

**Lay Formation**  
DIOCESE OF SASKATOON • Pages 16-17

BEING  
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INTO THE  
IMAGE OF GOD

**Blumenfeld:**  
100th Anniversary of prairie  
church will be celebrated  
at annual pilgrimage  
Sunday, June 28  
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**Year of Consecrated Life**  
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# Newsletter of the Diocese of Saskatoon

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APRIL 2015

## New programs will focus on outreach to those in need

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A strong desire to encourage Catholics to reach out to those in need emerged from last year's diocesan discernment about ordaining permanent deacons.

That desire was behind the establishment of two committees: one to explore the creation of a new one-year "ministry of outreach" formation program that could be connected to the Lay Formation program, and another to explore options for the formation of permanent deacons, based on a model of service.

"We are fostering a vision that would see deacons providing tangible service to those in need, both inside and outside of the church," said Bishop Donald Bolen. "It would be a deacon's responsibility not only to be engaged in that outreach, but to encourage the entire community to reach out to others as an intrinsic part of the gospel."

Service is a gospel call for the entire church, Bolen stressed. "Both of these new initiatives will give us the opportunity as church to be more deeply and more effectively present to our sisters and brothers – including many of us ourselves – who carry wounds, who are suffering, or who struggle in one way or another," he said. "The goal is to be a more compassionate and caring community."

Equipping and empowering Catholics to serve those in greatest need is the vision behind the proposed "ministry of outreach" formation program that the planning committee



### Holy Thursday

**Eight-month-old Sawyer Sapp watches with interest as Bishop Donald Bolen washes her feet at the Mass of the Lord's Supper April 2 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family, in the ceremony recalling Christ's example of service for his disciples.**

- Photo by Tim Yaworski

has begun to sketch out, said Bolen. "It's very exciting to look at the prospects of what that program could contribute to our diocese," he said.

"A second committee was established to work specifically on diaconal formation, asking how we could

build on existing programs and courses for formation of permanent deacons. They too have made excellent progress and come up with suggestions and recommendations which seem feasible and fruitful."

**DIACONATE continued on Page 2**

## Responding to the assisted suicide ruling

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Since the Supreme Court of Canada ruling Feb. 6 striking down the ban on assisted suicide, members of the Catholic community have been among those expressing profound

concern about the implications and dangers of the decision.

In media statements, postcard campaigns, letters to elected representatives, letters to the editor, as well as parish and diocesan

presentations in recent weeks, Bishop Donald Bolen, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, parishes, organizations and individual Catholics have raised concerns.

"I'm very proud of what the diocese has done and how many people have engaged in this vitally important discussion," said Bishop Bolen.

"I urge us all to continue our efforts. We are living in a critical moment where decisions are still being made. We are capable of making a difference on this question in the here and now, both on a provincial and a national level."

The court gave the federal government one year to come up with new legislation around physician-assisted suicide. However, under Section 33 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the federal government also has the power to invoke a "notwithstanding clause" to overrule the court for up to five years at a time. This is the action that many of those opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia are requesting.

The court decision leaves health care providers and physicians uncertain about the implications of permitting doctors to help individuals kill themselves. Some organizations are already trying to address it through discussions and in policy.

When the College of Physicians and

Surgeons of Saskatchewan recently invited feedback on a draft conscientious refusal policy, a local diocesan working group distributed information and encouraged parishioners to respond.

Some 4,000 responses raised concerns about the draft policy that would require doctors to refer for, or at times provide, services even if those services violate a doctor's conscience. At a recent meeting to consider the draft policy, the CPSS sent it back to committee for further discussion (*see related article on Page 2*).

"We were very grateful to hear of the vigorous discussion among doctors at the meeting of the CPSS, and that they have chosen to delay the vote in order to discern more about this important issue," said Bolen.

Bolen also expressed appreciation for the diocesan working group which includes representatives from Catholic health groups, the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy, clergy in the diocese, pastoral centre staff, and the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission. "Every member of the committee is doing wonderful work, but I would highlight the contribution made by Mary Deutscher, who brought her expertise and her deeply Christian, Catholic moral vision and her extensive knowledge, and put them at the service of the church."



### Way of the Cross

The suffering and death of Jesus was connected to suffering and injustice in the world during the Good Friday Way of the Cross through the streets of Saskatoon April 3. Different groups led prayers on various themes for the 14 stations of the ecumenical event, including Micah Mission, which walks with inmates and ex-inmates; Voices of Our Sisters, an ecumenical event about missing and murdered Aboriginal women; L'Arche Saskatoon; other groups such as Development and Peace, the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, parish nurses, and hospital chaplains, as well as local church leaders.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

**MORE on Assisted Suicide Issue INSIDE:**  
CPSS Policy P. 2 / Congress P. 4 / Concerns P. 6-8





**Knights of Columbus Faith Enrichment**

A faith enrichment weekend for men was held March 20-21 at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon, organized by the Knights of Columbus. The provincial event attracted some 90 participants from across Saskatchewan. The theme was “You will all be brothers: our vocation to fraternity” and speakers included KC State Chaplain Bishop Albert Thévenot of Prince Albert, Rev. Amanda Currie of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon, Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner, OMI, and Fr. Steve Morrissey, CSsR, Saskatoon KC Chapter Chaplain.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Diaconate discernment update

(Continued from Front Page)

The bishop said the next step will be to bring the work of the two committees together, to determine what resources, staffing and funding would be needed to make their suggestions a reality. At that point, the third committee – which will deal with the finances – will get to work.

“Pope Francis has inspired us with his outreach and with his common sense concern for those who are hurting or marginalized, consistently saying that the Church needs to be there for them,” noted Bolen. “The Church can never be indifferent to human suffering. The gospel is meant to be lived out.”

It is hoped that both the formation program for laity and the plan for formation of permanent deacons in the diocese will be in place by the fall of 2016, said Bolen.

An extensive discernment was held last year in the diocese of Saskatoon about whether or not to ordain permanent deacons, an order of the clergy restored after the Second Vatican Council. Regina and Prince Albert dioceses are also now forming and ordaining permanent deacons, as are dioceses in Manitoba and Alberta.

As members of the clergy, deacons can proclaim the gospel and preach at liturgical services and they are able to conduct baptisms and witness marriages. They can lead the community in prayer, but do not preside at the Eucharist, the sacrament of reconciliation or the sacrament of the sick, which are roles reserved to a priest.

Right now, only men can be ordained as deacons. Married men can be ordained deacons, but if a single man is ordained deacon he cannot later marry, and a widowed deacon cannot remarry.

Doctors’ governing body reworks policy on conscientious objection

By MARY DEUTSCHER

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS) ruling council sent their draft policy on conscientious refusal back to a subcommittee for further drafting after a meeting March 28 in Saskatoon. The draft policy, which was approved in principle at the College’s January meeting, proposed a regime in which doctors would be compelled to refer for, and in some cases provide, morally objectionable treatments, such as abortion and assisted suicide.

The decision came following a month of public consultation in which the council received over 4,000 submissions, the vast majority of which supported physicians’ conscience rights.

The council’s deliberations began at a March 26 meeting. Associate registrar, Bryan Salte, presented a new draft that incorporated some suggestions made in the public consultation.

Discussion centered on whether or not the policy would include an exemption for the Supreme Court’s Carter decision, leaving assisted suicide as the only “treatment” that physicians could refuse to provide on conscience grounds.

Concerns were raised regarding how long such an exemption would be maintained as

assisted suicide becomes normalized in Canadian society.

Council members also raised concerns regarding the impact the draft policy could have on future generations of physicians. Preston Smith, the Dean of the College of Medicine, stated that, “conscientiousness and perseverance are the two personality indicators that predict high clinical performance.” The draft policy would therefore select against the very people who should be encouraged to enter medical school.

All councilors agreed that the CPSS has an obligation to ensure that patients are not abandoned, but that the council requires more time to draft a policy that balances physician and patient interests.

The council reconvened March 28 to further discuss changes to the draft policy. The council made several recommendations to the subcommittee, including the need to provide a clear definition for the word “referral.”

While “referral” could mean to simply provide information regarding a treatment verbally, in medicine this word is used more formally to mean a written referral in which a physician entrusts care of his or her patient to another physician. While most physicians who object to procedures such as abortion are willing to provide their patients with

information, a formal referral is understood to endorse the patient’s decision to pursue an option the physician believes is harmful.

The proposed policy identifies three scenarios in which a physician may wish to withdraw his or her services from a patient. First, when a patient requires information about possible treatments; second, when a patient requests a specific treatment; and third, when a patient requires a specific treatment in an emergency situation.

Following discussion, the council recommended that when a doctor is not willing to provide his or her patient with information regarding treatment options, he or she should refer the patient or direct the patient to an appropriate physician or service. This solution came after it was pointed out that in many cases it is more expedient for a patient to self-refer than to go through the formal medical referral process. No consensus was reached regarding a physician’s obligations when a patient requests a specific treatment.

Regarding the role of physicians in emergency situations, council members had difficulty defining an “emergency situation.” This issue was referred back to the subcommittee.

The council also directed that the policy’s

title be changed from “Conscientious Refusal,” to the less adversarial “Conscientious Objection.”

The subcommittee will convene to create another draft, which will need to be approved in principle by the council before another public consultation can begin. The council hopes to have completed such a consultation before their June meeting, at which time they will vote on whether or not to approve a final policy.

The CPSS’s meeting was held just weeks after the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO)’s March 6 decision to pass a similar policy which infringes on physicians’ conscience rights.

Despite receiving 15,977 submissions, the vast majority of which supported conscience rights for physicians, the CPSO passed a policy that requires Ontario physicians to refer for and in some cases provide morally objectionable services.

On March 24, the Christian Medical and Dental Society and the Canadian Federation of Catholic Physicians’ Societies filed an application asking the Ontario Superior Court of Justice Court to declare that portions of the CPSO policy violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects freedom of conscience.

Holy Spirit and McClure United celebrate 15th anniversary of covenant relationship

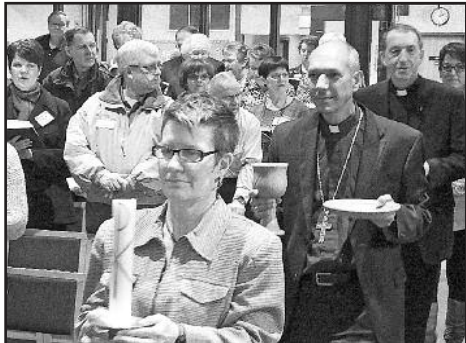
By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Fifteen years ago, McClure United Church and Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Parish in Saskatoon entered into a covenant, promising to journey together in a relationship of shared prayer, study and fellowship.

The anniversary was celebrated March 8 at Holy Spirit, with an afternoon prayer service, followed by a social gathering.

Holy Spirit pastor Fr. Ken Beck welcomed members of both congregations and representatives of the broader community “to celebrate the goodness and presence of God in our communities.” McClure United pastor Rev. Ron McConnell led the call to worship, and a choir made up of representatives of both churches led music for the service.

The chair of the River Bend Presbytery of



Entrance procession for a March 8 celebration to mark the covenant anniversary.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

the United Church of Canada, Rev. Jordan Cantwell, and Catholic Bishop Donald Bolen presented reflections, before together lighting a covenant candle.

Cantwell thanked the two congregations for their strong example of “deep, ecumenical sharing at a very grassroots level.”

Bolen noted that it is not easy to write a beautiful ecumenical covenant, but it is even more difficult to live it. With a steering committee that meets every six weeks, opportunities for joint prayer, shared preaching and common mission keep the covenant relationship alive, he noted with gratitude.

The assembly together prayed the Apostles’ Creed, exchanged the sign of peace, and collected an offering for the Prairie Centre of Ecumenism. Nicole Gursky and John Nanson led prayers of intercession, and then Jim Cruthers, Linda Cooney, Carol Pek and Bill Shank read the covenant originally signed by the congregations March 5, 2000.

“In witness to the wider Church and to the

world: we acknowledge the fractured Body of Christ and the need for healing, we rejoice in the gift of unity that Jesus Christ gives us, and celebrate the real though imperfect, communion that we share. We recognize the value of our respective traditions and pledge to encourage one another to grow in them in a manner that unites rather than divides,” the covenant states.

The two churches pledged to engage in regular public prayer for each other and the unity of all Christians, to come together for shared prayer, and to invite members to attend worship services of the other church. The covenant also lists concrete actions, including an exchange of preaching, music or other worship ministry at least once every six months; sharing Sunday bulletins, newsletters and bulletin board materials; and planning joint educational, social and justice activities.

Bishop’s Annual Appeal achieves 2014 goal of \$1.5 million

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The Bishop’s Annual Appeal reached its 2014 goal of \$1.5 million.

Donations by parishioners to the Appeal support such ministries as Catholic hospital chaplaincy, education of laity for ministry, the Lay Formation program, deaf ministry, the Liturgy Commission, the Marriage and Family Life office, Aboriginal parish ministry,

the Office of Justice and Peace, Catholic prison ministry, Christian Initiation and Catechetics (RCIA and sacramental preparation for children), youth and young adult ministry, vocations promotion, the education of priests and future priests, diocesan communications, the resource library, as well as partner organizations, including Catholic Family Services, the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism and

the Saskatoon Friendship Inn.

The final report for BAA 2014 was presented Jan. 20 at a dinner for volunteers and parish leaders at the Cathedral of the Holy Family. Bishop Don Bolen and BAA coordinators expressed thanks to all leaders, volunteers and donors.

For more about this year’s Appeal see the Jan. 30 article posted on the website news page: [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news)

The 2013-2014 Annual Report for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon is available on the diocesan website at [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news) or call (306) 242-1500 to request a printed copy

With funding from the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, this newsletter is published by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

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## Diocesan Council for Truth and Reconciliation

# DCTR promotes paths of hope and healing

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Paths of hope and healing for the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon were described – and built – during a recent Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting.

Members of a new diocesan council working to promote such healing described their mandate, gave an overview of the impact of colonization and Indian Residential Schools, and described a range of projects and initiatives. They also encouraged DPC members to reflect on the reality of racism, and find ways to foster dialogue and healing in their own parish communities and local settings.

The Diocesan Council for Truth and Reconciliation (DCTR) was established after a promise made at the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission gathering in Saskatoon in June 2012, part of a promise placed into the Bentwood Box by Bishop Donald Bolen and representatives of the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission and Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Saskatoon.

“The group’s mandate is to provide a forum for listening and sharing, through stories and prayer; to collaborate with the diocese toward building and strengthening relationships; and to support healing from the Indian Residential School experience,” states the DCTR mission statement.

“Our goal is to raise awareness throughout the diocese about injustice issues, and barriers to reconciliation, and to discern a way to walk together on a path of understanding, education and action, fostering relationships in light of the gospel.”

## Impact of schools

During the March 28 overview presented to the DPC, the history of colonialism was summarized, and several DCTR members spoke of the devastating impact of residential schools on generations of First Nations and Métis children, families and communities and on their own families.

Quoting TRC chair Justice Murray Sinclair, DCTR member MaryAnne Morrison noted: “Reconciliation is about forging and maintaining respectful



**Representatives of the Diocesan Truth and Reconciliation Commission (DCTR) Gayle Weenie, Myron Rogal, MaryAnne Morrison, Linda Klassen, Carol Zubiak, Fr. Mick Fleming, CSsR, Debbie Ledoux, Blake Sittler and Bishop Donald Bolen (left to right) joined the Diocesan Pastoral Council at their March 28 meeting, to provide an overview of the history of residential schools and the creation and mandate of the new diocesan council.**

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

relationships. There are no short cuts.”

DCTR member Carol Zubiak described the sacred nature of the promise placed into the Bentwood Box by the diocese, pledging to work for reconciliation and healing. “Reconciliation is not going to happen overnight... some of the promises are big. This is our promise, and it’s going to take awhile, there are new relationships that we have to build,” Zubiak said.

## Prayer, dialogue, projects

The work of the DCTR has included prayer, dialogue and discussion about a range of initiatives, reported Myron Rogal, DCTR member and coordinator of Justice and Peace in the diocese of Saskatoon. For instance, a pilot project is underway at St. Augustine parish in the city to examine and address the roots of racism, he noted.

Director of Pastoral Services Blake Sittler described diocesan participation in the Moving Forward Together Campaign, a pledge by the Catholic Church in Canada to raise \$25 million to put toward initiatives that promote healing, battle racism or strengthen culture.

Funds raised in the diocese have gone towards local events, including a conference at STM about racism, and a 10,000 Healing Steps conference about reaching out and healing those trapped in a

gang lifestyle.

The DCTR also studied a federal report on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and worked with Bishop Donald Bolen to write a pastoral letter on the issue (see related article, below). As a result, an ecumenical event was initiated to listen to Aboriginal women and their families on the issue of missing and murdered women (*Voices of Our Sisters*, to be held April 18 at Mayfair United Church in Saskatoon).

Local cultural and language programs were outlined by Elder Gayle Weenie, pastoral associate at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish and DCTR member, including a Saturday class for families using the Cree language to introduce teachings, prayer, crafts and activities. She described developing materials in Cree for the sign of the cross, the Hail Mary, Glory Be, and other prayers.

Weenie is also involved in a Canadian Bible Society project to translate the Bible into Cree: the team is now working on the Gospel of John.

Fr. Mick Fleming, CSsR, priest moderator at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish, described a program for single parents, grandparents or other family members raising children in difficult circumstances, offered at three schools with Barb Farthing of Catholic Family Services. Fleming noted the joy and consolation such

a program brings. “Are all their problems solved? No. But they know they are not alone. They know there is support.”

The Redemptorist order also recently took on a project to create a DVD of local elders presenting the seven sacred grandfather teachings. The DVD has been made available to Catholic schools, Fleming reported.

## Our Lady of Guadalupe

Debbie Ledoux, Parish Life Director at Our Lady of Guadalupe, first shared her own experience at residential school, before expressing her gratitude for the healing God has brought into her life. She described walking as a leader with those who have experienced abuse and hurt, and are dealing with the fallout of the wounds in their lives.

Ledoux provided an overview of the history and role of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish, which began 25 years ago, receiving official parish status in 2007. The community is now seeking a church building – a goal also mentioned in the diocese’s Bentwood Box promise to the TRC.

Right now the community operates out of a house on Avenue J, and rents St. Mary’s parish on 20th Street for their 1 p.m. Sunday Eucharist, but more space is needed for much-needed programs, wakes and other services.

Justice & Peace  
and Native Ministry  
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“We are praying that we do find a building in our area that will permit us to do all that we really need,” Ledoux said.

She noted that Our Lady of Guadalupe parish is growing. “People are moving back to the parish, feeling at home, living their First Nations spirituality in their Catholic faith, just as Saint John Paul II gave us permission to do: to share our culture within our Church.”

## Walking together

The DCTR is playing a role similar to the Council of Priests and the Diocesan Pastoral Council, said Bishop Donald Bolen, “giving advice, offering suggestions, and proposing practical initiatives which will help our diocesan church to walk with First Nations and Métis peoples, to value their gifts, and to build together a healthier community, which is engaged in the hard work of healing long-standing wounds and decisions from the past that were hugely unjust to our indigenous peoples.”

The goal is to learn to live well together in communion, he said. “We stand in need of the spiritual wisdom and experience of our Aboriginal sisters and brothers.”

## Other highlights of DPC meeting

Other highlights of the March 28 DPC meeting included deanery reports, suggestions for revitalizing deanery involvement, a presentation about the annulment process by Fr. Marvin Lishchynsky and Donna Rogal of the Marriage Tribunal Office, and a question and answer session with the bishop.

The DPC meeting was followed by an Annual General Meeting for the diocese. Find the Annual Report on the diocesan website at: [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/news)

## With input from the DCTR, bishop addresses issue of missing and murdered women and girls

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

In November 2014, Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen issued a pastoral letter about the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, calling on Catholics and the broader community to become better informed and to pray for those whose sisters and daughters have been murdered or remain missing.

Bolen wrote the letter after discussion and consultation with the Diocesan Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (DCTR).

The DCTR has been discussing the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women since the publication of the March 2014 parliamentary report on the status of missing and murdered women, entitled “Invisible Women: A Call to

Action.” In the pastoral letter issued Nov. 3, the bishop recommended the parliamentary report as a starting point for learning more about the issue.

“Nearly 1,200 Aboriginal women have been murdered or have gone missing over the past 30 years, according to police records. This issue does not affect only Aboriginal women but all Canadians; all people,” says Bolen in the pastoral letter.

“Something has gone dreadfully wrong, and the pain and suffering of the Aboriginal families and communities who have lost loved ones calls out for a response.”

If one part of the body suffers, every part suffers with it, says Bolen, citing Paul’s letter to the

Corinthians. “This same idea is found in traditional Aboriginal ethics when it is said, ‘The hurt of one is the hurt of all.’”

The issue of missing and murdered women can be connected to larger societal problems, says the bishop. “Like the residential schools, missing and murdered Aboriginal women point to a systemic problem, and we have a desire to walk and work together towards a systemic response which will make our communities healthier and safer, for Aboriginal women and for all of us.”

