
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
(No stamp required.)



Consider clipping, signing, and mailing this statement about human trafficking to your Member of Parliament – or use it as a source for composing a personal letter about the issue.

Marriage preparation coordinators reflect on ministry

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A marriage preparation weekend at St. Anne parish early this year drew to a close with engaged couples – surrounded by family and members of the parish community – enjoying the last bites of a candlelight dessert. The sweet treats were served after a special blessing celebration that sent couples forth to celebrate and live out the sacrament of marriage.

It's one of the special touches of the parish marriage preparation program at the Saskatoon parish, which is offered with the help of a team of mentor couples, presenting couples, and parish staff, coordinated this year by volunteer team leaders Michelle and Mitch Yuzdepski.

Married for 18 years, the Yuzdepskis can recall their own marriage preparation at Holy Family parish, and take inspiration from the impact their own experience had on their lives.

"We valued those couples who led our marriage preparation, and we learned a lot from them," said Michelle, reflecting on the impact of marriage preparation leaders who shared their insights and life experiences, which for one of the couples included the death of a child. "I remember thinking, for them to be doing marriage preparation and to have gone through some of the things they had gone through, they must have something to say that I need to hear," she said. "It was true. They were such a good example."

Mitch agreed, saying their own good experience preparing for marriage helped ensure they would be open to serving as members of the parish marriage preparation team for the past 10 years at St. Anne.

Ideally, marriage preparation would be one of the first things a couple does after deciding to get married, before booking the hall or choosing attendants, but the reality is that it's not always on the top of the "to do" list, admit the couple.

Engaged couples who come to the parish marriage preparation course are most often there because they know it's a requirement if they want to be married in the church, Mitch noted. That means at times participants are unsure, or even resentful, about the program. "But many times they come back and say to us, this has been a fantastic experience," Mitch described. One young man, who at first had reservations, said he was now recommending the experience to friends.

Another couple, who took the course when Michelle and Mitch first began helping with marriage preparation, have now returned as a mentor couple, helping to lead small group discussions during the parish marriage preparation course, which runs two Sunday evenings and one weekend in January.

Whether the young couples realize it or not, marriage preparation really does provide something that's needed at this important point in their lives, maintain Mitch and Michelle.

Because marriage is a sacrament, it's important to prepare for it, both spiritually and practically, stressed Michelle. "We need to see that it's a sacrament that we are receiving and we need to prepare for it. Christ is present here, we just need to be made aware of that."

Issues addressed during the marriage preparation course are "very real, very live topics" said Mitch, listing communication, financial, and sexual issues – areas which may cause problems in a marriage down the road.



Mitch and Michelle Yuzdepski work with the marriage preparation team at St Anne parish in Saskatoon.

"When young people are in love, they think love conquers all. We let them know that sometimes marriage is about the decision to love, and sometimes the decision to love is toughest when you're going through a crisis," he said. "But if you commit to that – commit to the sacrament – you will make that decision to love, and you'll have a marriage love relationship that continues to be vibrant, continues to grow."

Engaged couples may never have discussed some of the issues brought up during the preparation course, he noted. "If you don't get it on the agenda before you're married, it gets a lot more difficult afterwards," observed Mitch.

The married couples helping on the marriage preparation team can usually personally attest to the impact such issues have on a marriage. "All of us have been down that road. We can share that. We know stuff comes up," said Michelle.

One of the blessings in helping with the marriage preparation ministry is the chance to work with other married couples who are committed to their relationship and who are providing a witness of Christian marriage, noted Michelle. "We really enjoy the married couples that we work with. We learn so much every time somebody does a talk," she said. "Sometimes we say the engaged people won't really get it for a few years. But we're in it. We understand what we're listening to and we need to hear it again."

The Yuzdepskis once were advised to strengthen their marriage by surrounding themselves with couples who believe in marriage – and that's exactly what happens on the marriage preparation team, said Michelle.

Another blessing of being on the team is the chance for Mitch and Michelle to spend time together in ministry,

Uniting In Faith... to strengthen and support marriage

focusing on the sacrament of marriage away from the distractions of daily life. "It is an enrichment for us," said Michelle.

The couple also gets a boost from the love and excitement of the young engaged couples they serve. "It allows us to be rejuvenated a little bit by the younger couples... they love each other and everything is perfect to them," said Mitch. "Their excitement is infectious," agreed Michelle.

Both stressed the importance of having the support of the parish team of mentor and presenting couples, and the need to be flexible in order to allow people to participate on the team as they are able – it doesn't have to be "all or nothing," but can entail whatever time commitment the team members can manage, said Michelle.

At the final meal, blessing and dessert night, couples on the parish team are encouraged to bring their children to share in the celebration, noted Mitch. It's a witness to their children about the ministry their parents have been providing, and it's a witness to the young couples, letting them know that the team has taken time away from family to provide the ministry, noted Mitch.

The blessing evening also emphasizes the parish setting in which the marriage preparation takes place – in most cases, the couples who participate in the course are also married at St. Anne's and often make the parish their faith home. "We see them in our parish, we see them on Sundays, and I hope it's because of the atmosphere that they feel here – that no matter what place they are at in their lives, they're welcome here," said Michelle.

The Yuzdepskis have high hopes for the young engaged couples who attend marriage preparation.

"I would hope that they really value what they're going to have in their marriage," said Michelle. Mitch agreed, saying he hopes those who participate in marriage preparation would come to see their marriage as "holy ground."

"If everyone treated their marriage as if it was sacred, and if they lived their marriage as a sacrament, making the decision to love, then they will have a long and happy marriage," he said. "But we're quite frank with the couples too: marriage is hard work."

In the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, marriage preparation is offered widely at the parish level, and engaged couples are encouraged to check with their parish as soon as possible to ensure they get into a program well before their wedding day, said Blake Sittler of the diocesan office of marriage and family life. Curriculum for these parish programs has been developed and fine tuned through the diocesan Marriage Task Force, he noted.

In addition, Catholic Engaged Encounter operates within the diocese, with weekend sessions offered at the picturesque St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster, SK. Engaged Encounter is designed to give couples an opportunity to dialogue honestly and extensively about their prospective lives together in a sacramental marriage.

Catholic Family Services in Saskatoon also offers weekend marriage preparation workshops. Sessions run three times a year at a Saskatoon hotel.

Retrouvaille offers a lifeline to struggling marriages

BY BLAKE SITTLER

OFFICE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

Divorce has changed the face of the family around the world and the effects are no different in Canada.

Statistics Canada, the federal body that surveys the country with the expressed purpose of helping Canadians better understand the culture they live in, reported that in 2006, 48.5 per cent of respondents were married. This is the first time in their research that less than half of the population was married; down from 60 per cent in the 1980's.

This dip under the 50 per cent mark is due in large part to divorce and its impact on the decisions that couples are making in regards to marriage.

Many Canadians may perceive that divorce simply has to be accepted as part of the future profile of Canadian families. However, Retrouvaille Saskatchewan is attempting to reverse the divorce trend.

Retrouvaille is a peer-to-peer ministry offered to married couples who are considering separation or divorce. Though it is offered in dozens of countries, its roots originate in Canada.

Mike and Celia Caswell, who sit on the provincial board of Retrouvaille Saskatchewan, point out to couples who are struggling with their married relationship that there is hope. While statistics confirm the prevalence of divorce in society, divorce is not always the only option.

"If you are considering ending your marriage relationship or you think that there is more to life and love than your current experience, give Retrouvaille a chance," encouraged Mike.

The Caswells describe their personal experience of



Celia and Mike Caswell

attending the Retrouvaille weekend retreat like that of a plant being watered after a long period of drought.

"Our energy was spent, and we didn't know how we would make it through another day, [but] as we worked through the weekend and in the weeks following, life slowly started to come back to our marriage," said Celia.

The couple notes that the goal of a Retrouvaille weekend is not to keep bad marriages together but to help couples in difficulty rediscover the love and trust they once felt for each other.

Celia stated that a Retrouvaille weekend reveals that "a healthier and more loving relationship with your spouse is possible [again]."

Mike and Celia recognize that it takes a lot of courage to attend a Retrouvaille weekend. The biggest obstacle, in their opinion, is simply making the time.

"Couples need to be prepared to make the commitment to attend the [follow-up] sessions to get the full experience and maximum benefit and support," said Mike.

The Caswells pointed out that while weekends are currently only offered in Saskatoon, it is hoped that Regina or Prince Albert would also host weekends in the future.

"As the Saskatchewan Retrouvaille community grows, and people from across the province express an interest in supporting the growth of Retrouvaille Saskatchewan, it is very likely that we will be in a better position to expand our weekend offerings to other locations," said Mike.

The Caswells said that there is no "typical" Retrouvaille couple. Some couples are young and have been married only a few years while some couples have been married over 30 years.

"The common denominator is that we all come from a position of hurt and a desire to renew the love that brought us together in the first place," concluded Celia.

For confidential information about or to register for the next program in Saskatoon, call Ken and Rita Wolfe at 306-652-9653 or email retrouvaille@sasktel.net or visit the website at www.helpourmarriage.com

The diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life is supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Transitions reaches out to those who are divorced

BY BLAKE SITTLER

A recently-piloted ministry in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon reaches out to those who

are divorced, but who have already worked through many of the initial issues of shock, sadness, anger and guilt.

Known as Transitions, the program is described by organizers as a second-stage program, picking up where New Beginnings ends. New Beginnings has been active in the diocese for nearly 30 years, providing outreach to those who have experienced the loss of a spouse through divorce, separation or death.

The new Transitions program is coordinated by the diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life. Since an initial meeting in January 2006, four facilitators have volunteered to lead sessions.

Facilitator Sharon Powell first informed the diocese about the program, having heard about it from a friend in Calgary.

"I thought it would be good to offer it out of our parish and I brought it back to do that. It [the Transitions manual] sat on my desk for almost a year and I finally decided this was too big for one parish and too big for me as staff at this parish. I contacted the diocesan pastoral centre and offered it to the centre. The rest is history," said Powell, a pastoral associate at St. Augustine's Parish in Saskatoon.

Facilitator Dianne Sander initially heard about the pilot program through her church bulletin.

"I was in the process of taking the Lay Formation program and was thinking 'what can I do to work in the church community to help people' and the answer came to me," she said.

All of the facilitators were

themselves divorced and facilitated from their experience.

"It is important to share with the participants [from personal experience]...This gives them permission to be imperfect and to know that what they're going through is universal. Once they begin to realize they are not alone, they will share and will begin to heal," said Powell.

"Transitions is...about showing us how to grow from the pain...healing at a deeper level," she continued.

Facilitators met once every six weeks to discuss and modify the program as well as to learn some of the basic skills of facilitating a small group.

Transitions was hosted at Oskayak High School on Broadway Ave. in Saskatoon. The group met for two hours every Wednesday evening from late September until January. The evenings consisted of an opening prayer, some brief introductory statements about the topic, and then small group sharing about personal experiences.

Topics ranged from dealing with anger and guilt, to getting through the holidays and how to continue to be a good parent after the divorce.

After experiencing the program from beginning to end, Sander highly recommends Transitions.

"[For] anyone who is going through a hard time in their lives because of marriage breakup, this course...brings the support and

friendship that some people may need to make their journey that much easier."

Lorraine Cheke, another of the facilitators in the diocese of Saskatoon, was most moved by the closing ceremony held Jan. 21 at St. Paul's Cathedral.

"The closing liturgy was very moving and touching. Tears flowed quite easily. I believe it was the right kind of closing, simple but touching and moving. It was also great to have Bishop Albert [preside]," noted Cheke.

Cheke said that even though some divorce ministry is offered in the diocese of Saskatoon it is an area of hurt that can always use more support. Others in the group said that they felt the Church does not always know how to minister to divorced Roman Catholics.

"I am very happy that something is now being offered by the diocese to help those who, often through no fault of their own, have had to move on into singlehood and single parenting," concluded Cheke.

The Transitions pilot program is currently being reviewed to implement some of the changes recommended by the group. Plans call for the program to run twice annually, beginning in September and January. Ideally, each session would be facilitated by two separate teams.

For more information about Transitions contact the diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life at 242-1500, ext 229.



