



### CATHEDRAL CONSTRUCTION

Progress continues on our new diocesan home: the Cathedral of the Holy Family in northeast Saskatoon. The Diocesan Pastoral Council recently received an update about the project from the volunteer chair of the building committee. • **PAGE 4**

## Lay Formation: transforming lives and hearts

• **PAGE 7**

*"Always be ready to give  
an account of the hope  
that is within you."*

- 1 Peter 3:15

Read Bishop Don Bolen's  
latest **Pastoral Letter**

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# Newsletter of the Diocese of Saskatoon

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Spring 2011

## Bishop consults parishes and deaneries about long-range plan for ordained ministry

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Parishes and deaneries will be consulted this spring about long range planning for ordained ministry in the diocese of Saskatoon.

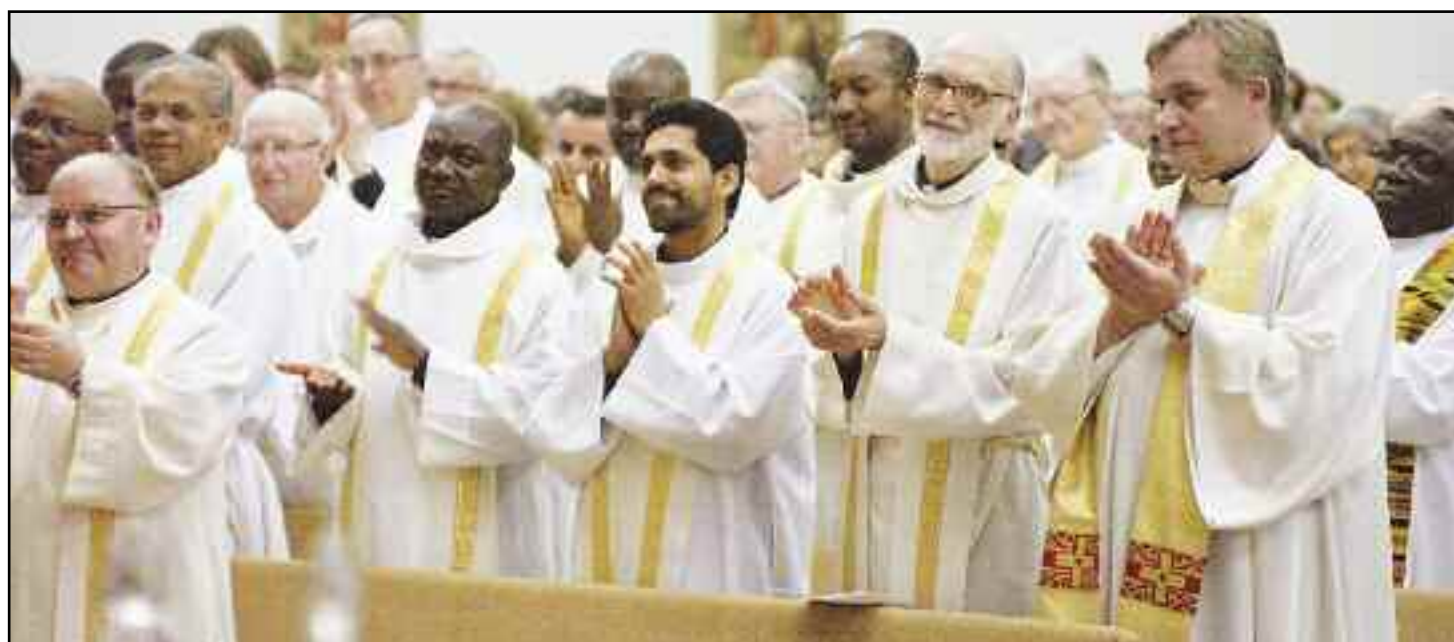
Declining numbers of priests and changing demographics are creating challenges when it comes to providing ordained ministry to all of the 96 parishes across the diocese.

Bishop Donald Bolen and diocesan leaders are therefore seeking input through a series of deanery and parish meetings about both the challenges and the blessings being experienced in the diocese, and to ask a number of questions seeking suggestions and feedback to creatively address the reality that fewer priests are available to serve in the diocese.

"I would ask the diocese to engage in a creative reflection process, faithful to the Church, in asking where the Spirit might be leading us," said Bolen, noting the importance of ordained ministry to Catholics as Eucharistic people.

"We do a great deal of work in vocations – but what more could we do to enhance that work?" he asked, suggesting possible areas for reflection. "We bring in missionary priests into the diocese. What are the factors that we should responsibly take into consideration as we do so?"

The bishop stressed that one of the blessings in the diocese is an educated and engaged laity, and suggested this is another area for creative consideration, while remaining faithful to the teachings of the Church about ordained ministry. "There are many ways in which priests and the lay faithful work together: but are there models or other ways in which the laity and the clergy can



Priests serving across the diocese of Saskatoon gathered with the bishop at the start of Holy Week April 18 to celebrate the Chrism Mass, along with parish representatives who came to collect the sacred oils to be used in sacraments in the year ahead. During the celebration, priests renewed their commitment to priestly service as well as applauding to acknowledge those among them celebrating milestone anniversaries. The entire diocese has started a process of consultation regarding long-range planning for ordained ministry in the face of declining numbers of priests.

- Photo by Tim Yaworski

work more closely together in situations where there is a shortage of clergy?"

The diocesan-wide consultation process was launched at a joint meeting April 9 of both the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) and the Diocesan Council of Priests. The bishop's two advisory councils received an overview of the situation from Vicar General Fr. Ron Beechinor.

The present ministry situation is showing signs of strain – for instance, when priests have

fallen ill in recent months, it was only by the grace of retired or visiting priests that Sunday ministry could be provided to affected parishes, Beechinor reported, describing "band-aid solutions" that included an elderly retired Oblate stepping forward to help, driving on winter roads to provide ministry to a group of rural parishes; and a visiting priest on sabbatical graciously agreeing to step forward after another pastor of four parishes had a heart attack.

"For the last number of years we have taken something of a 'band-aid' approach when confronted with priest vacancies in our parishes. It is becoming increasingly apparent that we are running out of band-aids."

In short, if the diocese has another parish priest leaving ministry because of illness, a transfer or any other reason, there simply is no replacement available at present, Beechinor said.

**ORDAINED MINISTRY Page 2**



### Momentum: Don't Stop Believing!

Grade 8 students Maria Kassian and Signe Hughes (l-r) display t-shirts for a Momentum youth rally held in Saskatoon April 30 – just after the Newsletter went to press. For more info about the rally or the *Steps in Faith* process for Grades 6 to 8 youth, check out: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/youthministry](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/youthministry) - Photo by K.L. Yaworski

## New English translation of Mass will be introduced in Advent 2011

Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent Nov. 27, 2011, English-speaking Catholics in Canada will celebrate Mass with a new translation of the Roman Missal.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) has now received "recognitio" from the Vatican for all sections of the English translation of the revised Roman Missal for use in Canada.

Details about the changes to the prayers, responses, music settings and postures of the Mass will be introduced in the next few months. A number of resources planned by the CCCC include DVDs, music recordings, workshops, and catechetical materials about the meaning and celebration of the liturgy.

In the Saskatoon Catholic diocese, the Liturgy Commission is planning training workshops and other initiatives in the fall.

The new English translation was undertaken to more closely adhere to the original Latin text of the Mass. The same translation will be used by English-speaking Catholics across the world, including English Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

The Mass will have the same parts and patterns, but there will be changes in wording and language style. Some

familiar responses will change, for example: "The Lord be with you... And with your spirit." However, most of the changes affect the parts of the Mass prayed by the priest.

New musical settings for the Mass have also been composed, using the new wording of prayers such as the Gloria, and these will be the focus of preparation for those involved in music ministry.

A new "General Instruction of the Roman Missal" or GIRM, has detailed instructions about celebration of the Mass. One area addressed in the GIRM is the posture of the assembly, most notably during the Eucharistic prayer.

The GIRM calls for the assembly to kneel during the consecration – from after the "Holy, Holy" to after the "Memorial Acclamation" – and then to stand after communion until all have received the Eucharist. A new emphasis on moments of silence during the celebration is also part of the revised GIRM.

- KLY

**Those interested in learning more about liturgy are invited to participate in the Summer School of Liturgical Studies being held in Saskatoon July 18-29, 2011. For registration and program brochure see: [www.wcl-ssls.ca](http://www.wcl-ssls.ca)**





### Memorial service for slain Christian leader Shahbaz Bhatti

Members of Saskatoon's Pakistani Christian community placed lighted candles during a memorial service for Shahbaz Bhatti held March 28 at St. Paul's Cathedral in Saskatoon. Bishop Don Bolen of the Catholic diocese and Rev. Ron McConnell of McClure United Church presided at the memorial service in honour of Shahbaz Bhatti, a government minister in Pakistan, who was gunned down there March 2 for his efforts working against blasphemy laws used to persecute Christians and other minorities. In an interview before his death, Bhatti predicted his assassination. A Catholic, Bhatti said he wanted to "follow the cross." The Catholic bishops of Pakistan have asked the Vatican to recognize Shahbaz Bhatti as a martyr. For the complete article about the memorial see the diocesan news archive at: [saskatoonrctdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrctdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm) - KLY



### Our Lady of Guadalupe parish celebrates Year of the Métis

To everyone's delight, Fr. Babu Mathew, CSsR, of the St. Mary's Redemptorist community joined in the dancing Nov. 14, during a "Year of the Métis" celebration organized by Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Saskatoon. After the parish's regular 1 p.m. Sunday afternoon Mass, parishioners walked over to St. Mary's school gymnasium to share a lunch of bullet soup, bannock and rice pudding, followed by fiddle and guitar music, entertainment by young dancers, and a jigging contest for all ages. The celebration ended with drumming and a round dance. - Photo by K. L. Yaworski

## Ordained ministry consultation will conclude by end of June

(Continued from Page 1)

At the same time, Beechinor emphasized the many ways in which the diocese has been and continues to be blessed, with gifted leadership from bishops, 22 active diocesan priests who express a high degree of personal and pastoral satisfaction in their ministry, and many priests of retirement age who chose to continue to provide pastoral ministry.

"We are also blessed to have international priests serving – and serving very well – the people of the diocese," Beechinor added. "Without the presence of these missionary priests, we would truly be struggling."

He noted that these priests from Africa, India and other countries are here under varying arrangements and for varying periods of time. At present there are 10 international diocesan priests serving in the diocese of Saskatoon with the permission of their bishops.

Active priests in the diocese also include 24 priests from religious orders, again including some from other countries.

These priests from religious orders – Oblates, Benedictines, Redemptorists, Dominicans, Vincentians, one Basilian and one Missionary of the Holy Family – provide pastoral service here with the permission of their religious superiors. Beechinor expressed gratitude for the ongoing blessings of collaboration between religious orders and the diocese.

"We are also encouraged by the number and quality of the young men studying for the priesthood in our diocese," he said. Two diocesan seminarians, Matthew Ramsay and Geoffrey Young, will be ordained to the priesthood June 10. Two men will also be ordained to the transitional diaconate this year: Huong Nguyen and Greg Roth. Three others are also continuing their studies toward ordination.

"And we are blessed to work side by side with a gifted group of lay people," Beechinor said. "We have the competency and commitment and conviction of the baptized and the laity that are providing ministry and doing it with good collaboration.... By goodness and by God this has worked in the diocese of Saskatoon."

Having said all that, the time has come for the diocese to once again seriously address the question of a declining number of priests available to serve in our parishes, Beechinor reiterated, calling for a broad consultation on the question. "It's our church, and it's our

responsibility."

Beechinor recalled how people across the diocese responded the last time the issue was addressed in 2001. "There was a wonderful spirit ... and the people made suggestions on the basis of what was good for the parishes, what was good for the deaneries, and what was good for the diocesan Church. We're hoping that spirit will continue as this discussion unfolds 10 years later."

During the joint meeting April 9, DPC executive secretary Diane Côté led discussion about the process and its timeline. The goal will be to have input from deanery and parish meetings presented to the bishop at a June 25 meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

In the process, all parishes will be asked for their creative suggestions about addressing the situation. Parishes will also be asked to consider using a "Parish Viability Reflection Tool" to look again at parish vitality, numbers, stability, involvement and participation. Parishes in each deanery will be asked to consider how they might respond if one less priest was assigned to their deanery.

Larger parishes in the diocese are also being invited to consider the ways they might support smaller parishes in light of a shortage of ordained ministers.

A number of parishes in the Saskatoon city deanery will also be asked to reflect on the possible "teaming" of parishes should the need arise. "In that scenario, these parishes would remain independent, served by a Parish Life Director, thus retaining their parish identity as a faith community, but would share a Priest Moderator with another parish." (These pastoral leadership teams have a Priest Moderator providing sacraments and a non-ordained Parish Life Director providing other pastoral and administrative leadership in parishes.)

The bishop concluded the joint meeting by stressing that this is "not a panic situation," but a prudent discussion of a reality that must be addressed. "This wasn't motivated by a crisis situation. The idea is to engage the diocese in a responsible way in a reflection on the future; to look in a faith-filled, but candid way at how we might best proceed in the years ahead," Bolen said.

"God is faithful. I hope this process of soul-searching on diocesan, deanery and parish levels will not be a cause of discouragement, but be seen as an invitation to a greater vitality, ever faithful to the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

## School district prepares to celebrate 100 years of faith and learning

By DONELLA HOFFMAN, GSCS

On Sept. 5, 1911, three teachers and 69 students began the school year together in the basement of St. Paul's Church. This marked the beginning of the newly formed Catholic school division in Saskatoon.

Now – nearly a century later – a team of staff and volunteers from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) is preparing a series of events to celebrate the school division's 100th anniversary during the 2011-2012 school year. The slogan for the anniversary is "Celebrating a Century of Faith and Learning."

"We are so proud to mark this wonderful milestone," says Diane Boyko, chair of the GSCS Board of Education. "Not only do we want to remember our past and the dedicated individuals who helped build and maintain Catholic education in Saskatoon and area, we want to look forward to our future – because we know families need and appreciate their right to choose to send their children to a Catholic school."

Robin Mitchell, a former teacher and principal in the school division and current director of the GSCS Foundation, is chairing the Centennial Committee. This group is planning a variety of centennial events so that as many people as possible will be able to experience the event.

**Friday, Aug. 26, 2011 – School Year Opening Celebration:** More than 1,500 division staff members will attend this gathering, which occurs annually. This year's speakers – drawn from a variety of backgrounds – will discuss why it is important to value publicly-funded Catholic education and what can occur if this privilege is taken for granted. All former staff are invited to attend the opening celebration, which begins 9 a.m. Aug. 26 at Circle Drive Alliance Church in Saskatoon0.

**Friday, Sept. 9, 2011 – Schools Mark Anniversary:** With Sept. 5 falling on Labour Day Monday, schools will



celebrate the division's 100th anniversary with a liturgy, tree-planting and other school-based events on Friday, Sept. 9. Staff are also preparing a history of each school. Former staff and students with memories or photos to share are invited to contact [info@gscs.sk.ca](mailto:info@gscs.sk.ca) or call Donella Hoffman at the school board office: (306) 659-7077.

**Saturday, Oct. 8, 2011 – Centennial Leadership Banquet:** This evening at TCU Place will honour past and current division leadership, such as principals, trustees and superintendents.

**Monday, Oct. 24, 2011 – Centennial Lecture Series, Part I:** Bishop Murray Chatlain of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese in the Northwest Territories, a graduate from Saskatoon's Catholic school system, will recount the Catholic school division's journey from its humble beginnings in the basement of St. Paul's Church to where it stands today. A second lecture, looking at the future of the division, is planned for the spring of 2012 with another presenter.

**Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2011 – Division Memorial Mass:** This Memorial Mass, an annual event, will be held at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, in remembrance of deceased staff members.

To commemorate the division's centennial year, a supper and social will be held after the Mass for former staff.

**Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011 – Division-wide Christmas Celebration for Staff:** This social evening, at Prairieland Park, is being organized by the GSCS Principals' Association.

**Thursday, Feb. 16, 2012 – Performing Arts Showcase:** Division staff will share their gifts during this special evening at St. Joseph high school.

**February/March 2012 – Visual Arts Showcase:** Visual artists from our division will display their work in the gallery at the Centre at Circle and Eighth mall from Feb. 13 to March 18.

**Saturday, June 23, 2012 – Community Centennial Banquet and Dance:** A celebration will be held at Prairieland Park in order to commemorate the division's special year with the wider community.

**Sunday, June 24, 2012 – Centennial Mass and Picnic:** Mass will be held at the new Holy Family Cathedral, followed by a 1911-style "Sunday in the Park" for families held at the nearby Saskatoon Forestry Farm.

More details about these events are available on the Saskatoon Catholic division website at [www.gscs.sk.ca](http://www.gscs.sk.ca) by clicking on the "Centennial Info" link.

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## Need to limit greenhouse gases discussed

BY VIRGINIA SCISSONS, NDS

Proposed legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan does not adequately address the growing problem, a justice and peace gathering heard Feb. 26 at St. Joseph's parish hall in Saskatoon.

Ann Coxworth of the Saskatchewan Environmental Society described how scientists have observed the close relationship between the increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the rise in global temperature.

The impact of this change ranges from immense flooding in some parts of the world, and extreme drought in other areas, she said. Temperature increases exceeding two percent are expected to cause the extinction of 20 to 30 percent of plant and animal life, reported Coxworth. Coral reefs and sea creatures with shells are becoming damaged as acidic carbon dioxide eats away at them.

Increasing temperatures are also causing the melting of the world's

glaciers. The loss of ice mass in the Arctic and Antarctic is causing higher water levels and loss of land.

Scientists around the world say it is vital to limit carbon monoxide emissions to keep global temperatures from rising a further two degrees centigrade, said Coxworth. Carbon dioxide emissions must peak by 2015, or we will not be able to turn global warming around. Globally, we must then decrease carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere to 50 per cent of the 1990 levels, she said.

Saskatchewan has one of the highest rates of greenhouse gas emissions at 74 tons per person per year in Canada. The highest percentage of the province's emissions – 34 percent – are created in the production of oil and gas; 22 percent are emitted in the production of electricity by the use of coal; while the agricultural sector and transportation both account for 16 percent of the emissions.

To lower emissions, Coxworth presented a number of suggestions:

### Justice and Peace – supported by the BAA!

in the production of gas and oil, rather than "venting and flaring" methane into the atmosphere, it could be captured and used as fuel; in the production of electricity, we must promote conservation and renewables such as wind, solar, and hydro, and phase out coal-generating power stations. In the area of transportation, she called for a return to rail transport rather than continuing the use of large trucks for transporting goods across the country. She also cited a need to set emission standards, lower speed limits and encourage car pooling and better public transportation systems within cities.

Coxworth explained the provincial Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act (MRGGA) which has passed its third reading in the legislative assembly and is expected to become law before the fall election. The Act will regulate carbon dioxide emitters of over 50,000 tons per year — however, it

does not include the oil and gas industry which are the greatest emitters in the province, said Coxworth. The plan and the hope is to reduce the emissions by two percent per year until the levels of 2006 are reached.

However, according to Coxworth, there are loopholes in the legislation, even beyond the exclusion of the oil and gas industries. Offenders can invest in future reduction projects, get recognition for taking early action, buy offsets, apply to get their baseline changed if their business expands, or pay a fine, with money going into a "tech fund" to which they may apply for a grant.

As the highest carbon dioxide emitting province in Canada, Saskatchewan has an inadequate target and an ineffective strategy for addressing the issue of global warming, asserted Coxworth.

She further pointed out that Canada's commitment at Kyoto to



Ann Coxworth

- Photo by V. Scissons

be six percent below the 1990 levels by 2012 is becoming a distant target. To meet our commitments, a reduction of almost 80 percent is required.

The information event was sponsored by the diocese of Saskatoon's Office for Justice and Peace.

## Hour of public prayer for life offered during 40 days of Lent

BY ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

A Lenten "Exodus" of 40 hours of prayers for life held for an hour each day outside Saskatoon City Hospital, ended Palm Sunday.

"We are a happy group," said Forty Hours for Life organizer Denise Hounjet-Roth. "I have seen such praying, dedication and commitment every day."

Hounjet-Roth, President of the Campaign Life Coalition, organized the annual walk in front of City Hospital from Ash Wednesday, March 9 to Palm Sunday, April 17. "It's different from other walks as we are in front of an abortuary for 40 straight days. Our focus is to pray to end abortion."

The group holds that the continual nature of the prayer makes a difference. "We are here every day at the same time for an hour. People who use this road regularly see us for 40 days and get the message more than once. They see a real persistence," says Hounjet-Roth.

There are about 10 volunteers who have come faithfully every day and often there were 20 people walking back and forth praying with signs.

On the day of the Campaign Life Coalition Saskatchewan Provincial Conference in Saskatoon, 47 people came out to pray. But the all-time high was a Friday in



Members of the Conquest Boys' Club were among those to spend an hour on the prayer walk.

- Photo by Anne-Marie Hughes

April when the Conquest Catholic Boys Club came with their families and 63 people were counted.

Three priests also came by to bless those on the walk during the 40 days.

Hounjet-Roth said she is excited about a new development this year. "We had groups

who picked a day and came consistently once a week... It has been so encouraging. We are hoping more groups will pick days next year. Anyone who is part of a group like a Knights of Columbus Council or CWL could pick a day and come out and pray. That would be great."

The response from those on the streets is always mixed. "We have people honk in support. We also have people drive by and swear. We are a non-violent group here to

pray, so we don't respond," says Hounjet-Roth.

Volunteers have also had the chance to engage with protesters going by. A cyclist who went by and yelled "It's all about choice!" stopped to talk to volunteers. "After a sidewalk discussion he said that they had really got him thinking."

Some drivers responded negatively to children being on the walk. Gerald Lashyn who brought his own children to the walk and a group of boys from Conquest Catholic Boys Club responded that "it's important our youth become part of this battle."

Matthew Fahlman talked about his thoughts after a driver yelled at him saying, "Way to indoctrinate your children." Fahlman asked: "Is it indoctrination to let children know that they are precious and their life is precious? It is a beautiful thing to see families out here."

City Hospital staff are sometimes surprised to find out abortions go on at their workplace. As well, people often have no idea how many abortions take place in Saskatchewan. "Thirty-six babies a week are aborted in the province. I have met MLAs who had no idea of the number of abortions," says Hounjet.

She finds the lack of knowledge concerning, but she is adamant about whose responsibility it is to educate politicians. "The onus is on us to clue them in... we need to visit our MLAs and MPs and set them straight about what is going on."

## March for Life May 12 at Legislature

An annual *March for Life* will be held at the Saskatchewan Legislature Thursday, May 12.

The event begins at 10 a.m. with Mass and registration at Christ the King Church, 3239 Gamet Street. The walk to the Legislature is at 11 a.m. with new arrival registration at 11:15 a.m. at the Legislature building.

Cliff Pyle of Lutherans for Life will lead the opening prayer at 11:45 a.m.

Activities at the Legislature will include a presentation by "Silent No More," guest

speakers and worship music by Michael Chiasson of Calgary. For more information see: [www.saskprolife.com](http://www.saskprolife.com) or call 1-888-842-7752.

In Saskatoon, the Knights of Columbus have booked a bus to take participants to the *March for Life* in Regina. The bus will leave Lawson Heights Mall in Saskatoon at 7 a.m. and will stop at Circle Centre Mall at 7:30 a.m. before heading to Regina. The cost is \$25 each. For more information, call Louis Roth at 249-2764 or John Cook at 477-1748.

### Rachel's Vineyard retreat for all those concerned about abortion

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is offering a retreat: "Holiness the answer to abortion" May 20-22 at St. Therese Healing and Growth Centre in Bruno, SK. This retreat is aimed at men and women who, though not personally post-abortive, desire to join themselves in spiritual solidarity with those who are.

Retreat master will be Fr. Ben Cameron of the Fathers of Mercy, who is the founding spiritual director for the new "Confraternity of Our Lady of

Mercy" and site leader for Rachel's Vineyard in western Kentucky.

The retreat will be a "mostly silent" retreat, with some periods in which participants will be encouraged to share insights. Includes daily Mass, opportunities for confession, adoration, rosary, silent time for prayer and reflection.

Cost for the retreat is \$200. For more information or to register contact Bonnie: (306) 480-8911 or email: [r.vineyardsk@sasktel.net](mailto:r.vineyardsk@sasktel.net)

### The diocesan policy for the protection of children, youth and the vulnerable

can be found on the diocesan website at: [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/privacy\\_and\\_policy/](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/privacy_and_policy/) or by accessing the link on the home page of the website. For more information call the Catholic Pastoral Centre at 242-1500 or toll free: 1-877-661-5005.

A previous policy regarding abuse of children, in effect since 1992, was expanded and revised in 2008 to include all vulnerable persons.

"Working together for a Safe and Respectful Church Environment" is our diocesan Church's response to the need to protect those most vulnerable in our Church and society.