He adds: “What has become clear to us is that we need to listen more closely to the voices of the survivors and family members of the women lost to us; and we need to

walk with their communities as they seek to name underlying problems and to take steps towards healing the brokenness that has allowed this tragedy to systematically continue. We all need to be more aware of what we have done and what we have failed to do.”

The diocese is working with other faith communities in organizing an ecumenical “Voices of Our Sisters” event April 18, to listen to the stories of those who have suffered through the experience of missing or murdered sisters and daughters. This is a chance “to hear from those who walk with the most vulnerable in our midst today, to listen to various voices and proposals suggesting a way forward, and to begin to discern

what steps we might take as we learn to walk together in solidarity and friendship,” says the bishop.

“Education, awareness and empathy are crucial,” says Bolen, calling for “partnering with all those who seek justice and yearn for dignity for our lost daughters, sisters, mothers, and kokums.”

In addition to participating in the April 18 gathering and reading the March 2014 “Invisible Women” document, individuals and parishes are also asked to lift up prayers for those who are grieving murdered family members and for “the deep suffering of those whose sisters and daughters remain missing.”

The letter is found online at: [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/bishop-donald-bolen](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/bishop-donald-bolen)



Congress Day in the Deaneries

Discussion, information and consultation in three locations

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Parishioners joined parish, deanery and diocesan leaders in reflecting on a number of issues and themes as part of Congress Day in the Deaneries, held recently in three locations across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Presented in Saskatoon on Feb. 28, in Kindersley on March 7, and in Humboldt on March 14, the 2015 Congress Day in the Deaneries included gathering feedback for an upcoming Synod on the Family in Rome, as well as a reflection on the Year of Consecrated Life, information about the dangers of assisted suicide and euthanasia, and a question-and-answer forum with Bishop Donald Bolen. Each Congress Day concluded with celebration of the Eucharist.



Parishioners and pastors from the Humboldt and Wadena deaneries gathered March 14 for a Congress Day held at St. Augustine parish in Humboldt, one of three such Days held across the diocese.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Synod on Family feedback

Members of the diocesan Marriage Task Force led each Congress Day group in discussion of seven questions distilled from the Synod document, “The Vocation and Mission of The Family in the Church and Contemporary World.”

The document is being used to generate reflection and input from throughout the Church, in preparation for the worldwide Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to be held in Rome in October 2015. Mary and Phil Wrubleski led the discussion in Saskatoon and Humboldt, Wanda and Lynn Freistadt presented in Kindersley (See the article about the Synod on the Family discussion, Page 5).

Year of Consecrated Life

Vocations Office Coordinator Myron Rogal introduced the Year of Consecrated Life in presentations at both the Saskatoon and Kindersley Congress Days. In Humboldt, Fr. Geoffrey Young, a member of the diocesan Vocations Commission, led the presentation.

Proclaimed by Pope Francis and beginning on the first Sunday of Advent, 2014, the Year of Consecrated Life will continue until the Feast of the Presentation, Feb. 2, 2016 – which is also celebrated each year as the World Day for Consecrated Life.

The purpose of this special year is to look to the past with gratitude, to live consecrated life in the present with passion, and to embrace the future with hope, said Rogal. In a video message about her vocation, Sr. April Mireau, PM, described consecrated life as living with an “undivided heart” focusing

on Christ, who matters most.

Small groups at Congress discussed the witness of those in consecrated life and how the Church grows by attraction rather than proselytizing. The session concluded with Congress participants prayerfully recalling the impact of consecrated religious in their own lives – whether sisters, brothers or priests in religious orders.

Dangers of euthanasia and assisted suicide

During each of the Congress Days in the Deaneries, guest speaker Mary Deutscher also gave an overview of the issue of assisted suicide and euthanasia.

She described those who will be threatened if euthanasia and assisted suicide is legalized, detailed the failure of safeguards in jurisdictions where such killing is already legal, and focused on the need to expand palliative care to ensure that pain relief and loving support is available to all Canadians facing illness.

Deutscher, a member of the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, who has a bachelor of science and a BA in philosophy from the University of Saskatchewan and an MA in public ethics from St. Paul University in Ottawa, is presently a PhD candidate in public policy at the University of Saskatchewan. She has also served as a Roman Catholic chaplain at Pasqua Hospital in the Archdiocese of Regina and held a term position with the Catholic Organization for Life and Family. She was also the keynote presenter at the diocesan-wide Congress Day for leadership

held Nov. 27, 2014 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

Deutscher emphasized that euthanasia is the active killing of an individual by another person to relieve suffering. Respecting a patient’s refusal of treatment or a person’s request to discontinue treatment is NOT euthanasia; nor is letting someone die naturally by withholding or withdrawing medical treatment when its burdens outweigh its benefits. In assisted suicide, one person provides the means for another person to kill himself/herself, by providing information or lethal substances such as pills or injections, she explained.

On Feb. 6, 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that those who are disabled or suffering should have the right to kill themselves, and to receive assistance to do so. The court gave the federal government one year to come up with new legislation.

Meanwhile, in the province of Quebec there is an attempt to legalize euthanasia as “medical aid in dying” in Bill 52, passed earlier this year – it asserts that euthanasia is part of health care, which falls under provincial jurisdiction.

Now is the time to lobby government to take steps to stop the advance of these dangerous practices, Deutscher said.

“If Canada legalizes euthanasia and assisted suicide, there will be many vulnerable members of our community who will be put at risk,” she stressed, listing those suffering from depression and mental illness, the elderly, and persons with disabilities as those in greatest danger.

The legalization of assisted suicide creates a situation where elderly persons or those with disabilities would not be given the same suicide-prevention options and support that able-bodied persons receive, Deutscher predicted. Rather than being offered the kind of assistance that would help them recognize their value and support them in the courageous choice of living, too easily society could default to simply killing them, she said.

With elder abuse already a problem, legalizing assisted suicide or euthanasia will threaten vulnerable seniors, many of whom already face depression, or feel as if they are a burden, said Deutscher, asking how long will it be before there is a pressure or “duty to die.”

It is already being suggested that euthanasia and assisted suicide



Speaker Mary Deutscher and MC Stephen Kloster in Kindersley.

- Photo by Blake Sittler

will help in controlling health care costs, she added, which indicates that there could also soon be an economic pressure to offer death to patients.

The experience in jurisdictions where euthanasia and assisted suicide have been legalized shows that safeguards do not work, Deutscher stressed, reviewing how euthanasia and assisted suicide expands and evolves once in place.

For instance, in the Netherlands, euthanasia was originally only for terminally ill patients, but quickly moved to include those who were suffering from depression.

“If we start calling this a right, it has to be available to every human being,” warned Deutscher. “If we open up this door of euthanasia and assisted suicide to certain groups of people, would we really be able to protect others, such as those suffering from depression?”

Death is not an isolated event, she said, noting how “suicide contagion” becomes a concern in communities or schools where one youth’s suicide can and does lead to others.

“How would suicide prevention be affected if assisted suicide becomes an acceptable option?” she queried.

Assisted suicide and euthanasia do not exist in a vacuum, she added, noting the effect such practices would have on families, communities and caregivers. “When someone is being killed, that means that someone is doing the killing and the assisting.”

The impact on a person who is responsible for ending someone

else’s life is not often considered in the public discourse about these issues, Deutscher said. “How will this affect our doctors, if they are asked to become killers instead of healers?”

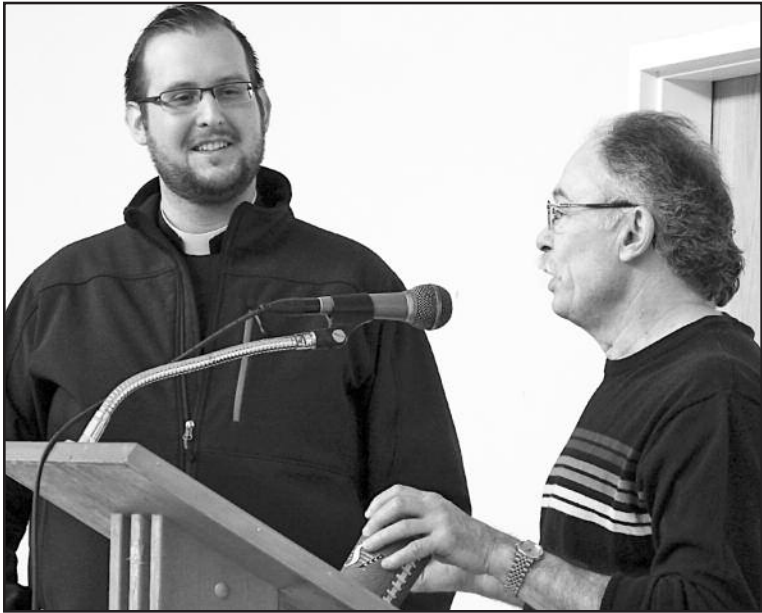
She pointed to a recent policy set forth by the Ontario and Saskatchewan colleges of physicians, which would require doctors to refer or provide procedures, even if they are morally opposed. This would include assisted suicide or euthanasia if these practices are legalized, she said.

**Palliative Care needed**

Ensuring that every Canadian has access to effective palliative care is important, she said. “We also want to look at focusing our energy on providing this support,” she said. “It’s not enough for us to say you can’t have access to euthanasia: we want to give people a better option. We want to look at ways that we can actually help people, so that these requests for suicide and euthanasia disappear.”

Deutscher urged Congress Day participants to continue to express their concerns and tell their stories, pointing to resources such as those available from the Catholic Organization for Life and Family.

Her presentation concluded with a moving video produced by Real Life Catholic, featuring young mother Lizz Lovett of Portland, Oregon, who is suffering from an aggressive and terminal cancer, but who has rejected assisted suicide in favour of living and loving to the end of her life.



Fr. Geoffrey Young (left) presented an overview of the Year of Consecrated Life in Humboldt, introduced by Don Courchene.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski



# Synod on Family feedback gathered at Congress Days: *how do we meet pastoral needs in challenging contexts?*

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Gathering input for the Synod on the Family in Rome was part of this year's Congress Day in the Deaneries, held in three locations across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

As a follow up to the Extraordinary Synod on the Family last year, bishops from around the world were asked by Pope Francis to reflect upon the "Lineamenta" – a summary document about the vocation, mission, and pastoral needs of the family in the Church and in the world – and to respond to a series of questions, in order to assist in preparing for the Ordinary Synod of the Bishops that will be held in Oct. 2015.

Feedback gathered by the diocese of Saskatoon – including submissions through the website and from local leadership, as well as input from the public at recent Congress Days – has been forwarded to the Canadian Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, which will in turn prepare a response to send to the Vatican.

### Bishop describes Synod process

At each of the three diocesan Congress Day locations – in Saskatoon on Feb. 28, in Kindersley on March 7, and in Humboldt on March 14 – Bishop Donald Bolen introduced the discussion with an overview of the Synod process.

With the help of a Salt and Light Television video, the bishop described some of the many contexts in which families around the world live and struggle – facing a huge range of issues, such as war, Christian persecution, poverty, divorce, secularism, homelessness, displacement, and much more.

Bolen noted Pope Francis' strong desire that the Synod process would involve open dialogue and frank discussion, with bishops speaking freely and fully, about issues and pastoral concerns. At the same time, there was enormous interest in the Synod by the media, which at times sowed confusion about whether the discussions meant the church would be changing doctrine.

"Pope Francis and others have clearly said that the church is not changing its doctrine, but it is looking at changing its pastoral response to those who are in need," said Bolen, before citing powerful excerpts from Pope Francis' closing address, which earned a four-minute standing ovation from the bishops of the Extraordinary Synod.

In his final summary, Pope Francis said: "There were moments of profound consolation listening to the testimony of true pastors, who wisely carry in their hearts the joys and the tears of their faithful people. Moments of consolation and grace and comfort hearing the testimonies of the families who have participated in the Synod and have shared with us the beauty and the joy of their married life. A journey where the stronger feel compelled to help the less strong, where the more experienced are led to serve others, even through confrontations."

After listing some temptations to be avoided, the Holy Father continued: "I have seen and I have heard – with joy and appreciation – speeches and interventions full of faith, of pastoral and doctrinal zeal, of wisdom, of frankness and of courage.... And



Issues facing families and what the Church can do to meet their pastoral needs was up for discussion at three Congress Days, beginning Feb. 28 in Saskatoon.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski



Phil and Mary Wrubleski facilitated a session on the Synod at Humboldt and at Saskatoon.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

I have felt that what was set before our eyes was the good of the Church, of families, and the supreme law, the good of souls. And this always – we have said it here, in the Hall – without ever putting into question the fundamental truths of the Sacrament of Marriage: the indissolubility, the unity, the faithfulness, the fruitfulness, the openness to life."

Bolen noted that in responding to the Synod report, the diocese of Saskatoon is part of the worldwide process of maturing, "with true spiritual discernment," the proposed ideas and concrete solutions to difficulties and challenges confronted by families: "to give answers to the many discouragements that surround and suffocate families."

### Marriage Task Force leadership

At the Congress Day in Kindersley, discussion about the Synod on the Family report was led by diocesan Marriage Task Force members Wanda and Lynn Freistadt. In Humboldt and in Saskatoon, Mary and Phil Wrubleski of the Marriage Task Force summarized the report, known as the Lineamenta, outlining its guidelines and questions.

"Upon first reading of the Lineamenta, as a lay person, the document was heavy: I found it very difficult but it is incredible," said Mary Wrubleski. "We are overwhelmed by the fact that the Synod fathers are so in touch with the world today."

The document begins by describing the family as "a school of humanity" for a wounded world. "There are signs of trouble, but the great part is though, that the desire to marry is still very strong. People want to become family," she said. "The family is important to the church. The church needs to re-discover the family as an agent to evangelize and to be a witness to the Christian mission."

Mary Wrubleski identified three parts to the document: listening, which includes a look at the context and the challenges facing the family; looking, which includes looking at Christ, as well as considering the gospel of the family; and confronting the situation from pastoral perspectives.

"There is a crisis of faith which points to great difficulties in marriage and family life," reported Mary, citing the document. "A couple of the symptoms of these challenges in society are loneliness and powerlessness."

The negative impact of this crisis in faith is said to be seen in the difficulty of raising children, a hesitancy to welcome new life, considering the aged a burden, living together before or instead of marriage, secularization, children born outside marriage, single parent homes, blended families, absent fathers, violence against women, sexual exploitation of children, crime, and pornography. At the same time, "more people have a desire to take better care of themselves, to know themselves better, to live in harmony with their emotions and feelings, and to seek better relationships."

In turn, the Church needs to offer hope, truth and support in the way of valuing marriage, humanity and the family. "Families and couples need help with their hunger for God and to feel part of the Church," summarized Mary.

### Helping families reach fullness of God's plan for them

Phil Wrubleski continued, saying the document acknowledges that "in order to deal with these challenges, we need to have our gaze focused on Jesus Christ – to be rooted in Christ."

"The family is the domestic church, the smallest unit of church. Love needs to be at the centre of the family. The document speaks of marriage as a sacrament of redemption," he said. "The indissolubility of marriage should be seen not as a yoke but as gift. The goal is 'forever marriage', sacramental marriage, which, among other things, includes the giving of oneself and having an openness to life."

The church has the responsibility of helping all couples reach that fullness of God's plan for them, he added.

As a vocation and a journey of faith, Christian marriage must be a place of evangelization for current and future



Lynn and Wanda Freistadt of the diocesan Marriage Task Force facilitated discussion about the Synod on the Family at Congress Day in Kindersley March 7.

- Photo by Blake Sittler



Kindersley Congress Day was held March 7.

- Photo by Blake Sittler

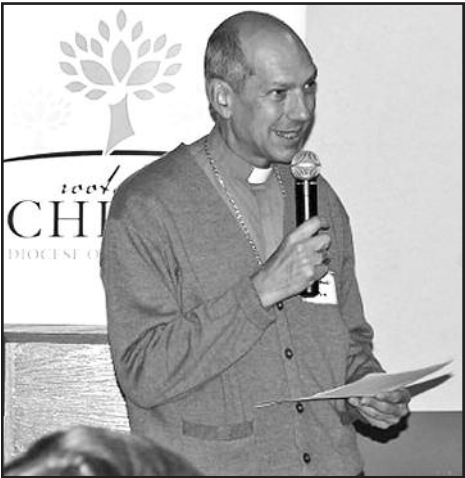
generations, continued Mary. "Marriage, as a vocation to love, means engaging the troubles of the world. The church needs to accompany couples along that journey. The family then is missionary to our neighbours and society."

### Pastoral needs identified

There is a need for more formation and training of priests, deacons, catechists and pastoral workers, as well as better preparation for couples who plan to marry, and better support for couples in their first years of marriage.

"Assistance and guidance are needed in caring for separated, divorced or single parent families. These wonderful persons should be able to count on the Church. The document asks for courageous pastoral choices to find solutions and to show love and respect as we attempt to walk in their shoes. We must show a respect for the suffering of (those who are) separated, (or) divorced," Mary continued. "As for those with homosexual tendencies, the Synod fathers suggested there are no grounds for unions but there needs to be respect and sensitivity. We need to listen and be present to their experience and their pain."

Congress participants were then asked to engage in discussion by tackling one of seven questions about how the church can respond in pastoral activity to areas of challenge and hurt. Responses, recommendations and discussion points were recorded, and were used in framing the diocese's response to the document.



Bishop Donald Bolen addressed Congress participants in Kindersley. - Photo by Blake Sittler



Small groups in Humboldt (and two other locations) tackled seven questions distilled from the Vatican's "Lineamenta" document about the Synod on the Family. - Photo by Kiply Yaworski



*A Statement about Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia by the President of the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan, Therese Jelinski, which has been endorsed by Bishop Donald Bolen and the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission*

“Not the Canada I Want...”

The Supreme Court of Canada wants to change the rules against assisted suicide and euthanasia. The Feb. 6, 2015 ruling has huge implications for health care and for our society.

Here’s why we should all be concerned if Canada adopts state-sanctioned suicide and gives physicians permission to kill their patients:

- **No human being dies in a social vacuum.** Anyone who has been touched by suicide, for example, knows how the effects of one person’s death ripple through a community. Likewise, other people would be impacted by assisted suicide (providing the means for someone to kill oneself) and euthanasia (killing someone, such as by lethal injection, to end their suffering). What about the impact on the person who is responsible for ending someone’s life?
- **The solution to suffering is not to be killed, but to have proper pain management and proper support from the medical system.** Parliament passed a motion in 2014 calling for a pan-Canadian palliative and end-of-life care strategy. Now it needs to act on it. Timely access to universal, palliative care must be a priority.
- **The absolute ban on assisted suicide and euthanasia is the norm in all but a handful of countries, where the initial restrictions against abuse quickly eroded.** There is well-documented evidence of the abuse of euthanasia and of its expansion, showing that safeguards do NOT work.
- **Many doctors and other health professionals who want nothing to do with killing their patients will leave the profession, and many young adults considering a medical profession will choose another path if they are expected to become killers instead of healers.** This will compound the difficulties many communities already have in recruiting and retaining physicians. No health professional or organization should be obliged to participate in assisted suicide or euthanasia.
- **The natural process of dying might be recast as a process to be avoided, so that assisted suicide and euthanasia could become the norm.** Might there also be pressure to offer death to patients as a cost-saving measure?



- **How will the normalization of suicide affect suicide prevention programs?** What will happen if suicide, instead of being a tragedy to avoid, becomes an acceptable option, a right that we must uphold? Will people with disabilities be given the same suicide-prevention options and support that able-bodied persons receive, or will we just kill them?
- **People with disabilities merit protection against discrimination.** Instead, the Court’s decision entrenches the idea that some lives are not worthy of living.
- **Elder abuse and neglect is already a problem in society** and could be extended to include pressure to request euthanasia or assisted suicide, becoming the duty to die.
- **All human life deserves respect and protection, but many people will be put at risk: persons who are elderly, disabled, mentally ill, depressed, or who have dementia.** What is initially considered a compassionate course of action could eventually evolve into eugenics.
- **The Court ruling states that a person need NOT have a terminal illness to request assisted suicide,** only a “medical condition” (including illness, disease or disability) that causes enduring suffering (physical or psychological) that is intolerable to that person. This throws the gates of assisted suicide wide open, forcing the state to agree to assisted suicide in every situation.
- **Patients already have the right to refuse medical treatments that they consider burdensome.** They are not required to do everything possible to stay alive as long as possible. Also, giving patients enough medication to provide pain relief is not euthanasia, even if the higher dose might unintentionally shorten the person’s life. (The intent here is to reduce suffering rather than to hasten death, unlike assisted suicide and euthanasia whose intent is to make the patient die before his or her time.)

*Do you want to live in a Canada that allows some people to kill others?*

Do you want to live in a Canada that considers taking a life to be a positive good, a “service” to be performed at public expense and the state’s obligation to facilitate? That subtly or overtly pressures the most vulnerable among us to end their lives? That blurs the line between suicide and assisted suicide? That pressures doctors to kill patients against their will and better judgment?