Marriage Appreciation Banquet

Keynote speakers Glenn and Judy Hilton brought an inspiring message to the 7th annual Marriage Appreciation Banquet April 4 in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. The event at St. Patrick parish also included Mass with Bishop Albert, a banquet and dance. Those in attendance also heard details about a national marriage conference planned for March 19-20, 2010 in Saskatoon. "A Time For Hope: Finally, Good News About Marriage" is the theme of the 2010 conference that will feature speakers Richard Gaillardetz, Reginald Bibby, Stephanie Coontz, and Kathy and Neil Heskins. For more information visit the website: www.marriage2010.ca

- Photo by Blake Sittler

Theology of the Body conference will be held June 5-7

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The profound meaning of the body, of human sexuality, and of marriage will be explored at a national Theology of the Body conference this June in Saskatoon.

Pope John Paul II's "Theology of the Body" was the focus of 129 messages delivered over the first five years of his pontificate. These teachings provide a revolutionary insight into what it means to be a human being, both physical and spiritual; how male and female reflect the truth and perfection of God; and how marriage and marital sex reflect and reveal God's love, explains Val Witzaney of One More Soul Canada, one of the organizations sponsoring the June 5 to 7 conference in Saskatoon.

It's a theology that pertains to every human being, but has some particularly profound things to say to married couples about living out their sacrament, she says. That's even reflected in the fact that there's a special conference rate for couples to attend together.

"A married couple that is open to God's plan for marriage experiences a love that is free, total, faithful and fruitful. Married love exists to mirror or reflect the perfect love between God the Father and God the Son," says Witzaney, noting that the idea for the conference originally began in the spring of 2007 with a discussion about providing high-quality marriage preparation and enrichment.

The Saskatoon conference will hopefully provide ordinary "people in the pews" with greater insight and understanding of the truth expressed in John Paul II's teachings, she said, noting the words of conference speaker Christopher West: "if you have a body, this theology is for you."

"The Theology of the Body has significance for everyone, no matter what stage of life one is currently living. Priest, single, married, teen, grandparent, bachelor, bishop, child, it makes no difference," says Witzaney.

"The Theology of the Body conference is an opportunity to learn something that will not only fill the natural desire for good, but will transform every aspect of life. When young people and old people embrace the Theology of the Body, we will have stronger families, and with stronger families comes a stronger Church, which will then lead more people to Christ."

Both of Saskatoon's Catholic bishops have prepared messages of support for the national conference.

"In his Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II invites us to consider our creation in God's image as the foundation for the dignity of the human person," says Bishop Albert LeGatt of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Pope John Paul II's "reflections on the body and the person, as well as sexuality and marriage, are a new and truly enlightened teaching on how our incarnation can be a path to giving praise



Dr. Mary Martin



Christopher West



Dr. Michael Waldstein



Dr. Janet Smith

to God as we share His divine love in our everyday human love for one another: man and woman; parent and child; young and old."

LeGatt expressed a hope that the Saskatoon conference would bring about "renewed understanding of our whole being – body, mind, soul and spirit – as called to holiness: a reflection of God's all-holy communion of love."

Bishop Bryan Bayda of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon wrote that he senses there is a need for more people to understand the Theology of the Body. "John Paul II's timely treatment ... is foundational in light of understanding moral and ethical challenges," Bayda says.

Speakers at the national Theology of the Body conference include Christopher West of the Theology of the Body Institute in the United States, author of *Good News About Sex and Marriage*, and of *Theology of the Body Explained*; and Dr. Janet Smith, consultant to the Pontifical Council on the Family and author of *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*.

Also speaking at the conference is Dr. Michael Waldstein of the St. Paul Centre for Biblical Theology and professor at

Ave Maria College in Florida, who translated John Paul II's Theology of the Body from the original Polish into English, entitled *Man and Woman He Created Them*. Speaker Dr. Mary Martin, is an obstetrician-gynecologist and Natural Family Planning physician, who treats infertility with information gained from the Billings Ovulation method of Natural Family Planning (NFP).

The weekend conference includes celebration of the Eucharist and of Divine Liturgy, opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, Eucharistic devotions, prayers with an icon of Our Lady of Victory, as well as a Saturday evening banquet and a Sunday morning family brunch. The Sunday program June 7 will also include ministry to children and to youth, offered by Cat.Chat, FacetoFace Ministries, and LEAP Ministries.

"We really want people to know the personal love that God has for them," says Witzaney. "This is why the conference program will also include 24-hour adoration as well as the sacrament of confession." Another special feature of the conference is a session for priests, pastors and religious Friday afternoon, June 5, and a special talk for couples that evening.

In addition to One More Soul Canada, conference sponsors include the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, Serena Saskatchewan, NFP Saskatchewan, Familia, St. Joseph Worker's For Life and Family, FacetoFace Ministries, and St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission. For more information see the website: www.tobconference.ca

Are you getting married this year?
Do you yearn to improve your marriage?
Do you want the recipe for
an extremely low divorce rate?

**SERENA Saskatchewan invites you
to take a couple-to-couple class
in the Sympto-Thermal method
of Natural Family Planning.**

This method is highly effective, natural, inexpensive and free of health risks. Group presentations, help with chart interpretation, and resources regarding fertility, breastfeeding, menopause and infertility are also available.

For more information, see the poster and pamphlets
in the reception area of your church or call
SERENA at 934-8223 (in Saskatoon)
or 1-800-667-1637



Meet the Deanery: KERROBERT

Meet the Deanery is an ongoing series featuring different deaneries across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. The diocese's seven regional deaneries were created to keep parishes in touch with one another, to provide a forum to address regional concerns, and to strengthen diocesan communication. Representatives from each of the deaneries also serve on the Diocesan Pastoral Council, an advisory body that helps facilitate two-way communication between parishes and the bishop.

Kerrobert Deanery rooted in historic St. Joseph Colony

Located on the far western border of the diocese of Saskatoon, the Kerrobert Deanery stretches from Macklin and St. Donatus in the west to Perdue in the east, from Unity and Wilkie in the north to Major and Kerrobert in the south. The Kerrobert Deanery has its roots in St. Joseph's Colony, a German/Russian Catholic settlement initiated by layperson F.J. Lange was a leader in the founding of St. Joseph's Colony, with spiritual guidance from priests of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. There are 13 parishes in the Kerrobert Deanery. The deanery chair is Steven Kloster of Macklin, and the priest representative is Fr. Andrew Wychucki.



Banners of parishes past and present are carried in procession during the annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary (left). The Holy Rosary Church (right) is a designated historic site.

St. Joseph Colony gathers at Reward for annual pilgrimage to Holy Rosary Shrine

The annual pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Shrine will be held this summer on Sunday, July 12. The pilgrimage day at the historic site begins at 1 p.m. with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the sacrament of reconciliation, followed by the rosary at 2 p.m., and anointing of the sick at 2:30 p.m. Benediction will be held at 3:30 p.m., followed by celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop Albert LeGatt, followed by supper. The evening before, Saturday, July 11, 2009 there will also be a youth-oriented gathering, featuring the rosary and Mass at 8 p.m. and an evening wiener roast. Next year, a homecoming celebration will be held Saturday, July 10, 2010 to mark the 100th anniversary of Holy Rosary Parish, said Gerald Deck of the pilgrimage committee. It will be followed by the annual pilgrimage the next day. Anyone interested in attending next year's homecoming is asked to contact Agnes Sperle, Box 3, Reward, SK. S0K 3N0, he said. The first small parish church constructed at Reward was replaced with the existing structure in 1918. In 1920 artist Berthold Von Imhoff painted 15 large images of the Mysteries of the Rosary inside the church building. Since it was centrally located in St. Joseph Colony, Holy Rosary Church was chosen as the site for the colony's first Marian pilgrimage in 1932. About 3,000 pilgrims attended the pilgrimage in its first year. In 1936 a wooden structure was built, and served as the grotto until the present outdoor shrine was constructed in 1966. To get to the pilgrimage site travel west of Saskatoon on Hwy 14 past Unity and turn south at the sign pointing the way to Reward. The country church is visible east of the Reward town site.



Wilkie Way of the Cross

Every week during Lent students from St. George Catholic School in Wilkie came to church to pray the Way of the Cross. On Wednesday, April 8 in Holy Week, Grade 6 and 7 students acted out the stations under the guidance of their teacher M.J. Rohs. For more news from St. James Parish in Wilkie, check out the parish website at: www.iacobi.net

- Photo by Fr. Andrew Wychucki

Denzil CWL hosts World Day of Prayer service March 13

BY JOAN KUCHAPSKI
CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE
SACRED HEART PARISH, DENZIL
Denzil Catholic Women's League held an annual World Day of Prayer service Friday, March 13. The service was written by the women of Papua New Guinea. Scripture reading, singing, praying and

acting were done by many adult and youth volunteers. The service was followed by fellowship with snacks and music reflecting the culture of Papua New Guinea. A total of \$275 was collected to support the work of the Women's Interchurch Council of Canada.



Wilkie retreat wind-up

John Fenrich and Gerry Cey were among the members of the Wilkie Knights of Columbus council serving brunch to parishioners of St. James Parish. The March 21 event was a final gathering for the parish 2009 lenten retreat given by Fr. Stanley Ksciuk of St. Catherine's Diocese, ON. For more news from St. James Parish in Wilkie, check out the parish website at: www.iacobi.net

- Photo by Fr. Andrew Wychucki

Denzil-area family named K of C Saskatchewan Family of the Year

Active in the Knights of Columbus, CWL, parish life, NFP and pro-life organizations, the David and Valerie Witzaney family was recognized with the Family of the Year Award April 18 during the annual Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus state convention. Presenting the award (at left, l-r) were Sylvia and Larry Tymiak (State Family Life Director) and Sherry and Arden Andreas, (State Deputy); recognizing members of the Witzaney family: (back, l-r) dad David, holding TaraLee, mom Valerie, Joshua, Katelyn, and Alanna, holding Thea; (front, l-r) Matthew, with Daniel directly in front of him, Janelle and Anthony. Missing from the photo is Lauren, 20, who is attending Thomas Aquinas College in California. As director of One More Soul Canada, Val is currently helping to organize the national Theology of the Body conference in Saskatoon in June.



Uniting In Faith... to learn, to grow, to celebrate



Youngsters display the advent wreaths they made during the retreat.



Youth learned more about salvation history by creating symbols of Bible figures to decorate a Jesse tree, one of the advent traditions explored during the all-day event.

Parishes organize advent retreat at Macklin for all ages

St. Mary's parish in Macklin entered the Advent season Nov. 30 with a day of learning, activities, community and prayer.

Some 300 attended the Advent retreat day organized by a local committee (*right*). Assisted by dozens of volunteers from the parishes at Macklin, Denzil and St. Donatus, the committee offered a program that spanned the entire day, all ages and three locations.

The program featured sessions for children, youth and adults, celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop Albert LeGatt, as well as lunch and an evening banquet.



Games, music, learning and prayers were part of the youth programs offered.

Four speakers explored the Advent season with adults gathered at St. Mary's parish: Lucie Leduc spoke about Advent scriptures; Blake Sittler discussed Advent and Christmas traditions; St. Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, spoke about St. Paul and letters from Paul heard this Advent; and Fr. Paul Fachet, OMI, discussed the Emmanuel theme in the gospel of Matthew.

Throughout the morning at St. Mary's church hall, children ages four and five years gathered to explore the meaning of Jesus' birthday through a puppet show, stories and craft activities, as well as participating in a baby shower for Jesus, with gifts going to Real Choices Pregnancy Center.

Meanwhile, children in Grades 1 to 3 learned about the meaning of the Advent wreath before each child created a wreath of their own – which were later used in a prayer service when the entire community gathered for the evening meal. In another session, this age group also learned more about the Christmas scriptures, and how they can share gifts and talents.

After lunch at the Communiplex, children ages 4 years to Grade 3 participated in a variety of games, before attending a Cat.Chat concert in the afternoon.

Youth in Grades 4 to 6 gathered at the school throughout the day, creating Jesse trees and learning more about the Advent and Christmas season.

Singer-songwriter Jennifer Jade Kerr, led sessions for both junior and senior high school youth, as did members of the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team.



Children greatly enjoyed a puppet show about the meaning of Christmas.