### Is God Calling You to Mission? Have you ever thought about serving in the Canadian North?

If you have thought about serving in mission, but aren't sure, or if you only have limited time to offer; then consider volunteering with **On Eagle's Wings Ministries**. *On Eagle's Wings* is an ecumenical Christian ministry that proclaims Jesus Christ and serves the Church and individuals in remote and isolated areas of northern Canada. Throughout the summer *On Eagle's Wings*, working side by side with the local leadership, offers Vacation Bible School to the children in these northern communities. As a 'mission' volunteer you will help lead the Vacation Bible School. This short experience will stir your passion for mission! This summer the Saskatoon Roman Catholic Diocesan Mission Office will assist four people with funding for this life changing experience.

For more information about *On Eagle's Wings* visit: [www.oneagleswings.org](http://www.oneagleswings.org) or call Mary Jacobi at the Diocesan Mission Office (306) 653-4945, email: [mary@sasktel.net](mailto:mary@sasktel.net)



# Progress continues on Holy Family cathedral, parish and diocesan Catholic Pastoral Centre

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Progress on the new diocesan home in northeast Saskatoon continues, with construction of the 65,000-square-foot building expected to be substantially complete by the beginning of Advent in November, with the move into the facilities phased in as final finishing work is completed. Preliminary planning is underway for grand opening celebrations to be held in spring 2012.

The Knights of Columbus have started fund-raising for innovative solar stained glass that will be a feature of the new building. They will be installed in May, when the necessary scaffolding is still in place.

The great south window installation entitled “Lux Gloria” has been designed by artist Sarah Hall to combine beauty with solar power. It is anticipated the windows will collect as much energy as five households use in a year. Sarah Hall is also designing the biblically-themed non-solar stained glass that will eventually be installed in the building, said volunteer building committee chair Jim Nakoneshny.

Nakoneshny gave a report on the history and progress of the project to the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) April 9 at St. Paul’s Cathedral in Saskatoon, describing how the building’s origins began in the urgent need for a larger parish for Holy Family in the growing northeast section of the city.

This parish project was seen as an opportunity for the diocese to also answer a need for a cathedral large enough to host diocesan celebrations such as ordinations and the Chrism Mass, and a need for more office and ministry space with overcrowding and maintenance issues plaguing the 50-year-old Catholic Centre.

The expected seating capacity for the new church will be about 1,200 seats, which is also what would be needed for a cathedral, Nakoneshny noted. The worship space can also be opened at the back to seat up to 2,000.



During a tour of the construction site this winter with building chair Jim Nakoneshny (at right), Bishop Don Bolen and his assistant Agnes Pelletier stood at the hole in the ground where the baptismal font will be located in the worship space of Holy Family Cathedral. - Photo by K. L. Yaworski

Land obtained from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools next to St. Joseph High School was adequate for the building and parking.

With Bishop Albert LeGatt’s 2005 decision that the new Holy Family parish would be the site of the new cathedral and Catholic Centre, an extensive parish and diocesan *Uniting in Faith* campaign was conducted to raise funds for the \$28.5 million project.

St. Paul’s Cathedral will continue as a vibrant downtown faith community, and the Vatican has given permission for it to be designated as “co-cathedral” because of its historic significance to the diocese.

A Worship and Liturgy committee led by

Fr. David Tumback, director of liturgy for the diocese, was established to ensure that the new cathedral would meet established liturgical guidelines, including compliance with the new General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Nakoneshny said.

“The challenge for the committee would be to present a vision for the building that encapsulated both the image of a cathedral, as well as that of a parish home,” said Nakoneshny.

Architect for the project is Friggstad Downing Henry Architects (recently renamed Henry Downing Howlett), a firm with a long history of creating “substantial and well-respected buildings” such as Holy Spirit Church, Credit Union Centre, the university Kinesiology building and the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, he reported.

The new Holy Family Cathedral building will include worship areas, a hall, meeting rooms and programming space, the pastor’s residence, diocesan offices, a library and archives. “In essence, we are building several combined facilities under one roof, many of which had unique and often conflicting requirements,” he said of the complex design process.

“In addition, the cathedral would require a functional lifespan of well over 100 years. This entailed choices in construction methods and building materials such as steel, stone and concrete,” he described.

“As much as possible, we tried to make nearly every space flexible or multi-functional. For example, meeting rooms that will be used during the day by the Catholic Centre will be busy in the evenings for parish use; hospitality areas needed for weekend masses will also be available for cathedral staff during the week.”

By the fall of 2009, the fundraising was substantially complete and the project went out to tender. “This coincided with a brief lull in construction activity prior to the start of the

Federal Infrastructure Program, and we were pleased to have the winning tender from Graham Construction and Engineering in Saskatoon come in line with our initial estimates,” Nakoneshny said.

“An unseasonably warm December (2009) allowed construction crews the opportunity to commence site preparations before winter had fully set in. By the first week of January 2010, the first of more than 575 concrete pilings for the building’s foundations were being poured.

“Work on the foundations and related concrete work continued throughout the spring, and by last summer the building’s framework was starting to rise, culminating with the cross-raising in late August. By the end of the year the main structure was largely closed in and construction continued on the building’s interiors,” he said.

“The most distinctive feature of the cathedral is the soaring spiral roofline and large central cross which reaches to a height of over 175 feet. The cathedral’s design was inspired by the traditional hymn ‘*Lift High the Cross*,’ with the building proudly proclaiming itself as a house of God.”

Environmental stewardship has been a strong consideration in the design of the building, he said. “Our design team has worked to implement sustainable and forward-thinking design principles wherever possible. Special care has been taken in the design of the heating and cooling systems, windows, and insulation. Over all, this will be a very green building.”

Interiors are now well under way with most of the framing done and many of the rooms already drywalled and painted, Nakoneshny reported to the DPC.

“Construction continues to proceed on time and on budget, with completion expected by the beginning of Advent. We’re expecting that the ceremonial celebrations will take place in the spring of 2012.”

## BAA raises \$1.35 million for ministries, outreach and evangelization

The Bishop’s Annual Appeal raised just over \$1.35 million in the fall of 2010, thanks to contributions by individuals and families from across the diocese, and the hard work of parish volunteers.

This will again provide vital funding for another year of diocesan programming in support of parish ministry, outreach, evangelization and faith formation across the diocese, as well as supporting ministry and outreach in the broader Catholic community, said Bishop Don Bolen, thanking all those who contributed prayers, time or donations.

A desire for more youth ministry across the diocese; a demand for resources for parish catechetics programs; an ongoing call for more Catholic chaplaincy at City and Royal University Hospitals; ever-more challenging issues facing the Justice and Peace office; increasing efforts by the office of Restorative Ministry to answer unmet needs in prisons; a longing for increased efforts around faith formation and evangelization to answer the hunger for Jesus Christ in our world; the costs of educating seminarians and of engaging in effective vocations promotion – all of this and more prompted the decision to increase the BAA goal in 2010.

“We know that when these very real needs are presented to people, they respond with incredible generosity,” said Don Gorsalitz, director of the Catholic

Foundation office, which now includes coordination of the Bishop’s Annual Appeal. “For more than 25 years the BAA has made a difference in the life and the vitality of our diocese, and it continues to be vital as we move into the future.”

Representatives of the Catholic Foundation office recently met with parish leaders and Bishop’s Annual Appeal volunteers from across the diocese at meetings in each of the seven deaneries. Input about the BAA – including feedback about some changes implemented in 2010 will be extremely valuable, said Gorsalitz.

“We were again deeply touched by the passion and commitment of all those working on the Bishop’s Annual Appeal in our parishes. We really appreciated their insights,” he said.

“The approach we took to the Appeal was somewhat different this year, as we asked parishioners to consider increasing their gift to the Appeal in an effort to meet some of the increasing needs in our diocese,” he said.

“As a result of the new format, we enjoyed an average increase in pledge size of 20 per cent, although we saw a decline from 41 per cent of our diocesan families supporting the Appeal last year to 36 per cent in 2010. So what was gained at one end was lost at another,” stated Gorsalitz.

“We are hopeful that the feedback and insights received from

deanery meetings will assist us in our 2011 Appeal in both participation and amount raised.”

For instance, it was suggested that rather than ask for a specific amount, the Appeal request a certain percentage increase, clearly communicating the need, and always stressing that each and every gift, large or small, is important.

“The Catholic community continues to support the Bishop’s Annual Appeal generously, and every day that is making a difference in people’s lives and in the ministry lived out in our diocese and in our parishes,” Gorsalitz said. “That continues to be a sign of hope in our world.”

The list of ministries supported

by the 2010 Appeal has been determined, but exact amounts to be disbursed remain to be finalized by the bishop.

All funds raised through the BAA go only to support the ministries of the Appeal, except for the portion shared with parishes in an incentive program for those that exceed their annual goal. - KLY

Episcopal Corporation of Saskatoon Statement of Revenue and Expenses For year end June 30, 2010		
	2010	2009
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>		
Bishop’s Annual Appeal	\$1,197,655	\$1,135,661
Parish assessments	1,024,006	984,031
Investment income	49,679	85,721
Donations	5,979,667	3,575,324
Brazil collections	62,756	74,506
Ministry	221,039	285,456
Sundry	467,840	478,289
	<u>9,002,642</u>	<u>6,618,988</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Pastoral services	1,209,148	1,246,473
Outreach grants & donations	5,623,929	3,193,688
Clergy and vocations	664,534	424,081
Brazil mission	62,755	74,506
Administration and chancery	1,294,023	1,357,567
Parish support	217,234	162,121
	<u>9,071,623</u>	<u>6,458,436</u>
Revenue less expenses before undernoted items	(68,981)	160,552
Gain (loss) on disposal of investments	17,206	(77,377)
Unrealized gain (loss) in market value of investments	12,877	(29,258)
<b>REVENUE, LESS EXPENSES</b>	<u>(38,898)</u>	<u>53,917</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<u>1,356,072</u>	<u>1,302,155</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 1,317,174</u>	<u>\$ 1,356,072</u>



## Parishes of Wadena deanery join together for events

A number of events and activities have involved parishioners from across the Wadena deanery in recent weeks.

Wadena deanery representatives were among those to participate in a Diocesan Congress day with Bishop Don Bolen Feb. 26 in Humboldt.

Parishes from across the deanery

also joined together for a workshop about Lay Presided Sunday Celebrations of the Word with Communion. The workshop was organized through the diocesan Ministry Development office.

Kathy and Ivan Hitchings of the diocesan Lay Formation team were facilitators. They walked through the lay presided service, explaining the theology, and providing practical help to lay people who may be called on to preside at such services in the absence of a priest.

Like many other parishes across the diocese, parishes in the Wadena deanery have been busy with catechism classes for children this winter and spring, and providing sacramental preparation programs. Bishop Don Bolen will be in the deanery for confirmation and first Eucharist, with celebrations held this year at St. Felix parish in Archerwill and St. Theresa parish in Lintlaw on Saturday, May 7, and at St. Catherine parish in Quill Lake and St. Mary parish at Wadena, on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 8.

At Mary Queen of Poland Parish in Fosston, the Knights of Columbus Fr. Kunka Council 6594 is having a third annual Father's Day Raffle, with a major prize of \$1,000, and 12 smaller prizes, with only 300 tickets to be sold for the June 19 draw.



Participating in a lay presided celebration workshop. - Photo by Lynda Statchuk

### Ministry Development – supported by the BAA!



Parishioners from across the deanery attended the lay presider workshop in Wadena (the workshop was also held in Humboldt). - Photo by Lynda Statchuk



Fr. Clement Amofah



Msgr. Matthew Tuffuor-Amoah



Fr. Jean Lacasse, OMI



Fr. Ephraim Mensah



The Wadena Deanery includes the easternmost part of the diocese of Saskatoon, stretching nearly to the Manitoba border. Parishes in the deanery are grouped into three parish clusters: Archerwill, Nobleville, High Tor and Perigord to the north (served by pastor Fr. Jean Lacasse, OMI); the seven parishes located at Quill Lake, St. Front, Rose Valley, Fosston, Kelvington, Wadena and Lintlaw in the centre of the deanery (served by pastors Fr. Clement Amofah and Msgr. Matthew Tuffuor-Amoah); and to the south, the parishes at Wynyard, Wishart and Foam Lake (pastor Fr.

## Couples from across deanery gather for Marriage Matters in Wadena

The church basement at St. Mary's parish in Wadena was transformed into a quaint romantic hall a few days before Valentine's Day 2011, for a marriage enrichment evening organized in conjunction with the diocesan office of Marriage and Family Life.

The "Marriage Matters" banquet Feb. 11 was attended by 21 couples from nearby communities, including Foam Lake, Wishart, Rose Valley, Fosston, Wadena and Tisdale.

The Wadena enrichment event was modeled on the Marriage Appreciation Banquet hosted each year in the diocese of Saskatoon by the diocesan Task Force on Marriage and Worldwide Marriage Encounter. The Saskatoon banquet, held on April 16 this year, generally attracts some 200 participants and is hosted to celebrate marriage and to affirm the ministry of parish-based marriage preparation and enrichment ministries across the diocese.

The office of Marriage and Family Life is actively promoting marriage enrichment suppers like the one held in Wadena as another way to offer marriage enrichment across the diocese, said office coordinator Blake Sittler, acting director of pastoral services at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. A similar event was organized by St. Joseph's parish in Kindersley last year, he noted.

The Wadena "Marriage Matters" event was coordinated by Lynda and Cal Statchuk, who were assisted by a number of fellow parishioners. Nevin and Royann Halyk of Foam Lake were Masters of Ceremony for the evening.

"It was a very enriching and well presented evening with good food, and drink, good company and good 'food for thought' – all ingredients for a loving faith-filled marriage," said the Statchuks.

This is the first time a marriage enrichment evening has been hosted

in the Wadena deanery, said Lynda, who also serves as diocesan Rural Catechetics coordinator in the area. "Cal and I have had opportunities to attend functions in the city like the Marriage Conference. We wanted to bring a piece of what there is out there to the rural couples," she said.

At first there were some misunderstandings about what the evening was all about, Lynda noted. "Some people thought this was for troubled marriages, but it was about making a good marriage better," she said.

"Attending we had one couple, Elsie and Carl Peters from Wadena, who will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in October. Another couple was our daughter Chrysta and her husband Adam Teale, from Tisdale, who were just married in July of 2010. Both these couples took home something from the talk that they felt was helpful and enriching."

Monsignor Matthew Tuffuor-Amoah also attended the event, and spoke briefly, joking: "The invitation said to bring your spouse. I am married and my spouse is the Church...so I have many wives!"

Guest speakers at the Wadena event were Brooke and Blake Sittler. Their presentation title "We'll Make Time (Even When There Ain't No Time)" was borrowed from a song of the same name by Canadian songwriter, Hawksley Workman.

Blake described what he called a "contemplative revolution."

"We need to make time not so we can do more but so that we can do less and do it better," he said. "The only way that we can make more time is to say 'no' to some things... sometimes to even say 'no' to good and holy opportunities."

Brooke expanded the theme by discussing how spouses need to be seen as personal "talents," based on the parable of the talents recorded in



Twenty-one couples attended a marriage enrichment banquet at St. Mary's parish in Wadena Feb. 12. - Photo by Lynda Statchuk

the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

"Blake is my 'talent' and I need to return him to God a better man... more loving, more forgiving, more compassionate, more patient. I want God to see Blake and say to me, 'I like what you've done with him,'" said Brooke.

Blake and Brooke shared several ideas about how to make time with your spouse including dating in your own home, but the concept that most couples in the audience enjoyed was the idea of showering together. "Don't get me wrong," laughed Brooke. "Most of time it's just about getting clean, but the shower is a place where Blake and I can catch up with each other...it's like this humid, warm cocoon where we can reconnect."

Blake pointed out that the liturgical year of the Church has a few lessons to teach those who feel overwhelmed by their schedule.

"We need to learn that there is a season for activity called ordinary time. There are seasons for celebration (Christmas and Easter); and seasons for calm preparation called Advent and Lent. Does anyone

notice that there is no season for chaos?" asked Blake. The Sittlers invited couples to reclaim their time, to prioritize their family and community, and to enjoy their marriage, not just endure it.

Comments about the evening were positive. Sandra Keep, who attended with her husband, said: "Wadena parish did a wonderful job of decorating, planning supper and organizing the event."

Frank and Jeannette Lipinski from St. Mary's Parish in Fosston agreed. "No one knew what to expect... but when we walked into the basement room we quickly found out that this wasn't just an evening of sitting and listening to speakers," said Jeannette. Enjoying a fine meal and getting to know other couples during the evening was part of the experience.

Tips from speakers Blake and Brooke Sittler about finding ways to connect as a couple were appreciated.

"Several other ideas were shared and many people realized that it didn't have to be complicated... something as simple as leaving a note of appreciation on a table or pillow, doing something for your



MCs Royann and Nevin Halyk from Foam Lake. -Photo by Lynda Statchuk

spouse that you don't normally do or getting a babysitter and then going out for the evening together," said Jeannette.

She described the evening's message as: "we need to take special time for each other. To remember to say 'I love you' or 'thanks for doing that,' to hold hands, to hug each other, to talk about everything, even if it seems unimportant, and most important of all: listen to each other."

"Couples left with a renewed spirit of togetherness and love," said Frank and Jeannette, expressing appreciation to those who organized the "Marriage Matters" evening and to the guest speakers. "We would strongly recommend others go to this next time, if it is in their area."

The evening included the presentation of many prizes donated by local businesses including the Wadena Coop, Wadena Bakery, Wadena Drugs, E and K Trophy Wadena, St. Mary's Parish, Royal Bank, Viteria, and Humboldt Kentucky Fried Chicken. Temple Garden Spas in Moose Jaw also donated a day pass to one couple.

For those interested in hosting a marriage enrichment event in their parish, information is available from Marriage Task Force chairs Gail and Pat Fitzpatrick. Contact the office of Marriage and Family Life, 242-1500, Ext. 223 or toll free: 1-877-661-5005, Ext. 223.

# Prisons as waste – reflections on Restorative Justice



### Prison outreach

Volunteers Yvonne and Russ Powell (right) assist diocesan Restorative Ministry coordinator Dianne Anderson sort through donated books which were distributed to men incarcerated at Saskatoon Correctional Centre this Christmas. Anderson coordinates a variety of pastoral care at the prison, including prayer, weekly rosary, *Returning to Spirit*, talking circles, Mass, sacrament of reconciliation and personal visiting. Lenten initiatives included offering ashes and prayer to all the prisoners on Ash Wednesday, praying the Way of the Cross at the prison on Holy Thursday, and collection of chocolate rabbits from parishes for distribution to inmates at Easter. The Restorative Ministry office also works with men who are being released, and with family members in the community, including working to keep connections between men and their children through a rosary and prayer program. Anyone interested in helping with Restorative Ministry in the diocese can reach Dianne Anderson by calling the Catholic Pastoral Centre, (306) 242-1500 Ext. 226; or toll free: 1-887-661-5005. - KLY

## Participate in Restorative Ministry through prayer and awareness

BY PETER OLIVER, CHAPLAIN  
SASKATOON CORRECTIONAL CENTRE AND  
REGIONAL PSYCHIATRIC CENTRE

The ministry offered to offenders and victims in the criminal justice system is called Restorative Ministry. Those involved in this ministry don't use the term "prison ministry" because this ministry is about more than that. It is about healing relationships and about telling the truth.

Prisons are often the starting point for this ministry but it can't stay there. Words like hope, forgiveness, justice and reconciliation must find a home in the hearts of people: victims, offenders and in our own homes as well.

Restorative Ministry makes concrete the vision of Isaiah who see communion between the lion and the lamb, and makes real the reconciling power of the cross.

On a personal note, I am often surprised and inspired by Evangelical believers who are absolutely certain about God's power to transform the lives of any person who approaches the Lord with an open heart. It would not hurt us as Catholics to have a little more confidence in the healing and reconciling power of the church.

Our belief in the immutable dignity of each person is an extraordinary conviction that can breath life into the violence, sorrow and grief that is a part of every criminal act.

Well, these are great words but what can we do? The answer is not as hard as one might think. Simply, take a moment and imagine the smallest possible thing that you can do, and do it.

Here is an example: Every Sunday the gospel is proclaimed. On many of these Sundays, a part of the gospel speaks directly to the reality of crime. The stories abound: the

### REFLECTING ON THE MEANING OF RESTORATIVE MINISTRY

parable of the good Samaritan is a story of a victim of crime; the hope announced by John the Baptist speaks of setting prisoners free; the story of the woman caught in adultery is a question about the death penalty; the arrest, trial and execution of Jesus are criminal proceedings, and interestingly the first person who is welcomed into heaven is a criminal sentenced to death alongside Jesus.

On the Sundays when these reading are proclaimed, wouldn't it be appropriate to include a prayer in the intercessions that speaks to victims, offenders or people who work in the criminal justice system? Dianne Anderson, who coordinates the office of Restorative Ministry, will circulate two pages of prayer examples that can be included in Sunday worship. (*Reach her at the Catholic Centre: 242-1500, Ext. 226*) This may seem small, but praying makes a difference.

Other ideas include starting a Restorative Ministry group in the parish. While keeping the centrality of healing and reconciling relationship in mind, ask: "what is the smallest possible thing our committee could do?" – and then do it.

Such a committee could begin by having coffee with someone like Helmut Isaac who runs the Person-to-Person ministry (prison visiting), or talking with the Parish Life Director at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish about the victims of crime in our First Nations' community. So much can be discovered with a little conversation.

This can take time and patience but it is a bit like growing a garden: "*the Son and the Reign*" do most of the work!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Columnist Donald Sutherland of Winnipeg has a long-standing interest in Restorative Justice. This commentary previously appeared in *The Prairie Messenger* and in *Whole Life* magazine.

BY DONALD SUTHERLAND

In our adversarial judicial system, the Crown represents "the public interest" and the offender is usually represented by a lawyer. The victim is but a shadow in the background and the community is not represented at all.

Crime followed by punishment is assumed to equal justice. A law has been broken. Sentences are meted out according to long established precedents and with political ears carefully tuned to public opinion. A simplistic "get tough on crime" policy appeals to voters who believe that offenders can be taught lessons and that potential offenders will be deterred.

The facts are otherwise. We overcrowd our prisons, offenders feel like victims, victims feel angry and frustrated, and taxpayers are struggling under ever-mounting costs.

From June 28 to July 2, 2010, I attended the Canadian School of Peace Building in Winnipeg, with Dr. Howard Zehr as teacher. The subjects were restorative justice, our punitive prison system, and alternatives to incarceration.

A world expert on the topic, Howard Zehr is professor of restorative justice at Eastern Mennonite University's Centre for Justice and Peace Building in Virginia and author of *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice* and numerous other books.

Restorative justice asks a different set of questions than our mainstream system which asks: "What laws have been broken? Who did it? What do they deserve?"

Rather, restorative justice asks: "Who has been hurt? What are their needs? Whose obligations are these?"

Restorative justice is not intended to replace the legally-based system but it does have the potential to reduce prison

populations, bring accountability to offenders, focus on victim needs, involve the community, and would result in substantial cost reduction.

Often victim and offender meet face to face along with family and community members. All share in decisions about restitution and in monitoring plans for moving forward in harmony. The central core is restoring relationships and identifying and acting upon root causes of harmful behaviour.

Our taxpayers are pouring billions of dollars each year into a justice system that leaves victims in trauma, offenders feeling like victims, and families in distress.

Zehr cited Judge Dennis Challeen's reflection on prisons:

- **We want offenders to have self-worth:** but we destroy their self-worth.
- **We want them to be responsible:** but we take away all their responsibilities.
- **We want them to be part of our community:** but we isolate them from our community.
- **We want them to be positive and constructive:** but we degrade them and make them useless.
- **We want them to be trustworthy:** but we put them where there is no trust.
- **We want them to be kind and loving people:** but we subject them to hatred and cruelty.
- **We want them to be nonviolent:** but we put them in the middle of violence.
- **We want them to quit being the tough guy:** but we put them where the tough guy is respected.
- **We want them to quit exploiting us:** but we put them where they exploit each other.
- **We want them to take control of their lives:** but we make them totally dependent on us.

The current political agenda is: longer sentences, fewer rehabilitative programs, close prison farms, and greater crowding. Result: costs spiralling upward and out of control. Why aren't we screaming: "*there must be a better way*"?

### Restorative Ministry – supported by the BAA!



### Way of the Cross on Good Friday

Members of L'Arche Saskatoon led the reflection and prayers at the final station of the 2011 ecumenical Way of the Cross through Saskatoon's downtown streets on Good Friday morning. Hundreds joined the prayer walk, which included stations at the courthouse, a medical clinic, a military building, a liquor store, a youth shelter, a television station, an employment office, a shopping centre, a bank and downtown churches. At each of the 14 stations, scripture and prayers recalled a moment of Jesus' crucifixion, and the cross was linked to suffering and injustice in our world today. Prayers were offered for youth; for environmental protection; for victims of human trafficking; for those around the world suffering religious persecution; for an end to discrimination and hatred against gay, lesbian and transgendered persons; for women in ministry; for restorative ministry; for Christian unity; and for healing, conversion and acceptance for all. See the article in the online news archive at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm) - KLY

### L'Arche Saskatoon – supported by the BAA!



# Lay Formation impacts lives and hearts

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

After two years of journeying together in a program of faith formation and enrichment, members of three streams of the Lay Formation program are preparing for their "missioning" in early June.