**This is an issue of public safety and of preserving our social heritage of caring. What kind of world do we want to leave for our children and grandchildren?**

Justice and Peace

Dangers of euthanasia discussed at diocesan event

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The dangers of assisted suicide and euthanasia, strategies to work against their legalization, as well as ways to support those who are ill or dying were among the issues addressed Nov. 26, 2014 in Saskatoon, during a multi-faceted presentation by two members of the Christian Medical and Dental Society (CMDs) of Canada.

The “Living With Dignity” event was organized by the diocesan Justice and Peace Office, and featured guest speakers Larry Worthen of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, – a lawyer, a permanent deacon and the executive director of CMDs – and Dr. Margaret Cottle of Vancouver – a palliative care physician and member of both CMDs and the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition.

After a prayer led by Mary Deutscher of the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen welcomed some 50 participants to the public ecumenical event held at the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

“The gospel that Jesus proclaims is a gospel that calls us to life, and it values human life. God creates human life as a treasure, and as Christian churches it is part of our responsibility to uphold the dignity of the human person, to defend human life when it is under threat,” said Bolen. “It is a great joy when we can gather together as Christians to give common witness.”

Larry Worthen explained that the CMDs represents some 1,500 members from a range of Christian denominations and background: “We are very involved in advocacy to protect the conscience rights of physicians, and also to argue to support and defend our patients against threats like the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.”

Vulnerable at risk

Worthen provided an overview of the issue of euthanasia and assisted suicide in Canada and other parts of the world, noting the importance of putting a human face on the issue in a way that highlights the dangers that legalizing euthanasia and assisted suicide would pose to vulnerable persons.

“The media discussion has been focused on a number of individuals, who have become very public in their end of life plea for legalization of euthanasia,” he noted. “But the concern that I have is that we don’t see the other people who will be affected by legalization: those who will be affected negatively.”

Worthen stressed that the option for assisted suicide as outlined in the Carter decision would not be confined to those who

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are terminally ill. He noted that those who receive a difficult diagnosis, or suffer an injury that leaves them a paraplegic or a quadriplegic, often do suffer depression and even consider suicide.

He reviewed the current laws against euthanasia and assisted suicide in Canada, and gave an overview of past and present challenges to the law, such as the Supreme Court of Canada decision in the Sue Rodriguez case in the 1990s and the parliamentary defeat of a 2011 private member’s bill to legalize euthanasia.

Worthen also summarized current challenges. At the time, the Supreme Court ruling on the Carter case had not yet been announced, but by February 2015 the court struck down the ban on assisted suicide in Canada for those with a “medical condition (including an illness, disease or disability) that causes enduring suffering that is intolerable to the individual.” In Quebec, the legalization of euthanasia as “medical aid in dying” in Bill 52 is an attempt to circumvent the federal criminal code by asserting that euthanasia is part of health care, which falls under provincial jurisdiction.

Experience in other countries

In Belgium and the Netherlands, the numbers of euthanasia deaths are increasing each year, Worthen related. “The euthanasia death of patients with a psychiatric illness is now sharply on the rise. Some patients are euthanized largely because they are aged, lonely or bereaved.”

The pro-euthanasia lobby in Holland is now proposing that anyone over the age of 70 should be able to get access to euthanasia, and that it should not necessarily be provided by medical personnel.

“I have a pastoral concern about members of my parish who are elderly, living alone, isolated,” he said. “When society accepts that someone’s life is no longer worth living, don’t you think they get the message? They do. They feel undervalued as it is.”

The faith of Canadians is not being heeded in discussions and decisions around euthanasia and assisted suicide, even though it is part of the fabric of this country, he added. The Hippocratic Oath is being



Palliative Care physician Dr. Margaret Cottle and Larry Worthen, director of the Christian Medical and Dental Society of Canada spoke at “Living with Dignity” in November.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

threatened, and there is also the question of how to provide freedom of conscience protection for doctors, pharmacists, nurses and other care providers.

“Bill 52 would require that every nursing home and every hospital in Quebec allow euthanasia. What about the patient who wants to avoid being euthanized? Where will they go?”

Worthen added: “The reality is, that even though this is characterized as an issue of choice – of live and let live – the proponents of euthanasia and assisted suicide are actually forcing this on other people.”

The media are failing us

The media are not asking hard and probing questions about the consequences of legalizing euthanasia and assisted suicide, or investigating the abuses and wrongful deaths that are happening where it is legal, said palliative care physician Dr. Margaret Cottle.

“If this was a pipeline or a nuclear power plant, they would go anywhere in the world to find out what was going on someplace else, but that’s not the case with this issue.”

Once legalized, who could be refused assisted suicide, and on what basis or authority? asked Cottle, again pointing to how the lines have been pushed farther and farther in jurisdictions like Belgium and the Netherlands. Those being killed now include those who are depressed, individuals who fear some future disability, newborns with spina bifida or other disabilities, as well as children and adolescents, and those who have never specifically requested euthanasia.

Arguments based on a right to autonomy can be countered by the fact that society already limits autonomy in many ways, Cottle said.

“We say you can’t smoke. In Vancouver you can’t smoke in a park, or on a public beach. And if you are a smoker you are not allowed to smoke in your car if your child is in the car. We have speed limits, we prohibit drinking and driving. All of those things limit our autonomy.”

Some 2,400 years of physicians “doing no harm” under the Hippocratic tradition cannot be lightly abandoned, Cottle asserted.

“It is like an old growth forest, it is part of our cultural heritage. You can chop it down really fast, but you are not going to be able to get it built up again,” she said. “Vulnerable people are at risk with this.”

Determining whose life is worthy

In studies and surveys, it is clear that physical pain – or the fear of pain – is not the main reason that people seek death, rather it is the psychological pain of indignity or of being a burden that prompts requests for euthanasia or assisted suicide.

“Equating the need for help with indignity assumes that only the purely

independent are worthy,” she said. “It is not ‘whose life is this?’ but ‘whose life will we support as a people?’ and what deaths we encourage.”

Cottle cited an article by disability advocate Amy Hasbrouck asking: “What about my right to cry for help?” and “If 90 percent of suicide attempts are a cry for help, why is it that you want to make sure that I’m successful on my first try?”

Care as a covenant

To combat calls for euthanasia and assisted suicide, we must learn to accompany people in suffering, to provide care that is not a commodity, but a covenant, Cottle stressed.

“We need to remember that Jesus is concerned about people who are vulnerable and we need to be too,” she said, sharing insights into her experience in caring for those who are dying, including her own father, who suffered from dementia.

Palliative care says that a person matters because of who they are, and not how able-bodied they might be – “and that you matter to the end of your life,” she stressed.

As for how to journey with those who are ill or dying, “90 per cent is just showing up,” she stressed, before providing tips for practical ways to help.

“If we need to have the right to kill ourselves, that means that love has failed,” Cottle said.

She quoted Dr. Sheila Cassidy on the importance of caring for those facing death in a spirit of love and compassion. Such care “is a prophetic statement about the unique value of the human person, irrespective of age, social class or productivity. It is an affirmation that people matter just because they are people, because God made them and loves them, just the way they are, not because they are good or witty or physically beautiful,” wrote Cassidy.

Cottle also strongly urged her listeners to get informed, to tell their own stories, and find some points about this debate that they are comfortable speaking about to others. “Learn your little ‘elevator speech’ so that when people say to you ‘why are you opposed to this?’ – you will have this little speech you can give. Memorize it, and make sure it focuses on something like public safety.”

She added: “Stay on topic. Don’t let them push you off. When people say things like ‘We treat our dogs better than we do people (by euthanizing them when they are ill or injured),’ I respond: ‘Well, the dog didn’t get to choose.’ We do, in fact, treat people better than we do our dogs.”

Cottle also urged all those concerned with the issue to continue to contact government representatives and officials, including the federal ministers of health and justice.

Protecting a precious heritage

“What kind of social world do we want to leave for our grandchildren? Are we being good stewards of our cultural heritage of caring and respect for life?” she asked, urging those in attendance to protect the inter-generational river of compassionate caring. “The love that we give and receive is both powerful and healing. It’s time for our generations to pass along this heritage to the next ones and to protect this river from those that would destroy or diminish it in any way.”

Worthen and Cottle also participated in a diocesan Congress Day about euthanasia and assisted suicide that was led by Mary Deutscher Nov. 27, 2014, and were featured speakers at an ecumenical seminar for Christian leaders held Nov. 28 at St. Anne’s parish.

**Contact the Government of Canada and your elected representatives to ask them to take action to STOP the legalization of Assisted Suicide**

Contact your MP and Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada 284 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8, no stamp needed). **Postcards are available** at local parishes or online at [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/office-justice-and-peace-0](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/office-justice-and-peace-0) stating:

“I am concerned about the recent Supreme Court decision in the Carter Case. Striking down the law against physician-assisted suicide will endanger the lives of many of our most vulnerable citizens, including persons with disabilities, our elders, and those suffering from mental illness. It will fundamentally change Canadian healthcare and the values we hold in common.

“I urge the government to take immediate steps to protect Canadians. Use the “not withstanding” clause to uphold Parliament’s past votes against assisted suicide and euthanasia. People who are contemplating suicide require care and support from our health and social systems and not pressure to end their lives.”

**Let your voice be heard during this one-year hiatus provided by the court!**

*A big Thank You to Alliance for Life for taking on the cost of printing the postcards for parish distribution at the Chrism Mass on March 30, 2015.*



# Those at their lowest point need love and care, not assisted death, says Mark Pickup

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Having lived with Multiple Sclerosis for some 30 years, Mark Pickup knows what it means to struggle with a chronic and debilitating condition. He also strongly asserts that legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia offer a false compassion that will threaten the lives of Canadians at their most vulnerable moments.

The recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to strike down the law banning assisted suicide is dangerous, immoral, and a threat to those suffering illness or disability, he said. **“It was a terrible decision that will irrevocably alter the character of Canadian society.”**

Pickup, who lives in Beaumont, Alberta, was the keynote speaker at a March 7 banquet held during a Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon *Sobor In Action* Conference at Bishop James Mahoney high school in Saskatoon.

“It was not a victory for liberty. It was a victory for license and the abuse of human freedom,” he said, describing the court decision as “morally twisted.”

The court cited Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensuring the “right to life, liberty and security of person” as the reason to end a prohibition on physician-assisted suicide for “competent adults who seek such assistance as a result of a grievous and irremediable medical condition that causes enduring and intolerable suffering.”

The ruling reveals “just how wide this death net of our Brave New World of the Canadian landscape is going to be,” described Pickup, stressing that the court does not restrict assisted suicide to terminal illness but opens it up to any “grievous and irremediable medical condition.”

The court sets “broad, gaping parameters” which would also permit assisted death for any kind of intolerable suffering – physical or psychological. “They threw the gates of assisted death wide open,” said Pickup.

“So modern medicine’s magnificent advances can be refused, and the state will still have to give assisted suicide,” he said, predicting the Supreme Court ruling will pave the way to “all kinds of cruelties and abuse” and will put the lives of the most vulnerable in peril.

This reversal of thousands of years of ethical and moral teaching is not what people in pain need, he said.

**“People in physical pain need palliation, not death. People in psychological pain need counseling therapy, even when they are in the thrall of depression or grief, and don’t recognize that they need counseling.”**

Pickup described his own struggles with darkness and despair in the course of his illness.

“At the two-to three-year point in my own downhill spiral with Multiple Sclerosis, my grief was so profound and unimaginable, my sorrow was so deep, my heartache was so sharp, that my judgment became clouded,” he described. If assisted suicide had been available in the mid-1980s he might have asked for it. Instead, he was enveloped by the love and support of his wife and of “a life-affirming community of concern” that showed him his own worth and revealed the love of God.

“They lifted up my value even when I doubted my own value,” he said, expressing profound gratitude that no one offered to take his life at such dark moments.

“I am so glad today that did not happen. I would never have known my five (soon to be six) beautiful grandchildren,” he said.

**“I needed to be able to grieve, to cry out, to say the most outrageous things, and not be held to a death wish that I might have sought when I was at my lowest point.”**

In the recent decision, the court downplayed the highest and first right, which is the right to life, instead favouring personal autonomy, Pickup said. “They said the right to life must not require an absolute prohibition of assistance in dying. They quipped that we must not create a ‘duty to live’ as they called it.”



Mark Pickup spoke March 7 Saskatoon.

**“Jesus healed the sick, raised Lazarus from the dead, gave back sanity to the deranged, but never did He practice, or include, killing as part of the mercy that occupied His heart. His true followers cannot but adopt the same attitude.”**

– Malcolm Muggeridge

However, all rights carry responsibilities, Pickup said. “If we accept that there is a right to life, then surely we also have a responsibility to live that life to its natural conclusion – not only for ourselves but for the common good,” he said, stressing that an individual’s decisions always affect others.

“If I opt for assisted suicide it will affect my wife, my children, and my grandchildren. It will affect my doctor – because I will ask her to stop being my healer and become my killer – and it will affect my society, because in a small but not uncertain way, it will help entrench the notion that there is such a thing as a life unworthy to be lived,” he said.

“We are an interdependent community, not autonomous beings in a jungle of self interest,” Pickup asserted. **“No matter how sick I become, I still have a responsibility to the common good of society. And I have a right to expect the best palliative care and those things that will foster life in me, even when life is ending.”**

He cautioned against euphemisms like “death with dignity,” “right to die” and “medical aid in dying”, which are used to give an air of medical legitimacy to killing. “Clothe it in the most clever euphemisms, it is still murder.”

“Let me tell you about death with dignity: it is not achieved by injecting someone with poison when they are at their lowest point,” he said.

**“You will hear people talk about the quality of life or the lack of it. Let me tell you something about quality of life: it’s a moving target.”**

“When I was 25 years old and I had an upwardly mobile career, and I was healthy and athletic, if someone would have told me that within a very short time I would have a degenerative disease that would eventually land me in a wheelchair, I would have said ‘I don’t want it!’ But yet today, at 62, my life does have quality. Why? The standard changed.” Pickup said that he has learned that what gives his life quality is to love and be loved.

**“These are dangerous times for people like me. Our lives are being devalued at every turn, with the ever-increasing acceptance of euthanasia and assisted suicide for the severely, incurably ill,” he said.**

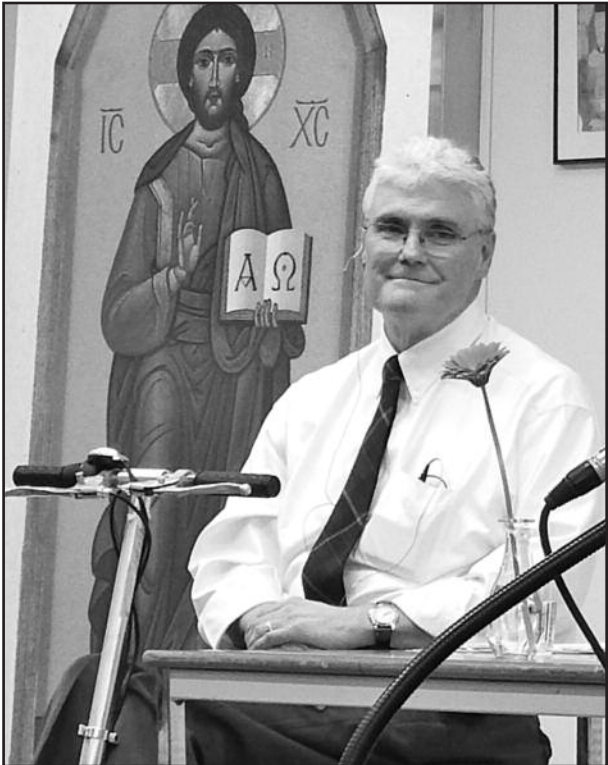
“I’m being told that I have a right to kill myself. And according to numerous polls, upwards of 80 per cent of my fellow able-bodied Canadians agree with that idea, should I become too disabled to do it by my own hand. I had no idea that my fellow Canadians held me in such low regard, or people like me.”

And yet, ironically, it was only two years ago that Canada’s parliament gave unanimous support to the idea of a national suicide prevention strategy to much public acclaim, which Pickup noted is a strange contradiction.

**“Most Canadians think able bodied and healthy people are worth more than the disabled, the ill and the sick. Quite frankly our lives are often seen as not worth living,”** he said, before urging his listeners to discern how faith is calling them to respond in a much different way.

“That may be the way of the world, but it must not be the way of Christ’s followers. We are supposed to change society, not society change us,” Pickup said with emotion, before quoting Malcolm Muggeridge:

“Jesus healed the sick, raised Lazarus from the dead, gave back sanity to the deranged, but never did he practice, or include, killing as part of the mercy that occupied his heart. His true followers cannot but adopt the same attitude.”



**“Humanity is not defined by knowledge or by power. We do not get our worth from what we can do, or our abilities, or even sentence. Our value comes from merely being.”**

Human fulfillment is never reached by killing or suicide, stressed Pickup, describing assisted suicide as an affront to justice, hope and charity that puts vulnerable lives in peril. “The common good concerns the responsibility that we have for all who are around us. The church teaches that the sick and the handicapped should be helped to lead lives as normal as possible,” he said, adding: “I want to know that my doctor and my caregivers will respect the dignity of my person, even if I have ceased to believe it myself.”

**“Grief twists our perceptions. I believe that is one reason why unresolved grief continues to fuel calls for assisted suicide and euthanasia.”**

Pickup then spoke “Christian to Christian” about the concept of suffering and the redemptive power of linking one’s grief, loss and pain to Jesus Christ.

“Christ can make sense of our anguish if we remain surrendered to his leading and sensitive to his voice and to his love,” Pickup said, giving witness to the power of Christ’s light and love in his own life.

“In 1984 at the age of 30, I was diagnosed with MS. I remember lying in the hospital and praying to our Lord, ‘why this?’ and he answered me so quickly, I could swear it was audible. He said: ‘You are mine’,” Pickup related.

“God was trying to illustrate to me at the very outset of this 30-plus-year journey with chronic, degenerative disease: I was still His child, I was still a child of God, Not even disease could strip that from me.”

He came to trust that God was with him, and working for his good. “My journey would take me through a terrible fire, but God did not abandon me: like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, I was not alone. And like Job my flesh was destroyed, but my life was spared. I went from being healthy and athletic, to what you see today.”

The journey with chronic illness and disability has taught him the importance of life’s spiritual journey, Pickup said.

**“Humanity is not defined by knowledge or by power. We do not get our worth from what we can do, or our abilities, or even sentence. Our value comes from merely being.** For those of us who are severely disabled, we must be open to God using our pain, our anguish, our frustrations, to spiritually mature us, to transform us to be more like Christ. This is important because as this transformation begins to occur, we will discover again our natural human dignity.”

Choosing to journey in trust – resisting bitterness and surrendering to the love of Christ – has led Pickup to the realization that he is invited to unite his suffering to the suffering of Christ. “Perhaps that is why our Lord said we must take up our cross daily. It requires a daily commitment to bear up under the weight of our cross and to follow him,” he said.

**“If I carry my cross of suffering, in union with Christ’s redemptive suffering, it does not lead to a Golgotha. It leads to a realization: Christ uses human suffering to draw us closer to Him, if we will accept it.”**

Pickup added: “For it has been in my sick room that I began to discover the beauty of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection. A great light began to shine into my inky darkness to reveal a renewed hope in Christ. My world gets smaller each year, as my body is turned into a living carcass, but my hope in Christ grows,” he said. “Christ can and does set people free.”

## Life-Giving Love:

A national campaign in favour of palliative and home care and against euthanasia and assisted suicide organized by the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF) supported by bishops of Canada (CCCB):

[www.lifegivinglove.com](http://www.lifegivinglove.com)



Justice and Peace

Event focuses on persecution of Christians; need for peace

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

An evening of information and reflection about the persecution of Christians around the world – and how to foster peace in the face of that persecution – was held Nov. 12, 2014 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

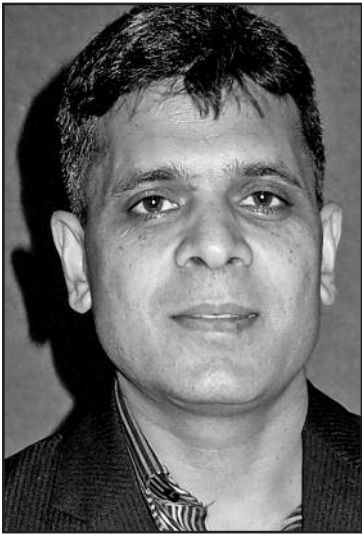
The evening seminar was held to raise awareness and to enter into solidarity with those who are suffering because of religious persecution and violence, said **Myron Rogal**, coordinator of the diocesan Justice and Peace Office, who organized the event.

“Another reason we come together tonight is to ask the justice questions,” Rogal said. “What is it regarding our collective systems, our systems of politics, economics and governance that permits so many people across the world to be diminished, losing their very basic right to practice their faith and worship their God as they see fit?”