Members of the committee that organized the Advent retreat day in Macklin for the parishes at Macklin, Denzil and St. Donatus (*l-r*): Gerry Scheck, Deb Gulka, Michelle Sieben, Carolyn Sieben, Karen Stang and Fr. Marvin Lishchynsky.

Adults listened and shared perspectives on advent.



Senior youth participated in sessions led by the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team.

FIND MORE NEWS ABOUT THIS EVENT ON THE WEBSITE:

www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm

Kerrobert parish sets up garden of repose

For the past three years, Our Lady of Assumption parish in Kerrobert has set up a garden of repose on Holy Thursday, in the church's lower hall.

The garden includes many plants as well as a garden gate and lots of candles. An altar is set up, on which is placed a tabernacle that is only used once a year. The Blessed Sacrament is placed there for Holy Thursday adoration.

This tabernacle was used in the old church, and so for some it brings back many fond memories and connects the present members with the past.

Adoration is usually held for about three hours, and provides a quiet and peaceful atmosphere in which to worship. On Holy Saturday all the plants



Eucharistic adoration is offered Holy Thursday.

- Photo courtesy of Our Lady of Assumption parish

and other items are moved to the main altar in preparation for Easter Sunday.

For many, this garden of repose is a reminder of the three days that Jesus spent in the tomb, before His glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Biggar celebrates 100th

St. Gabriel parish in Biggar will celebrate its 100th anniversary Aug. 1 and 2.

Registration begins Saturday, Aug. 1 at 8:30 a.m. at the town hall, with a tea at St. Gabriel Church from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., followed by cocktail hour at the town hall beginning at 4 p.m.

A supper, program and silent auction will begin at the town hall at 5 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 2 Mass will be celebrated with Bishop Albert LeGatt at 11 a.m. A brunch will follow at St. Gabriel parish.

Cost for the entire weekend is

\$20 for adults, 18 years and older; \$10 for students, 17 years and under; and \$3 for children six years and under.

Register before June 20 by sending your name, address and cheque to Donna Baum, Box 901, Biggar, Sask. S0K 0M0.

The Biggar parish has a close connection to St. Joseph's Colony. In 1909 parishioners worked together to build the first church building.

The present church was completed in 1965.

For more information about the anniversary, visit the parish website at www.stgabriels.ca

Denzil residents assist in Knights of Columbus wheelchair project

Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus began fundraising to send wheelchairs to developing countries in July 2006, after a presentation by Wheelchair Foundation Canada.

Since that time, Knights of Columbus members across Saskatchewan, working with their families, councils and communities have raised more than \$135,000. From these funds Moose Jaw and Regina Councils have delivered 390 wheelchairs to Sierra Leone, while another 390 designated by Kindersley Council and Melfort, Tisdale, St. Brieux Councils went to Vietnam.

On Nov 07, 2008 Past State

Deputy Marvin DeSchryver and his wife Pat, along with former Wheelchair Foundation Chairman Garnet Gramlich and his wife Doreen, travelled to the Dominican Republic. During the visit, they helped in the distribution of 390 more wheelchairs, joined by Larry Kustra, State Deputy of Manitoba and his wife Margaret.

The group arrived at an HHS Foundation warehouse in time for the main distribution. Eligible recipients were arriving by car, van, motorbike or on the backs of their caregivers.

HHS Foundation is an organization based in the Dominican Republic with a mission

to educate and empower children. HHS has partnered with Wheelchair Foundation Canada to distribute wheelchairs. HHS Foundation worked with civil defense employees to assist with the distribution in other parts of the country thereby reducing transportation costs.

The visitors also spent subsequent days travelling around Santo Domingo, assisting in delivering wheelchairs to those who were unable to make it to the warehouse distribution. They heard many stories and were able to see first hand the difference that the wheelchairs will make in the lives of many people in need.



State Deputy Jose Perez-Payano (left) of the Dominican Republic and Past State Deputy Marvin DeSchryver of Saskatchewan presented a balloon and a gift package to one of the youth who received a wheelchair. In all, about 80 pounds of school supplies, toys, rosaries and candies were given out during the distribution of wheelchairs, reported DeSchryver. -Photo courtesy of M. DeSchryver

St Peter's Parish in Unity engages in faith formation events

Faith formation opportunities are enriching parish life at St. Peter's in Unity.

Fr. Gerard Cooper said that a FacetoFace family retreat held on Palm Sunday was an "awesome and faith-filled" event. Hosting a retreat on Palm Sunday has become a tradition over the past five years, he added.

"These retreats are moments for youth, when their faith can be seen coming alive," Cooper said, describing comments from young people who said that as a result of the retreats they have come to understand the importance of having a relationship with God.

Many of the children who are preparing for confirmation and first Eucharist attended the family retreat, added Cooper. "The older ones really witnessed their faith to the younger students."

Palm Sunday was also the day that the group preparing for confirmation and first Eucharist were presented with crosses, he noted.

A series on St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is being offered at St. Peter's parish as a way to mark the Jubilee Year of St. Paul declared by Pope Benedict XVI from June 2008 to 2009. The study series includes video presentations and discussion about the 16 chapters of First Corinthians.

A seven-part series on the power of the Holy Spirit from the Intercessors of the Lamb prayer ministry is also being offered in the parish. "It focuses on empowerment in the Holy Spirit; in bringing Christ alive in us, so that we become ever more like Christ," said Cooper. Sessions consist of listening to a seminar talk, and then spending time praying with and for each other, and reflecting on the Word of God.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit is also the theme of a series of faith enrichment sessions that Fr. Cooper is offering to teachers in the local Catholic school. "It has become a year dedicated to the Holy Spirit and to the gifts of the Holy Spirit,"

he noted. "The whole school is learning about it and connecting the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit with the seven sacraments."

To mark the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary in October, students from St. Peter's School went on a field trip to the shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary at Reward. The students celebrated Mass with Fr. Cooper in the historic Holy Rosary Church.

Students were in awe of the beautiful building, decorated with paintings by Berthold Von Imhoff, Cooper said. A local artist also attended the event, and gave students a presentation about the artist and his work.

Another school field trip to the shrine is planned for World Catholic Education Day in May, he noted.

Eleven people from Unity were among the 53 from the Kerrobert Deanery to participate in an 11-week program in the fall entitled *Grief Ministry: Helping Others to Mourn*, organized through the diocesan Ministry Development office.

Both the Knights of Columbus and the CWL are also active in the St. Peter's parish community, Cooper said. And this year the Unity community has also been blessed to have seminarian Geoff Young serving his internship year at St. Peter's, said Cooper. "It's been a

sign of hope and encouragement for all of our people to see that young men of faith are coming forward in this way, and are willing to share their faith with a real zeal," Cooper said.

"It's been a positive experience to have him with us."



Macklin youth sleep over

In November, the parish hall at Macklin was transformed into a giant slumber party for about 96 girls from kindergarten to Grade 11, organized by leader Shirley Ann Neufeld and Laurie Stang with the help of older youth. A similar event was held the week before for some 45 boys in the school gym.

- Photo courtesy of St. Mary parish, Macklin

Purity Rally 2009 explores theme with events for all ages

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Some 600 people of all ages gathered for an annual Purity Rally Feb. 21 in Saskatoon. The day-long program included speakers, prayer, music, games and activities, as well

as the screening of youth-created videos about purity.

Mass with Bishop Albert LeGatt and opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation were again part of the rally, as was a closing hour of

musical Eucharistic adoration – a request of youth involved in the event, said organizer Carmen Marcoux. The theme of the 2009 rally was "beyond your wildest dreams."

Marcoux related how those involved in the Purity Rally appreciate how it supports them in their faith. "It is really neat to talk with these young people who describe how good it is to come to this event and be grounded in the message of purity that is so eroded by the world," she said. "It's one of the biggest areas we all do battle with in our lives, because we are surrounded by a culture of impurity."

Master of Ceremonies Joshua Jalbert and Daniel Zimmer were assisted by a group of 25 young adult leaders dubbed "QTs" who met monthly over the past year to

prepare for the rally. Members of the group led music and activities throughout the day.

Held this year at Holy Cross high school, the Purity Rally also included events for children four to six years led by Jen Vail, and for those seven to 11 years led by Jonathan Courchene and Sarah De Jong.

The teen and adult gathering included a talk on discernment by April Mireau, and sessions led by keynote speaker Rev. Clair Watrin, CSB.

Dreams of being rich, powerful or beautiful pale next to God's dream for our lives, said Watrin, reflecting on the rally theme. "God says he has a dream for you wilder than you can even imagine: eye has not seen nor ear heard ... what great things God has prepared for those who love him. Way beyond what you can ever dream, God has

prepared something for you."

Watrin challenged young people, asking: "who are you going to give your heart to?" Jesus has the real deal when it comes to happiness, and going in other directions will ultimately lead to disappointment and despair, he said. "Jesus promised if you seek first the kingdom, everything else is yours." In her address to the gathering, Marcoux said that purity is that virtue that makes us "transparent" so that the light of Christ can shine through us, drawing others to Christ. "It also clears our vision, so that we can see Christ in others."



Games and activities were once again part of the annual Purity Rally, held this year at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon.

Homilies for Everyday Life

By Fr. Rudolph Novacosky, OSB

Includes homilies for Sundays and major feast days for the entire three-year cycle of the church year, as well as funeral, wedding and graduation homilies.

\$35

Available at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 100 5th Ave N., Saskatoon, or from the gift shop at St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, SK.

is your parish
@ .rcxp.ca?

design and hosting
service for parishes
on convenient
domains .rcxp.ca

publish:
parish bulletin
calendars
galleries

training tutorials
for info visit:

www.rcxp.ca

CCO Impact mission offers summer of evangelization

Sixty young adults from across the country will participate in Impact 2009, a summer mission project in the diocese of Saskatoon.

Impact is organized by Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO), a university student movement dedicated to evangelization. CCO began on the University of Saskatchewan campus in 1988, with the approval of the bishop, and now involves hundreds of students on campuses across Canada.

Living and working at summer jobs in the community from May 4 to Aug. 12, Impact participants will spend their spare time leading and participating in faith formation and training, faith studies, retreats and special events.

Christy Gaudet of Saskatoon, one of the organizers of the CCO summer mission project, said that

the theme of Impact 2009 comes from Pope Benedict XVI's words to the youth of the world in Sydney, Australia: "Burning with the fire and love of the Holy Spirit, go forth to proclaim the risen Christ and draw every heart to Him."

As with everything CCO undertakes, the goal of the summer mission is evangelization, she said, adding that she's excited that Impact 2009 is being held in Saskatoon this year. Not only has CCO recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of its birth in this city, but a new *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision launched by Bishop Albert LeGatt lists evangelization as one of six priorities for the diocese of Saskatoon.

Impact teams of four to five students will be connected to 11 city parishes, providing programs and

Uniting In Faith... to empower youth

working with individual parishes to connect with the community and provide service and outreach.

These parish teams will offer Tuesday evening faith studies throughout the summer, and will be available Sundays to share in liturgies, help with ministries, and participate in parish activities.

For the Saskatoon mission project, CCO has also created an Apostle Team, a group with more CCO and retreat experience, which will reach out to parish communities throughout the diocese. The Apostle Team will provide school retreats, visit with Grade 11 and 12 students, and offer summer day camps. The team will also visit various rural communities on Sundays throughout the summer, giving their testimony at Mass and spending time in fellowship.

Diocesan-wide events are also planned, including a welcoming **Diocesan Youth Event Thursday, May 14**, for youth ages 14 and up, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon.

Every Thursday evening from May 21 to Aug. 6, weekly gatherings known as **Cornerstone** will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit parish, for young adults from 16 to 30 years, consisting of music, drama, teaching and fellowship.

Summit is a monthly Impact event featuring Eucharistic adoration, praise and worship, testimonies and the opportunity for reconciliation. Beginning at 7:30 p.m., Summit Eucharistic adoration will be held Friday, May 15 at St. Augustine parish, Saskatoon; Friday, June 19 at St. Anne parish; and Friday, July 17 at St. Patrick Parish.

A diocesan-wide Tuesday-evening **Courageous Catholic** program will be offered at St. Philip Neri parish May 19 to June 30, providing training in how to share faith with others.

The Impact team and diocesan youth ministers are collaborating to present a **Diocesan Youth Event Friday, June 12 and Saturday, June 13** at St. Augustine parish in Humboldt.