The Catholic formation program invites adults to deepen their faith through learning, prayer and community life over two years. Participants gather one weekend a month from September to June at Queen's House in Saskatoon, to live in community and share faith, to listen and dialogue with speakers and facilitators, and to pray and worship in a variety of forms.

The program is unique in how it combines three groups: a Latin rite diocesan stream, a Byzantine rite eparchial stream, and an Aboriginal stream. Together participants from the three streams share the Catholic faith they have in common, while also exploring more deeply their own traditions.

Year II participant Marlene VanDresar of St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt heard about Lay Formation over the years, and had a long-standing desire to experience the program. "I just felt that this was something that I needed to do so I could grow closer to the Lord and really understand my faith."

The experience has helped her to grow in confidence and in understanding, and has created wonderful community bonds, she described.

At times the journey has been challenging, and there is much to learn and absorb. "It also gives you an appreciation and understanding of where the other streams are coming from," VanDresar said. She has also developed a love of praying the Liturgy of the Hours – one of the prayer forms experienced at Lay Formation.

For those considering Lay Formation, VanDresar advises: **"Take a step in faith. Leap. Walk on the water. It's worth it ... I'm sorry [Year II] is coming to an end."**

For pharmacist Joyce Walker of St. Mary's parish in Saskatoon, Lay Formation is another step on a faith journey that has combined her Anglican heritage with an introduction to the Catholic faith through the "amazing ministry" of St. Mary parish nurse Sr. Carol Borreson. Eventually Walker went through the RCIA process to become Catholic and take part in the Eucharist, joining St. Mary's parish while still keeping the connection to her Anglican parish. Now Lay Formation has provided new faith growth and an ever-deepening understanding, she said. "I have absolutely loved it. I'm a better Christian for it... it's just a fullness of faith."

**"What Lay Formation reminds me of is the woman at the well in John's gospel," says Walker. "We all come to the well, the three streams come to the well and we all come and meet across that living water."**

Starting as a "group of seekers" – a disjointed, diverse group, dealing with many individual challenges and some carrying hurts



Some of the Year II Lay Formation participants: (standing, l-r) MaryAnne Morrison, Joyce Walker, Darlene George, Brian Thomson, (seated, l-r) Marlene Van Dresar, Chris Gartner, Daria Malin.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

and struggles — the three streams have bonded as a community over the past two years, Walker said. "It's truly that you just meet each other where you stand... We're family."

The bond grows and strengthens as the group shares life, losses and blessings over the two years together, she added. "We support each other."

Walker was enthusiastic about the quality of the speakers and presentations. "To get Fr. Ron Rolheiser speaking to us four times over the two years ... Fr. Mark Miller, Fr. Paul Facht... Deborah Rolfes... it's just tremendous. They add such context."

She also greatly appreciated the chance to experience all kinds of prayer, and different spiritualities and forms of worship. "Basically, you come in and you try whatever fits you – and you go away with a new inner sense of yourself, and where faith fits in."

Walker highly recommends the program. **"You can get so caught up and run the treadmill forever, but here you step out and you take the time. This is something you truly do for yourself."**

Darlene George of St. Louis parish at Patuanak drives five and a half hours from her home in the Archdiocese of Keewatin-LePas to get to the Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation Program at Saskatoon – but says that has not been an obstacle. "I haven't had any difficulty coming here, my family has always been supportive back home. I have a daughter and I know she's taken care of," said George, who serves as a mental health worker in her small community of 1,000.

**"It's just allowing God to do his work. I firmly believe that if you have chosen to do his work, he will provide you with what you need."**

Invited by Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie to undertake Lay Formation, George says the

experience is bearing fruit in her life. She is now more confident when called upon to help her small parish – for instance, when a priest was not available for a time, she served as a lay presider for liturgies.

"I guess the blessing is that I've become more confident and more open and have a willingness to go out and serve in my community."

Her relationship with God has also deepened, she added. **"One of the first things I really learned and loved here was that there's no wrong way to pray. So that really made me more fully open to what God is sharing with us and how I communicate with God."**

The learning and sharing that comes from the three streams journeying together has also been profound, George said.

"Sometimes I'm just in awe in thinking how we're all so alike. That's amazing for me... we think we're different, and we have different cultures, but when we actually meet in God's presence there are so many similarities and common aspects it's just amazing. You get really connected, you become really close and you become a huge community."

As a Métis person, MaryAnne Morrison, of St. Patrick parish in Saskatoon, wanted to explore the connections between her Catholic faith and First Nations spirituality.

**"What I was looking for were parallels between Aboriginal spirituality and Catholicism, and trying to learn more in depth about the Bible and the Catholic teachings, so I could draw those connections,"** says Morrison, who teaches in the Catholic school system.

For instance, during a session about the Book of Revelation, she discovered that the biblical book "really speaks to the experience of Aboriginal people and the suffering they have endured the last 200 years."

Morrison said she is excited about continuing to learn, and is considering continuing study about faith and spirituality. **"I believe that once you know something, you have a responsibility to do something with it, that you have to give back."**

Three participants in the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy stream of lay formation from Sts. Peter and Paul parish in Saskatoon all found new depths of understanding and faith through the Lay formation experience.

Daria Malin, a young mother of three, was pregnant during Year I and journeyed through Year II with her baby daughter Julia, one of two babies who are part of the Lay Formation weekends right now. Malin said she was happy to participate in the program while her children are small, since the family is only going to get busier as they grow up.

Malin said she has fallen in love with scripture, and learned much more about her Ukrainian Catholic faith – something which will also benefit her young family. **"My home is a lot of my ministry right now... when my children have questions, I can answer them."**

Her fellow parishioners Chris Gartner and Brian Thomson are also completing the eparchial Lay Formation stream. Experiencing top notch speakers, the joy of learning more about the Ukrainian Catholic tradition and sharing with the Latin-rite and aboriginal streams have been hugely enriching, they said.

**"One thing that was really brought to my attention is that we're a community, we're not just individuals searching for God,"** said Thomson, who works for Canada Post and is deeply involved in parish and family life. Through the Lay Formation experience he has now also developed a strong interest in iconography and the writing of icons.

**"For me, there has been transformation, change in my personal and spiritual life. I'm looking at this as not an end – it's a beginning. Life has opened many paths for me, and it's now that I have to sit and listen to where God's calling me to go,"** said Gartner, who works for the Catholic school division, said that for years she has felt called to service in her family, parish and community. When the time was right she happily entered the Lay Formation program. **"Finally it was an opportunity for me to be Mary and sit at Jesus' feet. It is a wonderful revelation for Christ to let me know that this was my time. There is always a right time."**

Lay Formation missioning for Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy participants will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 4 at Sts. Peter and Paul church, and for the diocesan and Aboriginal Catholic streams a missioning celebration will be held 2:30 p.m. Sunday, June 5 at St. Anne church in Saskatoon. Everyone is welcome.

**Lay Formation is now taking applications for the fall diocesan/eparchial streams.** Contact Mona Goodman or Kathy Hitchings at 242-1500 or toll free: 1-877-661-5005 or: layform@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

**Lay Formation – supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal!**

## Grief Ministry Course in Outlook

Dealing with grief was the subject of a 12-week course in Outlook Deanery organized through the diocesan office of Ministry Development.

Facilitator Dr. Brian Chartier, PhD, psychologist and associate professor at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon, led participants through an introduction to current insights about the psychological, social and theological aspects of grieving and pastoral ministry.

Offered several times across the diocese, the Grief Ministry course is intended for both lay and professionals who care for those who mourn, and for volunteers in faith communities and hospitals.

"The Grief Ministry class has been a journey of discovery into the realm of grief – that of my self and of others," said participant Maxine Prentice. "Reflection, prayer, scrip-

ture and discussion have enriched each session and helped me to deepen my understanding of how grief affects all of us."

The course considered the variety of losses that occur in life, which require one to walk through the pain of bereavement. "Unresolved grief needs to be dealt with either sooner or later," she said about what she learned in the course, adding that it will assist her in walking with those who are grieving.

"Now I understand that choice of words is of far less importance than one's presence and the ability to listen. Prayer, as well, before each encounter, proves helpful as we strive to journey with those who mourn."

Another participant said that the course provided reflection on personal grief as well as on ministry. "The Grief Ministry course provided a venue to reflect on my grief



Participants in the grief course held in Outlook Deanery. - Photo courtesy Bill and Kitty Paslawski

journey, for the past, present and future," said David Alm. "It will help me as I deal with grief personally, in my business life and through the [funeral] vigil ministry through the church. The course is presented with care and compassion by the facilitators."

For more information about this ministry training workshop or other diocesan offerings, contact Elan Ehresman at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 242-1500, Ext. 229, or toll free 1-877-661-5005, or e-mail: mindevel@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

# World day of Prayer for Vocations: May 15, 2011

## Pope John Paul II had role in Geoffrey Young's counter-cultural call to priesthood

BY GEOFFREY YOUNG

I was born in Saskatoon on Oct. 21, 1985, the third and youngest child of Maureen (Richelhoff) and Jerald Young. Prior to my birth, my family lived and farmed on land near Kerrobert, SK, which is my father's hometown. My mother's hometown is Major, SK and she became a teacher.

I have an older brother Tyler (who is married to Odette) and an older sister Natasha (who is married to Shaun Bzdel). We have a close family, in which our Catholic faith has always been a priority. As a young child, I was taught to say prayers before bed and meals, we would go to Mass on Sundays, and I was encouraged as a young child to go to the rosary club at my elementary school, St. Bernard. My favourite memories include playing hockey and spending my summers at Turtle Lake.

Following my confirmation I became an altar server at Holy Spirit Parish in Saskatoon, and I continued this up until the time I decided to enter seminary. From an early age, I always respected priests – yet I didn't understand much about the priesthood.

I graduated from Holy Cross High School in 2003 and although I didn't know what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, I had always been interested in politics, history, and religion. I studied for two years at the U of S, working towards a BA in political studies, but around this time I also began reading philosophy and theology, some works by Cardinal Ratzinger and Pope John Paul II.

Up until that point, I do not remember explicitly "thinking about being a priest". In 2005, with the events surrounding Pope John Paul II's death, I had an inexpressible conversion. During that year, I began re-engaging with my faith. I remember asking myself "what is it that *truly* makes me happy in life?"

Looking back now, I can see moments throughout my early life in which I believe God was calling me subtly to the priesthood. But this vocation was most directly inspired by Pope John Paul II. By his witness and faithful priestly life, he showed the depth of his love for Christ and His bride, the Church. As a 19-year-old young man with talent, ability to do many things, he found himself in a time of war – a dark time – yet he decided to give his heart totally to Christ, through the hands of Mary.

One Sunday Mass following Easter 2005, a gospel was proclaimed about the call of a disciple, who gave his possessions to the poor and followed our Lord. Then when going for communion, I saw the image of one of the *Stations* in which Christ is condemned by Pontius Pilate. I felt God was calling me to a radical conversion from my much divided heart. But I didn't know what this meant. After Mass, I don't know why, I suddenly found myself asking the priest about the vocation. He said that if I desired to find out more, he would set up a meeting with Bishop Albert LeGatt.

I didn't hear back for about a month, which at first I thought was probably for the best; because I hadn't really thought this out much! Eventually, I met with the bishop a few times and over the coming few months, with his support, I discerned that I could finish my BA in seminary while also discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

So I entered seminary, not knowing with any certainty, but trusting that God would continually guide me. In my heart, I believed in the words spoken by Pope Benedict XVI, "*Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything.*" I simply took it one year at a time, and promised myself not to make a decision

during turmoil but to complete the entire year. During seminary, I know that I have matured in many areas; most especially in my spiritual life, my love of the sacraments, knowledge of the faith, and love for the people of God. Throughout my future ministry as a priest, I will always strive to centre my life on Christ – truly present in the Eucharist – and on a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Each year I find myself falling deeper in love with the Church I am called to serve and the sacred priesthood that is *still today* a gift from Christ to his beloved. I also find that I am a more joyful and loving person because I have heard that calling that fulfills my deepest longings.

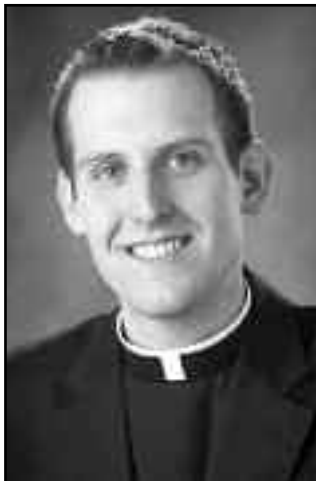
My ordination to the priesthood will be June 10 in Saskatoon. I find it providential that Pope John Paul II will be beatified May 1, exactly six years after I decided to follow his example of priesthood and enter seminary. I know that he will remain to be a holy intercessor in heaven for myself and for all the youth of our Church.

**Pope John Paul II said repeatedly to young people: "You are the hope of the Church and of the world. You are my hope."**

I believe that there are young men called to be priests in each of our parishes.

It is my prayer that our local Church will continue to foster a positive environment promoting vocations to the sacred priesthood. There are amongst us also young persons who are called to be religious brothers and sisters; there also are the future married couples and families that will transform the Church and the world. I pray that many will discern their call to all forms of Christian life and love. Such a *radical call* is indeed *counter-cultural*; but it is life-giving – one of joy, peace, and fulfillment.

Pray for your priests, love them; and know that God will always remain faithful to his promise spoken through that young prophet Jeremiah: "*I will give you shepherds, after my own heart.*"



Geoffrey Young

Geoffrey Young of Saskatoon and Matthew Ramsay of Humboldt will be ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Don Bolen 7 p.m. Friday, June 10 at St. Patrick Parish in Saskatoon.

The diocesan Vocation Commission will host an evening of prayer on the eve of the ordinations: "Come Pray With Us" 7 p.m. Thursday, June 9 at Holy Spirit Parish. All are welcome to attend.

## Ministering to prisoners brings insight about meaning of priesthood for Matthew Ramsay

BY MATTHEW RAMSAY

A key moment in my journey to the priesthood was an assignment I received in my first year of theology at Mount Angel Seminary.

I was sent to work at a youth prison. The high-school-age guys I worked with were Catholic, but couldn't get to the Mass offered at the prison. My job was to bring them communion. They had all committed violent crimes and were going to be locked up for a long time. At the same time, they all wanted forgiveness, respect, love, and a fuller life than they had known so far.

The days when I met these young men began in the seminary chapel. I would pray over the readings of the day, looking for a message that would speak to their lives in prison. Then I would take a few hosts from the tabernacle and bring them to the prison. After the communion service we would talk, sometimes about forgiveness, redemption, and the struggles to live a Catholic life in prison – other times about baseball.

This ministry has sat with me as an image of what the priesthood is. I was literally bringing Jesus to those young men, and over the year I came to see Jesus in them as well. Walking alone through the prison for the first time was a frightening experience, but it brought me to a lot of grace.

The path to communion in the youth prison began in Humboldt. Born Dec. 25, 1981, I grew up with a loving Catholic family, attending St. Dominic school and going to Mass at St. Augustine parish. My faith grew through the parish youth group and retreats at St. Peter's monastery at Muenster, SK. As involved as I was, the priesthood was not even remotely on my mind.

This changed with a conference I attended outside Edmonton the summer before my grade 12 year. A priest challenged us to pray a simple prayer every day: "**God help me to know your will and do it in my life.**" What he said made sense, and I began to pray. This was a dangerous move. I prayed that prayer every day, and gradually, silently, the thought of priesthood appeared in my mind. I tried to push it away, but I kept on praying, waiting for God to give me another

answer.

Another answer didn't come, and the answer I didn't want got stronger.

God put three important events in my path that helped me accept his call. First was World Youth Day 2000 in Rome. There I learned to love the Mass. We had daily Mass with anywhere from 20 people in a convent chapel to two million people with the pope in a field outside Rome, and I saw a beauty and power I had never seen before.

Second was the John Paul II Bible School in Radway, Alberta. There I learned to love prayer. This school is now closed, but the year I spent there taught me serious prayer. Prayer became a deep conversation and union with the God who loves me. And this God was still calling me to be a priest.

Third was joining *Behold the Lamb*, a traveling missionary team. There I learned to love the people. We worked across Saskatchewan, Alberta, BC, and the Territories, and I saw the difference God makes in people's lives. If one year helping people discover God was so meaningful, what about a lifetime?

Over these years and in hundreds of ways, God changed my heart. The call to priesthood, which looked impossible, unpleasant, and dull, became exciting, beautiful, and real. Finally, after a few years of university in San Francisco, I entered Mount Angel Seminary for the diocese of Saskatoon.

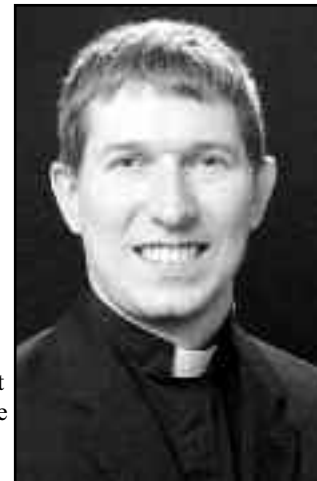
My journey to the seminary happened largely outside the diocese, but since entering seminary, the diocese has played a much bigger role. I am grateful for the wonderful people I have met throughout the diocese, working in hospitals, schools, parishes, youth programs, CCO, Face to Face, and many other places. The lesson I learned at the youth prison appears again and again. Bringing Jesus to people and finding Jesus in people is the way I want to spend my life.

Halfway through my seminary years I came to a wise old monk very frustrated. I had been working and praying for years, trying to grow into a good priest, but I realized that I didn't even know what I wanted to grow into. What does it mean to be a priest?

The monk sat back, closed his eyes, and gave me an answer: "**To be a priest is to sacrifice yourself, in union with Christ, for the salvation of souls. I try to do that. When I do, I find that sacrifice is never just sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice moved to Easter, and any sacrifice I make with Christ moves to its own resurrection. That is to say, I always get back far more than I give.**"

Looking ahead now to my priestly ordination what I'm most looking forward to is watching people encounter God. This might happen through the Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation, or other prayers and conversation.

However it happens, helping the people loved by God know the God who loves them is an experience worth giving my life for.



Matthew Ramsay

## Two seminarians to be ordained deacons: taking a step on the journey to priesthood



Gregory Roth  
Ordination to  
Transitional Diaconate:  
Friday, May 20  
St. Theresa, Rosetown

Bishop Don Bolen will ordain two seminarians as deacons this May, in celebrations at the parishes where they served their internship year in 2009-10.

Hoang Nguyen will be ordained to the transitional diaconate Thursday, May 19, 2011 at Holy Family parish in Saskatoon. The next day, Friday, May 20, 2011 Gregory Roth will be ordained a transitional deacon at St. Theresa parish in Rosetown. Both celebrations begin at 7 p.m. All are welcome.

This is another step in the process of preparing for ordination as a priest. In the fall, the two new deacons will engage in another year of study and discernment. It is anticipated that the two men might then be ordained to the priesthood in 2012.

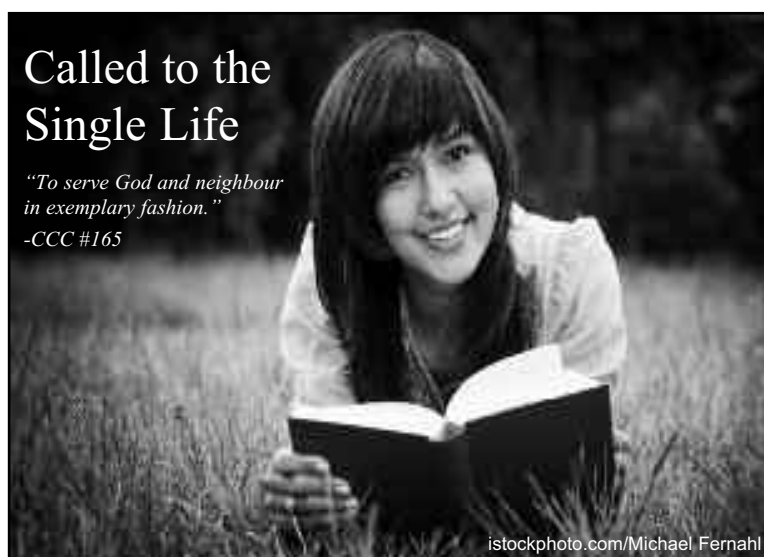


Hoang Nguyen  
Ordination to  
Transitional Diaconate:  
Thursday, May 19  
Holy Family, Saskatoon

Vocations – supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal!



# Vocation Commission focuses on 'forgotten' vocation



## Called to the Single Life

*"To serve God and neighbour in exemplary fashion."*  
-CCC #165

**Come spend a day on retreat to reflect on how the Lord is calling you as a single person to serve him in your life. With times of prayer, reflection and sharing, deepen your understanding of the Lord's call in your life on Saturday, May 28 at Queen's House, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To register contact Myron Rogal at 242-1500, Ext 242, or toll free 1-877-661-5005, Ext 242.**

## May 28 retreat examines God's call to single life

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A retreat focusing on the call of God experienced in the vocation of single life will be held Saturday, May 28 at Queen's House in Saskatoon.

It's the first time that an event specifically addressing single life has been offered by the diocesan Vocations Commission, said coordinator Myron Rogal, admitting that at times, single life is forgotten in vocations programming.

However, the mission of the diocesan Vocations Commission is to promote a vocation culture that includes all states of life, said Rogal, and that definitely includes single life, as well as marriage, ordination and religious life.

"We felt there was a crucial

need for us to fill in that gap," he said, noting the interest is there, with registrations already coming in from adult singles from a variety of different backgrounds.

"Some people are realizing that they can live out the single vocation well, without entering into a romantic relationship, or entering religious life," said Rogal, acknowledging that everyone is single at some time on the life journey, so at times the state of being single is seen as a state of transition.

"But this is a beautiful state of life that allows for tremendous freedom and growth, and a responsibility comes with that freedom," Rogal stressed. "Single persons give a gift to the Church without which there would be a

tremendous void."

Keynote speaker for the retreat is Jeremy Rude of Ottawa who has lived a life committed to the single life for the past five years.

The retreat will include prayer, reflection and sharing, and will challenge participants to discover how God is calling them to serve in the world.

Open to all singles over 18 years, the retreat runs from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Queen's House, and costs \$10 (includes lunch). To register contact Myron Rogal at the Catholic Pastoral Centre at 242-1500 Ext. 242, or toll free at 1-877-661-5005, Ext. 242 or e-mail: vocations@saskatoonrcdiocese.com or see: "Diocese of Saskatoon Vocation Boom!" on Facebook.

**Vocations – supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal!**

## Madonna House introduction

By ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

*"Mercy within mercy within mercy: a reflection on the spirituality of Madonna House"* was presented March 7 at St. Anne's parish in Saskatoon.

Speaker Helen Hodson was introduced by Bishop Don Bolen, who first encountered the spirituality of Madonna House some 30 years ago. "As a 21 year old I had never seen a community characterized by so much integrity. Their message was proclaimed in everyday life. The Church in Canada has been blessed by it," said Bolen.

Born in England, Hodson joined Madonna House over 30 years ago, and as a member of the community, has served all over the world, including Edmonton, Toronto, Michigan and in England, where she served as local director of the house there for seven years. For the last 15 years she has been involved in presenting Ignatian retreats.

Founded by Catherine and Eddie Doherty in 1947 in Combermere, ON, the Madonna House Apostolate is a Catholic community of lay men and woman and priests dedicated to loving and

serving Jesus Christ in all aspects of everyday life.

Those in community make a promise of poverty, chastity and obedience. Priests, woman and men all receive spiritual direction and work together as one community.

Often the work done is giving simple subsistence to the people who come to the centre, and just being with them as they are. "To listen someone's soul into existence," is how Hodson described it.

A number of "Field Houses" of the Madonna House Apostolate have been established throughout the world, including the Marian Centre in the Archdiocese of Regina.

Every House has a call from the bishop of the diocese. "At each House the bishop of that diocese asks us to do something in particular," explained Nancy Topping of the Marian Centre in Regina. "In Vancouver we were asked to be a presence in the diocese, to look at the needs of the area, do presentations and be a religious education office," she said.

"In Regina our mandate was to serve the poor; to be a presence for

men downtown; to give them a place out of the cold that is peaceful," said Topping. "It is a gift to be able to be there and trusted by the poor. We are not there just to serve the poor. We are all poor. We all need God."

Many people choose to live at Madonna House during a time of discernment. Six-week summer programs are available, and many houses include working guests. Retreats are also offered as a time "to be alone with God and just quiet enough to listen." Spiritual direction is also offered.

The evening also included a time of spiritual reflection on "The Icon of Resurrection, The Descent into Hell."

"This is a special icon, a very powerful one," Hodson said, describing the icon's image of Jesus descending into hell to find Adam and Eve. "Jesus doesn't take Adam and Eve back to the original paradise but one better. After the resurrection, all healings of Jesus are outside time. In every communion, Jesus descends into our hell, our darkest pain, and comes to find us."

The intent of the evening was to introduce Madonna House and how it functions as a community, how mercy is extended through the different communities, and to give listeners a taste of mercy through the Ignatian way of prayer.