Rogal stressed that Christians share their hope in the Risen Lord, and are called by Christ to be builders of peace. “The object is to pull away from the culture of division, the culture of fear that we can so easily be trapped into, because as a community – as a secular community, a Christian community and a global community – we really need to unify and to look for the voices of those who are marginalized and suffering, without causing further division in our midst.”

The seminar began with reports about persecution of Christians in two areas of the world: Pakistan and Iraq.

Speaker **Nadeem Imtiaz Bhatti** described the dire situation facing Christians in Pakistan, where the blasphemy laws restrict religious freedom and are used to justify violence and persecution of individuals and Christian communities. He shared video news reports about the recent murder of a young married couple by a mob after they were accused of defiling a copy of the Quran, and news that a



Nadeem Imtiaz Bhatti



Maggie Aziz



Dr. Chris Hrynkow

death sentence facing a Christian mother, Asia Bibi, was recently upheld.

“These laws are misused as an excuse to kill Christians,” said Imtiaz Bhatti, describing horrific attacks on religious minorities in Pakistan, including the destruction of a Christian village, the vandalizing of Christian churches and schools, theft of property, imprisonment, torture and murder.

Politicians are reluctant to take action or bring perpetrators to justice, for fear of retaliation, he said, pointing to the assassinations of Salmaan Taseer, the governor of Punjab, and of Imtiaz Bhatti’s own close relative, federal minister Shabaz Bhatti, after they spoke out against blasphemy laws.

“Pakistan’s blasphemy laws are a violation of fundamental human rights, which in practice promote religious hatred and violence,” said Imtiaz Bhatti.

A local group called Friends of Pakistan has been created to encourage governments to stand up for human rights and to extend assistance to the victims of religious persecution in Pakistan, he said. (The group held a second fundraising and awareness evening March 29, 2015 at Rock of Ages Church in Saskatoon.)

**Maggie Aziz** of Sacred Heart

Chaldean Catholic Church in Saskatoon spoke on Christian witness and martyrdom in Iraq, home to one of the oldest Christian communities in the world.

She described the history of Christianity in the region, and presented statistics about the decline of the Christian population. According to United Nations estimates, some 2.2 million Iraqis have been displaced since 2007, with the vast majority of these being Christians and other religious minorities, she said.

“The estimated number of Christians remaining has dropped to less than 450,000 as of 2013.” That number has declined even further in recent months, with the escalation of religious persecution and violence led by ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

Christians in the area now face an ultimatum: either pay a tax, convert to Islam or stay and be killed by the sword, Aziz said. “

“Time after time, our churches have been sacked, holy places of worship and statues have been desecrated, churches have been bombed, churches (have been) converted to mosques by force, our priests and clergy have been kidnapped, held ransom or killed,” she said, and some of those who fled are dying of hunger and thirst in the

mountains.

**Dr. Chris Hrynkow**, who teaches in the department of religion and culture at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon, led the second part of the evening seminar, focusing on how to foster cultures of peace, even in the context of religious persecution.

Hrynkow began by describing the concept of positive peace as more than simply the absence of war. Positive peace also eliminates the structural violence of unequal or oppressive applications of power and the distribution of resources. “It holds that without social justice and the reform of existing oppressive structures, there can be no sustainable or authentic peace.”

He then introduced the concept of “cultures of peace,” which has been explored by a number of thinkers, recognizing the importance of ordinary people finding a way to cooperate on a daily basis and live together in a peaceful manner. Fostering cultures of peace is a way to creatively deal with difference and conflict, grounded in relationships, recognizing that this will take different forms around the world.

“The presence of religious persecution can act like the ‘canary in a coal mine,’ alerting us to barriers that prevent the flourishing of cultures of peace,” he said, before suggesting a number of practices that can help foster conditions under which cultures of peace can flourish.

Hrynkow admitted that while

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any one of these practices would likely not be enough to eliminate religious persecution, “seeing several of them incarnated will represent forms of violence intervention and prevention.”

Each of the world’s religious traditions has sources and examples to draw upon in terms of building a culture of peace, he said. “It is important to have advocates for cultures of peace with strong grounding in their own faith tradition speaking to their co-religionists about creative ways to deal with conflict and diversity.”

Practices that would promote cultures of peace include comparing and contrasting “like with like” as a starting point; avoiding the path of being too quick to condemn others; and holding to the basic principle of humility, which holds that full truth will only be revealed at the end of time. Working on common projects and placing a high value on dialogue and shared identities also fosters peace.

Finding a way of policing that protects basic rights and promotes tolerance is important, he added, citing the United Nations Police motto: “sustainable peace through justice and security.”

The U.N. General Assembly’s 1999 “Declaration and Programme of Action on Culture and Peace” names eight areas that can contribute to cultures of peace. Promotion of human rights, peace education, sustainable human development for all, participatory governance, gender equity, multi-faceted freedom of expression, disarmament, and tolerance, empathy and solidarity are “key forms of leaven that will grow a culture of peace,” Hrynkow listed.

“Incarnating cultures of peace is a major challenge that can be understood as rooted and grounded in love,” he concluded.

Catholic Social Teaching: Political, but not Partisan.

Office for Justice and Peace, Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

We all know that factors such as the availability of health care, access to land and food, safe and affordable housing, quality education, peace and freedom from violence and oppression are among the factors that deeply influence the length and quality of people’s lives. The call to social justice is to address these issues where needed, especially with a concern towards those struggling most in our midst, in order to change lives for the better. Political decisions made at local, national and global levels determine to a large extent what a society offers to its people. Thus to act for social justice is fundamentally a political act.

This political nature of social justice makes many people of faith uncomfortable, as they don’t wish to link too closely the Church or the mission of social justice with the agenda of any particular party or political ideology. This is a wise caution, as party politics at times invite compromise, and faith is not about compromise; rather, faith brings to our public life a set of values and a concern with the dignity of all people, and seeks to address particular issues out of that larger vision.

It is prudent to make a distinction between political and being partisan. This distinction is not always clear to those around us. Brazilian Archbishop Dom Helder Camara famously said “When I feed the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist.” A call for justice is a call for political action, but not a call for support of one party or ideology. It is not ultimately important which party or parties makes good decisions, it is important that good decisions are made. The best way to test whether an action is political or partisan is to ask whether the action is about issues and outcomes or about who will get elected. Advocating, for example, for adequate available healthcare may require conversations with various political leaders. Aligning oneself with the position of one or the other does not mean identifying with that party, it simply means supporting their stance on a particular issue.

That doesn’t mean, of course, that people of faith cannot be partisan. We are each able to make our choices about which parties are more likely to make good decisions and to support and engage in that activity as best suits our conscience. For the Church, however, the separation between political and partisan is crucial.

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Scarf project

Grade 7 students from St. Luke Catholic School in Saskatoon tied scarves they made as part of a class project to trees and lampposts near Saskatoon Friendship Inn in December, leaving them for anyone who might need some extra warmth. Teacher Colleen Doecker initiated the project early in the school year, with a plan for each Grade 7 student to make a scarf for a kindergarten student at their partner school, St. John. The project grew in scope at the suggestion of Doecker’s mother, Lois McKay, with the idea of the 28 students making extra scarves and leaving them in the core neighbourhood for anyone in need to pick up.

- Photo by Colleen Doecker.





**Our Lady of Lourdes: Refugee support**  
A chili cook-off in support of refugee sponsorship was held Jan. 25 at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Saskatoon. “The overwhelming support from parishioners indicates their desire to embrace Christ’s gospel through this ministry,” said one of the organizers of the successful event. Winners of the chili cooking competition were Ann Fortin, first prize; Terry Seniuk, second; and Helen Marshall, third. Eritrean musicians Antonios Mendistu, and Mesmer and Birana Andu performed songs in the Tigrinya language. Our Lady of Lourdes parish is currently involved in a blended sponsorship with Citizenship and Immigration Canada for an Iranian woman, Marzieh Tohidi, who spoke about her experience, encouraging her listeners not to underestimate the contributions of refugees. Several parishes in the diocese are sponsoring refugees and others are waiting for sponsorships to be approved, reports Christine Zyla of the diocesan Migration Office.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

## Questions and answers about seeking a law requiring parental consent for underage abortions

SUBMITTED BY COLETTE STANG,  
SASKATCHEWAN PRO-LIFE ASSOCIATION

Here are some frequently asked questions on lobbying efforts underway in the province, asking the provincial government to pass legislation that would require parental consent in order for minors to have an abortion.

**Why are you bringing legislative issues into church? Is this not disrespecting the worship area?**

Jesus calls us to help the poor and if we don’t talk about it in our church communities we have to take it to the streets. While we are called as Christians to respect those in authority over us, the government has a duty to enact laws that restrict evil (Romans 13). Currently the injustice of abortion is not restrained whatsoever. As salt of the world we must do everything possible to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. This involves working with our elected lawmakers to pass a law mandating parental consent for abortion. Teenagers not given the support of parents in a teen pregnancy situation are in a dangerous place and need our protection. As Christians and parents it is our responsibility to protect our children. Our church communities should be responsible to stop these injustices. Will we be the Good Samaritan?

**If parental consent laws protect our minors and save a few unborn babies, is it not wrong to dismiss all the other babies who are not saved?**

We are called to save the babies we can. If it is impossible for us to save 100 babies, but we can save 10, we need to do that. Right now parental consent laws will help save some unborn babies and protect our minors and will be a step in the right direction of saving many more lives. In short, by saving some we are not dismissing others. We are saving those who are right now possible to save.

**Why do some have “Parental Consent for Abortion” confused with “Parents Consenting to Abortion?”**

Parental Consent means that parents have a “yes” or “no” choice to make. For example, immunization forms that parents receive from the Saskatchewan

Ministry of Health are called “Consent for School Age Immunization.” Parents are then instructed to sign and return the immunization consent form, even if they sign the form to say they do not want their child to receive the vaccines. The Ministry of Health wants the parents to make a “yes” or “no” choice in the case of immunization. “Parental Consent for Abortion” also requires a “yes” or “no” choice.

To be clear, a parental consent for abortion law will not stop all teenage abortions. There are some parents who will say ‘yes’ to their daughter having an abortion. But, a parental consent law will ensure that parents are involved. We have seen from other jurisdictions where parental consent laws are in place that in many instances other options are explored when the parents are part of the decision-making process.

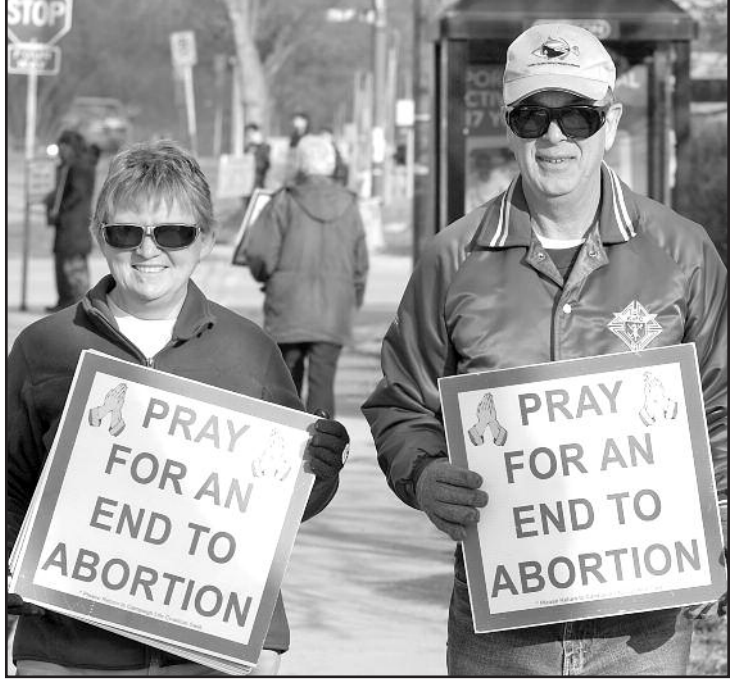
**What happens to minors who are in abusive homes and the best interest of the minor is not respected?**

Unfortunately there are some homes in which abuse takes place. All parental consent laws we have seen include mechanisms whereby coercion is prohibited. For example, if a pregnant teenager is denied financial support by her parents or legal guardian due to her refusal to have an abortion, she could then be deemed emancipated for the purposes of eligibility for public assistance. That said, the majority of parents in Saskatchewan have their children’s best interests in mind and these parents and minors need to be respected and protected too.

**Are abortion rates reduced where Parental Consent for Abortions legislation is passed?**

Yes, Parental Consent for Abortion legislation is effective at lowering the incidence of abortion among minors.

Many studies prove this, one of which is the 2006 study that was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* analysing the parental consent law that took effect in Texas in 2000. The study found that abortion rates fell by 11 per cent among 15-year-olds, 20 per cent among 16-year-olds, and 16 per cent among 17-year-olds.



**40 Hours for Life**  
Celine Hounjet and John Cook were among those of all ages who gathered outside Saskatoon City Hospital this Lenten season, to pray for an end to abortion. The daily event, entitled 40 Hours For Life, began in Saskatoon on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18 and ended on Palm Sunday, March 29. Denise Hounjet-Roth of Campaign Life Coalition describes 40 Hours For Life as “a powerful witness to the unborn in our community and also a time to ask God to have mercy on us.” She noted that this year, in addition to the hour of prayer every afternoon, there were also small groups who prayed in the morning outside the hospital, offering support and resources to any woman who might be thinking of having an abortion. “Though some days proved challenging because of weather, the prayer warriors stood strong and continued to pray,” said Hounjet-Roth. In addition to individuals, participants included representatives of churches, youth groups, Catholic Christian Outreach, Pure Witness Ministries and other local organizations.

- Photo by Tim Yaworski

## “Healing the Shockwaves” for all wounded by abortion

BY ANITA SONNTAG,  
SILENT NO MORE

Silent No More Awareness Campaign (SNMA) has launched a new initiative, entitled “Healing the Shockwaves of Abortion” to raise awareness about the far-reaching negative impact of abortion, which extends far beyond the negative effect it has on the baby, who does not get a chance at life, and on the mother of that baby.

An overview document by SNMA founders, Janet Morana and Georgette Forney, Fr. Frank Pavone of Priests for Life USA, and Kevin Burke explains: “When an abortion takes place, many people are impacted. Therefore, healing after abortion also has to be directed at many people. Nobody is wounded in isolation and nobody heals in isolation.”

The authors compare an abortion to “the detonation of an explosive device.” The detonation is the abortion where the baby’s life is taken. The shockwaves that follow the detonation, as with any explosion, are felt most intensely by those closest to it, namely the mother, followed by the father, grandparents, siblings, and so on.

These and other people groups are affected in varying degrees and in different ways.

Over the last 12 years, Priests for Life has helped build the two largest international ministries that reach out to those who have suffered abortion loss – Rachel’s Vineyard and Silent No More Awareness Campaign. The new initiative came about when Forney, Morana and Pavone gathered for a yearly planning meeting in Western Pennsylvania. “They prayed and reflected upon their many years in abortion aftercare and the healing journey of thousands of men and women from around the world. From this fertile soil, ‘Healing the Shockwaves of Abortion,’ a new year-long program of education, advocacy and healing of abortion loss was conceived,” states the overview.

Different groups are highlighted each month. A few examples include: grandparents in March, siblings in April, survivors and friends in July, abortion providers and advocates in August, families in September, and pro-life workers in November. In May and June, the focus is on “motherhood /fatherhood forever.”

Rolled out in 2015, the new initiative will now be a continuing part of the Silent No More program.

Rachel’s Vineyard Retreats will also be involved in raising public awareness and will welcome not only mothers, but also fathers, grandparents and siblings of aborted babies to retreats. For more information about this initiative go to [www.silentnomore.com](http://www.silentnomore.com) and click on the Shockwaves logo.

## Pro-Life Convention April 24-25 at St. Mary’s in Saskatoon

“Mother and Child Love Them Both” is the theme of the April 24-25 Saskatchewan Pro-Life Association Provincial Convention at St. Mary’s Hall, 211 Avenue O South, Saskatoon.

Dr. Deborah Zeni will present “A Compassionate Look at the Effects of Abortion,” while speaker

Travon Clifton will share her story “Conceived in Rape – the Exceptional Life.” Shawna Sparrow will provide information about “Protecting Your Child in the Digital Age,” while Shancelle Hildebrandt will tell her adoption story in “No Greater Love, No Greater Gift.”

Registration cost for the full convention including banquet is \$70 per person or \$130 per couple. The student rate is \$45. Banquet-only tickets are \$25 each. Those wishing to attend only the conference on Saturday can register for \$35. Registration is complementary for clergy.

Childcare is provided during the conference. There will be displays, vendors and a silent auction.

For more information call (306) 373-3096 or find registration information on the website at: [www.saskprolife.com](http://www.saskprolife.com)



## Justice and Peace

## Environmental action as Christian action: an ecumenical workshop

BY MYRON ROGAL

“Making your Case: Environmental Action as Christian Action” was a day-long ecumenical workshop held Dec. 6, 2014 at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Saskatoon.

The event was organized by Churches for Environmental Action, a newly-named group that strives to connect God’s care for creation found in scripture with daily reality.

In partnership with the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism and sponsored in part by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, the day gave voice to what environmental action is, and how it can be carried out through a Christian lens.

The ecumenical event featured Bishop Donald Bolen giving an opening address, followed by Dr. Jim Harding, who was the keynote speaker for the day.

Prairie Centre for Ecumenism Director Dr. Darren Dahl, who serves as a member of the new group’s organizing committee, welcomed participants to the event.

The opening prayer was a reflection on Psalm 40:5 “O Lord how wonderful is your creation,” which gathered participants into a spirit of wonder and awe, recognizing that the Creator creates “anything and everything,” as creation does not cease. Renowned poet Wendall Berry was cited, in that “God created the world because God wanted it made,” highlighting the supreme goodness of creation and questioning how we have at times neglected and have even destroyed this wonderful gift.

Bolen’s presentation focused on the 2003 CCCB (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops) pastoral letter “You love all that exists”, drawing the audience into three core questions:

- Why environmental issues are moral and faith issues,



Bishop Donald Bolen reviewed a CCCB pastoral letter on the environment – and teachings of several popes – at a Churches for Environmental Action workshop in Saskatoon. – Photo by Myron Rogal

- How do we reach parishes in the midst of division and indifference to environmental issues, and
- How do we speak hopefully?

Bolen stressed the unbreakable connection between the natural world and human ecology. Pope Benedict XVI wrote frequently on this link, which Pope Francis continues to emphasize as a necessity. Bolen walked the participants through the document’s themes as guidelines to address environmental concerns with urgency.

“We human beings are not only the beneficiaries, but are also the stewards of other creatures. Thanks to our bodies, God has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement. Let us not leave in our wake a swath of destruction and death which will affect our own lives and those of future generations,” Bolen said.

This urgency was precisely expressed by Saint John Paul II in a 1990 World Day of Peace message when he said: “Faced with the widespread destruction of the environment, people everywhere are coming to understand that we cannot continue to use the goods of the earth as we have in the past.”

Benedict XVI further described this intimate bond between

humanity and nature in a 2010 World Day of Peace address: “There exists a certain reciprocity: as we care for creation, we realize that God, through creation, cares for us.”

Bolen noted that creation has an intrinsic and intelligent order. He said there is a serious need to examine how we so often separate natural and human ecology. One pertinent example that was lamented is mining in the developing world, which exploits both the people and the natural world, with the poor most often bearing the cost of bad environmental practices.

Bolen highlighted responsible stewardship, drawing attention to a Common Declaration of John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I, looking at how we collaborate with God in creation. Demonstrating the intricate link between moral issues and the environment, Benedict XVI has said that “every economic decision has a moral consequence,” while Pope Francis recently named poor environmental practices as sinful.

Embracing eco-justice requires contemplative, ascetic and prophetic responses, as outlined by the CCCB document. Creation and spirituality play an important part in awakening our senses to the environment around us. “Our churches can be wonderful places for us to experience this,” said

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Bolen. A prophetic response then aims to lead us into action with a common voice, he said. Other points included: a recognition of environmental issues, a need for action, favourable policy development, international cooperation, financial responsibility and a decrease in individual and collective consumption.

One example of how individuals can be awakened to environmental action through a contemplative, ascetic and prophetic response is the St. Francis Pledge, found online at: catholicclimatecovenant.org

Bolen referred to Pope Francis in his advice to always hold hand-in-hand the urgent call for action and the immediate call for dialogue.

Dr. Jim Harding then dialogued with participants for the remainder of the day, focussing on wakening to creation. Harding is a former professor of psychology at Lakehead Environmental Studies at Waterloo, and of human justice at the University of Regina. Among many interdisciplinary and community-based projects, Harding has become known for his leadership in KAIROS and for his ability to mobilize social change.

“The first step to awakening is to admit that for the past 3,500 years we have not been doing a very good job” expressed Harding. “The pastoral lens which we live through is very powerful and sometimes our lens needs to be broken to enter into greater solidarity.”