Christy Gaudet
CCO Team Leader, Saskatoon

The Spiritual Journey of Saint Paul: "Paul's Senior Years"

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 9, with Sr. Teresita Kambeitz, OSU at St. Paul's Cathedral hall, 720 Spadina Cres. E., Saskatoon

All are welcome

Pre-registration NOT required

A presentation by the diocesan Foundations program.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon extends a warm prairie welcome to:



Impact 2009 is a four-month summer mission for young adults and university students that is offered by Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO), a university student movement dedicated to evangelization and to challenging students to live out the fullness of the Catholic faith.

Impact 2009 will involve 60 young adults from across Canada living and working in the community. From Monday to Friday participants will work at part-time or full-time jobs during the day. Evenings and weekends they will lead and participate in faith formation and training, faith studies, retreats, and outreach events. Teams will be connected to 11 city parishes, and a travelling team will be visiting Catholic schools and parishes outside of Saskatoon.

Impact 2009 will:

- Allow students to grow in their Catholic faith and in their relationship with God, and to help discern their call to ministry and vocation;
- Train students in evangelization and leadership, giving them an opportunity to share the Gospel and implement what they have learned;
- Place committed young adults at the service of the Saskatoon diocese in the areas of evangelization and outreach, particularly to youth.

Impact 2009 will include:

- **Cornerstone** - a weekly outreach event for young adults (16 to 30) featuring worship, music, drama, fellowship and outreach - beginning Thursday, May 21 and continuing every Thursday until Aug. 6.
- **Faith Studies** - beginning in select parishes May 19 and continuing every Tuesday through the summer.
- **Summit** - a Friday evening Eucharistic adoration event to be held May 15 at St. Augustine in Saskatoon, June 19 at St. Anne. and July 17 at St. Patrick, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Watch for times and locations!

School welcome

Dancers at Oskāyak high school in Saskatoon Feb. 25 welcomed representatives attending a national summit of education ministers, organized to address Aboriginal education. An associate school in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School district, Oskāyak (formerly Joe Duquette High School) was created to meet the needs of Aboriginal youth, offering special programs in Cree language, drama, and First Nations culture and art, as well as a hockey academy.



St. Peter's at Muenster now offers first year kinesiology

Prospective kinesiology, business and international students will soon be able to begin their university programs at St. Peter's College in Muenster.

Through a special agreement with the College of Kinesiology at the University of Saskatchewan, students will be able to take their first year of kinesiology at St. Peter's College, reported Val Koroluk, special projects manager at St. Peter's College.

St. Peter's College has also entered into a partnership with the University of Saskatchewan's Edwards School of Business to offer several new business programs at the college in Muenster. Students will be able to apply for direct entry into the Edwards School of Business (ESB) and take their entire first year of their commerce degree at St. Peter's College.

Also offered is ESB's Business Administration Certificate. This program is designed for the mature learner who wishes to take business classes on a part-time basis.

IBAC for international students will also be offered at St. Peter's College. The International Business Administration Certificate (IBAC) is designed to provide pathway programming for international students who are academically gifted, but who do not have demonstrated proficiency in English language skills or may face social or

transition issues. The IBAC program allows international students to study business education at ESB while mastering English language skills and adjusting to a new environment.

"This is an exciting opportunity for post-secondary education in the region. The IBAC program will attract international students who will benefit from our excellent faculty and supportive learning environment.

IBAC will also showcase educational and business opportunities in east central Saskatchewan and help promote these opportunities to students, the international

talent pool and marketplace," said Rob Harasymchuk, president of St. Peter's College.

"With these new additions, St. Peter's College offers arts and science, business, agriculture and kinesiology. Students are also able to fulfill the entry requirements to colleges such as medicine, law, nutrition, pharmacy, and education," said Glen Kobussen, special advisor to the board of St. Peter's College. "More students will be able to benefit from our small class size, excellent instruction, lower tuition and cost of living and friendly atmosphere," Kobussen added.



STM marks Catholic Students' Week

Bishop Albert LeGatt visited St. Thomas More College as part of Catholic Students' Week, speaking about the *Rooted in Christ* diocesan vision. The week of special events March 22-28 was an initiative of the Canadian Catholic Students Association and Canadian Catholic Campus Ministry, working in collaboration with Development and Peace.



Let us journey together in faith & joy!

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon
100-5th Ave. N., Saskatoon, SK. S7K 2N7
Phone: 306-242-1500 Fax: 244-6010
www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com

Writing icons brings spiritual blessings at St. Therese retreat

Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky, a Byzantine rite priest of the Ukrainian Catholic Church from Prince Albert, led an icon-writing workshop as a Holy Week retreat at St. Therese School of Faith and Mission.

"Fr. Ivan arrived on Passion Sunday with a trunk full of oak boards in need of chiselling and sanding; by Tuesday evening, 16 somewhat exhausted participants held completed icons," said Jim Anderson, director of the school.

"I found the time of prayer, meditation and painting to be a profound spiritual exercise, filled with symbolic meaning," Anderson said.

"Icons have been described as being windows to heaven, but... icons, as any window will, not only permit one a view of the beyond, but allow light into the room. For me, it was the light of heaven flooding my heart as I spent three intense days praying through the creation of an icon."

Fr. Nahachewsky stressed that the purpose of icon writing was to pray, particularly the Jesus prayer, beloved by the Eastern Church: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner." Fr. Nahachewsky told the gathering: "If you can't paint and pray, then don't paint!"

"Often in the room of novice iconographers a gentle buzz of chit-chat would start until someone began chanting: 'Lord have mercy' ... and the room would be filled with the prayer leading to silence," said Anderson. "During the prayer and painting the whole gamut of human emotion — joy and sadness, elation and frustration, encouragement and borderline despair—were all distilled into a narrow space of time and focused attention."

Uniting In Faith... for formation



Monica Tahn works on an icon.

- Photos courtesy of St. Therese

The process of painting was both frustrating and fruitful, Anderson said, describing the egg tempera, a thin, watery pigment that is applied in very thin coats, layer upon layer. "In fact, the coats are so thin that there is no apparent change in the image after applying the pigment. The process must be patiently repeated, over and over and over, until at last a change occurs," he said.

"I complained to Fr. Ivan about it in the middle of the retreat. 'It makes no



Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky (standing at the far right) led an icon-writing retreat at St. Therese School of Faith and Mission in Bruno during Holy Week 2009.

difference!' I said. 'You might as well be painting water on it, for all the difference it makes!' Fr. Ivan fixed me with a knowing look and responded, 'Kind of like prayer.'"

Chastened, Anderson said he returned to the process with thoughts of the gospel account of the persistent widow petitioning the judge. "How often had I taught: 'Prayer works. Persevere and be patient.' I dipped my brush in the paint and applied another invisible coat to the gradually appearing image ... and it did appear."

Participants all painted the same icon of the guardian angel, said Anderson, staring at it for hours, and repeatedly tracing the lines of the figure "until the shape and form were etched on our minds. I could see it in my sleep," he described.

"Strangely, in the days that followed the icon writing workshop, I found that I could see features of the icon in the features of the people around me: the line of one person's jaw, the curve of another's neck, a nose here, a lip there, the shape of someone's eye," he said.

"It struck me then in a new way, each of us is an icon, an image and likeness of the Divine. In truth, Jesus is no further away from me than the next person I encounter, and now I pray that my persistent and patient

brushstrokes of love, even despite my human frustrations, will render the image of those I see, and myself to those who see me, ever more reflective of the true image of the One in whose image we are all of us made."

Anderson said the experience of writing icons was also a microcosm of the faith formation that happens at St. Therese.

"We learn and learn to embrace a spirituality of littleness and hiddenness. It is the 'Little Way of St. Therese', a little way of small, humble, seemingly unimportant things done repeatedly with great love for God and neighbour. Our life of study, work, fellowship, community and prayer is, in essence, an act of icon writing," he said.

"It is the thin layers of obedience, humility, generosity, compassion, mercy, love applied by doing dishes or sweeping floors, spending time in adoration of the blessed sacrament, studying Church history, sharing our struggles with our brothers and sisters, preparing the play *Paper Wheat* to be taken on tour, sending out brochures, conversing with benefactors, or whatever the task before us might be — it is doing these little things with deep joy and love that make all the difference. I believe that this is the heart of becoming a disciple of Christ."

Prayer conference furthers healing centre at St. Therese

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A recent prayer conference at St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission is one more phase in the development of programming for a growth and healing centre at the Bruno facility, says Jerry Kristian, board chair and director of the healing centre.

"The course by the Intercessors of the Lamb parallels the vision of St. Therese, both in the school and in the healing and growth centre," said Kristian.

Some 300 people attended the public lecture by Mother Nadine Brown, who founded the Intercessors of the Lamb, while 116 participated in the entire six-day course on intercessory prayer led by Sr. Mary Grace Hymel and Sr. Mary Rita Bazzi.

"We have had different programs related to the growth and healing centre, and we're accelerating it now," Kristian said. "The true mission of St. Therese Institute is to bring people from worldly thinking and worldly practices into spiritual thinking and spiritual practices; to bring them to total surrender to Christ," he said, stressing that the school of faith and mission and the healing and growth centre are both part of one effort.

"We must come to work under Christ's

power, under his wisdom, protection and guidance. In order to do that, we must first go through a cleansing, healing and sanctification process," Kristian said. "We all bear hurts of the past that need to be healed."

Rather than dealing with hurt, we often try to deny or whitewash our pain, he said. "Most of us think if I just pull up my socks, I'll be okay," he said. "But that's just sweeping it under the rug. The Lord says there is so much more to life. He wants you to live your life to the full now, not only after you come to eternity."

A nine-day program to be offered at the healing and growth centre on an ongoing basis will be open to people of all ages and all backgrounds, including those of other Christian denominations, he said.

"For some the need for healing is much deeper, because of brokenness in their past, because of family situations, and so on," Kristian described. "But Christ says come as you are. No matter how hurt you are and no matter what you have done throughout our life he only says 'come and I will heal you, come and I will set you free.'"

The nine-day program will cover areas of self-esteem, emotional healing, addictions,

generational healing, theology of the body, catechetics and theology, and the ministry of intercession and discernment.

"We will bring participants to Christ the healer and to the healing power of the Eucharist," said Kristian. "Whatever their role in life is, we want to send them home operating under the power of God, to go out and spread the love of Christ to everybody in their personal realm."

Both the school of faith and mission and the healing and growth centre exist to help people become more fulfilled and better equipped to live out their mission in the world, Kristian said. "It's to develop that confidence in a person that says, 'yes I know why I was born, I know why I was created and what God wants me to do.' The ache is gone."

He noted that other offerings also continue at St. Therese Institute, including Rachel's Vineyard (a program of post-abortion healing), other speakers and courses that are open to all, and a summer youth camp by FacetoFace Ministries.

Through it all, it's the power of God that will make the difference, said Kristian. "We're only instruments helping to carry this out. It's the Holy Spirit and Christ who will open hearts and bring healing."



Prayer conference

Mother Nadine Brown of the Intercessors of the Lamb spoke Feb. 27 at St. Therese Institute in Bruno. For complete coverage of her talk, check out the diocesan news articles on the diocesan website at: www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/new_s_articles/news_articles.cfm

Knights of Columbus return to roots at annual state convention

By EDWARD GIBNEY, STATE SECRETARY SASKATCHEWAN KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The 87th annual state council meeting of the Knights of Columbus of Saskatchewan, held in Saskatoon April 17 to 19, was a call to return to the basics of the Columbian Order; and a call for Knights to hold fast to the Catholic principles around which the order was founded 127 years ago.

Under the theme *Follow us. Help us build up the Church* State Deputy Arden Andreas, the state executive, and the delegates and their families from around the province celebrated the past year's successes and deliberated on how to better serve the Church and the community and to *Build up the Church* with the help of young members with new ideas.