The evening also echoed the Saskatoon bishop's motto, chosen for his episcopal ordination one year ago: "Mercy within mercy within mercy."



**A session about the spirituality of Madonna House with Helen Hodson and Nancy Topping (left to right) was held March 7 in Saskatoon.** - AMH



### Reflecting on Religious Life

**Young men and women gathered for a weekend retreat Jan. 28-29 at Discernment House in Saskatoon to explore the realities, blessings and challenges of religious life. The retreat was jointly hosted by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.**

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski



### Holding Nothing Back discernment

**A "Holding Nothing Back" discernment retreat for men examining vocations – whether to the priesthood, marriage, religious life or single life – was held Oct. 30 in Saskatoon. Guest speaker was Mark Matthews of "Bibles and Brews" ministry, who spoke about chastity and celibacy. For information about vocation discernment, contact Myron Rogal of the diocesan Vocations Office at (306) 242-1500, Ext. 242.** - Photo by K. L. Yaworski



**hotcupofministry.ca** is the web address for a new podcast recently launched by Fr. Darryl Millette and friends Andy and Jane Korvemaker of Ottawa. Millette is presently the pastor at Englefeld, Watson and St. Gregor in the Humboldt Deanery. In "Hot Cup of Ministry" audio episodes, the three co-hosts are joined by special guests to talk about such topics as urban vs rural ministry, vocations, ministry models, and tackling problems that crop up in ministry. Millette says the podcast is one more way to use computer technology to connect people. He also runs a website for his parishes: [watson.saskatooncatholic.ca](http://watson.saskatooncatholic.ca)

**Many other parishes in the diocese have also launched websites**, including:

<a href="http://humboldt.saskatooncatholic.ca">humboldt.saskatooncatholic.ca</a>	<a href="http://ihmcc.webs.com">ihmcc.webs.com</a>
<a href="http://holyspiritsaskatoon.ca">holyspiritsaskatoon.ca</a>	<a href="http://stmaryssaskatoon.com">stmaryssaskatoon.com</a>
<a href="http://blog.scs.sk.ca/martyrs/">blog.scs.sk.ca/martyrs/</a>	<a href="http://stphilipneriparish.ca">stphilipneriparish.ca</a>
<a href="http://burr.saskatooncatholic.ca">burr.saskatooncatholic.ca</a>	<a href="http://stmaryssaskatoon.com">stmaryssaskatoon.com</a>

**For more parish websites** check the parish link box on the diocesan homepage, at [saskatoonrcdiocese.com](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com) (found above the diocesan logo at the very top, left side).

Also check out diocesan Youth Ministry coordinator Colm Leyne's blog at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/youthministry](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/youthministry)

## Catholics and Evangelicals gather in prayer and friendship to focus on Jesus Christ

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Evangelical and Catholic Christians recently gathered to pray and to celebrate their common faith in Jesus Christ at a joyful gathering at St. Paul's Cathedral in Saskatoon.

Sharing song, scripture and prayer, some 300 people attended the groundbreaking event March 22.

Pastor Harry Strauss of Forest Grove Community Church, representing the Saskatoon Evangelical Ministers Fellowship, and Bishop Donald Bolen of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon presided together at the service.

Welcoming all those attending from many denominations and local churches, Bolen described the origins of the event, which he traced back to the prayer and friendship experienced when three Catholic women joined those in the Evangelical community gathering regularly to pray for local Alliance Church Pastor Ken Rutherford, who was ill with cancer and who died in September 2010.

"It was Ken's request that those who gathered would also pray for

the wounded body of Christ in the city of Saskatoon," said Bolen, who attended one of the prayer services, where he first met Ken's wife Lenna. "Eventually I got to meet Pastor Ken as well, and I was stirred by his profound desire for unity and reconciliation."

In a sermon shared with Bolen and Strauss, Lenna Rutherford recalled her husband's experience of joy when he introduced two of his beloved friends to each other – something that also reflected his experience of connecting to other friends through a mutual love of Jesus Christ.

"Ken found that he was called to see not from a worldly, or religious, or denominational point of view, but from Christ's point of view, which was: 'let me introduce you to someone I love so much that I died for them too.'"

Looking out over those assembled to pray together, she concluded: "We have a mutual friend. His name is Jesus Christ, and I think he has been very excited to introduce us to each other."

Bolen described his sense of Pastor Ken Rutherford "passing the torch" of reconciliation, friendship and unity.

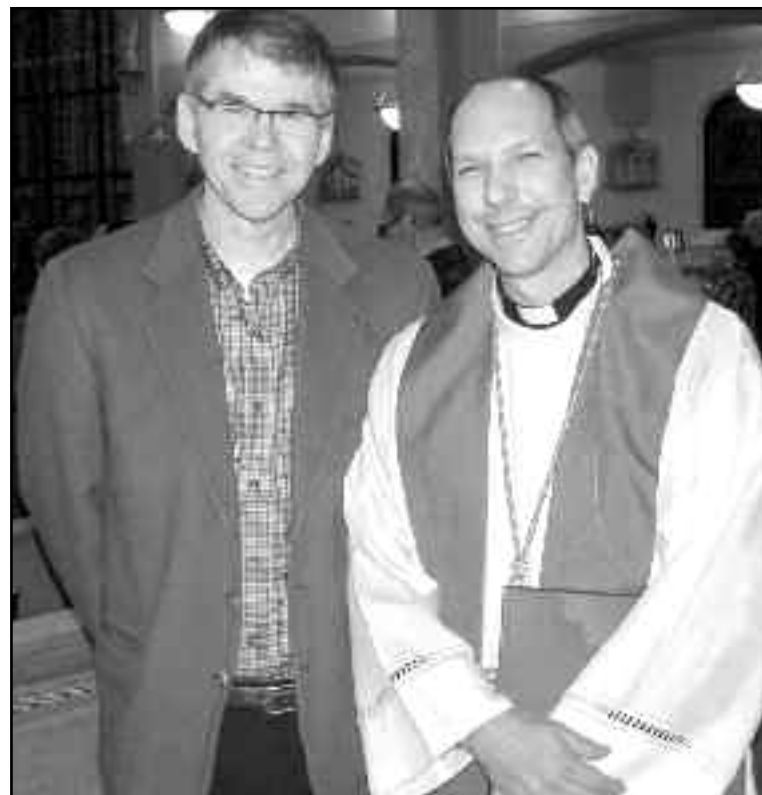
The bishop also expressed thanks for all those who have worked for Christian unity over the years in Saskatoon and the many individuals who continue "to help us to know each other, and to understand each other and to have that common vision of being brothers and sisters in Christ, and of trying to live out all that that means."

He stressed that Christian unity is not our idea, but is Christ's fervent prayer, as heard in John 17. "This stirring of friendship across the lines of our different traditions, which many people have felt, is not our idea and it's not our initiative and it's not our project. It's the work of the Holy Spirit who lives among us."

Bolen listed some of the ways in which Christian communities have learned to deepen their relationship with each other, through friendship, common study and shared prayer. Finding ways to give common witness to the gospel or to stand together on social and moral issues of the day, or exploring ways to engage in common mission are other ways of deepening relationships among Christians, he said, extending an invitation to continue journeying together.

Describing the impact of Jesus Christ on history and on our lives, Strauss stressed that Evangelicals and Catholics find common ground in the centrality of Christ.

"In the centrality of Jesus Christ, we are one with you in the importance, the foundational truth that Jesus Christ is central and core to who we are as people," said Strauss. At the same time, he acknowl-



Pastor Harry Strauss of Saskatoon Evangelical Ministers Fellowship (left) and Bishop Don Bolen of the Catholic diocese of Saskatoon jointly presided at the prayer service March 22 at St. Paul's Cathedral.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski



People from many denominations gathered at St. Paul's Cathedral March 22 for the special prayer service.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

edged Evangelical and Catholic Christians do not agree on everything. "Can we fellowship around Jesus Christ even in our differences? Well yes we can, tonight is a demonstration of that."

Noting the different gifts, strengths and resources that Catholic and Evangelical Christians have to share with each other, Strauss asserted that "the reality of a first class gospel calls for a first class fellowship."

The ecumenical worship service also included prayers asking for forgiveness, the sharing of the Apostles Creed, music of praise and worship, and the exchange of a sign of peace. The prayer service was followed by a social gathering in Bishop Mahoney Hall.

Reflecting on the celebration, diocesan ecumenical officer Nick

Jesson noted that as with many ecumenical happenings, it grew out of simple encounters of one-on-one friendship and dialogue – including small but powerful steps such as three Catholic women joining a group of other Christians to pray for Pastor Ken Rutherford, or the new Catholic bishop sharing his personal faith testimony at a meeting of the Saskatoon Evangelical Ministers Fellowship.

"Such things help to build understanding and help us to find common ground," Jesson said.

The connections were also strengthened during an Advent campaign jointly launched by many Christian churches to express support for the Good Food Junction Grocery Store at Station 20 West, he noted.

## Guiding principles part of prairie experience of Christian unity

BY NICHOLAS JESSON, DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL OFFICER

This area of Saskatchewan has a history of ecumenical cooperation and experimentation that goes back to the earliest settlements. At the core of the prairie ecumenical experience there are some basic principles that provide guidance and insight to the search for Christian unity here, just as they do throughout the Church. These principles are rooted in our biblical and doctrinal convictions about Christian faith and life, and are experienced in a particularly unique way here.

### The Church is already one.

In scripture we find our first principle that the Church is one. There is one faith, one, Lord, one baptism (*Eph 4*). In Christ there is no division, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, woman or man (*Gal 3*). Despite divisions that have arisen between our churches, the Church of Christ is undivided. For some Christians this means that behind our visible divisions there is an invisible unity, a true Church that is undivided. Catholics try to avoid sharp distinctions between a visible and invisible church out of our conviction that Christ is present in the world and is experienced in the life and mission of the Church, in the sacraments, and in the life of prayer. Unity is not a spiritual bond between warring factions but a visible expression in this world of the unity of the Triune God: "that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (*Jn 17:21*). Since the Church is already one, our ecumenical task is not to make unity in the Church community. The unity is already there. Our task is to allow God to act in and through the

Christian churches to express the unity for which Christ prayed.

### The unity of the Church is not our work, it is Christ's work.

One particularly helpful text is from Ephesians 2. Above all others, Paul is the apostle to the gentiles, responsible for the mission to convert the Greeks to Christianity. Yet he insists that it is not his work but Christ's work. Christ has broken down dividing walls between Jew and gentile, he creates in himself one new humanity in place of the two, reconciling both groups to God in one body through the cross (*Eph 2*).

Throughout Paul's letters we find his reluctance to take credit for any of the work that he does: it is all Christ's work in and through him. Catholics have always understood our mission to be Christ's hands and feet, to give our service as an offering to God in fulfillment of Christ's mission to sanctify and redeem the world. The ecumenical task of the Church then is not to build unity in our own image, but to discover the ways in which Christ is already manifesting or incarnating the unity of the Church.

### Christian unity requires conversion.

Pope John Paul II described ecumenical commitment as a conversion, a true change not only of heart and mind but within our souls, a change such that we desire what Christ desires. Christ's desire for unity among his disciples is integral to Christ's vision of the church that is his body. Ecumenism cannot therefore be an appendix, an added task to an already busy mission as Christians. An ecumenical vision must infuse all aspects of Christian life and mission.

Ecumenical conversion is not simply a matter of personal experience. Just as the faith and holiness of the Church are



Ecumenical Officer  
Nicholas Jesson

### Ecumenism – supported by the BAA!

expressed in both personal and communal dimensions, so too, ecumenical conversion must reach into the depths of our community. *The Groupe des Dombes*, a group of Catholic and Reformed theologians, clergy, monks and lay people in France, refers to this as the "conversion of the churches." They do not mean that the churches should all change to become the same, but that the churches must all turn towards the one who is the author of our unity. It is in Christ that the churches together find unity and become the body of Christ in the world.

### The heart of the ecumenical movement is prayer.

An ecumenical pioneer, Cardinal Mercier of Malines, Belgium is famous for his testament: "In order to unite with one another, we must love one another. In order to love one another, we must know one another. In order to know one another, we must go and meet one another."

We are together as churches on this journey, but we walk together with Christ, as on the road to Emmaus. This is a pilgrimage in which we will recognize Christ in one another in mission and ministry to the world. In pilgrimage we are guided by the Spirit as we walk together. As with any pilgrimage, we discover ourselves and our fellow pilgrims in sharing life and conversation, but most profoundly by sharing together in prayer.

Prayer for Christian Unity takes many forms. Most visibly, we pray together during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, normally held in January each year. Other ways that you might work for Christian unity include:

- prayer for a neighbouring church in the intercessions
- prayer for projects and ministries in neighbouring churches
- prayer for clergy and leaders in other churches
- visiting other churches for services or educational events
- joining together in ecumenical services with neighbourhood churches
- assisting other Christians in times of grief or difficulty
- starting a regular meeting of clergy (ministerial group).

### 20th Summer Ecumenical Institute July 6-9

#### "Acting Together: From Dialogue to Common Mission"

presented by Prairie Centre for Ecumenism  
at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon

Includes public event 7 p.m. Friday, July 8: "The Future of Ecumenism in Canada - Challenges and Opportunities."

For brochure and registration information see the website at:  
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To inquire about diocesan bursaries to offset cost of institute contact Nick Jesson at: [sdce@ecumenism.net](mailto:sdce@ecumenism.net) or 652-1595.



## Pastoral care makes a difference to those who are sick and suffering

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The profound impact of pastoral care volunteers on the lives of those who are sick, suffering and isolated was acknowledged and celebrated on the World Day of the Sick in Saskatoon.

An annual appreciation evening was held Feb. 11 for pastoral care volunteers who provide outreach in a range of settings, including hospitals, seniors' care homes and parish communities.

Sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon and the Knights of Columbus, the evening included a prayer service, wine and cheese refreshments, speakers and entertainment.

Bishop Don Bolen led the gathering in prayer, and blessed the caregivers. He also expressed appreciation for all who care for the sick and suffering.

"The risen Lord sends his disciples out to bring a healing word: to bring his presence to those who are in hospitals, to those who are ailing, to those who are suffering. You have received that call and have responded generously, bringing the Lord's presence to his suffering body, to the sisters and brothers who are in need of support, in need of friendship," he said.

Speaker Francis Maza, "executive lead" of mission, ethics, and spirituality for Catholic



**Francis Maza and Charlene Nijhawan were guest speakers at a pastoral care appreciation Feb. 11 in Saskatoon.** - KLY

Health Ministry of Saskatchewan, commended volunteers for their faithfulness in providing a caring presence to those in distress.

"You bring the presence of the entire Christian community into the room of the person you are visiting," he told volunteers. "Every time you go to visit someone, and they are going through a difficult time, and they are afraid, you can say to them that there

"When we give someone a blessing, making the sign of the cross on their forehead, and their previously restless spirit settles peacefully,  
When someone holds our hands in peace and gratitude after we visit them and they receive Eucharist,  
When we journey week after week with someone  
on their last days on earth, and they say to us: 'I'll pray for you'

**— we are walking on holy ground!"**

- Pastoral Care Volunteer Charlene Nijhawan

are a whole bunch of people out there who care; [people] who are praying for them."

Volunteers continue the healing ministry of Christ through simple acts: talking, listening, being quiet, bringing flowers or walking through the hallways praying, he said.

"What you do really makes a difference. I know how important it is," said Maza, relating his own experience of the power of a pastoral presence when he donated a kidney to his son Samuel 10 years ago. Travelling to Toronto for the surgery, far from home and from community support, he woke from surgery to find a "friend of a friend" sitting at his bedside.

"He volunteered at a different hospital, but he knew we were there, and he volunteered to sit with me the first morning after surgery," he said. "He didn't do much, he didn't say anything, but I tell you: he did everything for me. At a time when I was most afraid and felt most alone in a strange city, I had someone there."

Maza said this scenario is repeated in countless ways in many settings and situations. "I don't think this story is unique. It happens every day that people come into the city from all over [for health care], hoping they can find help," he said. "When something like that happens, everything is affected by it."

Maza said that he wanted every volunteer to know how important their ministry is and the impact they can have. "Please know that you make a huge difference."

Those who are sick suffer from fear of the unknown and the anxiety can be worsened by endless rounds of waiting – and the entire experience can raise tough questions, Maza

related. "Why is this happening? Why now? And where is God in all of this?" Every time a caring person comes into such a situation, they have an opportunity to "reveal the face of Christ," he stressed.

Charlene Nijhawan spoke about her experience as a pastoral care volunteer, describing how she has always felt comfortable in hospitals, from the time that she first volunteered as a young "candy striper." When she saw a notice in the parish bulletin about the need for spiritual care volunteers, she responded to the call.

Visiting those in hospital has blessed and enriched her, Nijhawan said. "They are often at their most vulnerable, and yet most of the time they unabashedly welcome us, not only into their hospital room, but into their pain, their loneliness, their confusion, their suffering, and yes, their faith, and sometimes their joy."

As a volunteer, she has experienced the presence of Christ in and through the ministry, Nijhawan said.

"When we give someone a blessing, making the sign of the cross on their forehead and their previously restless spirit settles peacefully, when someone holds our hands in peace and gratitude after we visit them and they receive Eucharist, when we journey week after week with someone on their last days on earth and they say to us: 'I'll pray for you' – we are walking on holy ground," she said.

"For me, no spiritual experience compares to that spiritual care experience – that fullness, that clarity, that gift – the sacramental presence of the body of Christ in our brothers and sisters. I am glad to share it."

**Each day, sisters and brothers in Christ from across our diocese – and beyond – are admitted to hospital in Saskatoon, facing illness, suffering and fear, in journeys through the health care system that often include a great spiritual longing for understanding, prayer, and connection.**

**Committed, caring volunteers are vital in answering this need. Areas where spiritual care volunteers can make a difference include Sunday pastoral visiting and bringing communion to Catholics, and assistance in setting up and serving during liturgies at Royal University and Saskatoon City Hospitals in Saskatoon. If you feel the Holy Spirit calling you to share your time, your compassion and your listening heart in this ministry, please consider applying to be a volunteer. Training and support will be provided. Call diocesan chaplaincy coordinator Céline Hudon at: (306) 292-5531**

**Catholic Hospital Chaplaincy – supported by the BAA!**

## Catholic Health Ministry of Saskatchewan works to improve care

BY ANDRÉA LEDDING

Catholic Health Ministry of Saskatchewan (CHMS) is a not-for-profit organization that oversees 10 Catholic health facilities in the province that are owned by the bishops of Saskatchewan. The CHMS mandate is to "continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ."

Karen Barber is the new "executive lead" of quality and strategic planning for CHMS, a

position created in October 2010 to work with the CHMS's 10 Catholic facility boards. She works at the Saskatoon office of the CHMS, along with Scott Irwin, president and CEO; Francis Maza, "executive lead" of mission, ethics, and spirituality; and executive assistant Janet Zinger.

Barber's background is in health care. "I am a physical therapist with a Master's degree in community health and epidemiology," explains Barber. She also studied with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Boston and worked with Saskatchewan's Health Quality Council as director of quality improvement. "In my role with the Catholic Health Ministry, I work with our health care facility boards to lead for quality, and continuously improve our systems of care."

Strategic planning is about 'doing the right

things' and quality is about 'doing things right,' says Barber. "Both involve continually listening to the people we serve, setting goals and engaging all staff to be leaders and role models in continuous improvement."

While Barber stresses that everyone has an important role to play, leaders must set the tone. "So it is very exciting to be working directly with the board members and leaders that can give this life," she said.

"Leaders make such a difference, they really make it happen, so it's really a privilege to work with them... and in terms of the purpose of the organization, that's near and dear to my heart." She expresses an appreciation for the purpose of Catholic health care and the core values it demonstrates.

The Institute of Medicine has identified six dimensions of quality care: safe, timely,

efficient, effective, equitable and patient centred, she noted.

"Our distinctive vocation in Christian healthcare is not so much to heal better or more efficiently than anyone else; it is to bring comfort to people by giving them an experience that will strengthen their confidence in life. The ultimate goal of our care is to give to those who are ill, through our care, a reason to hope," she adds, quoting Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin.

That vision may be the ultimate test of the quality of our health care services, she says. "These wise words, written after the archbishop's personal experience with the health system, gives us food for thought on the role of Catholic health care and its potential to inspire hope through our actions and interactions."

## CHAS Convention will address the 'Grace of Age'

BY SANDY NORMAND, CHAS

The Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS) 68th annual convention addressing "The Grace of Age" will be held Oct. 24-25, 2011 in Moose Jaw.

The two days will examine ways in which upcoming aging generations will shape how we serve in health care, while celebrating the aging journey. Featured keynote speakers will be Sr. Elizabeth Davis and Msgr. Charles Fahey.

A member of the Sisters of Mercy, Davis is a popular speaker whose outstanding contributions in health care has earned her the many honours and awards. She will speak about how our aging population is gift to us, unfolding how the upcoming demographic of "boomers" should be viewed for their

potential legacy, not liability.

Noted as a "towering advocate of aging," Fahey is currently professor of aging studies and senior associate at Fordham's Third Age Center. He will speak about how individuals and society as a whole are deeply challenged by all sorts of issues and new dilemmas, such as having more than one generation at a time dependent on senior care.

An invitation to share stories and wisdom, experiences and best practices (and maybe

even mistakes) will offer sacred insights into the everyday – how the ordinary can then become extraordinary. For further information, contact CHAS at (306) 655-5330 or [cath.health@sasktel.net](mailto:cath.health@sasktel.net)

*Sandy Normand is the new Mission Educator for CHAS. An article by Arch McKay about Normand and her new position can be found at the online news archive: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm)*



### Healing music

Music Therapist Angela Sloman, with St. Paul's Hospital Palliative Care Unit, recognizes the many positive effects music has on patients and their families: "When I perform the goal can simply be a distraction from their pain, while the emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual benefits that result are quite measurable." - Photo courtesy SPH

Dear Friends in the Diocese of Saskatoon,

I understand that many of you have been praying for my restoration to health following my accident and subsequent surgery. I am now very well on the road to recovery and I thank you deeply for your prayerful support.

Sincerely in the Lord,

**Bishop Gerald Wiesner, OMI**  
Diocese of Prince George

# Giving an Account of Our Hope: an Easter pas

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

As the *Exultet*, sung near the beginning of Easter Vigil the world over, proclaims:

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!  
Exult, all creation around God's throne!  
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!...  
Let this place resound with joy.

Jesus' rising from the dead bursts the bonds of death, and opens us to a new horizon of hope. The resurrection dismantles what had seemed to be the dimensions of human life, with death inevitably having the last word. Jesus Christ's undoing of the ultimate power of death loosens the human imagination, allowing us to truly trust that God has the last word, and that the last word is life.

In preparing for Easter, I have been thinking about the way in which the scriptures speak about the dimensions of the human condition, and of the life of faith.

Jesus, citing Deuteronomy (6:5), teaches that "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mk 12:30; cf Mt 22:37, Lk 10:27) – that is, with our integral being, whole and entire. And St Paul, writing to the Ephesians, prays for the community: "that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:18-19).

In this pastoral letter, I want to invite us to ponder the breadth and length and height and depth of the hope which is born of the resurrection. What are the dimensions of our paschal hope? In our Easter celebration, after weeks of Lenten restraint, we burst forth with Alleluias, light the Easter fire and paschal candle, ring the bells through the Gloria, and sing "sound the trumpet of salvation" in the Exultet – all humble human efforts to ring out a joy which knows no bounds, to let it resound. There is an old philosophical account of helping a blind person to imagine the colour red by comparing it to the sound of a trumpet. What is the shape and sound and colour of our paschal joy, of the hope that rises with Jesus from the tomb? How do we speak that hope to people whose senses are not attuned to it?

In the First Letter of Peter (3:15), we are exhorted: "Always be ready to give an account of the hope that is within you." Another translation puts it this way: "Should anyone ask you the reason for this hope of yours, be ever ready to reply." Verse 16 completes the sentence: "yet do it with gentleness and reverence."