Harding briefly touched on the reality that “the biosphere is chemically changing due to unchecked selfish consequences – for example half the species have disappeared in one generation.”

Harding spent much of his time working with participants to equip and mobilize them into changing their communities, and to building

“a more grounded sense of hope and faith amidst an ecological crisis.” He expressed that the divide we are trying to heal is big and growing.

This awakening begins with “understanding the limits and consequences of what we are doing,” he said.

“There is a need to take care of one’s heart, soul and relationships” and to “be aware of how much bad news we take in, balanced with staying connected,” Harding said. Participants were encouraged in their work to stick with the awakening process by “being fearless in an awakened way, not a delusional way,” followed by suggestions on how to carry on.

A starting point is to stay locally connected; then, in all of our networks, reach outside of our comfort zones.

A crucial step in mobilizing social change is to admit that everyone is a resource. Touching on communication, Harding stressed the need to celebrate achievements – even small ones – that lead to momentum and walls of division collapsing.

He added that through our actions we need to continually nurture our relationship with the land, and finally, “there is a thirst to create safe places for people to come together in a non sectarian atmosphere to create and reach out.”

At several points, Harding mentioned the role of faith and reason, noting “religion needs to become more accessible, just as science needs to be democratized, as scientism has become an ideology.”

Closing remarks shared by participants identified the need to define goals and to break them down.

At the heart of the day-long workshop remained the desire for a societal value change, recognizing that ecology is about distribution which makes it necessary for justice and peace.

To become involved, or for more information about the group Churches for Environmental Action contact Carol Zubiak at justpeace@saskatoonrcdiocese.com

## Shower held for spiritually adopted babies

BY CONNIE MCGRATH

The Spiritual Adoption Program was created by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen to encourage women to pray for babies in danger of abortion, to increase awareness about the development of the pre-born child, and to provide moms in need with assistance in the form of receiving baby items.

On Wednesday, June 11, 2014 some 30 women of the Catholic Women’s League at the Cathedral of the Holy Family, Saskatoon, met to celebrate the culmination of a Spiritual Adoption Program. Each month since September members had been noting the progressive development of a fetus as it grows to full development before a healthy birth.

Each member named her spiritual baby and the names were presented at the altar for blessing in October. Monthly, the CWL members prayed: “Jesus, we present with humility and love these unborn children, especially

(name chosen for child) for your care. We pray that each unborn baby we have spiritually adopted, who is in danger of abortion, is spared by your loving kindness and concern. We pray that the parents are touched by the love and compassion of the Holy Spirit and each family receives God’s guidance and love. Amen.”

Following the 7 p.m. prayer service, it was a night of laughter and fellowship as participants celebrated the “baby shower.” The group enjoyed many baby shower games, singing, and eating potluck appetizers and desserts.

A group picture was then taken in the Queen of Peace chapel. Members were touched to see the new beautiful mosaic in the chapel, which depicts the angel Gabriel telling the young Mary she is with child.

All of the many baby items were delivered to the Saskatoon Pregnancy Option Centre, a charitable Christian organization committed to providing love,

support and acceptance to women and families who experience an unplanned pregnancy.



## Think Fast focuses on farming

E.D. Feehan Catholic High School held its 2015 ThinkFast for Development and Peace, on March 6 and 7, with this year’s theme centering on free farming practices in developing nations. Sixty-five students from Grades 9-12 and six staff members participated in activities designed to teach students about the inequitable and damaging farming practices that are becoming ever more present around the globe and how these practices are impacting the small farming family. As in previous years the ThinkFast put on at E.D. Feehan was a Lenten fundraising opportunity. Students were encouraged to fundraise a minimum of \$20, a minimum that many students exceeded, helping to raise a final total of \$3098.30.

Photo by Craig Doecker



# “Putting my life together after prison”

**BY BLAKE SITTLER**

Restorative Justice was the theme of a Dec. 10 gathering held at St. Anne Roman Catholic Church in Saskatoon. The event was organized by The Micah Mission, an ecumenical group focused on reintegrating men and women leaving prison back into the community.

Peter Oliver, a Community Reintegration Chaplain, hosted the

evening and introduced Chantel Hubick. Hubick told Peter before her presentation that, even though she had only been released six months previously, she was willing to speak because she believed it would be one way she could give back to the community.

Her presentation was entitled, “Putting my life back together after prison.”

Hubick, 38, introduced herself

as a mother, a daughter, a sister, and a grandmother. She also introduced herself as an addict and an alcoholic, a provincial and federal inmate as well as a parolee. She now sees herself as a functioning member of society.

“I’ve been an addict since high school,” she admitted openly, “I was either there high and drunk, or not there at all.”

Hubick spoke of her story

beginning with her conception through rape and then being put up for adoption by her mother. She was sexually molested by her swimming teacher at age four. “From there, I became an enraged child...a hard to control child because I hurt inside,” she said.

Hubick knew early on that she was adopted and early on in her teen years started to ask where she belonged. She left home and got involved — “adopted,” she said — with a street gang. “They loved me: or so I thought,” she recalled. “I was alone before, but now I had an army behind me.”



Chantel Hubick was one of the speakers at a restorative justice event at St. Anne parish, Saskatoon.

## Crime victim meets offender in restorative justice process: a mutual journey of healing

**BY BLAKE SITTLER**

“Is Our Community Safe?” was the title of a restorative justice evening hosted by St. Anne’s Parish Dec. 10, and facilitated by community reintegration chaplain, Peter Oliver of the Micah Mission.

Some 150 people attended to hear about the topic from the perspective of an ex-offender, a victim, and the chief of police.

Paul and Laureen Millette spoke from the perspective of the victim of a crime.



Laureen and Paul Millette shared the perspective of being a victim of crime as part of an evening about restorative justice.

- All Photos by Blake Sittler

Back in September of 2012, Paul was the victim of an incident of road rage. He was just coming back from a late dinner with his daughter when a truck travelling very quickly cut him off in the parking lot. Paul honked at the man quickly and the other driver responded by making an obscene gesture.

Paul began to drive out of the parking lot to go home when about half a block later the man, almost instantly enraged, cut him off and wedged him into the sidewalk so he could drive no further.

Laureen briefly recounted how Paul started to lose sleep and was becoming focused on the event even to the point of Googling the other driver to find out more about him. “I wanted the book thrown at him,” Paul admitted. “I never thought that I’d participate in a restorative justice experience.

mood in the room changed from anger to listening,” she explained.

In the end, the two men came up with an agreement involving six steps that Alan would take in order to show Paul that he was serious about his desire to change. The list included community service and a monthly donation to the Salvation Army.

“I was scared and got more scared when I saw the driver, who was 6’3” and 230 pounds, had jumped out of his car and started screaming profanities while kicking my car,” recounted Millette. When the light turned green, Paul managed to maneuver his vehicle out of the bottleneck but within a few blocks the man blocked him in again.

The Millettes were approached by a group known by the acronym, RAMP, the Regina Alternative Measures Program.

RAMP is a First Nations-based organization where Aboriginal Elders facilitate a process of mutual healing between the offender and the offended.

Paul was not sure if he should participate. He initially felt that it would be letting the offender “off the hook.”

“When [the enraged driver] got out of his truck a second time, in a panic I reached over to hit the door lock button but accidentally hit the unlock button,” Paul relayed.

But he was convinced by a friend on his hockey team (a police officer), to give it a shot, and in July 2013, Paul met in a room with the man who had chased him down and threatened him only months before.

It was at that moment when the man tried to pull him out of the car. Again, though, when the light turned green, Paul made his escape by driving away.

Paul had no idea what was going to happen. He remembered saying and then nearly yelling: “I feared you. I feared for my family. I’m old enough to be your dad!”

“Luckily, witnesses provided a description of the vehicle and even license plate number.” The Millettes were pleased with the way they were treated by the Saskatoon and Regina City Police.

For two hours, the two men spoke. Paul shared his feelings, how he was not sleeping well and feeling nervous about interacting with strangers.

Paul said he felt that once the police were involved he would have a team of people behind him to legally exact revenge for the fear and pain that he had experienced. “This guy is in trouble,” Paul said he thought to himself. “Now, I’m in control”.

The offender, for whom Paul gave the pseudonym “Alan”, read a letter that revealed a history of concussions from hockey, as well as alcoholism. He also shared that he was working on getting his journeyman ticket.

The offending driver was arrested a few months later and Paul was invited by Regina City Police to come and identify the man.

The whole discussion was overseen by Elder Murray Keewatin, who Laureen described as a “formidable facilitator.”

“Over the course of time, the

Violence was part of her life. She was beaten and berated and this led to and then deepened her addiction to alcohol and drugs.

Hubick became a mother for the first time at the age of 15, and by Grade 12 she had two children. She was able to graduate and even went on to get an office education certificate and became a teaching assistant, all while being in an abusive relationship. She was trying to do what she thought was the “right thing,” but around every corner was another obstacle: a night of drinking or a beating from her partner.

“I was going into the staff bathroom to get high to deal with the pain,” she admitted.

She was arrested for the first time in Moose Jaw in 2013 for drug trafficking and possession of a loaded revolver. Her time in prison was an eye-opener, especially when she realized that two other cells in that institution contained her daughter and her mother all on separate charges. “That’s three generations locked up in the same institution,” she said.

Hubick said that up until that point she was constantly trying to avoid taking blame for her crimes. She blamed all of the people who hurt her and let her down. She decided that she wanted to try a new approach to getting her life under control.

“I told my lawyer that I wanted to plead guilty to all charges,” she stated. She was sentenced to 30 months at Maple Creek Healing Lodge.

It was there that she was asked repeatedly, “Why are you here?” She first responded by stating the

crimes for which she had been found guilty. She then responded by blaming her plight on her history.

Finally, she realized the question “why?” was not about what happened that brought her to Maple Creek, but what she planned on doing with her time. Would she use it positively to heal, or would she waste it blaming her past on others?

Hubick knew that she had to start taking control of her own life. and that she needed a more positive support system. “I wasn’t used to choices. For so many years, other people had been telling me what to do,” she said.

While in prison, the elders who were part of her programming told her to reach out for help and to trust other people. This was not easy for Hubick to do.

Hubick started to contact the only people she knew who could help her. She invited them up from the audience at the St. Anne’s event. They included the head of the halfway house where she stayed, two coworkers from Elizabeth Fry Society, and an Aboriginal liaison from the parole office.

“When we get released from prison, we are not put on a deserted island,” she said. “We are released into the community and we want to be a healthy part of it.”

“You can’t break someone like me; I’m not an animal,” she said. “You can be a person who listens, or who gives that moment to listen to their story. You can walk beside me because I am on a healing journey and healing journeys never end.”

## Marginalization and poverty fueling crime, says police chief

**BY BLAKE SITTLER**

Police Chief Clive Weighill was the concluding speaker at a restorative justice gathering held Dec 10 at St. Anne’s Church in Saskatoon organized by The Micah Mission and Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA). Weighill has been the chief of police in Saskatoon since 2006 and was recently elected to the role of president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP).

Weighill began by thanking the previous speakers, Chantel Hubick who spoke on “Putting my life back together after prison” and Paul and Laureen Millette who addressed “Road Rage and the RAMP Program.”

“What is driving crime? The number one factor is the huge marginalization of the First Nations community,” said Weighill.

He noted that many people in the community do not want to hear their chief of police speak like this, but he explained that it will only get worse if we do not address this factor.



Police Chief Clive Weighill

POLICE CHIEF continued on Next Page



# STR8 UP taking steps toward social enterprise model

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Well-known for walking with ex-gang members through “10,000 Little Steps to Healing,” the grassroots program STR8 UP has recently ventured on some next steps of its own.

A new executive director, a strong volunteer board of directors, charitable status and generous community support means that STR8 UP is moving forward in its goal to help young men and women escape gangs, criminal lifestyles and addictions, says founder Fr. André Poilièvre.

Expanding STR8 UP programming more intentionally into the “next steps” of education, job training and employment for members is part of a strategic plan now being developed under the leadership of Alex Munoz, hired in November as executive director for STR8 UP: 10,000 Little Steps to Healing Inc. Plans are also underway to hire a program coordinator.

STR8 UP started when Poilièvre, as prison chaplain, was approached by two men who asked for help in getting out of gangs. Since those early beginnings STR8 UP has slowly evolved as a grassroots, member-centred program.

As part of their multi-year commitment to the program, STR8 UP members are required to drop all gang involvement, deal with addictions and embrace honesty. The STR8 UP goal is to help each member become a loving parent, a faithful partner and a responsible citizen.

Along the way, STR8 UP members have also given hundreds of presentations in schools and churches, produced books to raise awareness about the reality of gang life, and hosted a successful community conference about gang issues, held in February 2014. That conference was one way in which STR8 UP has formed connections with the Los Angeles-based Homeboy Industries and its social-enterprise model that uses business and workplace opportunities as part of the journey to free young men and women from gangs.

“We are trying to become a little more proactive in our approach,” said Munoz, who comes to his new position as executive director of STR8 UP from a background that includes working with Aboriginal youth as a program manager at the University of Saskatchewan. He recently earned his MBA, with an eye toward working in the non-profit sector, and is enthusiastic about STR8 UP’s future.

“The next phase is more of a sustainability approach, to work more long-term,” Munoz said. “In order to reduce our need for outside funding, we are going to rely more on ourselves, based on the social enterprise model.”



**Executive Director Alex Munoz, member Shane Taysup, and founder Fr. André Poilièvre of STR8 UP: 10,000 Little Steps to Healing are looking ahead as the gang recovery program moves into a social enterprise model of “jobs not jails”.**  
- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Munoz says that services and programs are being streamlined, to ensure that STR8 UP can direct members to the resources they need, whether that’s housing, food, or clothing – and ultimately, education, job skills and employment.

STR8 UP is seeking partnerships with businesses, and wants to put their own Saskatoon stamp on the Homeboy model, which has been summarized in the phrase: “we don’t hire homeboys to bake bread, we bake bread to hire homeboys.”

Helping STR8 UP members develop skills and discover their potential is the goal of this process, according to Munoz.

“Whether it’s art or carpentry or whatever – our members all have gifts, but they also all have some obstacles to overcome,” added Poilièvre. “They have to deal with their issues, whether it’s addiction, fear of people, whatever... there’s a whole bunch of issues to deal with, all at the same time.”

STR8 UP members also need to earn an income to live on, Poilièvre said, noting that this is a big struggle for those trying to survive without the kind of cash they used to have from gang or criminal activities. “They don’t want to go back to that. That’s the challenge for STR8 UP... and that’s why it’s important for us to make the community aware of the obstacles, the difficulties that our members have to overcome.”

A new 18-month program is envisioned, using the template from Homeboy Industries, but unique to STR8 UP’s Saskatchewan circumstances, explained Munoz.

“When they enter this 18-month program, it’s a condition that they will have

reached a high level of sobriety,” explains Poilièvre. “We have members who have reached a certain level – and where do they go from there? They are not ready for employment, they’re not ready even for school, maybe, so we need to enter into another level that will take them there.”

“It’s based on skill development for individuals, and it can be soft skills or hard skills — perhaps trades, employment or education, higher institutions, University, SIAST, and so on,” described Munoz.

“But our first approach, our first priority, remains having members healthy enough to go into these higher stages in their odyssey... it’s not a quick fix, it’s a year and a half, and that’s where social enterprises will enter the picture.”

Young men and women seeking a way out of the gang lifestyle generally come to STR8 UP by word of mouth, said Poilièvre. “A lot of our members usually come (to STR8 UP) through the jail system or by accident,” he noted.

Having healthy STR8 UP members trained to recruit active gang members to this path of healing is another long-term goal Poilièvre said. “There are tons of kids out there who need this.”

Shane Taysup, originally from the Yellow Quill First Nation, is one of the STR8 UP members walking the path to healing. Today he has an interest in film making, and one of his goals is to go to university to study political science. “I want to educate my people around that, so they can ask their own sophisticated questions. It’s not hard to speak up once you have a voice.”

Taysup’s own healing from addictions

and the gang lifestyle has not been an easy journey, but the struggle is worth it, he said. “I’ve received a lot of negative scrutiny, and even ridicule, for my decision. But it doesn’t bother me, because I wake up breathing every day.”

Taysup said that it is no use to pretend to be healed – it has to be authentic. “It’s not called real change if it’s not real to begin with, and that means dealing with a lot of things about yourself, things that you don’t like,” he said.

“That’s probably the worst of all: looking at yourself in the mirror and saying I can’t believe I did something like that, and then dealing with it.” The STR8 UP process is to “find out, deal with it and let it go,” but those are not easy steps, he said. “Some people spend a lifetime doing that. You can’t change what yesterday holds – but you can change what tomorrow holds.”

Poilièvre stresses that the strength of STR8 UP is that it is a members’ program. “They have to be involved in everything we do, because if they’re not, we’re going to fail. It’s that simple. They are the foundation,” he said.

“Everything we do cannot be taught, it can only be learned. It’s a big difference. I can’t teach a person anything, but he can learn everything!”

Poilièvre noted that a local business has offered to do free tattoo removal for STR8 UP members, to eliminate tattoos on hands, face or neck. “It’s not every day that you can erase a mistake,” says Taysup of the opportunity to remove tattoos that might cause others to misjudge or fear him.

“All of these things are signs of progress, of our movement as an organization,” stressed Poilièvre.

“And that is thanks to all the people who have been so good to us,” he said, listing religious orders, churches and organizations who have supported STR8 UP financially and in many other ways. “We can’t grow without the community.”

Poilièvre also acknowledged Police Chief Clive Weighill: “His support has been so tremendous. He stuck his neck out for us many times.”

There are still hundreds of youth still at risk and actively involved in gangs, added Poilièvre. He stressed the importance of STR8 UP talking to the community, giving presentations, and getting people to listen to the call to treat these young men and women as brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, sons and daughters – rather than taking an attitude of “lock them up and throw away the key.”

“Those are our kids. They’re not anybody else’s kids. They’re Saskatoon kids. We need to start thinking that way.”

## Criminals “can’t be punished back to health” says police chief, calling for better solutions

(Continued from Page 12)

Weighill outlined the too-typical story of a boy who grew up in a tough neighbourhood, who was poor and bullied.

“He goes to school with no breakfast. He fails a test,” Weighill went on. “He’s an outsider who is finally invited in by a gang. This friendship escalates quickly to criminal activity.”

Gang involvement is connected directly to the fear and isolation that many feel before joining and to the power and belonging that they experience after they do join.

The police chief then praised the work of the local gang recovery program STR8 UP and founder Fr. André Poilièvre for helping individuals leave the gang life.

The topic of murdered and

missing Aboriginal women was also broached. Weighill said he sees this situation as a criminal issue, but also as a systemic issue of poverty, violence and a lack of education. However, he disagrees with those who are calling for a national commission of inquiry.

“We know what the issues are, so let’s act on them,” he opined. “If we spend five or six years on an inquiry, we’re going to lose momentum.”

Weighill assured the audience that he and the police service are very keen on solving the issue of the exponentially high rates of violence against Aboriginal women and that he saw it as the “Rosetta Stone” of criminology.

“If we can’t solve this issue (of high rates of violence and crime in

the Aboriginal community), then we won’t solve crime in Canada,” he stated.

Weighill explained how he sees so many of the issues that face both the Aboriginal community and all in Saskatchewan as connected.

He cited a June 2013 United Way study entitled “Saskatoon Plan to End Homelessness,” in which they tracked 23 people in Saskatoon who were the biggest cost to the civic and provincial system in terms of policing, arrests, health, emergency room visits, and other social costs. These individuals used \$2.8 million worth of resources per year.

“These costs drop dramatically when they are given access to treatment, support and housing,” explained Weighill.

Weighill pointed out that the only way to move forward was for individuals and institutions to work together and cooperate, but that there were many policies that keep people from being able to do so.

Weighill also weighed in on overcrowded prisons and noted that there was not enough transitional support for people getting out of prison.

“We need to spend money on long-term programming,” stated Weighill, “but governments only work on a four-year term.”

One of the insights that he shared was that he has spoken to other police chiefs in Canada where crime rates are incredibly low. He said that we grow accustomed to a certain crime rate and that we need to think of new

approaches to the problem of crime in order to lower rates to historically minimal levels.

“There is a continuum of criminals out there,” Weighill said. “They can’t be punished back to health.”

The evening ended with a group discussion about the various groups in the city that concerned persons could get involved with to make a difference: ranging from the United Way, John Howard Society, and STR8UP, to the Elizabeth Fry Society, Victim Services, Salvation Army, The Lighthouse and the Friendship Inn. One member of the audience offered that even volunteering to teach a student or new Canadian to read would be a way to create positive community support.



# Healing through art at St. Paul’s Hospital

BY LEANNE NYIRFA

Many things contribute to a positive healing experience within a hospital, including medical expertise, and respectful and compassionate care by physicians, health care personnel, staff and volunteers. But for patients at St. Paul’s Hospital, where the core values go further to include holistic care, the process of healing the body, mind, spirit and soul is enhanced through art.