The business meetings focused on informing all present on the important issues facing the Church, the community and the order with guest speakers instructing the delegates on the details they should be taking back to their home councils. Several resolutions addressing the internal workings of the order were discussed. Resolutions included:

- That Knights of Columbus deplore the trafficking of women and children, speak out against printed material, movies and television programs that depict gratuitous sex and violence and deplore sacrilegious attacks and disrespectful depictions of those things that are sacred to people of all religions.
- That the Knights of Columbus of Saskatchewan follow their bishops' lead and become aware of the issues surrounding the possible expansion of the uranium industry and the building of a nuclear reactor in Saskatchewan and that they encourage all residents to do the same.
- That the Knights of Columbus Councils of Saskatchewan integrate a formations program into their council meetings in order to nourish their spiritual growth through prayer and reflection
- That the Knights of Saskatchewan reaffirm our support and unwavering loyalty to our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, our bishops and priests.

Uniting In Faith... for charity and fraternity

State council executive election results were: State Deputy Arden Andreas of Lancer; Past State Deputy Marvin DeSchryver of Denzil; State Secretary Edward Gibney of Saskatoon; State Treasurer Gilles Doiron of Moose Jaw; State Advocate Denis Carignan of Battleford; and State Warden Brian Schatz of Regina. Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, of St. Peter's Abbey is the State Chaplain.

From the opening Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Bryan Bayda of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, to the Memorial Mass celebrated by Abbot Peter Novecosky, the 87th annual convention of the Knights of Columbus of Saskatchewan was dedicated to holding firm to the principles of the order; charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. The delegates left Saskatoon informed and inspired to go back to their communities and join together to *Help Build up the Church*.



Seminarians in the diocese of Saskatoon gathered with the bishop in December. (Standing l-r:) Hoang Nguyen, Greg Roth, Colin Roy, Mathew Ramsay, Dan Yasinski; (Seated, l-r:) Geoffrey Young, Bishop Albert LeGatt and Vocations Director Rev. Gerard Cooper. Three more young men are planning to begin studies in the fall of 2009.

‘Come and See’ weekend assists in discernment

“Come and See” discernment weekends for young men are held regularly in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, coordinated by Rev. Marc Mireau.

Eight young men attended the latest “Come and See” event March 13-15 at Discernment House in Saskatoon, a facility operated by the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

Bishop Albert LeGatt, diocesan Vocations Coordinator Donna Kristian, Dr. Gerry Farthing and Sr. Evelyn Nedelec, PM, joined Mireau in facilitating the weekend, which featured prayer, speakers, personal testimonies, dialogue and time for reflection.

“The Eucharist was the foundation of our prayer life, along with adoration, and the Liturgy of the Hours,” said Mireau. “Each man shared his story of how he came to attend, and what motivated him to possibly consider priesthood or the consecrated life.”

Speakers focused on the areas

of discerning God’s will, and ways to respond to God, Mireau said. “Psychology, theology, scripture, and personal testimonies were some of the areas that were presented to the young men.”

Geoff Young, a third year seminarian serving in his pastoral internship year at St. Peter’s Parish in Unity, shared the story of his vocation call, and described his own process of discernment. “The young men were given a good insight into the daily schedule of seminary life at St. Joseph (Seminary, Edmonton), and the joy that comes with saying yes to God’s call,” said Mireau.

Each “Come and See” weekend begins by focusing on the basic baptismal call, Mireau explained. “The vision, first and foremost, is recognizing our baptismal call, and first responding to it by consecrating the world to Jesus, by thought, word and action,” he said. “Some are called to marriage and the single life. Others are called to

Six seminarians continue journey to ordination; three more to begin studies for priesthood in fall

Three more young men will enter the seminary in the fall, joining six others who are in various stages of study for the priesthood for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Francis Denis will begin studies at St. Joseph’s seminary in Edmonton, and Matthew Orlowski and Greg Smith-Windsor will start their studies at St. Peter’s Seminary in London, ON, said Saskatoon Bishop Albert LeGatt.

All three attended “Come and See” weekends about the priesthood organized in Saskatoon by Rev. Marc Mireau, featuring talks, dialogue and prayer (*below*).

Two seminarians are finishing up an internship year working in local parishes – Mathew Ramsay at Holy Spirit in Saskatoon and Geoffrey Young at St. Peter’s parish in Unity. They will both return to their studies in the fall, with Ramsay at Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon and Young at St. Joseph Seminary in Edmonton, beginning their last two years of study leading to ordination.

Greg Roth and Hoang Nguyen will be entering their year of internship beginning in September. Roth has been studying at St. Peter Seminary in London, and Nguyen at St. Joseph Seminary, Edmonton.

Dan Yasinski and Colin Roy will begin their second

Uniting In Faith... for vocations

year of theology studies at St. Peter’s Seminary in London this fall.

“To see the number that we do have for our diocese is an encouraging sign,” said LeGatt. “To see three beginning this fall is certainly an indication that young men are continuing to consider the priesthood as a possible vocation.”

The bishop applauded the work of the diocesan Vocations Commission for their efforts to keep vocations to the fore of people’s consciousness, as well as the evangelization and vocation awareness efforts happening in parishes, in Catholic schools, in Catholic colleges such as St. Thomas More in Saskatoon, and through movements such as Catholic Christian Outreach and FacetoFace retreats, and especially within families.

“The Spirit is obviously still very much calling – touching the minds and hearts of young people and calling them to a life of service to God and to the Church,” he said. “As a diocese we need to continue to pray for vocations and to encourage every effort that ensure young people are engaged with the Church.”



Matthew Orlowski



Greg Smith-Windsor

the consecrated and priesthood. We like to give a balanced look at ALL vocations, as we discern God’s call to live out our baptismal call.”

Priesthood and consecrated life then become the focus of the rest of the weekend. “We share with one another how God could be calling some to a priestly or consecrated vocation,” he said.

“The response of the men was amazing! Their awareness of the possibility of being called by God to serve the Church as priest or religious was at the heart of the weekend,” Mireau described how



Participants at a recent Come and See weekend: (back row, l-r) Michael Lund, Fr. Marc Mireau, Mathieu Denis, Francis Denis, Bishop Albert LeGatt, (front row, l-r) Joshua Jalbert, Paul-Remi Poulin, Daniel Zimmer, Joshua Hrynchshyn. (Kyle Banadyga is missing from the photo.) Francis Denis will begin studies at the seminary in Edmonton this fall

- Photo by Sr. Evelyn Nedelec, PM

one man stated that “he always felt a call to serve, but that this was the first time he actually felt that priesthood could be his call.”

Another said “he now is beginning to see the possibility of

priesthood as a viable option in my life.”

The next “Come and See” will be held Dec. 4 to 6, hosted by the Trinity parishes of Prud’homme, Vonda and St. Denis.

Young women live-in at Discernment House

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Three young women recently reflected on the experience of living in Christian community at Discernment House in Saskatoon with the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

The long-term live-in program for young single Catholic women is offered each year at Discernment House, which is located on University Drive in Saskatoon, near the University of Saskatchewan campus. Discernment House also offers weekend discernment programs to both men and women throughout the year.

Katherine Croteau, 18, of Calgary heard about Discernment House from friends. Looking for something more, she originally considered attending John Paul II Bible School at Radway.

“I had a good chat with a friend of my sister’s who stayed at the House the year before, and it sounded absolutely amazing: spiritual direction every week, Mass every day (or when there is a priest available), community life, morning and evening prayer, and a relaxed enough environment,” said Croteau, who is studying physics at the U of S.

“I came to the Discernment House looking for spiritual growth, insight into my vocation and to experience community. God gave me all that this year and so much more,” she said.

“The Sisters have been a huge part of the joy that I have found, and the other young women here have changed how I see myself and how I see others,” Croteau added. “I have felt welcomed and loved throughout it all.”

The stable prayer life and strong support system provides a powerful way to grow in faith and to discern one’s path in life, she said. “God challenged me to be really honest with myself this year, to take a good look, and allow Him to work in me rather than trying to fix myself. This alone has opened countless doors in my heart, and it has set me free.”

Croteau has words of encouragement for other young women considering the experience of living in community at Discernment House. “If God is preparing your heart for a year here, don’t hesitate; It will be the one of the most blessed years of your life.

Uniting In Faith... to live in community

Marcee Brodner, 24, found the community she was looking for at Discernment House. “When I came to the house I did not know anyone else living at the house. Yet from the very beginning I formed a close bond with the other girls living at the house. When another girl joined us, my heart was stretched to become more open,” said Brodner, describing the intimate friendships that have developed through the experience.

It wasn’t always easy, she admitted. “Living in community can be very challenging at times. Learning to live with, and love other people’s idiosyncrasies is not easy,” she noted. Yet through the experience, Discernment House “was a place where I came as a stranger to a new city and found a home and best friends.”

Discernment House has also been a “spiritual greenhouse” for Brodner. With community prayer, spiritual direction, Mass and adoration, I was challenged to grow in my faith and walk more intimately with Our Lord. Falling in love with Jesus is not that difficult when he is closer than most of your friends and has a room within your home,” she said.

“The sisters are also so much fun to live with. Their humor and antics sometimes surprise me but always in a good way. Every occasion is special at the Discernment House from feast days, where you really feast, to birthdays and Christmas,” Brodner said, citing games, presents and Christmas carols by the fire as part of the Discernment House experience.

A “country girl at heart,” Brodner comes from a farm at Dysart, SK and was finishing up her final year of a social work degree at the University of Saskatchewan this year.

The support of Discernment House – including good home cooking – meant that attending university was also easier, she added, urging other young women to consider the experience. “If nothing else, come for the amazing food and Christ will blow you away with all the other blessings that are pouring out of this place.”

Brodner said she’ll be sad to leave, but is blessed by



Katherine Croteau, Marcee Brodner and Dia Cooper (l-r) say Discernment House blessed them.

- Photo courtesy of Sisters of Presentation of Mary

knowing how much she has grown through the experience of the past year at Discernment House.

Hearing about a friend’s amazing experience at Discernment House prompted Dia Cooper, 24, of Vancouver to give it a try. “After a year of prayer and consideration I moved into the Discernment House. I wanted to live at the house so that I could improve my relationship with Jesus,” said Cooper, a music education student at the University of Saskatchewan.

“Having spiritual direction every week has played a major role in my spiritual development and has strengthened my relationship with God,” she said. “My only struggle at the house has been waking up in time for morning prayer, I’m still not a morning person!”

Participating in the weekend discernment retreats regularly offered by the Sisters of the Presentation has also brought spiritual benefits,” Cooper noted. “The weekends that the sisters offer have increased my knowledge about the church and myself.”

The Sisters of the Presentation of Mary are currently accepting applications from young women for the live-in program. For more information, contact Sr. Lucie Hamel at 306-244-0726 or e-mail discernmenthouse@lycos.com

NEWS FROM THE SASKATOON MISSION IN BRAZIL Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, Sask., (Canada)

Dom Antonio to visit Saskatoon diocese

By SR. CLAIRE NOVECOSKY, OSU,
OF MACEIÓ, ALAGOAS

Archbishop Antonio Muniz Fernandes (Dom Antonio) of the archdiocese of Maceió, Alagoas, will visit Canada in July in response to an invitation by Bishop Albert LeGat when they met in Brazil in January, 2008.

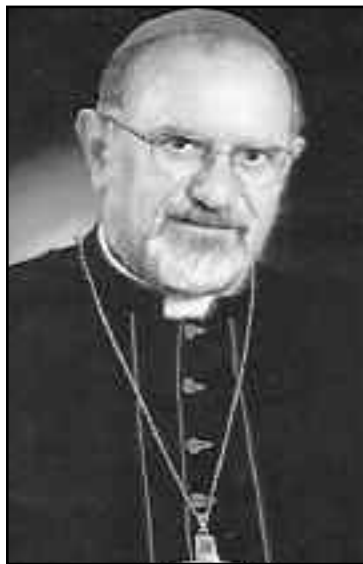
Dom Antonio is a member of the Carmelite Order and was ordained to the priesthood in 1980. He specialized in Biblical Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. Following his ordination, he served as formation director of novices and director of the Carmelite College, where he taught sacred scripture. He has also served on the Carmelite Order's economic commission and was co-pastor in a parish in Recife.

In 1998, at the age of 46, Dom Antonio was ordained bishop in his home state of Paraiba. For eight years he led the diocese in that capacity. During that time, he served as vice-president and president of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops for the region of the northeast, a position he continues to hold at the present time.

On Feb. 4, 2007, Dom Antonio became the 10th archbishop of Maceió, which includes 60 large parishes, both in the capital city and throughout the interior of the state of Alagoas.