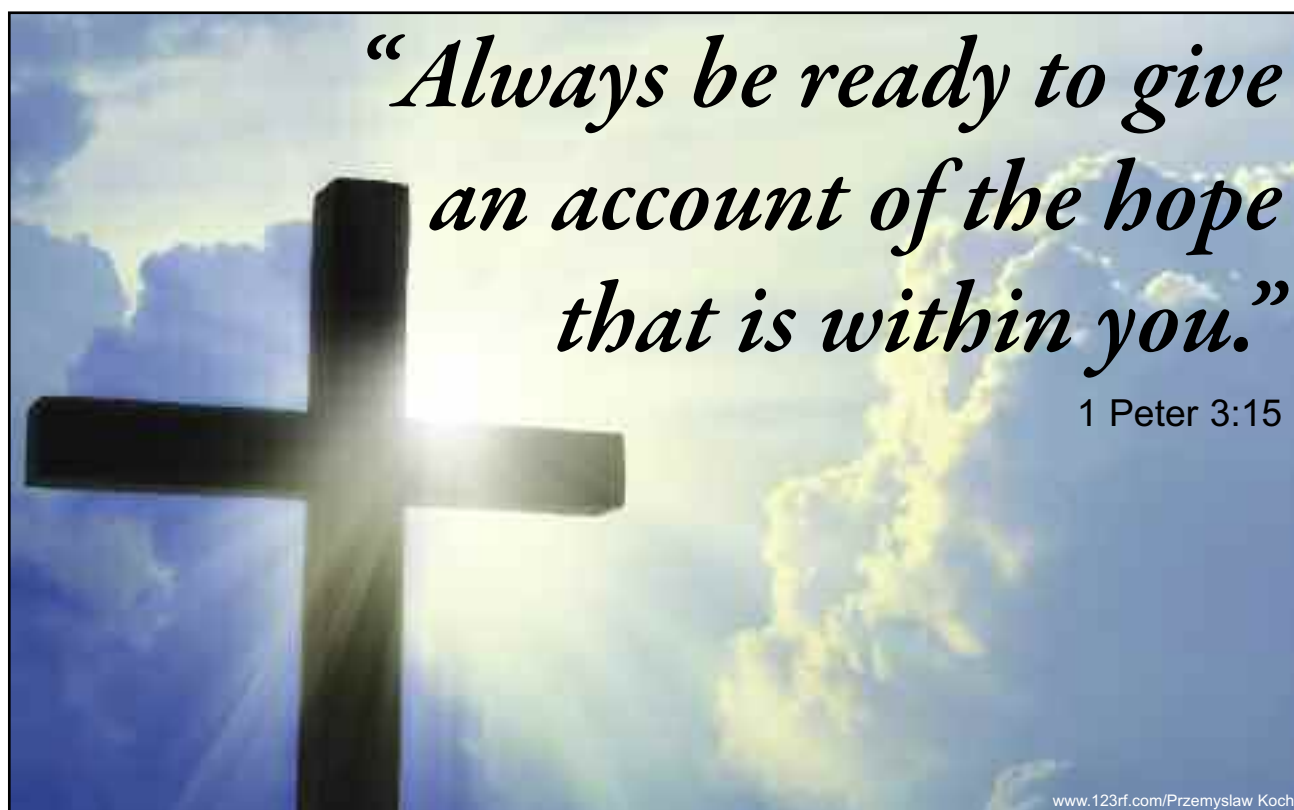
This pastoral letter offers an initial reflection on how we might use mind and heart and soul and strength to undertake this great task: to grasp, and live by, and effectively communicate our reasons for daring to carry such hope within us.

## Challenges to hope from the culture we live in

The world needs us to be bearers of hope, and needs communities of people who are able to articulate why being a people of hope is not foolishly naive, but an intelligent, responsible and faith-filled way of living this human life.

The world we live in is getting smaller and more complicated. While we have access to all the information in the world, many are confused and lost. Our lives are shaped by an economic system based on personal acquisition, which nurtures our desire for more things, but is not adequately focused on meeting basic human needs, serving the common good and building community.

We have more wealth than generations past, yet we still grapple with poverty and suffering in our cities and nations, as well as in our hearts. We – and our young people in particular – carry fears about the future, relating to the environment, climate change, and the rate at which we are consuming the earth's natural resources. When we look at the world of international relations, we see that despite the great effort and longing of many for peace, violence and war continue to be an all too common means of dealing with conflicts. There are signs that we are gradually learning to live as a global family, but also counter-signs in the form of deep unrest, terrorism, and a failure to come to any common vision about the future we would seek to build together.



In all of this and in what follows, the intent is not to sound a voice of doom, but simply to paint in broad strokes some of the decisive challenges facing the human race at this moment in our history. A recent study indicated that Canadians are among the happiest people on earth, and there is no doubt we have much to be grateful for. But the challenges facing the world are also our challenges; the struggles of those who live on the margins of our communities are our struggles. In addition, increasingly our society – and our church communities – are becoming multicultural, linking us in a very direct way with societies which face different problems and bring different blessings.

## Doubts, the search for meaning, and the need for dialogue

We live in a cultural context where secularizing trends present a significant challenge to religious faith. Insights and perspectives from the physical and human sciences continue to shake the faith foundations of many people, while a strident atheism directly confronts faith on various fronts, including advertisements on buses in some cities declaring: "There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life", and books such as *The God Delusion* and *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*.

The decline in membership in many churches in the Western world has been accompanied by an equally troubling phenomenon, the number of people who no longer feel confident looking to churches for meaning.

Both in the context of pastoral ministry and in academic contexts, I have had conversations with individuals – people of moral integrity, whose search for meaning is genuine – who are attracted to, or at least not adverse to, belief in God, who would like very much to lay hold of the hope which is borne of faith, but aren't convinced that it would be intellectually honest to do so. In turn, many who continue to actively be a part of the Church also struggle with doubts, often unarticulated, which are unsettling and keep us from living the depths of hope and joy to which our faith invites us.

While our culture is struggling to find meaning in religion, our neighbours, colleagues and friends still seek answers to their deepest questions. And even in quarters where faith is not present, one often senses a desire for the foundations of hope.

The Russian dissident writer Aleksandr Zinovyev (*d. 2006*) – not a believer – composed an extraordinary poem/prayer which I believe gives voice to the unspoken yearnings of many:

"I beg you, my God, try to exist, at least a bit, for me, / open your eyes, I entreat you! You'll have to do nothing else / than this: follow what is happening here in the world. It's not much! / But, O Lord, try to see, please! / what hell it is to live without witnesses, just us human creatures! / .... My Father, my God, I beg and cry: exist!"

This experience of doubt, of a searching disbelief, presents a great challenge to the Church in our day. The invitation for us in this context is to find a meaningful and convincing way to communicate our faith and give reasons for our hope – with gentleness and reverence. The Holy See's Pontifical Council for Culture, under the leadership of Cardinal Gian Franco Ravasi and at the suggestion of Pope Benedict XVI, has recently pointed us in the direction of one way of taking up this challenge.

Near the ancient Temple of Jerusalem, there was a large open space entitled the Courtyard of the Gentiles, where those who did not share the Jewish faith could ask questions and enter into conversation with the Jewish faithful. With this as a model, the Pontifical Council for Culture has encouraged opening modern Courtyards of the Gentiles, where – in Pope Benedict's words – people of differing convictions could gather in a "respectful and friendly encounter... to meet one another and to discuss the great questions of human existence."

At the inaugural Courtyard of the Gentiles gathering in Paris a month ago, the Holy Father challenged participants to build bridges and enter into a profound and mutually enriching dialogue. He noted "You have so much to say to one another", and added his conviction that "the encounter of faith and reason enables us to find ourselves."

This new forum for dialogue, allowing the Church to bring its resources and its hope into conversation with the burning questions and aspirations of non-believers, is a fruitful model to reflect on. In what way can we – as a diocese, in our parishes, in our educational institutions – create spaces for constructive dialogue with non-believers?

In what way are our schools and colleges places of meaningful and mutually beneficial dialogue between the courses or academic disciplines taught there, and the riches of the Catholic tradition? Are there ways in which the encounter between faith and reason can be enhanced in our educational institutions? What can our parishes and diocesan offices offer to assist and encourage those who have a searching faith and at times struggles with doubts? How can we – through our catechetical and faith formation programs – specifically be attentive to the questions of younger generations who have become distanced from the Church?

In addition to setting forth these questions for discussion, which I trust will lead to some practical initiatives within the diocese, I would also ask to what extent we can work together with our ecumenical partners in confronting the challenges arising from a predominantly secular culture. Given that these trends confront all Christians with similar challenges, and given also the extent to which in recent decades we have been able to identify a considerable deposit of faith which is held in common, I believe there is ample scope to work together in finding ways to give an account of our hope in ways which capture the imagination, mind and heart of our contemporaries.



# Pastoral letter from Bishop Bolen



We must find a meaningful and convincing way to communicate our faith and give reasons for our hope – with gentleness and reverence. . . .

## Pace of life, technology, and attentiveness to fundamental human experience

New technologies are bringing about significant changes and an intense pace of life. Use of the internet, cell phones, text messaging, and more recent developments in communication, have dramatically changed the way in which human beings relate to each other. They have also changed the way in which we seek information, and the sources we authoritatively turn to not only in search of facts but also in responding to questions of value and meaning. In countless ways, these technologies are a great blessing. Indeed it is hard to even imagine writing (or reading) a pastoral letter such as this without the assistance of such technology.

Yet there are certain risks which must be attended to: for instance, the way in which we can be isolated, rarely engaging in heart-to-heart, face-to-face communication; how our minds learn to race from one subject to the next, rather than cultivating concentration and focus; how virtual reality can end up distancing us from fundamental human experience; how it changes the way in which people grapple with questions of ultimate meaning, and make it more easy to be distracted from asking such questions.

One unavoidable aspect of human life which drives us to ask these ultimate questions is the reality of human suffering: Is there meaning in human suffering or not, and if so, what is it? Our Western society is evolving a curious relationship with suffering. We have television networks which immerse us in minute-by-minute coverage of often tragic and dramatic events; yet it is unclear whether this translates into greater solidarity with those in need. As a society, in various ways we try to make ourselves immune from suffering, to avoid it at all costs, through escape, anesthesia, or, if necessary, death; and we tend to place those who are suffering or dying on the margins of society, at a safe distance.

In our efforts to give an account of our Christian hope in this rapidly changing world, we do well firstly to be deeply rooted in the paschal mystery of Christ's passion, death and resurrection; and secondly, to make connections between the paschal mystery and our most ordinary and fundamental human experiences.

It is of critical importance that the resurrection takes place precisely in the midst of human pain and torment. For Jesus' disciples, his death had drained the world of meaning. Yet even there, in the disciples who asked for his body and prepared him for burial, we see an incipient Christian hope. They did not understand that Jesus would rise from the dead, but they did the only thing they knew how to do. They cared for the broken body of Christ, hoping against hope that death was not the end of their faith in Jesus. Hope neither replaced their grief nor revealed what would happen; hope simply sustained them in the midst of confusion and loss.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul speaks of hoping against hope, precisely in relation to God's power to give life to the dead and to call into existence the things that do not exist (*Rom 4:17-18*). Our hope has its foundations in God doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

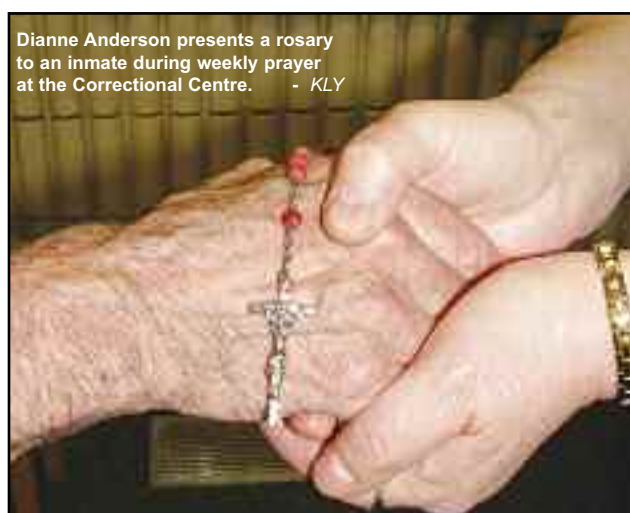
Jesus' resurrection is the vindication of his life, his mission, his passion, wherein we saw the face of God. It proclaims God's power and God's desire to transform death into life, darkness into light, despair into hope. It is the eternal reminder that we are not alone in the world, that even on this truth-crushed earth, new life can rise from ashes. And it places human freedom, including the freedom to open oneself to the reality of suffering and death, into a larger framework, where these things are not meaningless, but are caught up in God's redeeming work.

In the post-resurrection accounts in the Gospels, the Risen Lord comes back to the disciples in the midst of their ordinary human lives. He comes to the women in their grief, to the apostles back in their fishing boats, joining some of his disciples for breakfast, and another pair on a road outside of Jerusalem. And he transforms their everyday worlds by his risen presence.

In giving an account of our hope in the midst of our world, with its hectic pace and its rapidly evolving forms of communication and access to information, we also do well to ponder the presence of God in the midst of our ordinary human experience: Easter shedding its light on our daily lives. The God revealed in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ is the same God who authored creation and the human condition within it, creating us in God's own image.

Immersing ourselves in the natural world – the smell of the moist earth, the song of the meadowlark the first time you hear it in the spring, raking away the dried crust of winter on the lawn, walking on a prairie road under the sheltering sky – can be a renewing and transcendent experience. Taking time to be with others – holding a newborn baby and marvelling at the miracle of life, having coffee with a friend, taking time to be with someone in the cancer ward or prison cell – such fundamental encounters can be a reminder of the dignity and sacredness of the human person.

The experience of beauty – a piece of art that takes away your breath, the sound of a flute leaving you smiling as you walk down a street, or looking on the face of one you love – can be a portal opening the human heart to an encounter with God. Hope is evoked in all these places, or in the simple tasks of daily life, or in moments of quiet and contemplation; and above all it is born in love, the love which helps you to move outside of yourself, freely given and freely received.



Dianne Anderson presents a rosary to an inmate during weekly prayer at the Correctional Centre. - KLY



At Congress Days in the diocese, Bishop Donald Bolen led a discussion about the call to share hope. - KLY

How can we as Church deepen our understanding of the paschal mystery, and its relationship to our everyday lives? How can we foster a deeper attentiveness to fundamental experience, and do so in such a way that it helps others to see the coherence between their experience and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ? This too is the terrain of giving an account of the hope within us in our day.

## Conclusion

This letter began by reflecting on the dimensions of hope. There's one last scriptural text in this regard which has always stirred my imagination. In the Book of Job, after Job and his friends have exhausted their arguments, God comes to Job (*Ch. 38*) and asks him a series of questions.

While they sound as though God may be putting Job in his place, I think principally God is assuring Job – and us – that everything is in God's creative and life-giving hands:

"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Who determined its measurements... or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the children of God shouted for joy?... Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, and caused the dawn to know its place.... Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep?"

The dimensions of hope are indeed outside of our realm to measure. The text goes on to state that in making the thick darkness a swaddling band for the sea, God "set bars and doors" and said, "Thus far shall you come, and no farther." The American author Annie Dillard, commenting on this passage and God setting the limits of our ability to understand the mysteries of the created world and the human condition, asks the poignant question: "But have we come even that far? Have we rowed out to the thick darkness, or are we all playing pinocle in the bottom of the boat?"

Pope John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI after him, have called for a new evangelization at the beginning of this new millennium. When the diocese of Saskatoon produced a Diocesan Vision statement three years ago, evangelization was identified as the first of its six priorities. Finding a language for that new evangelization is a challenging task – worthy of our time, our sustained efforts, and requiring the best we can offer – with all our mind and heart and soul and strength.

Hope is deeply attractive. Being a people of hope, and allowing that hope to shape everything we do and are, is a vital form of evangelizing in our day. We can do this even without words – the witness of our hope and joy itself speaks a powerful word. But if we can find gentle but convincing words which name the foundation of that hope, which give coherent, intelligent, convincing reasons for that hope, that will be a still greater gift to those around us.

May we continue to be guided by the Holy Spirit as we creatively seek ways of giving an account of our hope. And may we experience the joy of being able to name life-giving reasons for our hope, letting those reasons shine forth for all to see and hear.



## Vietnamese Catholic community shares faith and culture, marking special occasions throughout the year

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The Vietnamese Catholic community of Saskatoon is well established after more than 30 years of meeting regularly to share prayer, religious celebrations and cultural events.

The Vietnam War ended April 30, 1975 with the communists taking over the whole country. Vietnamese people fled their homeland, leaving everything, including family members, to seek freedom.

A number took refuge in Canada and settled in Saskatchewan. Among them were those who had been raised in strong Catholic families, who were most comfortable worshipping in their own language. Therefore, beginning in 1980, the Catholic Vietnamese community of Saskatoon began to meet in a local home for evening prayer and visiting.

Occasionally, Fr. Bernard de Margerie would celebrate Mass for them at St. Paul's Cathedral, so that they could sing and respond to some parts of the Mass in Vietnamese. Monsignor Len Morand continued this when he became rector of the cathedral, and later on as pastor at St. Patrick and Holy Family parishes.

On April 13, 1982, the community was officially established with a pastoral committee. Every year,

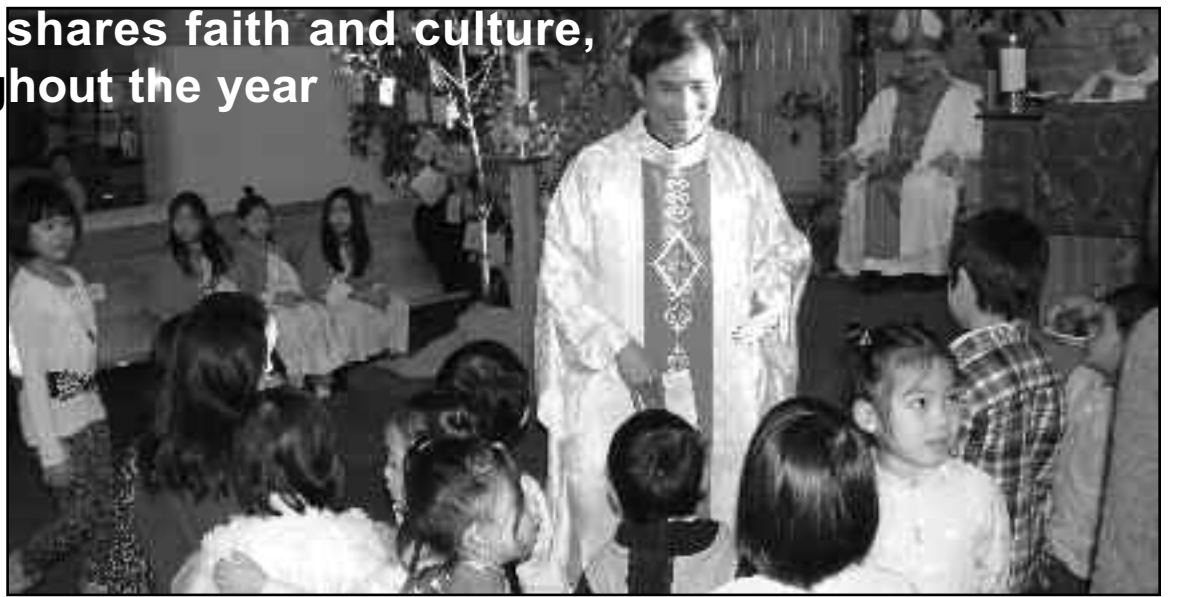
on special occasions such as Christmas, New Year's and Easter, Vietnamese priests would come from Calgary to celebrate Mass. A Marian Congress for the whole province and beyond has been hosted alternately once every two years by the Saskatoon and Regina Vietnamese communities. Next year it will be Saskatoon's turn to host the event.

In 1997, Fr. Phong Pham was ordained as a priest for the diocese and he has provided pastoral leadership to the Vietnamese community ever since, in addition to his present pastoral posting at St. Joseph parish in Kindersley. His responsibilities include performing marriages when one of the parties is Vietnamese.

In addition to being part of the Vietnamese Catholic community, individuals and families are also registered and active in their own parishes in the diocese, with most of them attending St. Mary's parish.

There are presently 50 families with a total of 156 Catholics in the Vietnamese faith community, including Br. Anthony Vuong Nguyen, OSB, a Benedictine monk at St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster.

The community currently gathers for Mass in Vietnamese once a month at St. Peter the Apostle parish. There are infant



Fr. Phong Pham greets and blesses the children during a special Mass for the Vietnamese Catholic community held to mark the Vietnamese lunar New Year or *Tết Nguyên Đán* at St. Peter the Apostle parish in Saskatoon. Prince Albert Bishop Albert Thevenot (back) and Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, were among the special guests at the joyful celebration, which included Mass, a banquet of traditional foods, entertainment and activities. - KLY

baptisms, children's liturgy, reconciliation, the Way of the Cross in Lent, and preparations for the celebration of Christmas and Easter. The youth have retreats twice a year, including a recent retreat in April led by the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team.

Since 2000, Fr. Peter Minh Quang Chu S.J. from California has come to Saskatoon each year to give a conference on Marriage and Family Enrichment, benefiting married couples as well as the spiritual life of the community. Families are encouraged to pray evening prayer daily with scripture

readings prepared by the Vietnamese Clergy and Religious Association in Canada.

The community and special guests gather for supper six times a year, including a picnic at Pike Lake in July.

Another important tradition is a celebration of the community's patroness, Our Lady of LaVang in May. At Christmas, the community always invites representatives of the Buddhist community in Saskatoon join their celebration.

The Vietnamese Catholic community is presently looking forward to the diaconate ordination

of diocesan seminarian Hoang Nguyen 7 p.m. Thursday, May 19 at Holy Family parish.

"We very much treasure the freedom and all opportunities to practice our faith here in Canada, as we think back to our homeland which has been under the cruel pressure of the communist regime for 57 years," said Fr. Phong Pham. "As we look back to our homeland, we treasure freedom, which isn't free, but comes at the cost of risking one's life," he said, adding that the local community continues to pray and hope for freedom and conversion for Vietnam.



Diocesan Director of RCIA Fr. Michael Koch, Bishop Don Bolen and St. Aloysius Pastor Fr. Joseph Jacek (l-r) with Teagan after the second Scrutiny. - Photo by Anne Moldenhauer

## St. Aloysius parish rejoices as rites of Christian initiation unfold on Teagan's journey to baptism

BY ANNE MOLDENHAUER  
ST. ALOYSIUS, ALLAN

Nine-year-old Teagan approached me one Sunday after Mass.

"I don't know how to say this...but...I want to know what I have to do in order to have the bread." Teagan's exposure to the Christian faith from her family members and at her school had led her to make this next step.

Teagan's dad registered her in the parish at St. Aloysius in Allan when she was a toddler, but she had not been baptized. She comes to Mass when she spends weekends in Allan, and helps with Children's Liturgy of the Word.

When Teagan was ready for school, her mom enrolled her in a Catholic elementary school in Saskatoon, and she is taking religion classes there. After conferring with

Fr. Michael Koch, director of Christian Initiation in the diocese of Saskatoon, the process chosen for Teagan was the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) adapted for children.

Teagan was accepted into the order of catechumens by her pastor during a Sunday Eucharist in Allan. On the First Sunday of Lent, she and the other catechumens from across the diocese celebrated the diocesan Rite of Election in Saskatoon. During Lent, she celebrated the "Scrutinies" and the "Presentations" in her parish – the rites belonging to this period of purification and enlightenment.

The celebration of the second Scrutiny coincided with Bishop Don Bolen's first pastoral visit to the parish. After the homily, the bishop led the assembly through the

Scrutiny and invited Teagan to stay to witness the installation of Fr. Joseph Jacek as the pastor of St. Aloysius, before she left for dismissal. After Mass, Teagan's extended family, parish friends, and pastor presented her with the Creed. The celebration concluded with refreshments at the parish hall and a chance to visit with the bishop.

During the Easter Vigil in Allan April 23, Teagan celebrated the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and first Eucharist – receiving the "Bread of Life" for which she had been longing.

St. Aloysius parish is a small rural community and it has been a blessing to witness the Rites of Christian Initiation as they have unfolded for Teagan. The graces Teagan is receiving have brought new life to the faith community.

## Mystagogy involves lifelong journey of deepening faith after baptism

BY FR. MICHAEL KOCH, DIOCESAN DIRECTOR  
FOR CHRISTIAN INITIATION (RCIA)

The 2011 Triduum is now over. Nine parishes in the diocese gave new Christian birth to 23 adults and children of catechetical age.

Eleven parishes also received 36 candidates (already baptized) into full communion through a profession of faith, confirmation and Eucharist. Some of these candidates were received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, some during the Easter season and some on a regular Sunday of the year. It is actually preferable to celebrate the "Rite of Reception into Full Communion" of already-baptized candidates on any Sunday of the year, rather than during the Easter Vigil.

The catechumens (those journeying toward baptism), were renamed Elect during the Lenten season, and now that they have

been baptized, are known as Neophytes. The word comes from the Greek *neos* (new) + *phyein* (to plant).

The neophytes were initiated into the Catholic faith community, the Church, the Body of Christ, through the initiation sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. While baptism and confirmation are only celebrated once in a lifetime, the reception of Eucharist (holy communion) continues regularly week by week, to feed the Christian with the Body and Blood of Christ, the Bread of Life.

The Easter Vigil is primarily our liturgical celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Easter Vigil is celebrated even if there are no baptisms. The celebration of the sacraments of Christian Initiation, however, are most appropriately celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

The Easter Vigil is the celebration of new life. Through his suffering and death Jesus was raised by the Father to new life beyond time and space. Baptism is about death and new life, moving from sin to grace. As St. Paul tells us, we go into the water, we die to the old sinful person and then rise to new life in Christ.

After the Easter Vigil, the process of Christian Initiation, now moves on to the period of post-baptismal catechesis or "Mystagogy." It is about reflecting, pondering, growing in faith and living the mystery of God's love for us. Thus we are called to grow into eternal life in the Trinity.

The period of Mystagogy is usually considered to be the time between the Easter Vigil and Pentecost. During this 50-day Easter season, the Rite has the following teaching (234): "This is a time for the community and the neophytes together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the Eucharist, and doing works of charity."