St. Paul’s Hospital is the first hospital in Saskatoon to deliver a program that fosters healing through art. The Healing Arts Program’s visual arts component is led by Artist in Residence Marlessa Wesolowski. Since 2005, the Hospital has been using the creative arts to enhance the well-being of patients, families, caregivers and the community.

“When someone is ill and feeling vulnerable, it can be difficult to articulate with words what may be going on inside,” says Wesolowski. “At St. Paul’s Hospital, we’ve created safe spaces where patients can use their imagination to express themselves, and create meaning through visual art, music and literary arts.”

Wesolowski says most patients are skeptical about their ability to create. Her role is to support and encourage them to reach a creative state where they are so focussed on their art they forget their pain.

“In this creative state, patients also develop confidence. They can be productive even if they are ill, and that is so important to well-being,” says Wesolowski. “My goal is to help get them to that feeling.”

Patients are referred to the Artist in Residence by doctors, nurses, and other health care staff. She connects with patients at their bedside or in common spaces using a mobile studio, or meets them in the hospital art studio.

“Creating art in the studio is liberating for patients – we get them out of their rooms and engaging with people

in a different environment where the focus isn’t on illness, but on creating. The studio is an inspiring space unlike any other area of our hospital.”

Finished artwork is often put up in patients’ rooms and rotated around the hospital. “The walls of this hospital tell the stories of our patients, adding to the special healing environment that already exists here,” says Wesolowski.

Ken Brevik, a 42-year-old former patient at St. Paul’s Hospital says Wesolowski and the Healing Arts Program changed his life. In hospital for surgery from a work-related accident, Brevik also suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping. “I was nervous about painting, but once I started, I stopped watching the clock to see when it was time to take my medication because I forgot about my pain,” says Brevik.

He says the program also helped him with his mental state. “I’m more comfortable with myself, I find it easier to talk to people I don’t know, and I sleep better,” says Brevik. “I feel like I have control of my life again. I am so thankful to Marlessa and the Healing Arts Program.”

The Healing Arts Program also has positive effects on patient families. The children of 91-year-old Stan Macdonald had the opportunity to paint together with their father before he passed away in late December.

“Marlessa asked my brother and my father to paint something that was meaningful to them both,” says Stan’s daughter Brenda Rutherford. “They did a painting of Grey Owl’s cabin in memory of a trip they had taken there together, and I had a chance to add to the painting when I visited Dad. So now we have this framed family memory of painting together in his last days which is very special.”

Rutherford says the Healing Arts Program brought out the sparkle in her father’s eyes in his last days. “His paintings, which he called *The Purple Cow* and *Smiley* let us know that even in Dad’s final days he was still able to find joy in his life. The program, and the wonderful compassionate health care he received at St. Paul’s Hospital, helped make everything a little bit easier.”

Wesolowski says it’s a privilege to come to work and make a difference in peoples’ lives. “The opportunity to see how creative expression contributes to the spiritual, emotional, and mental elements of human health, and to be a part of peoples’ lives when they’re dealing with illness is truly gratifying.”

The Healing Arts Program is presented by the Mission Office in collaboration with Volunteer Workforce, and is funded by St. Paul’s Hospital Foundation. In addition to art, the program includes music therapy with music therapist Lisa Wutch. Volunteer musicians, vocalists, and poets add to the beneficial program by sharing their unique gifts with patients, families and everyone in the facility.

The program also partners with core neighborhood organizations and schools to create art in the studio,



Artist in Residence Marlessa Wesolowski in the Healing Arts Studio at St. Paul’s Hospital in Saskatoon.  
- Photo by Electric Umbrella

which is periodically displayed throughout the hospital. This contributes to the colourful, healing environment at St. Paul’s and brings the program’s benefits to the hospital’s community.

To learn more about Marlessa Wesolowski or St. Paul’s Hospital’s Healing Arts Program, contact the St. Paul’s Hospital Mission Office at (306) 655-5808. To help support the Healing Arts at the hospital, contact St. Paul’s Hospital Foundation at (306) 655-5821.



Patient Stan Macdonald working on his painting “The Purple Cow” with St. Paul’s Hospital Artist in Residence, Marlessa Wesolowski.  
- Photo by Electric Umbrella

**Year of Consecrated Life**

*We recall with gratitude the Grey Nuns, who established St. Paul’s Hospital.*

GOSPEL  
PROPHECY  
HOPE

consecrated Life  
in the church today

## Macklin quilters sharing warmth with those in need

BY NADEN HEWKO

In the last decade, dedicated workers have made over 1,100 quilts for those in need. The quilt-making project started under the direction of the Macklin branch of the Catholic Women’s League of Canada.

With the cooperative efforts of many women from the town and surrounding area, many quilts are put together every winter.

Since ardent sewers with remnants left over did not want to see the materials go to waste, they put the pieces together to make quilt covers. They sew together fabrics that match to make colourful, attractively designed quilt tops.

Fibrefill batts are ordered and cut into rectangular pieces to make filling for various quilt sizes. Husbands have been recruited to help with cutting the batts into the correct dimensions.

The multi-piece quilt cover is sewn onto a suitable backing like



Catholic Women’s League members from St. Mary’s parish in Macklin with some of the quilts going to the CWL Clothing Depot in Saskatoon. From left: Helen Stang, Fran Stang, Hildegard Gartner, Ida Prediger, Key Zerr and Imelda Feser.  
- Photo by Nick Fearn, Courtesy of the Macklin Mirror

flannel or other soft material and turned inside out. The batt is attached to the inside of the cover with hand stitching. Then the quilt is turned right side out and the opening is sewn shut. Using wool yarn and a large needle, the yarn is pulled through the entire thickness at regular intervals, thus securing the layers. The yarn is tied, completing a durable, warm quilt.

The official quilting sessions usually begin in January, when every Tuesday afternoon the women meet at St. Mary’s Catholic Church hall to begin the work.

The number of volunteers varies from six to twelve or more, depending on weather and other commitments.

Due to health issues, some women cannot come to the hall

but are able to work on the quilts at their residence. The covers are sewn at home by many women in the community. Some quilts are tied at the hall and others are given to our senior women at the assisted living facility Villa Marie, to residents at the Countryside Manor and to seniors at their homes for completion.

The group has lost several willing workers over the years but

the project still goes on.

The quilts are taken to the Catholic Women’s League Clothing Depot in Saskatoon and made available to those in need.

This season, by the end of February 2015, a total of 55 large quilts, 21 baby quilts and five pillows were delivered to the clothing depot. There were still more quilts to complete in March.

Any willing volunteers who are driving to Saskatoon and have room in their vehicle are asked to deliver them. Also some quilts are given to the Macklin Food Bank for those in need.

Working together gives the women a sense of fellowship and a feeling of accomplishment by helping others.

At the mid-session break, a light lunch of tea, coffee or juice and some baking is enjoyed.

This project is also an excellent way of recycling fabrics as much material is donated to the sewers for making quilts.



# Faith communities to celebrate centennial of historic church

BY ELIZABETH HEATCOAT

Standing on the middle of the Saskatchewan prairie it is almost as though you can feel the history of the place. You can close your eyes and visualize a young bride full of nervous excitement being escorted by her father. Or sense the energy of children rushing by, eager for a Sunday visit, or hear the joyful chatter of the annual church bazaar reverberating from the basement.

The few cracks in the church's foundation aren't wrinkles from strain. Rather, they are the laugh-lines from the memories shared by gathering pilgrims. All of this is combined with a sense of sorrow lingering from the century of mourners who have buried loved ones here.

The church is Saints Peter and Paul, and the place is the Blumenfeld Heritage Site in the southwest corner of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

It is located 16 km south and 6 km east of Leader, just off Highway 21.

The church's records go back more than 100 years. They are amongst the first official records to document the early settlers in the area and tell the story of what was once a thriving rural parish.

## Centennial Celebration

On Sunday, June 28, 2015, a centennial celebration will be held to mark the 100th anniversary of the church at Blumenfeld.

Additional information and registration forms are online at: [blumenfeldheritage.jigsy.com](http://blumenfeldheritage.jigsy.com) or contact Kendra Volk at (306) 666-2017. **The registration deadline for those attending the evening meal is May 15, 2015**, and tickets are: \$20 per adult, \$10 per child (7-12), no charge for children 6 and under.

Everyone is welcome to attend the June 28 pilgrimage: Mass will



A procession during last year's Blumenfeld pilgrimage to the historic church and grounds.  
- Photos on this page by Timothy Yaworski

be celebrated at 3:30 p.m. with Bishop Donald Bolen as presider and homilist.

Registration, children's activities and "grebble" (a local delicacy of fried dough, similar to elephant ears) begin at 10 a.m.

Pilgrimage activities, including the blessing of the cemetery and praying of the outdoor Stations of the Cross, as well as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, start at 1 p.m.

"One hundred years ago, pioneers built Saints Peter and Paul church as a symbol of faith that stood strong against the harshness of the rugged prairie environment," said Deacon Bob Williston, a member of the Blumenfeld Heritage Committee.

The church is the main beacon of the heritage site. The belfry, spire and cross that rise above the prairie can be seen for miles remaining as a reminder of faith-filled life in early Saskatchewan.

"Through the years many pilgrims have journeyed to this holy ground to gain insight and inspiration. This year we invite you to experience the strength, wonder, and devotion of those who, with very little, were encouraged for greatness," added Williston.

Known for his gifts of singing and song-writing, Deacon Bob Williston has composed a song for

the 100th anniversary entitled *Blumenfeld is Softly Callin'*. CDs featuring the song are available for sale.

## Local History

The following are snippets taken from a history of Blumenfeld written in May 1955:

"In speaking to some of the oldtimers, they refer to the year 1908, when the first Catholic settlers arrived in the district of Blumenfeld," begins the author.

The early German settlers came from Romania, Krasna and Bessarabia. Some of the original family names in the area were Hoffart, Guckert, Duchscherer, Drescher, Ziebert, Riffel and Weisgerber.

From the early years of the parish until 1955, 1,740 baptisms were registered, as well as 254 marriages and 295 deaths.

"The Church of Saints Peter and Paul, and Parish of Blumenfeld, is the mother church of the district... similarly to a mother, who sees her children depart to make their own homes, so too, the mother church of Blumenfeld has witnessed the beginnings and the flourishing of new parishes all around her, which at one time belonged to her care," wrote the author of the 1955 historic account.

In 1964, less than 10 years after the writing of that early history, the Blumenfeld parish celebrated its last regular Mass. In 1983 the site was designated as a heritage site.

## Annual Pilgrimage

Each year, the parish yard is brought back to life for the afternoon of the annual pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage is a tradition that began during the 1930s. Those were tough years for the locals, so much so that Fr. Father Henry Kelz, OMI, stayed with the Karl Duchscherer family. This was "because of lack of funds to supply fuel and other needs to the upkeep of the parish rectory," according to the 1955 historic account.

## Blumenfeld & District Heritage Site 2015 – Centennial Year

### Join the celebration, June 28

Find more information at [blumenfeldheritage.jigsy.com](http://blumenfeldheritage.jigsy.com) or phone Kendra Volk at 306-666-2017  
May 15 is the deadline to register for the evening meal.

**Tour this original Roman Catholic Church built in 1915**

**Guided tours:** July and August, Sundays from 2-4 p.m.

**Group tours:** Available upon request.

**Contact:** Ron or Marlene Duchscherer at 306-673-2622 or 306-628-7403 (cell) or Karri or Dave Wagman at 306-673-2663 or 306-628-8083 or 306-628-7868.

## Blumenfeld is calling:

**100th Anniversary of historic prairie church,  
Pilgrimage and celebration Sunday, June 28, 2015**



Fr. Hoang Nguyen, Fr. David Tumbach and Fr. Alphonse Narisetty (l-r) celebrated Eucharist at historic Saints Peter and Paul Church in 2014.

Nevertheless, the parishioners worked to build a place of pilgrimage. In 1936, the grotto for outdoor worship was constructed – primarily of rocks gathered and hauled from neighbouring lands – and was blessed for the first pilgrimage.

"We recall the era when our people settled the land. Land carries special meaning for people of an agricultural background. For the last 100 years — and prior for our Native peoples — the land has proven to be a resource of abundance, bounty, limitation and scarce returns at various times," said Daryl Tumbach of the Blumenfeld Heritage Committee.

In the early years, there used to be up to 2,000 pilgrims walking prayerfully, and for considerable distances, from all four directions toward the Blumenfeld site.

Today, a volunteer committee continues to work at maintaining the site. A few years ago the windows on the north side of the building were replaced for \$23,000. The original church, complete with a basement, cost just over \$10,500 to build. The rectory cost a meager \$1,200.

Operations and upkeep today depend on donations. Current needs include a new roof, chimney, the remaining windows and a wheelchair lift. Sponsorship and donations are greatly appreciated. To either sponsor a project or make a donation to the maintenance of the Blumenfeld Heritage Site, simply add a donation to your registration or make a donation upon arrival for the centennial celebration. Donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax receipt.

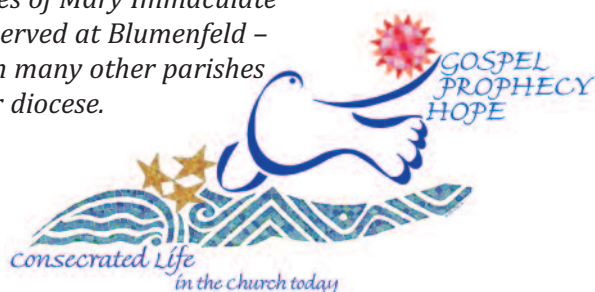
*Note:* volunteers provide tours of the church on Sundays in July and August from 2 to 4 p.m. Group tours can also be requested. (See contact information in box, at left).



The grotto on the grounds of the pilgrimage site at Blumenfeld was constructed in 1936, built with rocks from neighbouring fields.

## Year of Consecrated Life

We recall with gratitude the  
Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
who served at Blumenfeld –  
and in many other parishes  
in our diocese.





# Rite of Election: bishop prayed with those who were preparing for baptism at Easter

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

As part of their journey to the initiation sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist at this year's Easter Vigil, 10 catechumens from across the diocese were welcomed by Bishop Donald Bolen and wrote their names in the Book of the Elect during the diocesan Rite of Election held on the first Sunday of Lent, Feb. 22 at the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

The Rite of Election is part of the RCIA process (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) by which new members come into the Catholic Church. During the diocesan celebration, catechumens were presented to the bishop, and

affirmed in their journey of conversion and faith by their godparents, catechists and the community.

Covenant, baptism and the Lenten period of preparation were themes of the scripture readings and the homily. "The God who made us, loves us and wants to be in a relationship with us, a covenantal relationship. God wants to draw us into God's own life," Bolen said.

"Your experience of being called to be a disciple of Jesus, to be baptized, is part of this covenant – a covenant which gives life, an everlasting covenant that is our hope and our life," he added, addressing the catechumens who at

Christian Initiation and Catechetics is supported by



the time were journeying toward baptism at Easter.

"We are drawn into the life of Christ" through the waters of baptism, he said. "In baptism you are also drawn into the life of the church... the community who tries to live as Jesus' disciples



Bishop Donald Bolen welcomes catechumens and their sponsors at the diocesan Rite of Election held Feb. 22 in Saskatoon. - Photo by Tim Yaworski

empowered by the Holy Spirit. In baptism we summon you into that life," Bolen said.

"We live with a great hope that God is with us, and God's transforming power is at work in us."

Journeying with those who are being brought into the church and being formed as disciples is a great gift to the entire Christian

community, the bishop added. "We are all renewed by this process. We accompany you with great joy."

At a luncheon gathering earlier in the day, Bolen also welcomed and blessed 21 candidates – Christians already baptized in other traditions – who were preparing to come into full communion with the Catholic Church during the Easter season.

## Oblates bid farewell to Mazenod Residence, continue to discern future

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Mazenod Residence, a long-time home for Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Saskatoon, was demolished at the beginning of March, after an extensive process of discernment and transition for members of the religious order.

Seeing the building come down March 2-3 was another difficult moment of "letting go," said Fr. Bill Stang, OMI, describing a multi-year process of decision-making and relinquishment, as members of the order grappled with the reality of aging members, including some dealing with a range of health issues, as well as the challenges of the deteriorating residence building, and the ongoing call to continue to live the Oblate mission.

There are no plans to sell the property at the corner of Taylor Street and Saskatchewan Drive, and there are no plans to close Queen's House, said Stang, stressing that there is an ongoing discernment still continuing about the future of the religious order's mission and ministry in Saskatoon.



Queen's House Director Brendan Bitz (left) and Fr. Bill Stang, OMI, Saskatchewan District Community Superior of the Oblates.

"As someone said to me about this whole process, unless something dies, nothing new will come. Hopefully something can be reborn here," said Stang, Saskatchewan District Community Superior.

Most of the priests and brothers who were living at Mazenod Residence are now settled in apartments or assisted living suites at Trinity Manor, a retirement housing development owned and operated by the Catholic Health Ministries of Saskatchewan adjacent to Samaritan Place nursing home in the Stonebridge neighbourhood of Saskatoon.

In addition to the 12 OMI community members now living at Trinity Manor, three are residing at Potter's House, another long-time Oblate residence in Saskatoon.

Just as for anyone who is downsizing and

moving to a retirement community, the transition involved some heartache and regret, but members of the Oblate community are now finding a new community at Trinity Manor, said Stang. The Oblates are beginning to feel at home there, he said, with Trinity staff members taking over tasks that were once handled by Brother Walter DeMong, OMI, or other fellow Oblates.

The transition has been a gradual process, beginning in 2008 with discussions about elder care and planning for the future, followed by the establishment of a property task force in 2013. As part of the move out of Mazenod Residence, furnishings and other material from the residence was dispersed, Stang noted, often given to those in need, or to other organizations.

"We didn't hold an auction, or sell anything," he said. "It was given away."

With the housing question resolved, the order continues to examine ways in which it will continue its mission and ministry in the community – which includes discussions about the ministry of Queen's House.

The retreat centre – which is also located on the Mazenod House property on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River – has been a spiritual resource for the Catholic community of Saskatoon and beyond for some 60 years.

The mandate of Queen's House has evolved and expanded over those years, said director Brendan Bitz, emphasizing the strong community support and affection for the

facility and its mandate, and ongoing efforts to upgrade the building and expand its offerings and the scope of its outreach.

"Oblates have touched in a wonderful and significant way the lives of countless individuals, families and communities through their dedicated service, sacrifice and charism of hospitality and charity to any and all," said Bitz in a recent director's report. "Renewal will be welcomed, is being anticipated and will be supported."

Today, the retreat centre has built ecumenical connections and also serves as a gathering place for a broad range of groups in the wider community.

There is also a desire to serve those on the margins, Bitz added. A recent day for women who are newcomers to Saskatoon from all over the world was coordinated in conjunction with the Open Door Society, and had a profound impact on staff, he said.

Discernment about the future direction of Queen's House is part of a larger picture for the country's Oblates, who are also connected with other retreat houses across Canada.

There are some 215 Oblates across the country – continuing in 60 different ministries – approximately 35 of those men are under the age of 60.

Consultation and planning about mission and ministry continued at recent Oblate leadership meetings in January and February 2015 and will be furthered at the national Oblate Convocation April 13-17 in Cornwall, Ontario.

**Year of Consecrated Life**

*We recall with gratitude the establishment of Queen's House by the Oblates.*

## Lay Formation: "grow, pray, sing, laugh, and cry"

### Lay Formation Alumni Profile

Joanne and Wayne Kzyzyk  
St. Anne Parish, Saskatoon

Missioning Years:  
Joanne 2007, Wayne 2010

#### Why did you choose to participate in Lay Formation?

**Joanne:** I had been drawn to participate in the program for a few years before ever taking the step to actually do something about this call. At the time, I would have liked to have journeyed with my husband - but the Holy Spirit was calling me and not him (not at that time anyway!).

Looking back, I'm not sure now that I would have wanted us to go at the same time after all. Going at different times allowed Wayne to "be himself" and I didn't have to feel embarrassed by that or feel the need to nag at him. Going separately allowed us each to be open to the Holy Spirit and all the teachings and fellowship that come with the Lay Formation experience.

**Wayne:** A good friend, Ivan Hitchings, suggested I should give it a try. He basically kept bugging me until I did. Our family life is such that I couldn't journey through the program alongside my wife without finding childcare – but that didn't stop us.



Joanne and Wayne Kzyzyk of Saskatoon. - Submitted photo

Participating separately gave us each the opportunity to go through the program while maintaining commitment to our children.

#### What are some best memories of your Lay Formation Experience?

**Joanne:** The greatest gift of Lay Formation has been the multitude of people we have met and the relationships that have developed as a result. We can go to almost any parish in the diocese and we will know someone there all because of our Lay Formation experience –

our "church family" has grown exponentially.