Dom Antonio's great passion is that of helping the people of God to rediscover the work of evangelization as a fundamental duty of all baptized Christians.

"As disciples and missionaries of Christ," he says, "we must give testimony and engage ourselves, without fear, in living and propagating our faith. We do this,



Archbishop Antonio Muniz Fernandes (Dom Antonio)

not as isolated groups, but with the dimension of being ecclesial, so we can feel and experience the renewing dynamism of the Spirit in the life of our communities."

Dom Helder Camara, noted archbishop of Olinda and Recife, who died in 1999, continues to be Dom Antonio's inspiration. Using Dom Helder's words, he said, "Mission is to begin, to journey, to leave all, to forget self and to break the crust of egoism which closes us in. Humanity is much bigger. Mission is to open ourselves to others as brothers and sisters. It is to meet them and love them. We need to cross oceans and go to the ends of the earth."

These words, together with the call to revitalize the church's missionary activity in Latin America arising from the fifth conference of the Latin-American bishops in Aparecida, Brazil (2007), have impelled Dom Antonio to

Dom Antonio's itinerary:

Friday, July 17 - Arrival; travel to Humboldt

Saturday, July 18 - Visit to St. Peter's Benedictine Abbey;
5 p.m. Mass in Humboldt

Sunday, July 19 - Mount Carmel Pilgrimage

Monday, July 20 - Celebration of 50th anniversaries of Ursuline Sisters of Bruno, including missionary Sr. Claire Novecosky, OSU

Tuesday, July 21 - Visit to Waskesiu

Wednesday, July 22 - Meeting in Saskatoon with BMAC and Bishop Albert LeGat

Thursday, July 23 - Open invitation to all the faithful to meet Dom Antonio and to hear about life and pastoral challenges in his diocese
7:30 pm. St. Paul's Cathedral hall.
Everyone is welcome.

Friday, July 24 - Mass and visit with Sisters of Mission Service at Queen's House of Retreats, Saskatoon

Saturday, July 25 - Departure

promote popular missions in all parishes as, in his words: "We are all disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ, for it is only in Him that our people will have life in fullness."

Dom Antonio also has a deep concern for the marginalized and the excluded. Soon after his arrival in the archdiocese, upon reflecting on the social situation in Alagoas, he spoke of the need for the Church in Maceió to help deal with the many urgent and grave problems. One of these was the high number of drug addicts. Not letting any grass grow under his feet, he went to the state governor and asked for the donation of land and buildings for the purpose of creating a centre for the rehabilitation of chemically dependent men. The Farm of Hope was inaugurated Dec. 3, 2007.

Since then the bishop has given unstintingly of his time, energy and financial and spiritual assistance to the work of the Farm of Hope, which bases its dynamic pedagogy on the tripod: prayer, work and community living. A Farm of Hope for chemically dependent women is in the process of being organized at the present time.

The violence and lack of respect for human rights to be found in this region led the bishop to invite families and communities who had suffered attacks of violence to gather for monthly celebrations of the Eucharist, to pray for the victims and to offer comfort and consolation to the respective families. In addition, he invited the government representatives responsible for social defense and public ministry, delegates of the city

and military police, lawyers and all connected with public security to dialogue together following each of the celebrations to see what means can be taken to ensure more security and peace.

Another area of concern to our bishop is that of the many families living in the streets. The "House of the Suffering Servant" opens its doors at night so these may have a bath, a bowl of soup and a safe place to sleep. Dom Antonio's charisma touches the hearts of many and he receives many volunteers and offers of help. On Christmas Eve, following the celebration of the Incarnation, many donations of bread and the "finest of cheese" were shared with these suffering members.

The family, "the patrimony of humanity," is one of the most important treasures for Latin-American people. It is the school of faith, the place where human and spiritual values are implanted. Dom Antonio gives priority to families and has gathered thousands for two great assemblies - one celebration to mark the national week of the family and the second to wind up the Advent family preparations.

The faithful of the diocese of Saskatoon will have a chance to meet and dialogue with Dom Antonio during his visit to Saskatchewan this summer from July 17 to 25 (*see details above*). For instance, there is an open invitation to all the faithful to meet Dom Antonio and hear him speak 7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 23 at St. Paul's Cathedral hall in Saskatoon.

This visit to Saskatchewan will surely serve as yet another highlight in our 45-year-long friendship with the people of the archdiocese of Maceió.

Brazil Mission Awareness Committee

The Brazil Mission Awareness Committee (BMAC) carries out a number of awareness activities during the year.

BMAC was formed in 1992 as a diocesan committee to strengthen the bonds of solidarity with those involved in our diocesan mission in Brazil, which began in 1964. Since 2005, BMAC has been part of the Diocesan Mission Office.

The current members of BMAC are: chair Margaret Sanche, Fr. Emile April, Louise Bitz, Sr. Marie Gorsalitz, OSU, Melanie Lipinski, Marcie Lukan, Sr. Leona Meier, SMS, Fr. Les Paquin, and Dale Scott.

Some of the activities of BMAC, assisted by the missionaries in Brazil, are: preparing Brazil Mission Notes for parish bulletins; editing Brazil Bulletin material in the Diocesan Newsletter; designing an annual

poster for display in churches and schools throughout the diocese; making presentations about the Brazil mission in schools and parishes; and planning group visits to the Brazil mission every two years.

BMAC recently hosted a get-together of the high school students and teachers who visited the Brazil mission in 2007 and 2008, inviting them to reflect on how the Brazil experiences have had an impact on their lives.

In July 2009, BMAC members will assist Bishop Albert LeGat in hosting Archbishop Dom Antonio Muniz Fernandes of Maceió while he is visiting the diocese of Saskatoon, and participate in discussions with the two bishops about possibilities for the ongoing relationship between the two dioceses in the future.

Prayer for Missionaries

Almighty God, Lord of the harvest of souls, we ask You to guide and bless all who have gone forth to preach the gospel. Endow them with the gifts of generosity and concern. Send your Holy Spirit on them, to strengthen them in weakness, comfort them in trials and direct their efforts. Open the hearts of all to receive Your message. Let Your revelation enlighten all minds for the salvation of souls, and let Your love heal every heart and body for the happiness of each person. May all people consciously acknowledge You and serve You by living the teachings of Your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



The Advent 2008 BMAC poster shows men working in the fields of sugar cane, the main agricultural crop of our Brazil mission region. The work is hard, dusty, dirty (the sugar canes are burned prior to the cutting of the cane), carried out in intense heat during long working days - and the pay received is a pittance, barely enough for the workers to support their families. The poster's stark images remind us of so many Brazilians who live and work and care for one another in difficult and poor living conditions and that our diocesan mission stands in solidarity with them and upholds their dignity in their discouraging circumstances. Our missionaries affirm God's love for them and help the people to be strengthened by the gospel and the experience of compassionate community.

Helping children go to school

BY SR. MARIE-NOELLE RONDOT, SMS, OF SÃO JOSÉ DA LAJE

February is the beginning of a new school year in Brazil. For families who are having difficulties surviving, this is usually a stressful time because of extra expenses associated with sending children to school.

Statistics indicate that, each year, seven million young Brazilians neither work nor study and 72 per cent of those who do study leave school after only four years of education.

As we know, low education can only generate more poverty and oppression. However, when efforts are being made to improve life, hope is nurtured and any small, positive change has to be acknowledged in order to keep that spark of hope alive.

In recent years, our present government in Brazil has implemented the *Bolsa Familia* or "Family Purse" program to provide assistance to low income families. Approximately 11 million families have benefited from it so far.

This is how the program works: For each child who studies, the family receives a monthly income to provide for that child's needs in school. Therefore, the primary purpose of the program is basically to encourage education.

However, theory is one thing



Financial support makes school possible for these children.

and the reality often another. Many parents will openly admit to using the money intended for school to simply feed the family. One could say then that the purpose of the Family Purse Program is being defeated – not really, though, because even if the money is used for something other than what was intended, it is still motivating the parents to send their children to school and therefore still promoting education.

Here in São José da Laje, 15 families felt extremely privileged throughout this past school year 2008 to 2009, due to the great generosity and genuine concern of some Canadian friends who made a donation directed towards the

education of children from poor families.

Choosing those families was not that simple really because everyone from that specific area of town is basically struggling with life. Priority was given to children who had never studied; secondly, to large families; and thirdly, to families with little or no income at all.

Each child was visited once a month throughout the year and provided with whatever was necessary to attend school (books, clothing etc.) and, while the student's needs were being met, the family also continued to receive financial support from the government for that child – in other words, it turned out to be a



Sr. Marie-Noelle Rondot with a young friend.

double blessing! That means there are 15 families for whom life became less of a burden.

"Building bridges" is all about reaching out and making a

difference in the lives of others. To so many of you who do this so well, I wish to express deep gratitude on behalf of our Brazilian sisters and brothers.

Sr. Francisca professes vows as Ursuline March 21

BY SR. CLAIRE NOVECOSKY, OSU

At a very young age, Francisca da Silva was inspired by a film about a sister working in Africa which planted in her a desire to also be a sister. She told her pastor, Fr. Emile April, about

her wish, but he told her she was too young and should wait until she was at least 15 years of age. On her fifteenth birthday she presented herself again and Fr. Emile said he would take her to meet the sisters, which happened

to be the Ursulines of Bruno.

Thus began Francisca's vocational journey. A few years later she participated in our vocation discernment encounters and eventually came to live with us and finish her high school. The call to be an Ursuline religious grew and in 2007 she began her novitiate studies. Coincidentally, Fr. Emile was present for the celebration.

During the next two years, Francisca deepened her relationship with her "only Treasure" and also got to know more intimately our foundress, St. Angela Merici. Francisca had a natural love of working with families, so her gifts were placed at the disposal of the Pastoral for Children, which deals with poor families who have children between the ages of birth and six years of age. The young people of the parish neighbourhood community of St. Angela also benefitted from her religious instruction and orientation.

During her retreat in 2008, Francisca felt confirmed in her vocation and asked to commit herself to living chaste, poor and obedient as did Jesus.

The preparation for her temporary vows took place in her



Sr. Francisca da Silva and her father.

home community, the Holy Family, in the parish of União dos Palmares. A mission of three days was planned by the sisters and, with a number of volunteer missionaries, the community experienced home visits, celebrations of the Word, encounters with children, youth and adults.

On the fourth day, March 21, came the culminating celebration in which Francisca pronounced her vows during the Eucharist in

the presence of her co-sisters, family, parish community and many friends. It was a simple, but significant celebration.

God continues to call young people to this way of life. A call demands a response – a generous response – and we pray that the youth of today have the courage to allow the invitation to touch their hearts and to give their "yes" as did Mary when she was asked to be the Mother of God.



Ursulines of Bruno in Maceió

Bishop Albert LeGatt of Saskatoon was present in Brazil Jan. 27, 2008 for the profession of vows by Sr. Roseane da Silva as an Ursuline of Bruno. Members of the Ursuline community of Maceió, (l-r) Srs. Claire Novacosky, Ana Lucia Duarte, Francisca da Silva, Louise Hinz, and Roseane da Silva, are pictured with Bishop Albert LeGatt.

Human resources officer hired part-time in diocese

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

When it comes to human resources, the issues facing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon are no different than for any other organization, says human resources officer Glenn Hilton.

Recently hired by the diocese to provide human resources information, direction and advice on a part-time basis of five hours a week, Hilton described his role at a recent meeting of the Pastoral Association of Lay Ministry (PALM) in Saskatoon.

"I want to make sure that people

Uniting In Faith... to provide ministry and service

who are doing the hiring have the tools available to hire the right person for the job," he said. "I want to make sure that people who are hired know their roles and responsibilities." Other areas addressed by a human resources office might include questions about salary and benefits, or developing effective evaluation procedures, he listed.

Hilton pointed out that although the diocese of Saskatoon is not

always spoken of as an employer, anyone working for a parish is actually an employee of the diocese.

When he talks to those in management, Hilton said he stresses the three C's: the need to be clear, consistent and conscientious when it comes to every aspect of human resources.

Hilton has 39 years of human resources experience in areas such as recruitment, training, organizational development, labour practices, collective bargaining and grievances.