In reality, mystagogy is really about the rest of our Christian life after our baptism. Mystagogy is about life-long living and learning to look through our new Christian glasses seeing reality in a way we never saw before.

The danger is that this period of Mystagogy is still seen by many as a period of "post graduation," rather than initiation and the beginning of living out the Christian life which lasts a lifetime. This can result in Mystagogy being the weakest of all the four periods in the Catechumenate.

The solution can be found in the Rite, which tells us (#75.1) that the initiation process is to be "accommodated to the liturgical year."

As more and more of the parish leadership begin thinking and practicing the liturgical year as their frame of reference for their Christian Initiation process (rather than the school year), there will be less need to worry about the period of Mystagogy. It will continue going on and on: Cycle A, then Cycle B, Cycle C, Cycle A, Cycle B...until death do us part.

### Western Conference for the Catechumenate RCIA and Liturgical Catechesis

(Using the Church's Liturgical Rites as a primary resource)

Friday, May 27 to Saturday, May 28

at Holy Spirit Parish, 114 Kingsmere Place

Deadline for registration: May 17

Call Fr. Michael Koch (306) 373-0404

E-mail: mjkrcia@shaw.ca



## Workshop brings healing and understanding around sacrament of reconciliation

By ARCH MCKAY

A need to deepen understanding and heal negative experiences around the sacrament of reconciliation has led Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers on a journey of learning and healing, walking with adult Catholics in exploring the sacrament.

Inspired by a diocesan report on the state of the sacrament of reconciliation that Sr. Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, and Fr. George Smith, CSB, prepared several years ago for Bishop Albert LeGatt, Ternier-Gommers first initiated discussion about the sacrament with a focus group at St. Augustine's parish in Humboldt, where she works as pastoral associate.

She invited people from differing demographics in her community to participate in a discussion about the sacrament of reconciliation.

At the first session she asked, partly in jest: "Why did you say yes to be part of this experiment?" What she heard caught her by surprise. "The responses required a box of Kleenex. This was in the first 10 minutes."

For instance, one young mother articulated that her Catholic faith was very important to her, and shared how much she wanted to pass it on to her children. The mother expressed her desire to be a good model to her children; but the memory of her first "confession" was horrible. She did not want that for her child.

"We were onto something. Something that was very tender and had to be approached with great care and respect," Ternier-Gommers said.

In a climate of trust, she presented several resources; including a video by David Wells entitled "*Confession - Do they still do that?*" as well as scripture, history, and personal reflection.

As an icebreaker, she introduced several short humorous anecdotes and jokes about the sacrament of reconciliation. Interspersed with the humour were statements from people who have had uncomfortable and sometimes hurtful experiences with the sacrament. She also included passages from Luke 15, the story of the prodigal son. "Among the funny and hurtful stuff, the real story and meaning can be found," she pointed out.

From the responses of the initial two focus groups, Ternier-Gommers then went further, preparing material to be used in the parish with parents of children preparing to receive the sacrament of reconciliation.

The community's two Catholic elementary schools were doing a wonderful job preparing the young children for the



Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers (left) talks over material from the "Reconciling with Reconciliation" ministry development workshop with a representative of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish. - Photo by Andr  a Ledding

sacrament, she said. However parents were only minimally involved in the process.

Given what she had read in the report by Kambeitz and Smith, as well as other research and her own local focus groups, Ternier-Gommers was convinced parents needed additional education, support and guidance.

With support and encouragement from St. Augustine parish priest, Fr. Emile April, a letter was sent to all parents whose children were to celebrate the sacrament – about 80 families.

Language was carefully chosen. The letter indicated "that the parish would like to partner with you (the parent) in fulfilling your role in preparing your child."

Ternier-Gommers stressed: "Words have a lot of power." Rather than lecturing parents about "why haven't you been coming to confession?" the letter appealed to the parents' role in helping their children experience a positive and life-giving sacrament. Over 90 per cent of parents participated.

From this initial experience Ternier-Gommers has now developed an extensive resource book made up of focus group plans, suggested readings, music, a PowerPoint presentation and other materials – all directed at helping parents prepare for their child's first reconciliation.

The resource is now available to other parishes upon request, through the diocesan offices of Rural Catechetics and Ministry Development at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Saskatoon. The material was also presented at a day-long Ministry Development workshop – "*Reconciling with Reconciliation*" – presented in the Saskatoon deanery in January.

"It was never intended as such a large project, but just grew out of the original

### Ministry Development – supported by the BAA!



The sacrament of reconciliation is a popular part of an annual Rock the Mount Catholic youth rally, with young adults lining up at stations around the Mount Carmel pilgrimage site. However, for many Catholics, the sacrament carries negative "baggage." - Photo by Tim Yaworski

experience and it was something that other parishes felt that they needed and could use," said Ternier-Gommers.

Throughout the process of preparing and offering the material, as well as in conversations and workshops with other catechists, Ternier-Gommers has extensively reflected on how the sacrament of reconciliation is perceived by the faithful today.

"I cannot speak for all adults [Catholics], but what I have seen so far is that people are still sitting in the pews with negative experiences. And they have never been invited to... share those [experiences], or been listened to," said Ternier-Gommers. "Unless we create a forum where people can share their baggage, we will never get 'unstuck' as a church around this sacrament."

She added: "As a church we have not equipped people adequately to use the sacrament in a way that moves them past 'the grocery list' [of sins]."

From what she has seen and learned, Ternier-Gommers has come to the awareness that "the sacrament, and the way people have experienced it, have kept people in a parent-child relationship with the Church and with their God. That is why memories of the first celebration are so vivid. They belong to childhood."

She added: "In all fairness, some priests do not treat people as adults, but as children."

A lack of adult participation in the sacrament of reconciliation is also an offshoot of our secular and individualistic culture, she said. "Sin is very personal, but no sin is private."

"We have lost a very concrete understanding of who we are as a body of Christ. We have lost a communal dimension and so we think that if I say 'sorry God' in the privacy of my bedroom that that is adequate.

In a way it is, however, we are a part of a community of faith and if we truly want to live our lives as members of that community, then we have to acknowledge that there is a communal dimension to our sinfulness." At the same time, the larger culture colludes against the concept of communality and this collusion has crept into the pew, she said.

What is often forgotten is that the priest not only represents the forgiving God but also represents the faith community, she added, stressing that through the ritual with the priest, we are also reconciled back to the community.

At the same time, Ternier-Gommers expressed a longing for a richer celebration of the sacrament.

"To celebrate the sacrament as part of a line-up where one has, maybe, two minutes with the priest, encourages a minimalistic approach."

Ternier-Gommers suggested that many people would appreciate beginning with a simple conversation that would move into the sacrament.

She acknowledged that the faithful recognize the pressures and time constraints facing the clergy, and some may think it is probably better to keep one's confession to "the grocery list" of sins. However, that does not encourage adult faith development and maturing in the faith journey.

Ternier-Gommers suggested that there is a need to examine what we are doing in our churches and ask "are we encouraging or obstructing adult faith?"

Putting the entire onus on the parish priest is not the answer, she said. Rather, the entire community must work together to help prepare all parishioners for the blessed benefits of the sacrament of reconciliation.

## Foundations scripture series focuses on Easter Vigil readings



Deb Rolfes led a four-part Foundations series about salvation history as revealed in the Easter Vigil readings. - Photo by K. L. Yaworski

By ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

Often during Deborah Rolfes' four-part *Foundations: Exploring Our Faith* series about the readings of the Easter Vigil, participants were encouraged to "collapse time" and put themselves into a particular moment of salvation history.

"We come to the Easter Vigil as Cleopas and his wife on the Road to Emmaus," said Rolfes as she set the scene for the Easter Vigil with scripture from Luke. "On Good Friday we have seen the crucifixion and now we are in mourning. There are rumours of a resurrection but we are leaving with a heavy heart, after everything is all over in the most horrible way."

During the Vigil, we are like the disciples on the road to Emmaus: hearing the Old Testament readings that explain our entire salvation history. Then we stop and gather round the fire and break bread with Jesus, said Rolfes.

"Goosebumps" is what she describes feeling as she hears the nine scripture readings during the Easter Vigil every year.

During the diocesan Foundations series that was launched Jan. 17 and concluded April 11, Rolfes brought her enthusiasm about the Easter Vigil readings to others.

The first session focussed on an overview of the history of Israel during the time of the Old Testament. The next three

sessions focused on each of the Vigil readings specifically. The Pentateuch (Genesis and Exodus), the Prophets (Isaiah and Baruch) and an overview of the New Testament Vigil readings from the book of Romans and the gospel of Matthew.

"The readings at the Vigil recall the great events of salvation, beginning with creation itself. In moments we are living it ourselves not just re-living it. We haven't been slaves, but we have moments of oppression in our lives," said Rolfes. "During the vigil we put ourselves in the company of these people."

About 40 participants were at the opening session at St. Paul's Cathedral, and many came regularly for all four sessions.

Organizer Marci Deutscher said she was pleased with the response and came away with her own new insights. "I am very excited and looking forward to going to the next Vigil with my new-found knowledge."

In addition to the series, there were 29 individual *Foundations: Exploring Our Faith* sessions (featuring local speakers addressing a wide range of topics) held in parishes around the diocese during the Lenten season, Deutscher said.

## Challenge club holds weekend retreat for 63 girls, ages 8 to 18

BY CORINNE KIRKPATRICK

The Challenge Catholic Girls Club explored the theme "*Apostles and Friends for Christ and Each Other*" at their annual retreat Jan. 14 to 16 at Queen's House of Retreats in Saskatoon.

Sixty-three girls, aged 8-18 years, gathered for the weekend of fun and faith, designed to allow them to grow deeper in their relationship with Christ. Open to all girls, the weekend provided opportunities for growing in faith, as well as fun activities, daily Mass, all-night adoration, and confession.

When asked what their favourite parts of the weekend were, several of the younger girls wrote: "I loved the dance." "Confession (*sic*), because I feel fresh." "I love the food!"

Others said: "This place was awesome." "Confession, because you shake out all the sins." "The Stillness Chapel." "Sleeping over and getting to know Christ." "I really liked adoration (*sic*)." "I liked the games and exercise."

Without exception, the 13-plus age group



Members of the Challenge Catholic Girls Club build friendships at the annual retreat. - CK

cited Eucharistic adoration as the best part of the weekend for them.

When asked what could be done to improve the retreat for next year, one girl suggested: "I think we should never have to leave." And finally, "this weekend was one of the best weekends of my life."

Queen's House staff rose to the occasion to ensure the girls were well fed, and had

ample opportunities to use every nook of the building for their faith-based games, exercise, crafts, scavenger hunts and more.

"Our program teaches girls how to be leaders and strong advocates for their faith in their community", said Jo-Anne McKay, director of programming for Challenge club.

"To achieve this, the girls are active participants in every part of the retreat. This is

not a 'sit quietly and listen' weekend, although there are times when quiet is required, so that they have a chance to reflect on what they're actively learning."

Challenge organizers said that they follow the advice of Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko, president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity: "Youth ministry can't be ordinary or mediocre, it requires... ever new ways to announce Christ," he states. "And it is an extremely exacting task, since the young have extremely exacting expectations of adults, in whom they want to find not just teachers but above all genuine and consistent witnesses."

"These retreats are a way for us to fulfill that directive, and instil an apostolic zeal and love of Christ into our community", said Lesia Ostertag, director of Apostolic Projects.

Queen's House of Retreats also hosted the Pure Fashion Retreat Feb. 11 to 13, a sister program to Challenge Girls Club. Pure Fashion, a purity formation program for girls aged 14-18, will culminate in a fashion show May 8 at St. Joseph High School, Saskatoon.

## Purity Rally on "Quest for True Love"

BY ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

It was a cold Saturday morning when MCs "Indy Andy Jones" (Andrew Dupuis) and "Annie of the North" (Maria Zimmer) set out to warm up the crowd at St. Patrick's Parish for a Purity Rally organized by Pure Witness Ministries.

The young leaders hosted some 300 youth and family members "On

a *Quest For True Love*," using skits and games to bring the rally theme into focus for the all-day event Feb. 26 at St. Patrick parish in Saskatoon.

Pure Witness Ministries founder Carmen Marcoux opened the rally with the idea of changing the mindset of seeing purity as a line to be observed and instead, looking at purity as a direction to be taken.

"Human nature is such that a line becomes something we look at as 'how far can I go up to the line? Can I touch the line? Stick my nose over the line? An elbow? Will I fall over the line? Can I move the line?'" Carmen Marcoux explained: "Purity is not a line that divides sin from not sin. Purity is a direction."

She encouraged listeners to put "the line" behind them, and experience a mind shift where they focus on the relationship they have with God. "Live for, in and through Jesus Christ and you will be fit for life."

Panel discussions and a testimony followed, answering practical questions about how a relationship can move from friendship to marriage, while keeping purity and God as the focus. Giving youth and parents a clear picture of how a pure relationship looks, and the parameters couples have set in their lives to follow this direction, is a big part of the rally's content.

While the talks upstairs in the church are directed at youth ages 12 and up, the rally itself has something for all ages. "The event is for the whole family, and the whole church community," said Marcoux. "We build a social context that is broader than one parish. We create opportunities for mentoring of all age groups and social times for parents and youth to talk about what they have experienced and build support for the idea of purity."

"It's such a great day when you can bring your whole family to one event and all your children are



Andrew Dupuis, Carmen Marcoux, and Maria Zimmer at the Purity Rally. - Photo by Anne-Marie Hughes

involved in hearing a great message" said Leah Sidloski who attended with her five children ages nine years to 18 months. "I think it's really important for parents to be hearing the same message as their children and know what has been presented so they can talk about dating and relationships in the same language."

Pure Witness Ministries began nine years ago. As part of the ministry, Carmen was inspired to write a novel, *Arms of Love*, about a romance that was true to Catholic teaching.

John Paul II's call for a new evangelization inspired Carmen and her husband James to do more. The family decided to create their own publishing company to publish the

book and pursue the idea of purity as a ministry. It became a true family affair when James Marcoux quit his teaching position five years ago to work alongside his wife and children in what has become a family mission.

The ministry has taken Carmen across North America on speaking engagements, in person and on television, encouraging youth to live pure lives. Over nine years she has written two novels, and the family has together written and illustrated a new children's book "*The Parish Picnic*."

In addition, eight purity rallies have been coordinated, pure dances organized and a web site and blog developed. For more information see: [courtshipnow.com](http://courtshipnow.com)



### Shrove Tuesday in Burstall

Wyatt Job of St. Michael parish in Burstall flips pancakes during a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper held March 8. - Photo by Vivien Fiesel



Encounter Team 1 will be visiting the diocese of Saskatoon in May, leading retreats at several Catholic schools, as part of the NET (National Evangelization Teams) Ministries' outreach across the country. - Photo courtesy of NET Ministries

## NET Ministries: evangelizing youth

NET Ministries of Canada is a Catholic Movement of young adult missionaries, who bring youth to Christ across the country. NET trains and sends out teams of young adults, aged 18 to 30, to parishes, junior high and high schools. The teams conduct retreats, implement youth ministry and equip musicians for evangelization, reaching up to 25,000 each year with the message of the gospel.

One girl from a NET Encounter retreat commented on her experience: "Today was fun. I learned a lot about God and Jesus. I developed my faith and hope. I now have more hope in my future and more faith in God."

At Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Saskatoon March 20, NET's local alumni, donors, and volunteers gathered for an appreciation event. Joe Vogel (executive director) and Robin Daniels (development director) were on hand to thank Saskatoon supporters in-person for their involvement with NET's mission. Following the event, alumni sang praise and worship songs, before going out for ice cream.

Visit the NET website [www.netcanada.ca](http://www.netcanada.ca) or check the blog at [www.netcanada.blogspot.com](http://www.netcanada.blogspot.com) for more information.

For more information on how you can book a school, or parish retreat in the Saskatoon diocese for the 2011-2012 year contact Sharon Leyne at (306) 979-4375 or e-mail: [sharonleyn@gmail.com](mailto:sharonleyn@gmail.com)



## “We Believe” is theme of Grade 8 Steps in Faith retreat

BY ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

“We Believe” was the theme of a diocesan “Steps in Faith” youth retreat held March 26 at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon.

Thirty youth from seven parishes in the diocese of Saskatoon attended the retreat for Grades 8 and 9 students who are preparing to make a reaffirmation of faith as part of the diocesan Steps in Faith process. Youth came from Saskatoon, the Trinity parishes of Prud’homme, St. Denis and Vonda, as well as from Vanscoy for the retreat.

“They brought real enthusiasm to the day,” said organizer Myron Rogal, who coordinates the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team that led the event.

Steps in Faith is being introduced across the diocese as a ministry of catechesis, community service and faith affirmation aimed at middle years youth in Grades 6-8.

Based on the Creed, Steps in Faith is implemented in a variety of ways in different parishes, but always includes four elements: learning and catechesis about the Creed, a service project, a retreat experience and an affirmation of faith at a parish celebration for those in Grade 8.

“If there is anything I want people to know, it’s that Steps in Faith is not a program,” explained Rogal. “Steps in Faith is a process that provides middle years youth with a chance to be part of activities to affirm their faith as they move

into the next stage of life.”

The process was introduced in the diocese as an intentional form of youth ministry after confirmation was restored in the order of the sacraments of initiation. With that change, children in Grade 2 now celebrate the sacrament of confirmation at the same celebration at which they receive their first Eucharist. This highlighted the need for ongoing faith formation after confirmation.

Rogal stressed that Steps in Faith is not a sacrament, nor is it a program with a set curriculum, rather it is a process in which parishes journey with young people in their faith. By using the four components of Steps in Faith, youth ministry becomes “fool proof” – both easier to offer and more effective, he said. Resources about the Creed have been produced and are available from the diocesan Youth Ministries office, but parishes are encouraged to choose what works for them.

“Some parishes have chosen resources that start at Grade 6 and involve a two-year process that ends with an affirmation ceremony,” he described. “Other parishes have asked Grade 6 to 8 youth that are regularly at youth events to come to some extra meetings about the Creed and a special retreat and then have an affirmation at a regular Mass.”

Ministry to middle years youth has seen an increase since Steps in Faith was introduced, he noted.

### Youth Ministry & Diocesan Youth Retreat Team – supported by the BAA!



Participants engage in an activity at the Steps in Faith retreat March 26.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

“Last year we had 15 per cent of parishes involved in this ministry and this year we have increased to 37 per cent,” he says.

The Diocesan Youth Retreat Team (DYRT) is focusing on presenting retreats to help parishes fulfill the retreat component of Steps in Faith. Several of the 17 young adults and high school students on the retreat team led the recent retreat at Holy Spirit parish.

Retreat team leaders were impressed with the level of knowledge and insight the Grade 8 students brought to discussion at the retreat. “They had deep questions about

things I would expect from a young adult group,” said Kara Brooks, a DYRT member currently attending St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission in Bruno.

One retreat highlight was the use of media such as YouTube, which are familiar to today’s youth. The morning focus included the “big picture view,” showing the broadness and vastness of the faith. “We showed the kids a video from catholicscomehome.org that basically summarizes the history of the Church in two minutes. It’s quite touching and the kids were moved by it,” described Rogal.

The afternoon featured a deeper, more personal reflection, with youth looking inward to nurture a personal relationship with Christ. Youth were then challenged to live out the faith in service to others.

Rogal noted that the retreat team exists to serve the entire diocese, rural and urban alike. “The ministry of DYRT is intensely powerful in that it is youth ministering to youth – that’s one reason why the retreat team is a good fit to lead this retreat,” he said. “Who knows? Perhaps some of the youth who attended this retreat will join the team in September. For these Grade 8s, joining DYRT could be the next step in their faith journey as they enter Grade 9.”

Rogal noted that each deanery will be encouraged to host a Steps in Faith retreat annually to serve the needs of middle years youth. He encouraged parishes to book their 2011-12 DYRT retreat by contacting him at the Catholic Pastoral Centre.

“Youth need to see that they are not alone in their faith journey: that there are other young Catholic’s enthusiastic about Christ. For young and old alike must ‘always be ready to give an account of hope that is within you’ (1 Peter 3:15),” he said.

The retreat day concluded with a promotional video about “Momentum: Don’t Stop Believing,” the diocesan Grade 6-8 youth rally April 30 in Saskatoon. “Today was a great day, but there is more!” Rogal said.

## Miscarriage ministry group addresses need for resources

BY BLAKE SITTLER

Many parents who suffer a miscarriage often feel as if there is no place for them to mourn the loss of their unborn child. A new committee in the diocese of Saskatoon is hoping to provide resources to parishes and individuals to help address that problem.

“When the statistics say that 25 per cent of pregnancies end in miscarriage, that means there are a lot of people in our parishes who need this supportive ministry,” said Shannon Granger, founder of the ministry.

When Shannon and her husband Dan went through a miscarriage, they turned to their parish priest, but found that resources were not readily available to him.

“The pastor was very supportive but he didn’t know what to offer us... he was open to whatever we wanted to do, so I talked to a few people and I organized a liturgy and he presided,” said Granger.

If a child is stillborn or dies soon after birth, doctors, nurses, chaplains and pastors know how to handle the death, because there is clear protocol. But for parents who lose a child weeks or months after conception, answers become less clear.

After her family’s experience, Granger approached the diocesan office of Marriage and Family Life and began meeting with parish nurses Deb Bauche, Ethna Martin and Carol Kostiuk.

Russ and Shirley Hannan also joined the discussion. The Hannans had also experienced a miscarriage and found, like the Grangers, that support was lacking.

The group has several goals and many of them are around education. When a couple approaches a

parish to ask for help, many of the resources that are available are not compiled all in one place. The committee hopes to have a package of information prepared by the spring of 2011.

The diocese of Saskatoon plans to use the diocesan website to host a page where pastoral information will be available, including links to other sites and the outline of potential liturgies to be used at the parish level.

“This information needs to get out to everyone. Not just the pastors and counselors or nurses but also parishioners in the pews... so that when friends and family experience this, people will know that there is good, solid, caring information available,” said Granger.

In October, intercession prayers were sent to parishes. It was also suggested that the names of children lost through miscarriage should be added to a parish’s Book of Remembrance for the Feast of All Souls in November.

A special memorial liturgy prepared by Saskatoon Funeral Home for children lost in miscarriage has been held for several years at Woodlawn Cemetery.

“Many parents attend... one family had lost a child over 50 years ago and attended because they still felt the loss of the baby in their life,” said Don Shepherd, general manager of both Saskatoon Funeral Home and Westwood Chapel, who helps to coordinate the liturgy.

For more information about the diocesan project, contact Ehresman at the Catholic Pastoral Centre at 242-1500, Ext. 229 or toll free 1-877-661-5005, Ext. 229.



### Kids for Christ at St. Anne parish

One of the leaders of Kids for Christ at St. Anne parish in Saskatoon leads young participants in a “wedding dance” – one of the activities held as part of a reflection about Jesus at the wedding in Cana. Led by Sr. Dianne Sehn, OSU, Kids for Christ is offered on a Sunday afternoon once month for children ages four years to Grade 3. Older youth are also involved as helpers. Kids for Christ was originally developed by Janine and Shawn Baier at St. Augustine parish as a way to reach out to younger children.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

## Diocesan youth heading to Madrid, Spain for WYD

Youth from around the world will gather in Spain this summer, sharing and celebrating faith at World Youth Day, Aug. 16-21.

Delegations from the diocese of Saskatoon will be among those attending the international gathering and celebrating with Pope Benedict XVI in Madrid.

Bishop Don Bolen will also be attending.

“Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith” is the WYD 2011 theme.

- KLY



### Theology On Tap

Another year of speakers and faith discussion in a casual pub setting recently ended for Theology On Tap in Saskatoon. Speakers this term included ethicist Fr. Mark Miller, CSsR, retreat leader Fr. Paul Fachel, and D & P solidarity visitor Zar Gomez of the Philippines. Aimed at young adults age 19-35, Theology On Tap is jointly coordinated by the youth ministry offices of both the diocese and eparchy of Saskatoon, as well as the St. Thomas More College Campus Ministry team.

- KLY

# Muenster families work together to offer religion classes in school

SUBMITTED BY FAMILIES FOR RELIGION

The Families for Religion program is in full swing, in its fourth year of providing religious instruction within Muenster public school. Pam Saretsky continues to take on the role of instructor for children in kindergarten to Grade 6. Enrolment includes a majority of the students from each class in the school, with the exception of two grades. The program continues in the same format as in past years. The Grade 2 children prepare for the sacraments of reconciliation, confirmation and first communion. They also participate in a retreat that enhances their catechism. All other grades are instructed using the *Pflaum* program, with age-appropriate material for each grade group based upon the Sunday gospel. To enhance the program, some Bibles have been purchased for the children. Teacher Pam Saretsky helps them to learn how to look up the scriptures, with the older children receptive to the challenge. For the younger levels, some craft items have been purchased. Children decorate their parishes with their handiwork at Christmas and Easter, which also encourages Church attendance. "I have a lot of fun with these children. The younger ones are so inquisitive," she commented. As for the older children, she

adds that she is really proud of how they have settled in to the program. Encouraged by an initiative from the diocese, the Muenster Families for Religion committee has taken a lead with the *Steps in Faith* program. *Steps in Faith* involves a reaffirmation of faith, with youth making a commitment to continue on their faith journey. Grade 6 students are focussing on the reaffirmation, which is based on the Apostle's Creed. They will receive a special blessing from the bishop on the same day that the Grade 2 children celebrate their confirmation and first communion. The committee also hosted four fun youth events in conjunction with *Steps in Faith*. Teaching about the Apostle's Creed happened in conjunction with the fun atmosphere. Oct. 24, 2010, the committee hosted "The Amazing Race," inviting Grades 6 to 9 youth from surrounding parishes to participate. Sixty-five young people attended to enjoy the activities, games and snacks. Fees for the religion program are kept to a minimum to help encourage enrolment. The committee therefore continues with fundraising events to keep the program financially viable. A turkey bingo is well attended, and will again be held this spring.