One of these relationships has been particularly fruitful. In the late summer of 2011, we volunteered to provide childcare for a couple wanting to attend Lay Formation ... from that "yes" we have developed a profoundly life giving relationship with a wonderful couple and their growing family that is sure to continue for a long time.

**Wayne:** A highlight of the program for me was journeying with my prayer group, not to mention social and community times. We also went through the Lay Formation program with participants from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy. During Lent, the coordinators led us through an experience of Forgiveness Vespers, which is a tradition practiced within the Eastern Rite. I particularly enjoyed being introduced to that experience.

#### What are you doing now?

**Joanne:** In 2013, I felt honoured to receive a phone call asking us to join the Lay Formation team as volunteers. As our children are now at an age where they can manage a weekend without us, going to Queen's House once a month is not difficult for us to manage. In fact it's a "get away" for us!

We enjoy helping out as needed as well as being able to sit in on the different sessions. Presenters change, as do their presentations,

**Lay Formation**

DIocese of Saskatoon

supported by the

**Bishops**

ANNUAL APPEAL

so it's not like hearing the same old thing. Being able to be a part of small prayer groups this past fall was another gift; allowing a more personal and deeper relationship to develop with the ladies in my group has been such a blessing. Getting to cuddle babies while their mothers present isn't a bad gig either! Lay Formation has been the gift that keeps on giving. I hope to be a part of it in some way for many years to come.

#### Would you recommend Lay Formation to others?

**Wayne:** I would tell people to go to Lay Formation in order to learn nothing and to learn everything – to have all your questions answered and a hundred more questions unanswered; to journey with like-minded individuals; to grow, pray, sing, laugh, and cry.



## Lay Formation

# Christmas project connects seniors to Aboriginal Lay Formation participants

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A Christmas spirit of giving and of thanksgiving was all wrapped up together in a project undertaken this year by residents of St. Ann's Senior Citizens' Village in Saskatoon.

Dozens of wrapped gifts and shoeboxes filled with Christmas cheer were put together by St. Ann's residents, their families, volunteers and staff. The gifts were then presented on the Feast of St. Nicholas, Dec. 6, to participants in the Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation Program to take back to families, elders and those in need in their home communities across the north, on area reserves, and in the inner city of Saskatoon.

Gathering at Queen's House of Retreats in Saskatoon once a month, the Aboriginal stream of the Lay Formation program includes participants from the Catholic dioceses of Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Keewatin Le-Pas – including some who spend many hours on the road to attend.

Aboriginal stream participants were surprised to receive a visit from Sr. Kathleen Bolton, SND, in November, asking them to provide a list of names and ages for the St. Ann's Christmas project. When later presented with the boxes of gifts in December, members of the Year I class expressed delight, awe and appreciation that the elderly residents of St. Ann's wanted to give gifts to people they didn't even know.

"In our culture, it's usually the other way around – we give to honour the elders. It was a surprise to us that the elders were giving this to us. And it was wonderful that they were thinking of other people to help, including people in the north," said Brenda Montgrand, who travels each month from Sandy Bay, Sask. to attend Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation.

The Christmas project was initiated as a way for St. Ann's residents to experience the blessings of giving, explained Carla Bergermann, Director of Recreation

at St. Ann's Senior Citizens Village.

"These are a group of people who in their lives were always contributing, always doing things for their community – they were involved in CWL and in their churches and their communities. Sometimes there is a feeling that they had to lose all of that once they are in long-term care," she said. "We wanted to find a way to give our residents back that experience of helping others."

In addition to the nursing home, St. Ann's also offers independent living and enriched living. The entire St. Ann's community, including staff and volunteers, participated in the project in many different ways, said Bergermann.

Knowing that 90-year-old St. Ann's tenant, Sr. Kathleen Bolton was still actively involved in outreach and various parish organizations, Bergermann asked for her advice about who might benefit from the Christmas project. "Sr. Kathleen said that she would think about it, and 24 hours later, she had the entire plan."

Sr. Kathleen had attended the 2014 Lay Formation missioning celebration, and was touched by the commitment of participants, especially those in the Aboriginal program who would travel long distances and make other sacrifices in order to attend. "These people come to Lay Formation every month for two years, some of them from great distances, to gain what I got for free," she said. "That was in the back of my mind – I thought, if I ever get a chance to help them, or encourage them, I will."

At the same time, the idea of Christmas shoeboxes, often sent to children in developing countries overseas, was in her mind. "I always thought: why don't we do something like that for Canadians?"

Sr. Kathleen connected with Lay Formation coordinator Mona Goodman at the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon to launch the project, and also invited lay Associates of her religious



At the suggestion of Sr. Kathleen Bolton of the Sisters of Notre Dame D'Auvergne, residents, families, volunteers and staff at St. Ann's Senior Citizens' Village participated in a Christmas project to present gifts to Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation participants to distribute in their home communities. - Photo submitted by St. Ann's Home

congregation, the Sisters of Notre Dame D'Auvergne – to help in shopping, collecting and wrapping the gifts. Residents felt like they accomplished something in helping others, she said, describing how one assistant would encourage nursing home residents to assist in holding the wrapping paper or a ribbon, making sure all could help.

Bergermann agreed that the response of the St. Ann's community was heartening. "It was really neat to see the families stopping by and helping out... and to see the impact of the residents and tenants knowing that they are giving back, and that they are part of a community that cares for others," she said.

"Our mission is to live the Catholic tradition, to give care the way the sisters started it here at St. Ann's," Bergermann noted. "Our vision right now is 'A Place to Call Home' – and we are trying to make that happen for our residents in many ways."

"I think it was a great idea coming from the elderly people," said Alexander Morin of Sandy Bay. "It surprised me!"

Alvina Halkett of LaRonge chose to deliver gifts to children who recently lost their grandmother. "They will be surprised to be getting gifts from Saskatoon. They will be surprised that somebody that they don't know there is thinking about them – other grandmothers."

"The family I chose just lost their mom last month, and they all feel kind of lost...it's going to be hard for them," said Virginia Bird of LaRonge.

Veronica Favel of Cumberland House works with 14 families in a Kids First program, as a home



Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation participants were delighted to receive the parcels to distribute at Christmas. - Photo by Kiply Yaworski

visitor. On her list to share gifts from St. Ann's were two high-risk families dealing with a number of different issues.

Others who received gifts from the St. Ann's seniors: a family that just lost their husband and father; a single dad and his eight children; elders in several communities; and a mother grieving the death of her son, who benefited from knowing someone cares – just as her own grandmother used to care for her.

Sandi Harper of Saskatoon recalled how her mother used to knit

and sew gifts for others. "We'd ask her why she did it, and she would say: 'Part of life is giving.' Seeing the seniors' home doing this – they just reminded me of her."

"It's really about a spirit of love," said Lay Formation participant Judy Bull.

"It brings up a person's spirit," agreed Maggie Hunter. "I hope they found joy in doing what they did. I will be praying for those who have provided these gifts. I just want to let them know that we will be praying for them."

## Year of Consecrated Life

Sr. Kathleen Bolton is a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame D'Auvergne, whose members have served in a variety of ways in our diocese. We also remember with gratitude the care of the Franciscan Sisters of St Elizabeth in the establishment of St. Ann's Nursing Home, as well as hospitals in Macklin and Humboldt. We also recall with gratitude all those consecrated religious – sisters and priests from many orders – who have helped with Lay Formation over the years.



**Lay Formation**  
DIOCESE OF SASKATOON

Diocese of Saskatoon  
306-659-5847 or 1-877-661-5005  
Email: [layform@saskatoonrccdioocese.com](mailto:layform@saskatoonrccdioocese.com)  
Website: [www.saskatoonrccdioocese.com](http://www.saskatoonrccdioocese.com)

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INTO THE  
IMAGE OF GOD

You are invited to deepen your relationship with God and enrich your faith life through prayer learning and community.

**APPLY TODAY!**

Currently accepting registrations for September 2015!

You are invited to attend the 27th annual diocesan Lay Formation

**Missioning Celebration**



**Lay Formation**  
DIOCESE OF SASKATOON

Sunday, June 7  
2:30 p.m.  
Cathedral of the Holy Family  
Reception to Follow

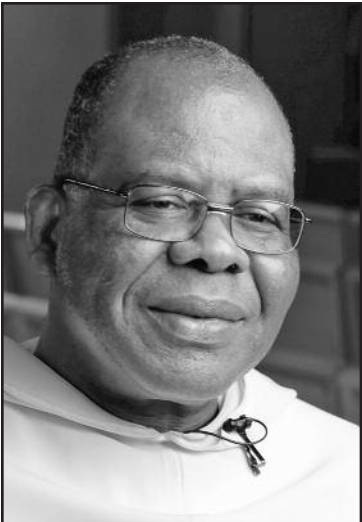


# Excerpts from reflections on Consecrated Life

In this Year of Consecrated Life, reflections and vocation stories are being collected in writing as well as on video.

Here are a few excerpts of reflections that can be found in full on our website:

www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com



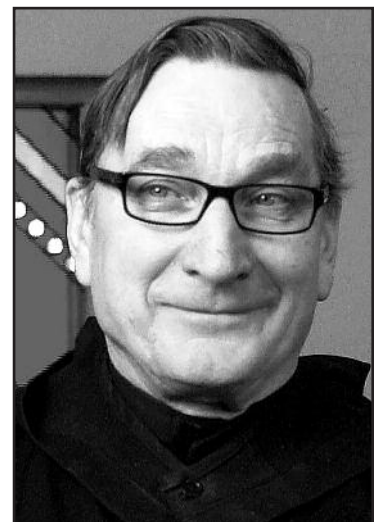
“As God would have it, I have spent the greater number of years of my priestly ministry as a Dominican, engaged in the combined role of preaching and teaching... I can say it loud and clear that I am a happy, joy-filled and fulfilled priest.”  
- Fr. Iheanyi Enwerem, OP



“I always felt this was where God was calling me, and I always felt very happy... If I can bring the love of Christ to whoever I meet, this is my dream.”  
- Sr. Dolores Bussière, FDLP



“If I had to do it all over again, I would choose as I have chosen. I know that one can only be fully happy in following the vocation in life that God has meant for one.”  
- Sr. Adelaide Fortowsky, OSU



“Being a brother means being consecrated to Christ... it means living a common life with others, being in prayer with others, being in the Spirit with others. It means cooperating in life and work.”  
- Br. Basil Schaan, OSB



“The first time that I went to visit the Daughter of Providence Sisters who were new to Saskatoon, one of their sisters was visiting from a small rural area and had brought them a bag of potatoes.... She informed me of a retreat for young women which would take place in the coming November. I attended that retreat and the possibility of a dream stirred within.”  
- Sr. Adeline Behm, FDLP



“I had been searching to know whether God was calling me to religious life – praying, reading, and talking, but still no definitive answer which I felt I needed.... In the quiet of the night, the words ‘Serve my Church’ came into my consciousness. I recognized the words as a message from the Lord and I said, ‘Yes.’”  
- Sr. Bernice Daratha, OSU



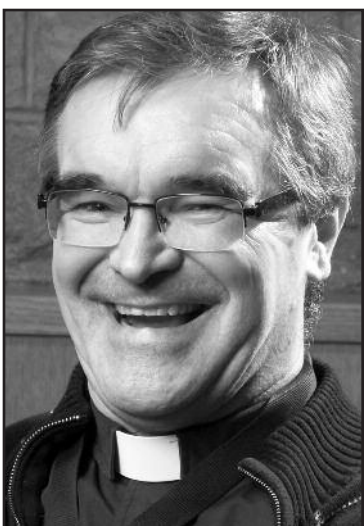
“I believe that it is this unfailing and caring presence (of God) that has led me to places where I would not have chosen to go, but where I truly discovered joy – a deep sense of purpose – and how wonderfully close God is, when one dares to step into the unknown and live life with an open heart.”  
- Sr. Marie-Noëlle Rondot, SMS



“I moved into Discernment House in Saskatoon, a place where one could receive spiritual direction, discernment and live in a community of faith with sisters and other young women. I felt like I had come home. I enjoyed living as a part of a community. In fact, I realized that I had been thirsting for it: to belong, to be part of something bigger than myself... the Word of God also confirmed for me: ‘this is the way, walk in it.’ ... My greatest joy and peace comes from prayer, being a companion to Christ.”  
- Sr. Cindy Lewans, PM



Describing the freedom to love all that comes with religious life: “You are able to go out there and spread the Word and be able to love all people as required... it is a great gift, I have been able to share my life.”  
-Sr. Jemimah Wanjiku, ASN



“I smile because consecrated life fills me with so much joy, I cannot help but share it everywhere that I go. It really is a great gift.”  
- Fr. Steve Morrissey, CSSR



“My dream of being able to serve in our missions and to live out our motto, ‘I came that they may have life, and have it to the full’ has brought me much joy, peace and fulfillment.”  
- Sr. Marie Gartner, SMS



On feeling the call to be a sister, even as a child: “That thought often came back to me during my teenage years and into adulthood. I tried to ignore it for a long time. But our God is a persistent God and finally at the age of 26, I succumbed to the call.”  
- Sr. Anne Flegel, SMS

## Highlights of a letter to consecrated religious, in which Pope Francis described his hopes about the focus for this special year:

- “Where there are religious, there is **joy**.”
- “I am counting on you ‘to wake up the world’, since the distinctive sign of consecrated life is **prophecy**.”
- “...make the Church **the home and the school of communion**.”
- “**Go into all the world**” - especially to the peripheries, to the suffering, to the poor.
- “**A time of transformation**” - may this be a time of dialogue and renewal.

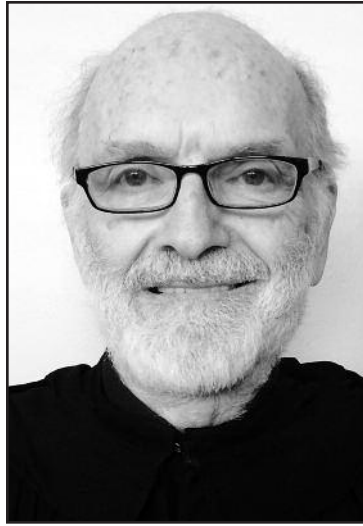


## Vocations: Year of Consecrated Life



"Imagine my surprise, when on an eight-day silent retreat, where for the first time in my life, I really and truly experienced God's overwhelming love, I also heard God calling me to more than volunteer work."

- Sr. Felicitas Drobig, OSU



Recalling the death of a cousin and the symbols and words of his ordination: "As time goes by and I learn more about God's gracious action in our lives, I treasure the experience of answering the call to religious life as the paradigm of learning how to die."

- Fr. Lawrence DeMong, OSB



"God has been – and is – so present in my life, guiding me constantly in my vocation as a nurse to the First Nations people and now, for over ten years in Pastoral Care ministry in the hospital."

- Sr Renee Buliard, SMS



"The call has really been an anchor for me in my life. I knew that with the call came the promise that God was there, that God would provide... the call comes with a freedom to serve, to answer, to respond."

- Sr. Lucie Hamel, PM



"Religious life is a gift from God. It is freeing. It has freed me to be available to help people, to be available to journey with people... the sick, the poor and the lonely. It is a free gift that has freed me to be available for service to humanity, to God."

- Sr. Agatha Ogunkorode, SSMA



"Religious life has been good to me... God has been so good to me... Service is very much part of my ministry and my desire... that's a great fulfilment for me."

- Sr. Louise Hinz, OSU



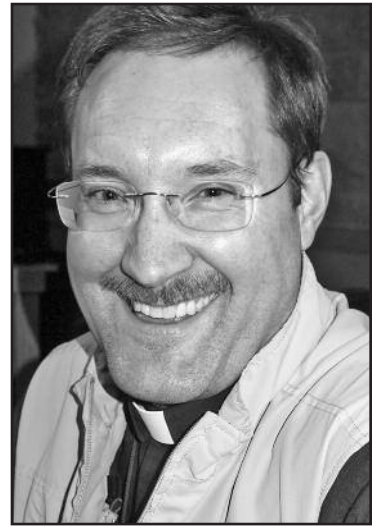
"The big challenge for me was to 'let go' of all that I had known in my younger years and open myself to a whole new world."

- Sr. Jeannine Rondot, SMS

### The Year of Consecrated Life

Nov. 30, 2014 to Feb. 2, 2016

...to look to the past with gratitude,  
...to live the present with passion,  
...to embrace the future with hope!



"I found... the kind of enthusiasm and spirit of adventure and daring that I was looking for .... that experience of the joy of the gospel that comes when you give yourself totally."

- Fr. Mark Blom, OMI

### What is Consecrated Life?

"The life consecrated through the profession of the evangelical counsels (of chastity, poverty, and obedience) is a stable form of living by which the faithful, following Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God who is loved most of all, so that, having been dedicated by a new and special title to His honor, to the building up of the Church, and to the salvation of the world, they strive for the perfection of charity in the service of the kingdom of God and, having been made an outstanding sign in the Church, foretell the heavenly glory."

- Canon 604

## Prayers of thanksgiving to our God for all the consecrated women and men who have served among us in the diocese of Saskatoon:

#### Orders of Women Religious

Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist (FSE)  
Franciscan Sisters of St. Elizabeth (OSE)  
Les Filles de la Providence - Daughters of Providence (FDLP)  
School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND)  
Sisters of the Assumption (SASV)  
Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception (SCIC)  
Sisters of Charity of Montreal (SCM) "Grey Nuns"  
Sisters of Charity of St. Louis (SCSL)  
Sisters of the Child Jesus (SCJ)  
Sisters of the Holy Family (Ukrainian Catholic)  
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM)  
Sisters of Loretto - Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM)  
Sisters of Mission Service (SMS)  
Sisters of Notre Dame D'Auvergne (SND)  
Sisters of Our Lady of the Cross (NDC)  
Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (RNDM)  
Sisters of Our Lady of Sion (NDS)  
Sisters of the Presentation of Mary (PM)

Sisters of St. Joseph (Ukrainian Catholic)  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto (CSJ)  
Sisters of Service (SOS)  
Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate (SSMI - Ukrainian Catholic)  
Ursuline Sisters of Bruno (OSU)  
Ursuline Sisters of Prelate (OSU)

*In recent years, Consecrated Religious from other orders have also lived and served among us, including:*

Assumption Sisters of Nairobi (ASN)  
Missionary Apostles of Christ in the Eucharist (MACE)  
Sisters of St. Michael the Archangel (SSMA)

#### Orders of Men Religious

Basilians (Congregation of St. Basil, CSB)  
Benedictines (Order of St. Benedict), OSB  
Dominicans (Order of Preachers, OP)  
Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF)  
Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI)  
Redemptorists (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, CSsR)  
Vincentians (VC)



"Rooted to the spot in the St. Thomas More College chapel, on the Saskatoon campus, after Mass, before an exam, in the spring of 1958, I said, 'Okay God, I surrender.' The effect was instantaneous. I was so overwhelmed with PEACE that I thought I would faint. I knew for me this was a permanent commitment and the steps that would follow would bear that out."

- Sr. Gertrude Sopracolle, OSU



World Day of Prayer for Vocations: April 26

Wadena pastoral region gathers together to pray for vocations

SUBMITTED BY WADENA PASTORAL REGION

Parishioners from throughout the Wadena Pastoral Region joined together with Fr. Emmanuel Banahene and Fr. Geoffrey Young on Feb. 2, 2015 to pray for vocations to the priesthood and to consecrated life.

The “Candlemass” celebration at St. Mary parish in Wadena included the blessing of candles during the Mass

on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, St. Blaise’s blessing of throats, the anointing of the sick, confessions and adoration.

The evening of prayer (and subsequent Masses offered) were for vocations to religious life and, in particular, for the seminarians of the diocese of Saskatoon.

In sharing the importance of prayers for vocations to the priesthood, Fr. Geoff thanked the parishioners for their past and ongoing support for those discerning.

“Do not doubt that your prayers helped to

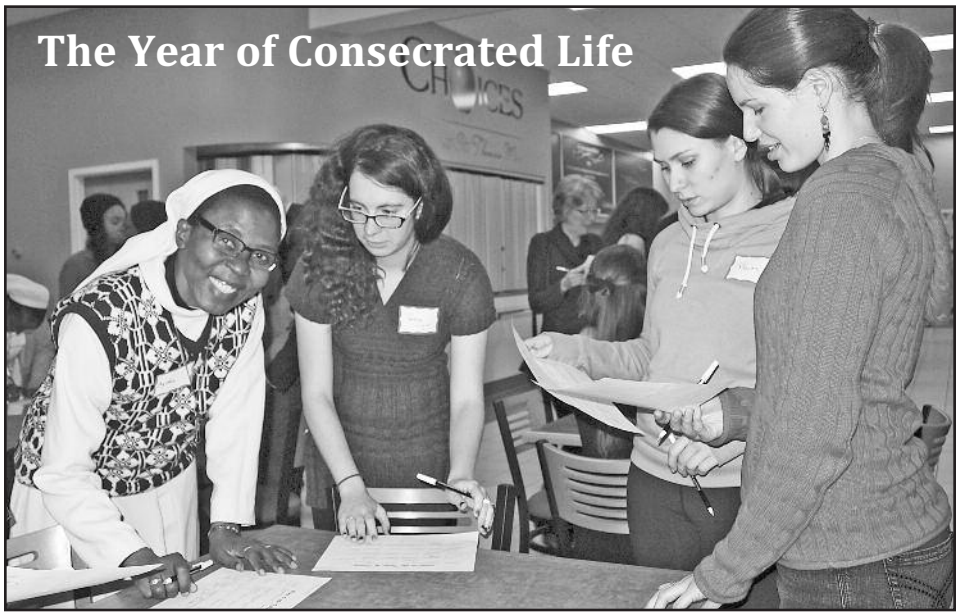


In the Wadena region, a Candlemass celebration Feb. 2 on the World Day of Consecrated Life included prayers for vocations.