He retired from "everything that goes with an eight to five position" in December 2006 to work both independently and as part of a local consultant group.

Hilton said he is looking forward to learning more about the diocese and the church in his new position. "I'm a relatively new Catholic. I love the Church and I love the Lord. What better way to serve the Lord than in a way in which you can bring something to the table?"

The recent meeting with lay pastoral ministers is one of several Hilton has had with groups in the



Glenn Hilton

diocese since he was hired. He has also been spending time reading policy manuals and familiarizing himself with diocesan structures and organization.

"At the moment, our first priority for Glenn is education: helping people understand the role

of a human resources office, and building trust within our community about the work that human resources can do," said Leah Perrault, director of pastoral services. She noted that Hilton's immediate supervisor is Vicar General Rev. Ron Beechinor.

Receiving and giving advice on best practices is another priority for the new office, Perrault said. "We want to find what works best, whether that has to do with hiring, performance review, team building, communication, or leadership development."

She said the diocese created the part-time position in response to a request from the association of lay ministers (now known as PALM: see related article), and out of a desire on the part of the diocese to create a transparent and positive work environment, in which people can be comfortable bringing forth issues and concerns.

The new position will provide a resource to parishes, pastors and diocesan directors "that will help us make sure that not only are we following the laws around human resources and employment, but to make sure that the way we practice human resources policy and management is in line with the spirit of the gospel," Perrault said.

Association of lay ministers selects new name: PALM

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

An association of lay ministers first established in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon in 1991 received a new name at a recent meeting in Saskatoon.

Now known as the Pastoral Association of Lay Ministry (PALM), the group is an organization of over 60 lay people employed in pastoral ministry in the geographic area of the diocese of Saskatoon, both urban and rural.

Members of PALM minister in a

variety of settings, including parishes, the diocesan Catholic Centre, schools, prisons, hospitals, care homes, retreat centres and on campus.

Objectives of the organization are to build community among lay ministers; to offer professional and spiritual development; to act as an advocate for members; and to nurture collaboration between lay and ordained ministers.

Co-chairs of PALM are Blake Sittler and Madeline Oliver.

Ecumenical gathering of women in ministry held at Queen's House

By MARIE-LOUISE TERNIER-GOMMERS

Women who serve professionally in church ministry recently gathered at Queen's House of Retreat and Renewal in Saskatoon to share and celebrate common yet different journeys of faith and of call, to learn from and to support each other.

Twenty-two women from six different denominations – from as far away as Fort Nelson, BC, and Ottawa, ON, and ranging in age and experience from young ministry students to retired pastors – gathered for two days to immerse themselves in the eucharistic themes explored by Henri Nouwen in his book *Life of the Beloved*.

The gathering explored how for women in ministry, lives are taken or chosen by God, blessed by God, and broken and shared for the salvation of the world.

A planning team representing Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, United Church and Free Methodist traditions, prepared and animated the event. Special guest presenter was Bishop Cindy Halmarson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) bishop for the Saskatchewan Synod.

"Each woman brought to our gathering her unique call to ministry which opened us all to



Participants in a Women in Ministry gathering in Saskatoon make bread together.

sharing the joys and frustrations of life and work in the church. I pray that in its rich diversity the Church will grow to demonstrate more fully its unity as the body of Christ," Bishop Halmarson said of the gathering.

"The greatest gift I took away from the

retreat was a renewed sense of desire to answer God's call in my life. Other women witnessed to me they were doing the same. I also experienced a deep respect for one another, and from one another," said Adèle Bolduc a Roman Catholic participant from Ottawa.

"As I remember and reflect on our time together, two activities continually come to mind. Making bread together ecumenically, that is making decisions together as to who would scald, mix, knead and so on, laughing and enjoying the fruits of our labour of love. Some of us watched the video *The Joy of Stress*, and laughed, and laughed at the foolishness of humankind. This, too, gave me hope that vulnerability and laughter would be two of the main ingredients in our ecumenical gatherings and activities," said Pat Ribey a member of the United Church from Lloydminster.

"In my own denomination, especially when I was in pastoral leadership, I never felt received or included by the clergy," reflected Stephanie Molloy, a Roman Catholic participant from Regina.

"The gift of acceptance has to be freely given, and it is so refreshing to be able to share on an inclusive basis. In retrospect, I didn't realize how much having Bishop Cindy there would affect me – what a gift and a model she is to share the weekend with us as a woman, even before and apart from being a bishop."

Resources relate to priority areas of new diocesan vision

By FRAN TURNER

DIOCESAN RESOURCE LIBRARY

In keeping with the recently released *Rooted in Christ* vision for the diocese, the diocesan Resource Library has many materials focusing on the priorities that Bishop Albert LeGatt has outlined.

Evangelization:

Try doing an Alpha Course in your parish. The diocesan Resource Library carries the five videos that accompany the teachings of the Alpha program.

A recent acquisition is a set of DVDs entitled *Catholicism 201*, which is designed as a Catholic follow-up to the Alpha Course. It contains eight 30-minute talks, with small group discussion questions. These talks are presented by Fr. James Mallon from the Archdiocese of Halifax, and include such topics as: the Church, the sacraments, the

Uniting In Faith... to provide resources

Eucharist, Mary and the saints, and Christian morality.

Faith Formation:

For the youth of the parish, try the series put out by Salt & Light entitled *In Your Faith*. In this series, youth explore the Church's teachings in a fast-paced and fun way, offering practical messages, and giving an opportunity to discuss the teachings of the Church. It gives references to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and has discussion questions to use with small groups. The series consists of 13 sessions of 30 minutes each, covering a wide range of topics.

Another tool that can be used in parishes to help Christian men live their faith is the program *Reaching Catholic Men: How to Design a Breakfast Ministry to Effectively*

Reach Catholic Men. One DVD tells how to set up this type of ministry (accompanied by a guidebook). An accompanying DVD set, *Men to Men: A Challenge to Experience Catholic Life* contains 18 short talks that could be used at this type of ministry, or could be used by Knights of Columbus during the spiritual portion of their meetings.

Justice and Peace:

In order for non-Aboriginal people to build and improve relationships with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, it is necessary to become familiar with their culture. *Circles* is a DVD about sentencing circles, through which you can learn about this traditional form of aboriginal justice. (57 min.) *Smudge* is a 12-minute DVD about

the worship of a group of Aboriginal women.

Or take time to read the book *Treaty Promises, Indian Reality: Life on a Reserve* by Harold Lerat, or check out *People to People, Nation to Nation* which gives highlights from the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Finding resources

The Resource Library has many other materials to help implement the diocesan vision. Drop in and see what is available at 100-5th Ave. North, or check out the library catalogue on the diocesan website: www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com by clicking on *Resources*. You can also reserve materials by phoning Fran Turner at 242-1500 or toll-free at 1-877-661-5005.

The Humboldt Resource Centre also has a large selection of resources. Phone: 306-682-1534.



Resource Library
Fran Turner

The Resource Library is supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Nine travellers join diocesan mission encounter to Africa

By JOYCE DE GOOLJER

An opportunity to learn from people and walk in their footsteps is the focus for nine people who took part in the Ussongo Mission Encounter in Tanzania, Africa from April 16 to May 3, sponsored by the Diocesan Mission Office (DMO).

After being approached by Norman Duerr, DMO members decided this encounter clearly fit into their vision statement of "helping the people of the diocese to experience our call to mission beyond the local church as a community of people living and sharing our faith through presence and relationship." The team will be staying with Fr. Chuwa at Ussongo, and will have the opportunity to visit hospital, school, and church communities.

Before leaving Saskatoon on April 16, the mission team and members of the DMO, gathered with Fr. Les Paquin March 28, spending the day discussing hopes and fears, and the meaning of mission, poverty and solidarity.

Mission team fears – including what the team will do there, giving up control, lack of training, the unknown, and insects – were balanced with hopes to change, grow

in love, learn from other team members, forget about selves, and experience softening hearts.

Fr. Les Paquin discussed the nature of mission, noting that there is a resurgence of people interested in mission experiences.

Mission is a mindset of sharing Christ's love, giving and receiving, and sharing experiences, he said. The goal is to go with no expectations, but to walk with and be with others. Though participants may have no idea of what to do and why they want to go, people go because it is the Spirit who sends them. Mission can be anywhere, where thoughts and feelings are shared, the group heard.

The Ussongo team included:

Sharon Therens, a member of Holy Spirit parish who works at Sherbrooke Community Centre. She said that going on a mission has always been a dream, and after encouragement from her family, she decided to go and see what the Lord sends her through this experience.

Carmella Pavelich from Guernsey has never traveled, but hearing the Spirit saying 'go' was so strong that she knew instantly she had to temporarily put aside her



Visiting Ussongo, Tanzania April 16 to May 3 were (l-r): Chandra Schraefel, Anita Turnbull, Sharon Therens, Cheryl Brunen, Betty Cooper, Norm Duerr, Carmella Pavelich, Arlene Julé and Mary Jacobi.

- Photo courtesy of John de Gooljer

dream of going to Lourdes and join the mission encounter to Ussongo.

Betty Cooper of Saskatoon, said that in 2007 she fell in love with animals and nature in Tanzania, and is going this time to experience the people.

Anita (Phillips) Turnbull lives on a farm outside Kerrobert and teaches Grades 7 to 9. She is excited and nervous about the experience. Her husband, Don, four children and two grandchildren will be waiting at home to hear about her experience.

Cheryl Brunen is a retired nurse from Warman. She had been thinking about going to South America someday, but after seeing the notice about the diocesan mission trip, knew she had to go to Tanzania.

Uniting In Faith... for mission and outreach

Chandra Schraefel is married to Clem and helps to run a grain farm near Kerrobert. She plays piano, is music director in her parish and the town librarian. Plans to visit her sister in Chile and travel in Argentina changed when she was called to this mission. She said she is excited to see what God has in store for her.

Arlene Julé from Humboldt has previous experience in Ussongo where she worked with women giving birth at the health clinic. She says that she believes our choices and actions give us power to create a loving home on earth. She is grateful to everyone

who "goes with us" in spirit and prays for the team while they are there.

Norm Duerr from Humboldt is personally involved with the village of Ussongo, which he says he has adopted and has been adopted in return. He donated money to build a library and has been fundraising to ship a container of books to the village.

Mary Jacobi from Saskatoon is chair of the DMO, and has organized the mission encounter. She said she is pleased that the DMO is taking this step forward to encourage and foster mission awareness.

Formation events held every year for those helping to lead RCIA

In the diocese of Saskatoon, there are a number of formation events every year for those who are in leadership in RCIA. Part of the mandate of the diocesan committee for Christian initiation is "to assist in the education, direction and formation of pastors, coordinators, catechists, and catechetical teams in RCIA" (quoted from the constitution of the committee).

Each year the committee holds a one-day fall workshop with a guest presenter, many of whom are from the North American Forum on the Catechumenate. Topics are chosen that are of interest to RCIA leaders in our diocese, but the basic vision of the Rite is always part of the presentation. Whether a person is a seasoned leader or new to the RCIA process, the fall workshops are of tremendous benefit. Cost is minimal because the committee has a budget for training workshops.

The committee chairs one or two RCIA coordinators' meetings every year and these have a formation component as well. The



Diocesan Coordinator of Christian Initiation
Dolores Crawford

one just held April 21 featured resource persons Sr. Dianne Sehn, OSU, and Sr. Anna Aulie, RNDM, discussing how to teach our catechumens and candidates to be people of prayer. As part of these meetings there is always time

Uniting In Faith... for the Rite of Christian Initiation

allotted for group discussion of issues brought forward by those present.

As well, the annual Western Conference for the Catechumenate meets on a weekend in early June each year in Saskatoon, under the leadership of Fr. Michael Koch. The topic for this year's conference June 12-14 is *On-Going Formation*, with facilitator Nick Wagner from the North American Forum. This is about the continuing formation of those who have been initiated into the church through RCIA. Faith is a journey that lasts a lifetime and we need to know how to keep the newly initiated practicing their faith along with the rest of us. This topic is of interest not only for RCIA leaders, but for anyone working with adult faith formation in their parish.