Members of the Knights of Columbus recently presented a cheque to Families for Religion in School. Back row (left to right) Ray Hofmann, treasurer; Fr. Daniel Muyres, OSB, KC chaplain and pastor at St. Peter's in Muenster; Jordan Bergermann, past Grand Knight; and (front row, l-r) Pam Saretsky, instructor; Richard Muench, Grand Knight; Tara Hofmann, committee member; and Laurie Szautner, committee member. - Photo courtesy of Families for Religion

The support of the Knights of Columbus is vital, as the men's organization continues to sponsor an annual fundraising supper with proceeds going to the religious instruction program. The committee also has support from parents, teachers and staff of Muenster

School, parish families and parish councils from both St. Gregory and St Peter parishes. Committee members include Laurie Szautner, Pam Saretsky, Corrine Breker, Maryanne Major, Leann Frerichs, Michelle Pratchler, Wanda Kiefer, Gail Michel, Collette Lessmeister, and Tara Hofmann.

# Abbot says students are top priority at St. Peter's College

SUBMITTED BY ST. PETER'S COLLEGE

St. Peter's College in Muenster recently completed another successful university year. Students will finish their final exams in the last week of April. St. Peter's College has received media coverage recently, with a proposed merger with Carlton Trail Regional College in Humboldt not going through. "Our management and staff had been working on this project for more than a year," said Abbot Peter Novecosky, College Chancellor. "This recent announcement has helped us refocus on our 90-year tradition of providing an excellent post-secondary education for our students in a rural setting. They remain our number one priority." The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration, which did a review of the proposed merger, has asked St. Peter's College to review its governance and financial management. "The college welcomes this review and looks forward to cooperating fully with the ministry," Novecosky said. "St. Peter's College always has been, and always will be, about the students," he continued.

"The college is committed to providing a university experience which allows students to start here and succeed anywhere. That's why we are expanding programming, completing renovations and preparing to welcome more students than ever before." Renovation to Michael Hall, the main college building, will be completed in June. This will give St. Peter's students state-of-the-art labs, classrooms and study areas. "St. Peter's provides a dynamic student experience in a safe, friendly and supportive

environment," Novecosky said. College enrollment continues to grow. There are 56 per cent more students at the college this year than there were two years ago (2008). "The number of students that have signed up for next fall are double what we had in 2008," he noted. College student resident spots are increasing in demand. In partnership with St. Peter's Abbey, the college is responding to the growing number of students who want to live on campus in the upcoming year by increasing its student residence capacity by over 86 per cent. St. Peter's College board, management and staff are committed to academic excellence, quality programming and enhanced facilities, Novecosky said. "Students are always our Number 1 priority. They are the reason for the improvements we have made. We want them and their parents to know this." St. Peter's College at Muenster was started by the Benedictine monks of St. Peter's Abbey in 1926 and continues its programs with their assistance.

Students today attend St. Peter's College to begin their university degree in arts and science, business, agriculture and kinesiology or to fulfill the entry requirements to colleges such as medicine, nursing, law, nutrition, pharmacy, education and nursing. Other programs offered include the widely-recognized SPC writing diploma or the Edwards business administration certificate. New programs and classes continue to be added to meet the needs of students and the community. For more information, please contact St. Peter's College at (306) 682-7888.

# Alpha program offered to college students

SUBMITTED BY ST. PETER'S COLLEGE

As part of its campus ministry program, the St. Peter's College Campus Ministry Team *The Men in Black* this year offered the well-known Alpha Course to students. The Alpha Course at St. Peter's College is a video course on the basics of Christian faith specifically written for college students. The course is non-denominational and provides an opportunity to explore the meaning of life through seven weekly sessions. Topics covered include: Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus die? How can I have faith? Why and how should I pray? Why and how should I read the Bible? What about evil? Does God heal today? What about the Church?

**Search the Diocesan Resource Library online at:**  
**saskatoonrcdiocese.com/library/search.cfm**  
The Diocesan Resource Library – supported by the BAA!



## Launching Knights of Columbus project

Children from nearby St. Mary Catholic school sang the national anthem in Cree and in English at the Nov. 8 official launch of a new 75-unit affordable housing complex for seniors being built by KC Charities in Saskatoon's core neighbourhood, a block from St. Mary Catholic Church on 20th Street. The \$13.9 million Columbian Place is the latest faith-based affordable housing initiative undertaken by KC Charities in Saskatoon, working with all levels of government. The Knights of Columbus group also currently offers 127 housing units to 150 residents at Columbian Manor on Louise Street on the east side of the city. For more about the new Columbian Place project, see the article on the diocesan website at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm) - Photo by K. L. Yaworski



## Knights of Columbus retreat

Some 200 men from across the province gathered March 4-5 for inspirational talks, reflection and prayer as part of a men's retreat held at St. Patrick Parish Centre in Saskatoon. "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" was the theme of the spiritual weekend organized by the Saskatchewan State Council of the Knights of Columbus for all interested men, with sponsorship from the Saskatchewan Charitable Foundation, Knights of Columbus Insurance, and Msgr. Robinson Council. Speakers were Prince Albert Bishop Albert Thevenot; Saskatoon Eparchy Bishop Bryan Bayda; Deputy Supreme Knight Dennis Savoie of New Haven, Connecticut; Ken Miller of the Saskatchewan Roughriders; and singer Mark Mallett. "It is a wonderful thing to see so many men come together to re-investigate what we are in our Church and what we are in our community," Saskatchewan State Deputy Ed Gibney told the crowd, stressing the importance of gathering to share faith. See the article at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm) - Photo by K. L. Yaworski





### Fox Valley Lenten quilts

At St. Mary's Parish in Fox Valley, several women undertake a Lenten project to sew baby quilts and crochet baby afghans for *Birthright* (Regina) which is an organization that helps young mothers who have made the choice to keep their babies. The St. Mary's parishioners also donate some of the items to *First Steps* (the Neonatal unit in Lethbridge, AB), to the short term Mexico Missions, and *Real Choices* (Saskatoon). Responding to the needs of the children, these women get together once a week to cut, sew and press. Some sew or crochet baby quilts all year round just to donate to the children. This project is open to everyone. If you can't sew then you can cut, pin, press or just keep everyone company while they sew.

- Photo by Candace Koch



### Theology Uncorked

Sr. Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, examined spiritual themes found in the popular novel *The Shack* during a presentation at a *Theology Uncorked* faith discussion session March 31 at The Ivy in Saskatoon. To read more about the *Theology Uncorked* presentation check the diocesan news archive at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm)

- Photo by Anne-Marie Hughes



### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Burstall

An ecumenical service was held in January at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Burstall, SK. during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Pastor Larry Glaeske and some parishioners from St. Paul's Lutheran Church joined Catholic parishioners and Fr. Modestus Ngwu for the service and for socializing afterwards.

- Photo by Vivien Fiesel



### YMCA Peace Medal to Just Youth

Holy Cross High School alumni Michelle Hulak (left) and Liz Dubourt, and school chaplain Louise Bitz (centre) pose with a YMCA Peace Medal recently presented to the school's *Just Youth* group. Since the group was formed in 2003, it has undertaken mission work and fund-raising, advocacy and raising awareness about Development and Peace. To read more about the presentation check the news archive at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm)

- Photo by Karin Schweir

## Ireland will host Eucharistic Congress

The Irish bells are ringing out to welcome the Church to the International Eucharistic Congress next year, from June 10-17, 2012 in Dublin, Ireland.

The Congress in Dublin will feature a week-long program of events, reflections and celebrations, linking faith and culture, with a particular focus on the church as it gathers and encounters the Lord in word and sacrament, as well as a focus on the 50th anniversary of Vatican II.

At the request of Bishop Don Bolen, the diocese will consider ways for every parishioner to benefit from the Eucharistic Congress and its vision, with local events and catechesis over the next year.

Diocesan congress delegate and coordinator of Ministry to Tourism Fr. Ralph Kleiter is also organizing pilgrim journeys to Dublin, Ireland for the event.

A limited number of rooms close to main Congress venues have been secured and options for pilgrimage tours to Ireland in June 2012 have been prepared. Cost will range from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per person, depending on final program and airfare. **Serious applicants should immediately submit a deposit of \$250 per person (refundable) before May 30, 2011 as a limited number of rooms are allocated.** For details about three options for travel to the Dublin Eucharistic Congress, contact: [kleiter@shaw.ca](mailto:kleiter@shaw.ca) or Lois McKay at the Catholic Centre 306-242-1500, Ext. 233 or [agmckay1@shaw.ca](mailto:agmckay1@shaw.ca) or see the website: [pilgrimjourneys.ca](http://pilgrimjourneys.ca)

- KLY

## Macklin women create quilts to help those in need

BY NADEN HEWKO, MACKLIN

Providing warm yet attractive quilts for the needy is the goal of a group of Macklin and district women.

Their annual winter project produces over one hundred adult size and at least two dozen baby quilts for the Catholic Women's League Clothing Depot in Saskatoon.

A number of years ago, women were making quilts in their homes from remnants and discarded *fortrel* clothing. This polyester material never seemed to wear out, so dresses that were no longer fashionable were taken apart, cut into squares and made into cosy coverings. Some women who pursued this hobby and donated the quilts to charity included Rose Dewald, and Hilda Graf, both now deceased. To this day there are several other women who work diligently at home, making quilts and donating them to the CWL Clothing Depot.

Some of the women found all this sewing just too hard on their eyes, so they asked the Macklin Catholic Women's League if they would like to help with the work. The group agreed and other ladies, not members but who liked to quilt, also joined them.

In 2002 with Bertha Farkas as the coordinator, the local council picked up the project. Thick quality fibre fill batts are ordered from a local fabric store and paid for by the Catholic Women's League. The other materials are all donated.

The ladies who enjoy sewing make up the quilt covers, arranging the blocks of recycled fabric into attractive designs. Flannel or other soft material is used for the backing. After the



A group of Macklin women meet regularly to create warm and attractive quilts for distribution through the CWL Clothing Depot in Saskatoon's core neighbourhood. Some of the women participating in the project include: (standing, l-r) Adeline Knox, Angela Vetter, Imelda Feser, Barbara Moss, Angela Sieben, Lorraine Sieben, Maureen Stang, Ida Stang, Kay Zerr, Magdeline Vetter, Betty Bichel, Madeleine Gartner, and (seated, l-r) Dorothy Schulmeister, Betty Fischer and Bertha Farkas.

- Photo courtesy of Macklin Mirror

filling is inserted and stitched down around the edges, the quilt is turned and ready to be tied. The quilters gather in St. Mary's Catholic Church hall one afternoon a week. Using wool yarn and a large needle, the yarn is pulled through at regular intervals, thus securing the layers. It is then tied making a durable, warm quilt.

This is a great opportunity for the women to socialize while working for a good cause. They use material that would otherwise be wasted to make many serviceable covers. Lunch is shared

after the afternoon work is done. Up to 16 have turned out to help at one session.

When the quilting season is over, the women all gather for a pot-luck supper.

The quilts are taken to the Catholic Women's Clothing Depot by volunteers who happen to be driving to Saskatoon.

The Clothing Depot sells them at a low price so those who need them can afford to purchase them.

Proceeds from the sales are then used by the CWL for other charitable work.

Diocese of  
SASKATOON**BRAZILIAN BULLETIN**

sharing

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Archdiocese of  
MACEIÓ (BRAZIL)**NEWS FROM THE SASKATOON MISSION IN BRAZIL**

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, Sask., (Canada)

## Teachers visit Brazil mission



Sr. Louise Hinz, OSU, holds a baby receiving care through the project Bem Vindo Bebê, the Archbishop's project, supported by the diocese of Saskatoon after last year's flood.

BY LOUISE BITZ

HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL, SASKATOON

After six months of preparation, eight Greater Saskatoon Catholic School teachers – along with Mary Jacobi, Parish Life Director at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Saskatoon and chair of the Diocesan Mission Office – embarked on a two-week visit (Feb 13-27) to our Diocesan Mission in Brazil.

In addition to myself, the teachers included Joann Carson (St. Volodymyr), Barb Boryski (St. Volodymyr), Colette Bischoff (St. Mark), Sean Lewandoski (St. Mary), Dave Buttinger (Holy Cross), Val Udell (Viscount), and Reanne Lajeunesse (Bishop Klein).

In Brazil, we were warmly received by Ursulines of Bruno, Srs. Louise Hinz and Claire Novacosky, and Sisters of Mission Service, Srs. Marie-Noelle and Jeannine Rondot.

The experience took the Saskatoon visitors into three different communities where people persevere in their struggle to secure land. These communities are supported by the Catholic Church's commitment to the Land Reform Movement.

Some of the schools in Saskatoon participated in helping these communities by gathering donations of school



Visitors from the diocese of Saskatoon enjoy the hospitality of the Sisters of Mission Service as part of their pilgrimage to the Brazil Mission.

- Photos courtesy of the Brazil Mission Awareness Committee

supplies and money to help pay teacher salaries. It was indeed a joy to be able to offer this small but meaningful support to our sister church in Brazil. We take our freely accessed public education system for granted in Canada.

Over and over again, the visitors remarked on how inspirational the Sisters are. Their missionary work in Brazil has provided them with wisdom and joy; they live with generosity of spirit and attentiveness to the way of love. They bring encouragement and hope to everyone they meet.

We accompanied Sr. Louise and Brazilian Ursuline Sr. Francisca to Talitha, a home for street girls. We watched the girls swirl around Sr. Francisca as she helped them with their crafts and listened to their stories. (Meanwhile Sr. Louise was busy translating for us).

We watched Sr. Claire and Sr. Louise in the Archbishop's project Bem Vindo Bebê; they held the babies and warmly encouraged the mothers.

We witnessed Sr. Claire's motherly care for those struggling with addictions at the Farm of Hope.

We walked with Sr. Marie-Noelle as she introduced us to some of the families who live on the *Alto da Cocada* at São José da Laje; she knew them by name, knew their circumstances, knew their stories, and we felt the people's love of her.

The light and love of Christ shines

through these Sisters and eases the burden and pain of dire poverty in people's lives.

Sr. Jeannine accompanied us to a hospital, a school, and an orphanage. The hospital was stark and basic in its care; the school had dedicated teachers striving to do their best in basic schools to enable children to secure a better future for themselves; the orphanage, begun by Fr. Don Macgillivray, protected and cared for young boys who were unable to be raised in their homes.

We witnessed the long lasting love and regard for our Saskatchewan diocesan priests who had also dedicated their lives in service to the poor in Brazil over so many years.

After our two weeks in Brazil, we returned to our Catholic schools and our diocesan church in Saskatoon with a greater sense of the need to participate in the universal church. As people of privilege in Canada, our birthright calls us to deep responsibility in the world.

Having walked with our missionary Sisters, even for a short period of time, we recognize how we ourselves need to become rather radical in living a life of simplicity, spirit, generosity, and love. We are fortunate to have a diocesan mission; it invites each one of us to have a larger vision of what our church is and what our lives are for.

For more information or a presentation about the trip, contact Louise Bitz at Holy Cross: 659-7600.



Ursulines of Bruno: Srs. Claire Novacosky, Roseane da Silva, Francisca da Silva, and Louise Hinz (l-r).

## Family connections part of healing journey for men at Farm of Hope

By Sr. Claire Novacosky, OSU

Once a week, I go to visit the Farm of Hope (*Fazenda da Esperança*), a ministry for recovering addicts. During my visits I spend a lot of time listening to the heart-wrenching life stories of the men and the boys in the program. They are not allowed to have any visitors for their first three months at the Farm. All anxiously await the first visit from their family.

Speaking with Jorgevaldo after a visiting Sunday, I asked if he had received any visitors. "No," was his sad reply. "My parents are dead and my sisters and brother don't connect with me." My heart bled for him. I could not imagine someone without any family ties.

Often, problems in family life are connected to addictions. It is increasingly clear that the family too,

must be involved in the healing process. Their attitudes toward the recovering addict also need to be changed. Frequently there is a need for mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. Families must learn how to welcome and support their son after he returns from the Farm of Hope.

For this reason, GEV or *Grupo de Esperança Viva* (Group of Living Hope) was initiated some ten years ago for the recovering addicts, their families, friends and volunteers.

At weekly meetings, the gospel of the day is the main focus. The sharing of the Word inspires and motivates all present. It is a time and a space for families to express their concerns, hear testimonies from those who are recovering, and for all to live more intensely the charism of *hope*.



Sr. Claire Novacosky, OSU, leads an encounter at the Farm of Hope.



# Sisters bring hope and the warmth of relationship to the people on the hill in São José da Laje

BY COLETTE BISCHOFF

ST MARK SCHOOL, SASKATOON

Nine individuals from the Saskatoon diocese visited the *Alto da Cocada* or 'high' region of the city of Laje on Feb. 23. We trekked up the muddy slopes with Sr. Marie Noëlle Rondot, SMS, to meet some of the people who live there. The men were off working in the sugar cane fields, but the women and children were very welcoming and openly shared their stories. It was quite apparent that the Sisters have forged authentic, meaningful relationships through their love and support of the people on the hill.

Rosimilda is 17 yrs. old. She is married and lives with her mother-in-law who is 48 yrs. old and has 12 children. Rosimilda used to work seven days a week as a housekeeper for 190 reais per month (approx. \$112 CA), but quit when her employers wanted her to live in. Her husband works in the sugar

cane fields. He leaves at 4 a.m. and returns about 5 p.m., earning a maximum of 280 reais per month (\$165 CA) depending on how much cane he can cut. The women get up early – about 2 a.m. – to make lunch for their husbands.

Odeti is an amazing woman with "a whole bunch of children." She was not able to tell us how old she is, but thought she was past 40. Two of her older sons live in the houses on either side of hers. Odeti is hoping to expand her own mud/stick home to include a separate area for the children to sleep. Right now, the children sleep on the floor of the main living space. The government eventually wants to replace these mud homes with concrete ones because of an insect that burrows in the mud and causes a heart disease called *Chagas*. Sadly, we learned that in Alagoas, Brazil, funds allocated by the federal government often get

squandered by municipal governments. Therefore, how long it will actually take before the mud homes get replaced remains to be seen.

The children play happily with whatever means are available to them. Some children of the Alto do go to school. The government provides a monthly allowance per child to encourage education. Unfortunately, this money is often needed for food.



The children play happily with whatever means are available to them. These two young boys (left) enjoy hoeing the dirt and Josellia (right) was very curious about the visitors in her village.

## Hummingbirds become symbol of beauty and activity experienced in visit to diocesan mission

BY JOANN CARSON

ST. VOLODYMYR SCHOOL, SASKATOON

In the months prior to our February visit to Brazil, our teachers' group met monthly to discuss topics related to our Catholic identity and the history and present situation in Brazil. Closer to our time of departure we were asked to think about gifts that could be given to our hosts and places that we would visit. I began to think about some stained glass hummingbirds that I had made in the past as gifts. I thought they would be a special little hand-made gift from Canada, so I made fifteen. At the time, I did not know the story of the hummingbird and how they would have their own special significance in Brazil.

While we were in Brazil, we visited people and places that our Ursulines Sisters and Sisters of Mission Service are connected with. We visited the Farm of Hope (a faith-based addiction centre for men), an orphanage, three different schools, three communities of people struggling to obtain land in the land reform movement, Talitha (a home for young girls rescued from the street), some of the poor families who live on the hill in São José da Laje, and the Archbishop's project for young mothers with babies. Whenever we could, we left a gift of a stained glass hummingbird. They were always received with great delight.

As I returned back to the reality of my everyday life, I thought more about what I was to do with the Brazil experience and what it meant for me to live out more of the "mission Church" aspect of my faith. We saw so much poverty, and desperate situations, yet also witnessed so much faith, hope and love. We were united in our belief in a God who cares for us.

At our get-together a few weeks after returning home, Margaret Sanche of the Brazil Mission Awareness Committee recalled a hummingbird story told by one of our diocesan missionaries a number of years ago. Here is a version of that story, as told by by

Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai when she addressed international educators at a conference in Montreal:

One day a terrible fire broke out in a forest - a huge woodland was suddenly engulfed by a raging wild fire. Frightened, all the animals fled their homes and ran out of the forest. As they came to the edge of a stream they stopped to watch the fire and they were feeling very discouraged and powerless. They were all bemoaning the destruction of their homes. Every one of them thought there was nothing they could do about the fire, except for one little hummingbird. This particular hummingbird decided it would do something. It swooped into the stream and picked up a few drops of water and went into the forest and put them on the fire. Then it went back to the stream and did it again, and it kept going back, again and again and again. All the other animals watched in disbelief; some tried to discourage the hummingbird with comments like, "Don't bother, it is too much, you are too little, your wings will burn, your beak is too tiny, it's only a drop, you can't put out this fire." And as the animals stood around disparaging the little bird's efforts, the bird noticed how hopeless and forlorn they looked. Then one of the animals shouted out and challenged the hummingbird in a mocking voice, "What do you think you are doing?" And the hummingbird, without wasting time or losing a beat, looked back and said, "I am doing what I can."

Like that hummingbird, we each must do what we can. It gave me peace to know that I don't have to carry the burden of the many situations we saw, and the knowledge that in some way God will inspire me to do what I can, however small it may seem. The hummingbirds have become for me very special, and looking at mine will continually remind me of my journey and how my faith has been influenced by the people I met and the places I visited.



Sr. Marie Noëlle Rondot, SMS, (right) with Titiane and her daughter.



Sisters of Mission Service Srs. Jeannine and Marie-Noëlle Rondot.



Rosimilda bathes her young baby.

# Liebenthal CWL celebrates 50 years

BY JOAN WAGNER

The Liebenthal Sacred Heart Catholic Women's League council recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Liebenthal Sacred Heart and a council from the neighbouring country parish of St. John's officially became CWL councils on April 13, 1961. The first director of both was Fr. Reschney.

Liebenthal began with 19 members. St John's began with 30 charter members. The St. John's church closed and the CWL members joined Liebenthal parish on April 22, 1965 bringing the membership to 44 women. Today the Sacred Heart CWL council has nine members.

The council celebrated the 50th anniversary with a gathering Sunday, March 27. The day began with celebration of Mass at 11 a.m. with Fr. Modestus Ngwu, OP.

Gerri Holmes, provincial CWL president, carried the banner. All nine CWL members participated in the Mass. Prayers were offered in remembrance of deceased charter members

Following Mass, everyone gathered at the hall for dinner and a program. The theme for the day was love. The word Liebenthal means "Valley of Love."

President Cheryl Eresman was MC for the program. A spiritual reading and CWL summary were read. The charter members of both

councils were recognized and introduced. Guest speakers were Gerri Holmes, a former Liebenthal resident, now provincial CWL president. Also speaking was Betty Kuntz, Liebenthal's first president in 1961.

Susan Melchiorre, CWL diocesan president brought greetings and presented a plaque from CWL national. Gerri Holmes presented a certificate from provincial. Tillie Aessie, provincial president-elect was also in attendance.

Letters of congratulations were read from Bishop Donald Bolen, the national executive and former council members. Congratulations were also given by parish council, the Knights of Columbus and Fox



Charter members of Sacred Heart CWL at the 50th anniversary celebration March 27 in Liebenthal. - Photo by Joan Wagner

Valley and Leader CWL councils. Cheryl Eresman wrote and sang a song called "For God and Canada," and entertainment was by "The Sisters of Liebenthal" who sang three songs. The day ended with singing the League Song and a closing prayer.

# 'Holy Yoga' practiced in context of Christian belief

BY ANNE-MARIE HUGHES

Wearing a shirt to work that says "Jesus is my personal trainer" is just one of the benefits Shirley Berthelet has found since she discovered a way to combine a fitness career with her deep Catholic faith.

Two years ago, after being involved with teaching fitness for six years, Berthelet found herself at a crossroads. Berthelet had been leading yoga classes at city facilities for four years, and found the benefits to herself and her students to be huge, but as she pursued more training and advanced classes she definitely felt in conflict with her Catholic Christian faith.

"I found myself uncomfortable in those surroundings," said Berthelet, "and I wondered about pursuing any more training. It was becoming more and more a spiritual practice that didn't acknowledge Jesus Christ or my Christian spirituality."

While discerning if she was going to discontinue further yoga, Berthelet came across a biography in a resource book for Brooke Boon who had founded "Holy Yoga", a program for Christ-centered yoga. It gave her an avenue to pursue. It wasn't a Catholic perspective, but it put the physical yoga practice firmly in the context of Christian belief and kept Christ at the centre of it all.

Berthelet decided to delve into the program and traveled to Arizona to attend a workshop there. One of the resources she discovered in her studies was a letter to bishops on some aspects of Christian meditation, written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in 1989 before he became Pope Benedict XVI.

"It was a revelation to find there was Catholic guidance and teaching about exactly what I was going through," says Berthelet. "It was intended to serve as a reference point for



Lauren Jardine, Debbie Bauche, Sonia Kucey, Shirley Berthelet, Loretta Simonot, and Samantha Berthelet pose during one of the Holy Yoga gatherings at St. Philip Neri parish. - Photo by Anne-Marie Hughes

the different forms of prayer practiced today."

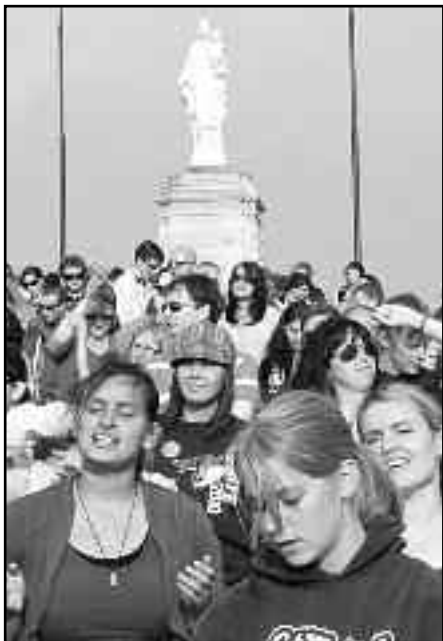
Armed with her new-found information, Berthelet decided she would continue to teach fitness yoga at city leisure centers, but that she also wanted to start her own Holy Yoga classes where she could fully incorporate her faith and spirituality into the practice.

Each session begins with a piece of scripture and biblical reflection followed by a few moments of meditation before the physical component begins. "This is a thought participants can be mindful of throughout the practice and the rest of the day," says Berthelet. "We can use our minds, bodies, and our spirits to de-stress and become more receptive to God in our lives."

During the poses, Christian music plays in

the background and Berthelet subtly changes some instructions to bring the practice into a Christian focus. Sun salutations can become "Son (of God)" salutations and open palms become praise hands. "The sole purpose is to facilitate a Christ-honouring experience that offers an opportunity for participants to authentically connect to God through his word, worship, and wellness," explains Berthelet.

Worship sessions have been offered at both St. Anne and St. Philip Neri parishes in Saskatoon. Classes are now being offered at both St. Philip Neri parish and Cornerstone Church in Saskatoon. Holy Yoga has also been also offered as a diocesan *Foundations: Exploring Our Faith* presentation at St. Anne's parish in Saskatoon.



## Rock the Mount

The shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at Carmel, SK. west of Humboldt, will again be the site of a day of prayer, Catholic bands, and Christian witness as youth and families gather for the free all-day Catholic youth rally *Rock the Mount* on Saturday, Sept. 3. This year's theme is "Let it be done to me according to your word." - KLY

## 'Jesus Lives Forever' outdoor performance at Mission Hill in July

A drama about the life of Jesus and Mary will again be presented by volunteers in the natural outdoor setting of Mission Hill, east of Bellevue, SK., **July 15-17** and **July 22-23**. All performances start at 5 p.m. For more information call: 1-877-449-7444 or see: [www.missionhillproductions.com](http://www.missionhillproductions.com)

# Face to Face Ministries featured at 'Fully Alive' event in Humboldt

BY MARIE-LOUISE TERNIER-GOMMERS

"What if you receive a beautiful birthday gift one year," started Ken Yasinski, leader and speaker with Face to Face Ministries, "and, after

admiring the beautiful wrapping paper, you tuck it away under your bed without opening it. Every year you bring out the gift again and admire its wrapping. What's wrong

with this picture?"

Yasinski posed the question to the 120 participants at St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt, gathered from across the province for a *Fully Alive Conference* in November 2010. Yasinski's question became an apt analogy for our tendency to admire the gift God has given us in Jesus Christ, but our failure or inability to truly open the gift and enter into a relationship with what is inside the gift wrapping.

The *Fully Alive Conference* helped participants unwrap God's gift in Jesus through challenging and engaging talks, touching skits, small group sharing, and inspiring prayer times.

Opportunity was provided to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation and to request individual prayer ministry.

Unforgiveness in our hearts, noted Yasinski, can block our ability

to enter a personal love relationship with Jesus. After clarifying that forgiveness does not equal condoning the injustice or dismissing the pain, participants were invited to write a letter of forgiveness to someone in their lives whom they have difficulty extending forgiveness to, without necessarily intending to send the letter.

"Forgiveness is meant to set us free to love," explained Yasinski.

In his final talk on the obligation to evangelize, Yasinski shared a conversation with an evangelical Christian who questioned him on the Catholic belief in Christ's real presence in the Eucharist.

"I was all ready to give him a solid explanation on the doctrine of transubstantiation," said Yasinski, "but to my surprise that is not what he asked about."

Instead, he was asked why the lives of Catholics do not seem to be

transformed by this radical belief in Christ's real presence.

Yasinski acknowledged that his evangelical friend's question revealed an embarrassing irony: while Catholics claim to receive the real presence of Jesus in every Sunday Eucharist, the evangelical zeal to live transformed lives with a missionary spirit can't be seen in the majority of Catholics.

Yasinski urged participants to take seriously the words of the dismissal rite in the Eucharist: *go in peace to love and serve the Lord*. Just as the first disciples were sent forth to share good news, so are we.

Over the past 10 years, Face to Face Ministries has focused primarily on offering youth retreats, but the ministry has now expanded to include families and parish retreats. The Humboldt event was the first adults-only Face to Face conference to be offered in Saskatchewan.



## Cornerstone praise and worship

Face to Face Ministries and Catholic Christian Outreach again offered monthly Cornerstone faith enrichment gatherings for young adults throughout the university term. The March Cornerstone event featured Bishop Donald Bolen speaking on giving others an account of our hope.





### Nuclear waste resolution

Catholic Women's League provincial resolutions chair Jean Reader (seated), president-elect Tillie Aessie and president Gerri Holmes (standing, l-r) recently presented Saskatchewan's energy and resources minister Bill Boyd with a resolution entitled "Nuclear Waste Disposal" passed this year at the provincial CWL convention. The resolution calls for broad consultation on nuclear fuel waste storage and urged establishment of a committee representing "all of the stakeholders" to discuss the issues around nuclear waste. The resolution's preamble noted that the 2009 Perrins Report showed that 86 per cent of the 900 respondents were strongly opposed to nuclear waste being stored or disposed of in Saskatchewan.

- Photo courtesy of The Press Review, Eston

## Development and Peace solidarity visitor from Philippines speaks in Saskatoon

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The work of Development and Peace and its partners in the Philippines was highlighted by solidarity visitor Eleazar Gomez during a recent visit to Saskatoon as part of the Canadian Catholic organization's Share Lent campaign: "Building a World of Justice."

Gomez took part in a number of gatherings in the diocese of Saskatoon, including a Share Lent meal at St. Anne parish in Saskatoon, a gathering with the local Filipino community, a young adult Theology on Tap evening, and a meeting with pastors and parish representatives from across the diocese.

Gomez is the program services head of the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA) for the Philippines Conference of Catholic Bishops. He also recently held the position of regional program coordinator of Caritas Asia for Sustainable Agriculture and Farmers' Rights.

In his presentation to parish leaders April 7 in Saskatoon, Gomez introduced Asia and the challenges faced by the continent. He explained how the poor in Asia are among the most vulnerable to disasters and climate change. "In all these crises, it is always the poor that suffer most."

He stressed that the connection with Development and Peace and the initiatives that flow from that are making a difference to the people of Asia and the Philippines, and help to provide hope in the midst of the many challenges.

Armella Sonntag, Development and Peace animator for four dioceses, Keewatin-Le Pas, Prince Albert, Saskatoon and



Armella Sonntag, provincial Development and Peace animator; Eleazar Gomez, solidarity visitor from the Philippines; and Gertrude Rompré, co chair of the diocesan Development and Peace committee (l-r) during the recent visit.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

Regina, provided an overview of the work of the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. During the past 43 years, it has provided \$575 million to finance 15,800 projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

The full article about the solidarity visit is online at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm)

## Trip opens eyes to impact of aid

During a recent trip to Bangladesh in southern Asia, Kerrobert resident Bev Murphy saw first hand the impact of work being done by Chalice, an international Catholic sponsoring and development organization.

Murphy said that the two-week mission tour to Bangladesh Nov. 15 to Dec. 1 clearly demonstrated to her how every donation makes a difference. "I was reminded of where in the Bible Jesus said 'Come and see', and sometimes I think that's just about what you have to do to believe it."

Murphy's 13-year-old granddaughter Ali Tuchscherer accompanied her on the Chalice mission tour along with 11 others.

- KLY



Bev Murphy of Kerrobert was excited to be able to meet Antora Das (right), the child she sponsors through Chalice.

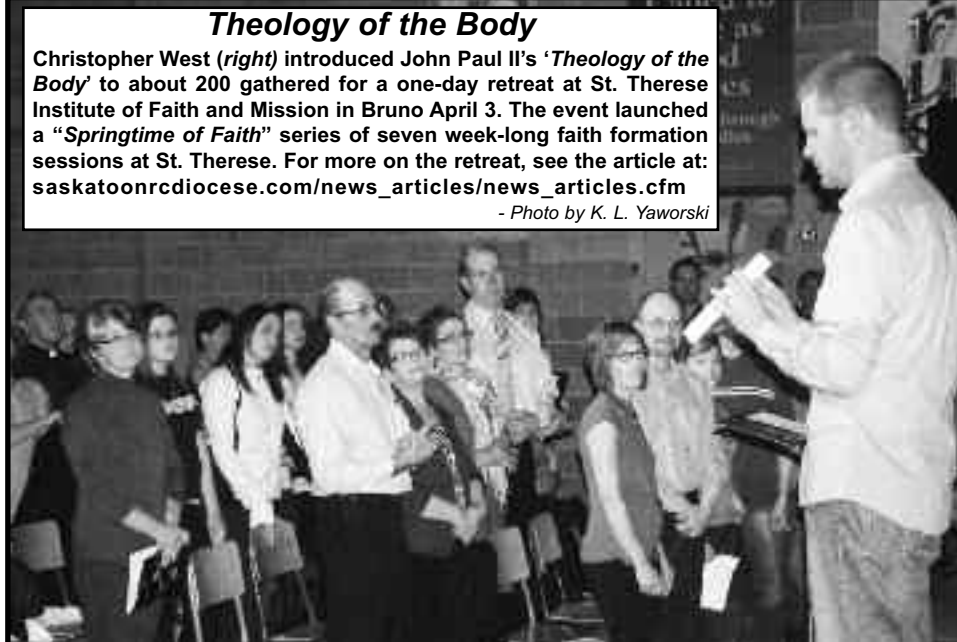
- Photo by Ali Tuchscherer

For the complete interview with Bev Murphy about her mission tour, see the diocesan news archive online at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_article/s/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_article/s/news_articles.cfm)

### Theology of the Body

Christopher West (right) introduced John Paul II's 'Theology of the Body' to about 200 gathered for a one-day retreat at St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission in Bruno April 3. The event launched a "Springtime of Faith" series of seven week-long faith formation sessions at St. Therese. For more on the retreat, see the article at: [saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news\\_articles/news\\_articles.cfm](http://saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news_articles/news_articles.cfm)

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski



## Queen's House offers 'essential space' for retreat and reflection

By LUCIE LEDUC

### QUEEN'S HOUSE

Recall a retreat you have made that nourished or even helped to transform your life. Retreat houses are essential spaces for consecrating time away from the busy and often noisy lives we find ourselves in to re-create space and connection with God in our lives.

Queen's House in Saskatoon

offers a variety of retreat and renewal opportunities for the faith community and facility booking opportunities for the community at large.

Highlights at Queen's House this year have included Sr. Rosalyn Miller, OSU, leading a group of seniors in retreat mornings she entitles "Living Fully Our Wisdom Years." These retreat mornings for

seniors have been offered for the past four years and provide spiritual uplift, social connection and good-natured fun.

Fr. Kevin McGee and Marge Copeland led a group of 20 participants through an introductory Centering Prayer Retreat. Using short DVD presentations from the Contemplative Outreach Centre and several of their own presentations, they gave the group some basic principles of centering prayer along with the experience of the prayer. Weekly follow up gatherings are held 7 to 8 p.m. Monday evenings at Queen's House.

Other weekend retreats have included a Faith and Sharing Retreat where Fr. Paul Fachel, OMI combined reflections from Sieger Koder's work of art "The Washing of Feet" and Jean Vanier's book *Drawn into the Mystery of Christ Through the Gospel of John*, to lead a group of ten more deeply into the love of Christ for the world.

An Ecumenical Retreat for Women with Cara Driscoll and Marilyn Scheske delved into the ancient Biblical concept of "Shalom" and it's meaning for living lives in wholeness and completeness.

In November, The Spiritual Days *Twelve Step* Retreat led by Brad Bodnarchuk and Brian Bauche renewed sixteen people on their

twelve-step journeys. A grief retreat led by Sarah Donnelly ministered to the needs of a group of widowers, and a Women's Wellness Day retreat led by Gisele Bauche ministered to a sponsored group of inner city women.

An ecumenical Advent retreat with Bishop Don Bolen led more than 30 people on a journey of remembering to prepare the way of the Lord, seeing everyone who thirsts, and becoming bearers of mystery for the world.

The ecumenical Scripturefest: *Women in Scripture* featured keynote presenter Christian Eberhart. Panel presenters Sr. Teresita Kambeitz, OSU, Jan Bigland-Pritchard and Pastor Vern Ratzlaff considered what women in the Bible have to say to women and the church today.

Spiritual directors and others took part in a weekend learning and experiencing the practice of focusing with Esther Stenberg. Still others found their retreat nourishment with Dean Bauche in a workshop on "Art and Contemplation" or the Lenten Retreat with Fr. Paul Fachel, OMI on "Baptism into the Death and Resurrection of Jesus in the Four Gospels."

Silent directed retreats, private retreats and several evening series presented by Sr. Judy Schachtel and Sr. Felicitas Drobig, OSU, are

among the other opportunities that have been offered for spiritual renewal.

The other significant side to retreat and renewal ministry are the hundreds of partnerships forged with groups, organizations and businesses who make Queen's House their home for meetings, retreats, and workshops.

These partnerships provide important financial support to our work – vital for the future sustainability of Queen's House – and in turn provide the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and staff the opportunity to be the face of the gospel to our community.

Practical support of Queen's House also includes participation in fundraising initiatives, volunteer work, financial donations, and the prayer and care of the many faithful friends of Queen's House.

Currently, the month-long May *Spring Fling* lottery; a June 25 golf tournament; an Aug. 6 bike-a-thon; and an *Extreme Makeover Campaign* are underway. Support for these fundraising projects continues to grow and provides for the ongoing health of the ministry.

Whatever the season or reason, Queen's House welcomes friends and strangers; any and all seeking sacred space on their spiritual journey. For more information call 242-1916 or see: [www.queens.org](http://www.queens.org)

### Queen's House— supported by the BAA!

Queen's House retreat & renewal centre		2011 PROGRAMS <a href="http://www.queenshouse.org">www.queenshouse.org</a>	
<b>MAY</b>			
Taizé May 10			
A Day Away May 11			
LUCIE LEDUC & PAUL FACHET, omi			
Making the Talk Last a Lifetime May 14			
LEAH PERRAULT			
A Spiritual Journey with Psalms May 14			
GISELE BAUCHE & ARLENE BOULANGER			
Parish Secretaries Retreat May 18			
Living Fully Our Wisdom Years May 19			
ROSALYN MILLER, osu			
CWL Twilight Evening May 19			
DIANE SEHN, osu			
<b>JUNE</b>			
Lay Formation June 3-5			
Women in Ministry June 12-14			
MARIE-LOUISE TERNIER-GOMMERS & TEAM			
Taizé June 14			
Living Fully Our Wisdom Years June 16			
Silent Directed Retreat June 19-24			
<b>Ecospirituality: the "Kindom" of God -</b>			
MARK HATHAWAY June 23-26			
<b>Golf Tournament June 25</b>			
<b>JULY</b>			
The Way of the Heart Retreat July 4-7			
SHIRLEY BERTHELET & ELAINE ZAKRESKI			
Fellowship: A Retreat for Men July 4-7			
BRAD BODNARCHUK & BRIAN BAUCHE			
Ignatian Silent Directed Retreat July 4-11			
GEORGE MORRIS, sj			
Demystifying Mysticism July 7-10			
RON ROLHEISER, omi			
Retreat on Genesis Ch 1-11 July 11-14			
PAUL FACHET, omi			
A Three Day Retreat for Artists July 11-14			
GISELE BAUCHE			
Artful Dialogue w/Mother Nature July 11-14			
FELICITAS DROBIG, osu			
<b>AUGUST</b>			
Bike-A-Thon August 6			
601 Taylor Street West Saskatoon SK S7M 0C9 tel: (306) 242-1916 fax: (306) 653-5941			
DO YOU NEED A FACILITY? BOOK QUEEN'S HOUSE TODAY! (306) 242-1916 / <a href="mailto:bookings@queenshouse.org">bookings@queenshouse.org</a>			



## Ecumenical group works to raise awareness about homelessness

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

In an ongoing effort to raise awareness about homelessness, the Broadway Nutana Ecumenical Homelessness Committee recently set up “red tent” displays in several of its member churches in the southeast Saskatoon neighbourhood.

The small one-person folding red tents feature bold white lettering that reads: “End homelessness now!” and: “The committee calls upon federal, provincial and territorial governments to address homelessness and inadequate housing as a national emergency.”

The red tents are part of a national campaign to draw attention to homelessness and inadequate housing across Canada, said Brian Murphy, chair of the ecumenical homelessness committee that includes St. Joseph and St. Francis Xavier Catholic parishes, St. James and St. Timothy Anglican churches; Augustana Lutheran Church, Grace Westminster United Church, and a Community of Christ congregation.

“We are all small congregations, and so we’re trying to work together to see whether we can do more as a group than we could do individually,” said Murphy, who also chairs the justice and peace committee at St. Joseph. “And maybe we’ll have a bit more left when we write to government” or advocate for the homeless in other ways, he said.

At St. Francis Xavier parish, where one of the red tents was on display, committee member and parish pastoral associate Judy Schmid explained to the congregation how homelessness affects the working poor; women and children fleeing violence; youth at risk; seniors, families and others who can’t afford increasingly high rent; as well as the mentally ill, those on social assistance, and “couch surfers” who move from place to place, relying



Young parishioners at St. Francis Xavier parish in Saskatoon were recently exploring the red tent on display to raise awareness about homelessness in the city and across Canada.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski

on temporary accommodation with friends and family.

The Red Tents were used across the country to highlight Bill C-304, a private member’s Bill to establish a national housing strategy to ensure adequate, accessible and affordable housing across the country, Murphy explained.

A “Canada Without Poverty” lobby group based in Ottawa encouraged using the red tents at gatherings across the country in October 2010 (including at a rally at Saskatoon city hall), when Bill C-304 was before Parliament. Although the bill made it through its second reading, it was one of the pieces of legislation that died when the May 2 federal election was called. National housing legislation now has to

start from scratch after the election. Those concerned about the issue are being encouraged to contact their Member of Parliament.

Canada is the only G8 country without a national housing strategy, Murphy said. “It would behoove Canada, which wants to have a lead role in the G8, to have a similar policy,” he said. “And a strategy certainly is needed. We can see that in Saskatoon.”

Studies and statistics reveal that both hidden and absolute homelessness are experienced by individuals and families in Saskatoon – with estimates that some 6,000 are affected. Multiple and large rent increases, and a loss of rental units to condominium conversions have also resulted in those on low incomes losing their homes. Nationally, the

advocacy group Canada Without Poverty reports that an estimated 150,000 to 300,000 persons experience “absolute” homelessness in Canada, living in shelters or on the streets.

A national housing strategy would ensure that the cost of housing in Canada does not prevent individuals and families from meeting other basic needs, such as food, clothing and education. “So many people now have to choose, asking ‘do we eat this week, or do we pay the rent?’”

Another goal is to affirm that “decent shelter is a natural human right, as proclaimed by the United Nations,” he added.

In warmer areas, such as Vancouver, the red tents have actually been distributed to those without shelter — but that would obviously not work during a prairie winter, Murphy said.

In addition, civic authorities in some communities, such as Saskatoon, have made it clear they will not permit people to live in tents.

In any case, the homeless don’t want tents to live in — they want a solution to the problem, he stressed.

Other projects undertaken by the Broadway-Nutana Ecumenical Homelessness Committee have included an information meeting about the issue, and a recent campaign to collect backpacks and luggage, which resulted in 300 pieces of luggage being distributed to homeless individuals and families at Saskatoon women’s shelters, youth crisis centres and other helping agencies.

“It’s a problem, especially for women with small children fleeing a violent situation, winding up on the doorstep of a shelter, with their few belongings carried in a garbage bag. That’s terrible. It is especially hard on the youngsters,” Murphy said, describing how backpacks and bags are “more secure and certainly more dignified.”

## Catholic schools partner with Friendship Inn to help supply food staples

BY BLAKE SITTLER

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the diocese of Saskatoon are collaborating with the Friendship Inn to help supply staple food items to some of those in most urgent need.

The project stemmed from a conversation about schools partnering with the Friendship Inn, which feeds the hungry and offers other supports in Saskatoon’s core neighbourhood (www.sfinn.ca). A similar experiment was attempted earlier.

“Two students from St. Luke volunteered for their confirmation project and wanted to fill the shelves. They went back to their school and then the whole school raised cereal for the Inn,” recounted Friendship Inn director Geselle Doell.

Unlike a general food drive, however, this new project aims to gather specific staple foods most often needed by the Friendship Inn. These staples include breakfast cereal, pasta, sugar, powdered milk and canned fruit and vegetables.

The pilot project, which has been in development since September 2010, unfolds in two parts. The first step includes a presentation to the entire school from representatives of the Friendship Inn, the school division and the Catholic Pastoral Center.

During this first week, students study age-appropriate material about the gospel values of charity, love and justice. Gilbert Chevrier, Religious Education Coordinator for Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, put together much of the resources for the schools.



The St. Bernard Catholic school community gathered with Geselle Doell of Saskatoon Friendship Inn to share their donations.

- Photo by Blake Sittler

“In the early grades, we build on their natural desire to help others by teaching about the Christian virtue of charity... In the older grades, the virtue of justice is promoted by having the students reflect on questions like, ‘Why are people hungry? What are the causes of poverty in Saskatoon?’” explained Chevrier.

The second part of the project involves the elementary school children actively gathering food donations. Each school only collects one particular item during their two-week partnership.

The final part of the project includes staff from the Friendship Inn picking up the food from the particular school. Many students offer help in carrying the food to the van.

Project coordinators were hoping to attract five schools to the pilot project but found themselves inundated with over a dozen schools wanting to be part of the fledgling outreach.

In a letter to the schools, it is noted that the Friendship Inn provides more than simply food, “it is also a place of friendship, safety and acceptance... Even when physical hunger is satiated, the hunger for friendship and community remains.” The letter is signed by Friendship Inn director Geselle Doell, Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen and Bev Hanson, Director of Education for GSCS.

The theme of the project is “Pooling our Love for the Friendship Inn” and is represented by a children’s pool filled with food.

The first school to take part was St. Bernard elementary school in the Lakeview neighbourhood. Principal Darren

Hyshka took the idea to his staff and parent committee and found many were eager to participate.

“Many of us are very fortunate to have never experienced extreme hunger in our life. As Catholic Christian people, it is our responsibility to share our blessings with others and especially those in need. As teachers, we also need to provide opportunities for our students to learn and instil the gospel virtues of love and respect, service and social justice,” said Hyshka.

“It was our aspiration that this opportunity provided our students with the experience, compassion and knowledge to continue to share their blessings with others,” he added.

After the last school in the pilot year completes the project, teachers, students and coordinators will evaluate and plan for the next school year. Coordinators of the project say that they hope to see this become a regular practice of Catholic elementary schools in the future.

Catholic schools currently involved include: St. Bernard, Georges Vanier, Pope John Paul, St. Gerard, St. George, Fr. Robinson, St. Peter, St. Matthew, St. Angela, St. Edward, St. Philip, St. John, Bishop Pocock, and Mother Teresa.

Opening its doors in March 1969, the Friendship Inn is open 365 days of the year, serving breakfast and lunch. On the first day it opened, the Inn served six people breakfast. Now the Inn serves 500 meals a day. The Friendship Inn has long been one of the ministries supported by the diocesan Bishop’s Annual Appeal, and the diocese recently handed over full ownership of the building to the helping agency.

Friendship Inn – supported by the Bishop’s Annual Appeal!



### Building donated

Bishop Don Bolen handed over the key of the Friendship Inn building to director Geselle Doell in a ceremony Dec. 15, 2010, to officially mark the diocese’s donation of the building to the downtown helping agency, which is planning to expand its facility.

- Photo by K. L. Yaworski