The most comprehensive formation opportunities are the institutes offered by the North American Forum on the Catechumenate. The forum, based in Washington, D.C., is an international network of pastoral ministers, liturgists, catechists and

theologians dedicated to making the full implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults a reality in all parishes in the U.S. and Canada. These institutes present the vision of the Rite as well as the skills to implement the initiation process.

Offering a forum institute is a major undertaking for a diocese and Saskatoon has held a number of them in the past. This summer, Prince Albert diocese and the forum are co-sponsoring a six-day institute called *The Initiation Experience: Beginnings and Beyond*, August 9-14. Participants learn all the periods and stages of the initiation process and explore the dynamics of conversion through presentations, reflections, celebrations and skill building experiences. For more information, contact the Prince Albert Diocesan pastoral office at 306-922-4747.

A Beginnings and Beyond Institute is a must for anyone working in leadership in RCIA, as well as pastors, Parish Life Directors, parish councils, liturgists and those involved in music

ministry. Parishes cannot expect coordinators and teams to lead RCIA without any formation. Parish councils need to provide funds for their RCIA teams to attend; assistance is also available from the diocese. If your parish does not have RCIA at present, this is an opportunity to find and form a team so that you are ready when someone calls and asks to be initiated. As the Christian initiation process grows and evolves, discernment and renewal as to how we can more faithfully follow the Rite are important, and the forum is in the forefront of this.

I am retiring from my position as diocesan coordinator of Christian Initiation. I want to thank the diocese for giving me the opportunity to serve in this ministry for the past 10 years. I've loved every minute. I have learned so much and have enjoyed meeting and working with so many faith-filled people. Keep up the good work you are doing in your parishes! Bishop Albert LeGatt has appointed Fr. Michael Koch as the new coordinator. Fr. Mike is the initiation expert in our diocese so I know that the committee is in very capable hands.

Fr. Ralph Kleiter marks 50 years of leading pilgrim journeys

In 2010, Fr. Ralph Kleiter, director of Ministry to Tourism in the diocese of Saskatoon, will be celebrating 50 years of leading pilgrim journeys to destinations around the world. He began organizing groups while still a seminarian in 1960.

Fr. Kleiter is inviting people to join him on at least one "anniversary journey" starting this advent. "I want to dedicate much of the anniversary to revisiting many of my favorite travel destinations and experiences," he said.

Fr. Kleiter led his first group in

1960 to see the Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany and has done so for every decade's performance since. The Bavarian villagers vowed in 1633 to undertake a Passion Play every 10 years if God would spare them from the plague.

The "anniversary journey" to France and Bavaria will take place May 28 to June 7, 2010, featuring two nights in Oberammergau and the performance. A \$1,000 deposit is needed by May 28, 2009 to be assured a seat.

"Mexico was my first foreign

travel experience over 50 years ago and it remains my first love as a travel destination," said Kleiter. A short winter escape to Mexico, Feb. 24 to March 1, 2010 will be offered.

An anniversary cruise aboard *MS Crystal Symphony* sails from Miami Nov. 22, 2009 to the Amazon as far as Manaus, Brazil with an option to continue to Rio and Buenos Aires.

Contact Fr. Kleiter for details at 306-244-3747; or through e-mail: kleiter@shaw.ca or visit the website at: www.pilgrimjourneys.ca



Holy Spirit parish hosts "Paul Party"

Volunteers enact a drama about the conversion of St. Paul during a "Paul Party" Jan. 27 at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon, an event that also featured Mediterranean cuisine, scripture and songs. The program was facilitated by Sr. Anna Aulie, RNDM, of the diocesan Scripture Resources Office as one of the events held to mark the Year of St. Paul.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Come and see weekend for prospective students May 29-31 at St. Therese School of Faith and Mission, Bruno. Phone: 369-2555 or see: www.StTherese.ca

Prairie Centre for Ecumenism 25th Anniversary, 6 p.m. Thursday, June 4 - Banquet at Western Development Museum, Saskatoon, Tickets \$40, register by June 1. Contact: 306-653-1633 or e-mail: pce@ecumenism.net

Canadian Summer Ecumenical Institute, June 2-5, at Queen's House, Saskatoon, "Telling our story, shaping our future: Christian unity and reconciliation in Canada" - Organized by the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism on this year's 50-50-25 theme, and featuring keynote speaker Fr. Tom Ryan. (Registration includes 25th anniversary PCE celebration June 4). Contact: 306-653-1633 or visit: www.ecumenism.net

Theology of the Body national conference, June 5-7 Saskatoon - See details on Page 13 or visit the website: www.tobconference.ca

Building Healthy Communities, Sat. June 6 at Bishop Mahoney High School, 231 Primrose Drive, Saskatoon, 9:15 a.m. to noon, - A restorative justice presentation organized by the diocesan office for Justice and Peace. Contact: Tony Haynes at the Catholic Centre, 242-1500.

RCIA: Ongoing Faith Formation, June 12-14 Western Conference for the Catechumenate at Holy Spirit Church, Saskatoon - Anyone involved in adult faith formation would find this conference with Nick Wagner helpful. Contact Fr. Michael Koch at 306-373-0404 or e-mail: mjkrca2shaw.ca

Year of St. Paul closing Mass, 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 29, St. Paul Cathedral, Saskatoon - Join Bishop Albert LeGatt in this diocesan celebration to mark the end of the Year of Paul.

Pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows June 19-21 Cudworth, SK. - This is one of the official pilgrimage sites of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, located two miles southwest of Cudworth, just off Highway 2. Events begin 7 p.m. Friday, June 19, with the rosary and hymns. A youth program for Gr. 9 and up begins with registration at noon June 20. Pilgrimage events continue 1 p.m., Saturday, June 20, and at 4 p.m. there will be a pontifical Divine Liturgy with Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, followed by supper and Stations of the Cross. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in English 10:30 a.m. Sunday, June 21 with Fr. John Sianchuk.

Ignite youth camp Aug. 16-22 by FacetoFace Ministries at St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission, Bruno. For more info: www.facetofaceretreats.com

Rock the Mount Catholic Youth Rally, Saturday, Aug. 22 at Mount Carmel Shrine (about 95 km east of Saskatoon on Highway 5, then turn north to Carmel, SK.; the shrine is north of the town site) - a free all-day youth and family out-door event featuring speakers, music, activities, games, and worship. Food can be purchased on site. E-mail: rockthemount@sasktel.net

Uniting in Faith campaign reaches 71 per cent of goal as more parishes begin effort



The largest fund-raising and building project in diocesan history is breaking records and expectations as volunteers in parishes from Macklin to Foam Lake explain the project to fellow parishioners and many respond with five-year pledges to help build a new diocesan home.

About 71 per cent of the goal for the *Uniting in Faith* campaign has now been reached. Several of the largest parishes in the diocese have yet to start the campaign, noted diocesan Development Officer Don Gorsalitz. "The next few weeks will hopefully see even more happening."

Several parishes have already met their diocesan goal for the campaign, and some are working beyond that to raise funds for local initiatives through a parish-sharing incentive, noted Gorsalitz.

"Priests in the diocese are also providing a powerful leadership role in this campaign," added Gorsalitz. "The clergy have already pledged in excess of \$200,000 to *Uniting in Faith*."

The \$12.5 million diocesan campaign to build a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre, along with the \$16 million commitment from Holy Family Parish for its share of the facility, has posed a huge challenge, admits Saskatoon Bishop Albert LeGatt. "Absolutely every gift is needed, and every parish is an important part of this effort."

At the same time, the bishop said he is touched and encouraged by the response in so many parish communities as volunteers make the sometimes-difficult effort to connect with fellow parishioners. "It is perhaps the most important



St. Philippe de Neri parish *Uniting in Faith* chair Garth Wruck stands next to the parish sign in Vonda describing the success of the campaign in that community. "I know the whole parish is being blessed by this campaign as we witness our faith to each other through our support," he said.

- Photo courtesy of St. Philippe de Neri *Uniting in Faith* team

part of the campaign - to make those connections and try to ensure that the faithful across the diocese share in a sense of unity, a sense of vision and a sense of common effort."

Blessings have spilled over from the *Uniting in Faith* effort - including a new awareness about the diocese and the role of the Catholic Pastoral Centre in

supporting and nurturing parish life, as well as in coordinating those diocesan programs that exist to implement united efforts in outreach, justice and mission.

"This diocesan family of faith provides a community that goes beyond our immediate needs, a bit like extended family and our own network of friends," said Leah Perrault, director of pastoral

services at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. "For instance, priest chaplains and the diocesan coordinator of Hospital Chaplaincy are supported by the diocese. Alongside volunteers from city parishes, they visit the sick in hospital when we cannot, they provide services and programs that every parish could never run alone. The diocese provides parishes with financial support when they are in need, educates our lay and ordained leadership, gives us guidance, and connects us to a Church that is bigger than we are," she said.

"The *Uniting in Faith* campaign is about being and becoming a family of faith. We will build a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre, but we also have the opportunity to get to know our neighbours, to support one another, to imagine that our family can be stronger in the future," Perrault said.

"Being part of a family of faith is challenging, but it is also rich in blessings. It gives us a shared purpose. We are the Church, Christ's hands and feet in the world, and our family of faith exists to nurture us and to allow us to serve the world."

The *Uniting in Faith* campaign is inviting people to make an investment in their faith, she added. "This Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre is about providing a diocesan and ministry home for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren and their children," Perrault said.

"Rural and urban parishes face unique challenges and offer unique gifts: we are uniting in faith now to draw closer together, to support one another in ministry and to prepare for our future." - KLY

Understanding of baptism mirrored in architecture says RCIA coordinator

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The interior design of the new cathedral for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon will clearly illustrate the meaning and importance of baptism, says Fr. Michael Koch, chairperson for the Western Conference for the Catechumenate.

Koch, who has spent more than 34 years studying and promoting the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the rite by which adults are baptized and come into full membership in the Church, says plans for the new cathedral interior call for an "awesome" baptistry.

The design will clearly communicate the meaning of the sacrament as the life-changing sacrament of conversion by which we share in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection and are led to the altar of the Lord, he said.

Design elements and building materials will show how baptism, Eucharist, and the death and resurrection of Christ are connected as the key elements of our faith, predicted Koch. "It will be obvious. Everything will contribute to make that understanding happen."

Visiting the cathedral in Quebec City last summer during the International Eucharistic Congress, Koch was surprised and a little shocked when he could not locate the baptismal font. Neither staff members in the bookstore nor local people in the building had any idea where it was located. "I never did find it," he said. "What does that architectural design say about our understanding of baptism?"

Greater understanding about the central place of baptism in Christian life is very much needed, he maintained, suggesting there might one day be

Uniting In Faith... to live our baptism

the kind of diocesan-wide gathering about baptism that was experienced around Eucharist in Oct. 2007 with the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress.

"The self-perception of being a baptized person needs to be awakened. People don't always perceive baptism as making a difference, when it should make all the difference."

We are continually called to live out our baptismal call in an ever deeper and more authentic way, he said. "It is baptism that takes us out of the world to become part of the Body of Christ. We are now in the world, but not of the world."

Koch noted that a focus on baptism also leads to a renewed ecumenical spirit, as Christians of many traditions recognize their shared baptismal identity.

The inherent richness of the catechumenate (the process which leads adults to baptism), is how it tries to initiate people into "a living, explicit and fruitful profession of faith." The RCIA process is held up by the Church as the model for all other catechesis, Koch noted.

Architecture of church buildings can shape faith and understanding, Koch said, reflecting on how a renewed understanding of baptism has influenced the design of baptismal fonts in recent years. He pointed to the font at the recently renovated St. Anne's parish in Saskatoon, located at the entrance way of the church building,



Fr. Michael Koch at St. Anne's font.

designed so that those being baptized can walk in on one side, be immersed in the water and then walk out the other side as a new creation.

"The baptistry is the womb of the church, where the whole living community gathers around to receive the new Christian, whether a child or adult," he said, noting this will also be reflected in the design of the baptistry for the new Holy Family Cathedral. "In planning these things, it's important to think about how architecture shapes our faith," he said.

In addition to being the founder and director of the Western Conference of the Catechumenate, Fr. Michael Koch is pastor at Dundurn, as well as providing pastoral assistance at Holy Family parish in Saskatoon. With the retirement of Dolores Crawford, Fr. Koch will also serve as diocesan coordinator of RCIA.