Photo submitted

foster and sustain the vocation of your priests standing here this night, and tonight we pray also for your future pastors,” he said.

“We give thanks for the nearly 40 years of priestly service to our parishes of late Oblate Fr. Jean-Marie Lacasse, and for the many religious sisters and priests who gave their lives here in our rural parishes. On this, the traditional end of the Christmas season, with the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, we rejoice in Christ the light of the world, the light of our lives!”



STM students and consecrated religious women and men participate in an icebreaker during a Feb. 8 gathering to mark Catholic Students Week at St. Thomas More College, with a focus on vocations during this Year of Consecrated Life.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Students gather with consecrated religious at St. Thomas More College

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A week of events organized for Catholic Students Week at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon wound up Feb. 8 with a celebration focused on vocations and the gift of consecrated life.

Men and women religious from a number of religious orders and congregations joined students for celebration of the Eucharist, followed by a supper, with activities and table conversations focusing on consecrated life.

Mass was concelebrated by Fr. Mark Blom, OMI, vocation director for OMI Lacombe Canada (the Oblates of Mary Immaculate), and Fr. Ron Griffin, CSB, pastor at STM Chapel at the Catholic college on the University of Saskatchewan campus founded by the Basilians (Congregation of Saint Basil).

“We have become a culture that is infected with a virus. And the virus is individualism,” Blom said in his homily. “And the idea of consecrated life, of giving your life to God through a particular religious community, through the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, doesn’t feel attractive in an individualistic culture.”

At the heart of individualism is the feeling “what about me?” noted Blom. He described a veritable fever of fears, worries and preoccupations that accompany the affliction of individualism: worries about acceptance, about career, about the future. Even in vocation recruitment it is easy to fall into the subtle seduction of speaking about religious

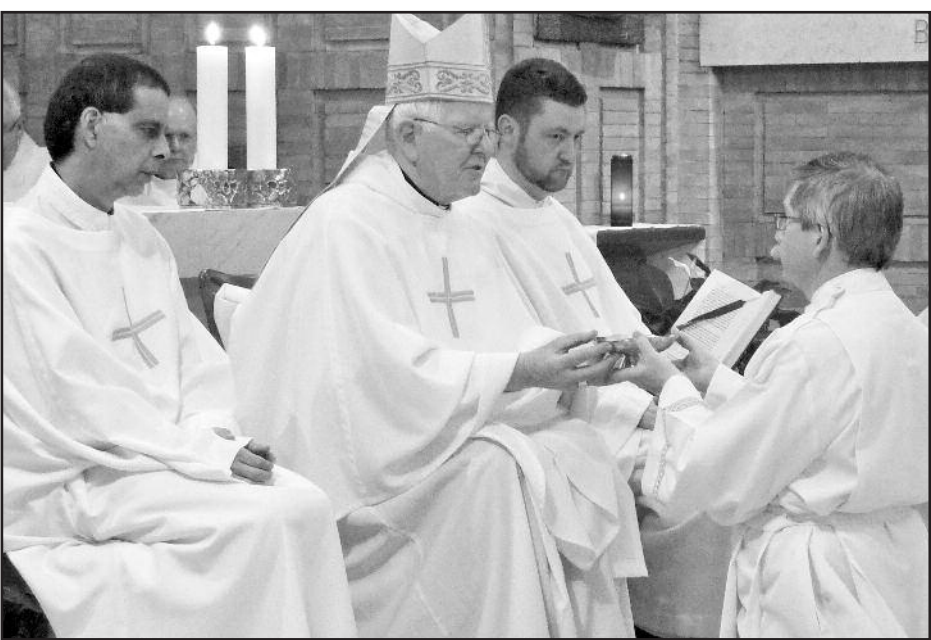
life as something that will fulfill “you.” Now as a vocation recruiter, he says things like: “I don’t care about your happiness. I care about God’s happiness more,” Blom said.

“That’s the funny thing about happiness. It’s one of those things that when you are seeking it, you never find it. True happiness shows up when you are seeking something else. And the deepest and the most rewarding happiness that there is comes when you are willing to do what God asks of you in this life.”

“The religious life is based on the truth that you already have everything that you’re searching for, and the religious life is one way – it’s a very beautiful way – that you can acquire everything that you’ve been given in the spirit of God’s love. So when we are able to allow the love of God to touch us, that fever of ‘what about me?’ starts to subside, and we are able to find ourselves moving into service of others.”

The more we seek God and open ourselves to the love of the Father, the less we think and worry about our own life, he added.

Other events on the university campus during Catholic Students Week included a Catholic Christian Outreach “Summit” featuring Eucharistic adoration with music; a Theology on Tap discussion evening about vocation with Fr. Daniel Yasinski as the guest speaker; viewing of a TED Talk video followed by discussion; and a multi-faith chaplaincy tour, said Michael MacLean of the campus ministry team.



Ministry of Acolyte

During a celebration in Rome on March 19, 2015, Bishop Michael Campbell, OSA, of the Diocese of Lancaster instituted Edward Gibney (kneeling at right) into the Ministry of Acolyte. A seminarian for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, Gibney is studying for the priesthood at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome, along with Deacon Cosmas Epifano, OSB, of St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster (seated at left).

- Photo by Brian Muling of the Archdiocese of Melbourne

Gathering held for lay associates of religious orders

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Celebrating vocations and the gifts and charism of consecrated life were among the themes of a gathering of the associates of a number of religious communities in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, held March 6-7, 2015 at St. Mary parish in Saskatoon.

Some 50 lay associates attended the event, accompanied by some members of religious communities or orders. Participants included associates of the Redemptorists, the Ursulines, the Benedictines, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Franciscans and the Grey Nuns.

Lay associates are women and men who wish to be in a formal relationship with a religious community, their mission and spirituality. Not all religious orders have associates, and those that do vary in the formation process and the degree to which associates are involved in the life of the congregation. Associates do not



Lay associates and consecrated religious in conversation at the retreat.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

take vows, but they do receive formation in the particular charism or spirit of the religious order, discerning whether it is a good fit for their life and spirituality. Associates are also known as affiliates, oblates or co-workers.

It has been about eight years since such a combined gathering for associates was held in Saskatoon. The impetus for the retreat came from Yvonne Armstrong, a Third Order Franciscan Oblate, said Fr. Jon Hansen, CSsR, pastor of St.

Mary’s parish. Once the idea was raised, and the venue was offered, a number of volunteers stepped forward to make the event a reality.

Anne Walsh, a Lay Missionary of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists), led the group in reflection, conversation and prayer the evening of March 6 and throughout the day March 7.

Walsh is the executive assistant to the Archbishop of St. John’s Newfoundland. She holds her Masters in Religious Education

from the Faculty of Theology of the University of St. Michael’s College, Toronto. In January 2003, she made her commitment as a Lay Missionary of the Most Holy Redeemer.

During presentations at the Saskatoon gathering, Walsh focused on how associates come to experience the call of God in their lives – a call made real in relationship with the particular group of religious that each found themselves attracted to. “The charism of a religious order draws us and informs our own desire to do the will of God through mission,” summarized Hansen.

Through activities and discussion at the opening session, Walsh encouraged participants to connect their own faith journey as associates to the scriptural story from the Gospel of Luke, about the disciples on the road to Emmaus meeting the Risen Lord.

The weekend event was “a great

opportunity to meet associates from other communities and realize that the circle is much bigger than just our own,” said Hansen. “Each community complements the mission of God, the way that facets complement the face of a diamond.”

Most religious communities in the diocese have lay associates who meet on a regular basis. For more information about becoming an associate or about opportunities available in the diocese to connect with religious orders, contact Myron Rogal at the diocesan Vocations Office, (306) 659-5841.

“Then it’s a matter of exploring which group speaks to your heart in terms of their mission,” said Hansen. “The program for enrolling as an associate will vary with each community but usually involves a period of formation followed by making promises to the community which are generally renewed on an annual basis.”



# Prayer connects Ursulines with women in Malawi

BY KATE O'GORMAN

Meditator, yoga instructor and missionary, Elaine Zakreski of Saskatoon is passionate about sharing the peace of Christ with others.

As a student of the Living School, a two-year course of study through Richard Rohr's Center for Action and Contemplation in New Mexico, Zakreski is embarking on a project linking women in Saskatoon to women in Malawi, Africa through meditation and prayer.

Elaine and her husband Peter are the founders of the Hope for Malawi Foundation Inc. Since 2006 the couple has been travelling to Malawi, getting to know the people in the community and offering assistance through the construction of a medical clinic, preschool and gathering place for the local grandmothers. The elderly women of the region have made a big impact on Elaine Zakreski.

"Through my yearly visits to Malawi, I have built trust relationships, and with the help of donors I

have been able to assist the Go-Go Grandmas in Malawi with their material needs," she said.

"Their lives are desperately difficult and heavily burdened. The AIDS epidemic has caused the death of their children and many are now raising their grandchildren. Worry and grief have resulted in high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes (among the grandmothers)."

With a desire to help the grandmothers physically and spiritually, Elaine is establishing meditation circles in Malawi and linking them with an already-established meditation circle of Ursuline Sisters here in Saskatoon.

Each week, Elaine visits St. Angela Merici Residence, a retirement residence in Saskatoon for the Ursulines of Prelate religious community, to teach yoga and to lead the Sisters in prayer and meditation.

"For the last six months [the Ursuline Sisters] have been keeping the Go-Go Grandmothers in their



Ursulines of Prelate living in Saskatoon are participating in a prayer project connecting them to grandmothers in Africa: (back row, l-r) Srs. Aloysia Kosolofski, Hermana Blatz, Lucille Bleile, Alice Wagner, Elaine Zakreski, Brigitta Haag, Bernice Daratha, Charlotte Beler, (seated, l-r) Srs. Patricia Lockert, Helen Hoffart, Dorothy Bertsch, Adelaide Fortowsky, Imelda Burgart.

- Photo by Peter Zakreski

hearts and in their prayers" explains Zakreski.

To assist the Go-Go Grandmothers of Malawi in managing some of the stress they are experiencing raising their deceased children's children and in helping them to cultivate a returned sense of peace, Zakreski will invite the elderly women to meet in small groups and lead them in practices of mindfulness, breath awareness and the technique of resting with their Creator – just as she does with the Ursuline Sisters in Saskatoon.

"I will share the stories of the Ursuline Sisters with the Go-Go Grandmothers of Malawi [and vice versa]. I will share pictures of these

women in Canada and explain how the Sisters are holding them in their loving thoughts and prayers.

"We will be united in prayer and we are enabled to do this by the fact that we understand the communion of saints," continues Zakreski.

"We have an interconnection with each other – something author Ilia Delio calls the *cosmic entanglement*. ...two particles can affect each other in physics, no matter the distances between them; so too can we affect each other, no matter the distances between us."

The Ursulines of Prelate have been connected with the people of South Africa throughout their community's missionary history, and as such, have found deep meaning in this unitive project of prayer with women of Malawi.

"Love has no distance" one sister commented, "what else could connect us more to each other and to God than love?"

The Zakreskis will return to Africa for the seventh time this coming May to resume the work of their foundation and to begin this meditation project with the grandmothers of Malawi.

This experiment of connecting the grandmothers in Malawi with the Ursuline sisters in Saskatoon through prayer and loving kindness will serve as Zakreski's final project for her Living School studies.

In terms of evaluating its success, Zakreski is clear that there is no set agenda. "I have to let it go," she concludes. "Only God can do this – I trust in the communion of saints."

## Year of Consecrated Life

We recall with gratitude the service of the Ursuline sisters (of Prelate and of Bruno) in our diocese in many areas, especially in education.



## Young women experience community, faith enrichment at Discernment House

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Five young women living in community with the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary at Discernment House in Saskatoon recently reflected on the joys and challenges of the experience.

"Living in a house full of women has been both a challenge and a blessings," says Jillian Ramsay, who is studying English at the University of Saskatchewan. "Of course living in a community always has its rough patches, but knowing that we all have Christ at the center of our relationships makes it easier to work through small discrepancies."

Jillian appreciates the lasting friendships she has made with the other young women living at Discernment House. "The support we are able to give one another is very beautiful, and unequal to that found in other accommodations."

The opportunity to attend daily Mass, and having a chapel on the main floor, helped strengthen her prayer life. "I have learned much about humility and obedience this year as well," Jillian adds. "I thank God for the ways He has worked through my being here, to help me grow in ways I never expected."

Currently in the second year of her PhD program, Mary Deutscher was happy to spend the year at Discernment House.

"Living in community does take a lot of energy – especially for an introvert! – but it has given me so much back in return," Mary says. "It has been wonderful to live in such a supportive environment and to be able to share my faith journey."

First-year engineering student Jamie Johnson said that one of the biggest joys of living at Discernment House is coming home to a loving and supporting community every night. "It feels so amazing to have a group of people so close to me that share my faith, my troubles, struggles, and most of all, my need for late night kitchen socialization," she says.

It was a challenge to learn to communicate, Jamie admits. "It took a good three months before we became attuned to each other's ways of expressing ourselves, and, though still not perfect, we've learned to love each other through it."

She adds: "I would have been a lot more lost if I didn't have this group of loving people to give me a home to hold me up."

Nicole Mireau, who is studying hairdressing, says

that her time at Discernment House has been a blessing.

"What a joy it is to live with such amazing people, with Jesus in your house and in a place that is nothing but a catalyst for spiritual growth," she says. "It is such an amazing thing to live with people who care for you and who enjoy spending time together. The prayer and opportunities to receive daily Eucharist are definitely amazing."

Juggling community with school and volunteering was sometimes a struggle, Nicole notes. "In the same breath, if it wasn't for this community living that always brings me back to the main thing – loving Christ and others – I don't think this year would have had all the blessings that came from it. God is so good and I love the Sisters of the Presentation and thank God for the gifts of their hearts and home to us."

Second-year university student Monique Mireau says she would recommend Discernment House to any young woman desiring deeper intimacy with the Lord, and with sisters in faith.

"From the convenience of living within walking distance from the university to the beautiful friendships I have made and wonderful spiritual growth, God has gifted me in ways I had never expected," says Monique.

"I have grown in love with the daily Mass and prayer, and have been so drawn into the spiritual journey that our Catholic faith leads us through every day. I feel that so much has been revealed to me through the Mass and breviary, and I have realized how closely we walk with Jesus in this practice."

For more information about the Live-in Experience for young women at Discernment House in Saskatoon, contact Sr. Lucie Hamel at (306) 244-0726 or e-mail sk.dhouse@gmail.com

## Year of Consecrated Life

We recall with gratitude the service and contributions of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary in our diocese.



## Monument in Regina will commemorate contribution of sisters

SUBMITTED BY CATHOLIC CONNECTIONS

A monument commemorating pioneering women who introduced education and healthcare in Saskatchewan will be unveiled Thursday, Oct. 1, 2015 in Regina's Wascana Centre, close to the Legislative grounds.

The art installation will depict two Catholic Sisters representing religious orders that established local hospitals and classrooms across Saskatchewan before the province created funding and delivery models for these vital public services.

"The installation will commemorate the courage and commitment of religious women across Saskatchewan who established needed health services and education to their local communities," explained project lead, Sandra Kary.

"These sisters laid the foundation for modern day education and healthcare delivery in Saskatchewan and their legacy is worthy of this recognition," said Kary.

The monument features two Catholic sisters cast in bronze, one

representing a teacher, the other a nurse.

Saskatchewan Catholic Connections is the organization behind the project, and Prince Albert sculptor Jack Jensen has been commissioned to create the work. The project has been made possible thanks to the support of private donors, dioceses, men's religious communities and leading Catholic organizations across Saskatchewan.

"Some 5,500 Catholic Sisters have served and continue to serve in the province, totalling over 85,000 sister-years of ministry," noted Paula Scott, chair of the committee overseeing the project. "The monument will be a lasting tribute to their legacy and their selfless service to the people of Saskatchewan."

A celebratory Mass, unveiling and blessing of the monument is planned for Oct. 1. Provincial political leaders, the Catholic bishops of Saskatchewan and officials from Catholic health and education are expected to attend, including Catholic sisters from Saskatchewan and across Canada, representing 59 religious orders.

## Saskatchewan Catholic Connections

is a coalition of leading Catholic organizations from across the province, including the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association (SCSBA), Saskatchewan Catholic University Colleges, the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS), Catholic Health Ministry of Saskatchewan (CHMS), Saskatchewan Catholic Women's League (CWL), Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, and Roman Catholic dioceses of Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Regina, and Keewatin-Le Pas. [skcatholicconnections.com](http://skcatholicconnections.com)



## STM hosts “Dialogue and Diversity”

**BY GERTRUDE ROMPRÉ, STM,  
DIRECTOR OF MISSION AND MINISTRY**

Some 60 people gathered at St. Thomas More College Feb. 27-28, to explore the theme “Dialogue and Diversity.” Conceived as a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*, the Dialogue and Diversity Conference explored both ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

Speaking from her experience of Hindu-Christian dialogue, Dr. Catherine Cornille from Boston College gave the opening address.

She described dialogue as an opportunity for mutual learning and outlined the challenge of bringing the fruits of interreligious dialogue back to our wider faith communities. She called for a stance of humility and hospitality that allows us to learn from other traditions.

Dr. Eileen Schuller, from the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster University, is best known for her work with the Dead Sea Scrolls. On this occasion, however, she outlined how Jewish-Christian Dialogue has evolved in Canada since *Nostra Aetate*. In

particular, she shared her work with the Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation, a uniquely Canadian approach to Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Bishop Donald Bolen moderated the closing panel discussion with Drs. Cornille and Schuller.

Exploring dialogue and diversity from a more experiential starting point, each of the three presenters shared his or her own best moments in dialogue and reflected on the similarities and differences between ecumenical and interreligious encounters.

Other conference presenters included Dr. Brenda Anderson (Luther College, University of Regina), Héctor Acero Ferrer (Institute of Christian Studies, Toronto), Julien Hammond (Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton), Dr. Graham McDonough (University of Victoria), Dr. Alisha Pomazon (St. Thomas More College), and Dr. Scott Sharman (All Saints Cathedral College, Edmonton).

The Dialogue and Diversity Conference was sponsored in part by the Dubé Chair for Catholic Studies at St. Thomas More College.

### Jewish-Christian relations

Sr. Kay MacDonald, NDS, (right) of the Diocesan Interfaith Commission, introduces Sr. Eileen Schuller, OSU, who was speaking March 1 about Jewish-Christian relations 50 years after *Nostra Aetate*. The diocesan event was held in conjunction with a Dialogue and Diversity conference at St. Thomas More College.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski



### Year of Consecrated Life

*We recall with gratitude the establishment of St. Thomas More federated Catholic College by the Basilians, and the commitment of the Sisters of Zion to education and to interfaith dialogue and understanding.*



## Cudworth parish celebrates 90th anniversary

**BY BERNICE JUNGWIRTH**

St. Michael parish in Cudworth recently marked its 90th anniversary. The parish was first established in September 1924, with Fr. Casimir Cismowski, OSB, as the first resident pastor.

Information about the history of the parish is recorded in the book *Walk of Ages*, and was recently compiled by Maureen Loeffelholz. Beginning in 1912, Mass was conducted monthly in the village of Cudworth's public school, and in 1920, the first St. Michael church was built as a mission in 1920, blessed by Abbot Michael Ott, OSB, of St. Peter's Abbey. With the official establish-ment of the parish

in 1924, a parish house was built, and the church building was enlarged and renovated in 1930.

Another major renovation occurred under the direction of Fr. Edward Benning in 1952. The interior was completely renovated and the basement was enlarged. One addition to St. Michael's church at that time was a five-foot hand-carved wood corpus from Oberammergau, Germany, which was donated by Dr. J. Schropp.

The original St. Michael Church was demolished in 1968 to make room for the present church building. The church was completed by September 1969, and weekly Masses have continued for the past

45 years in the same building. The original parish house was moved in June 1973 to make room for the present rectory and assembly room.

The present St. Michael church was entirely new when it opened in 1969, save for one piece of art: the hand carved corpus from the former church. The new cross itself was designed and fashioned out of walnut brought from Iowa by Donald Loeffelholz.

The furnishing of the church became a community effort. The altar was constructed by John Saxinger, and carved by Dr. Zygmunt Kondzielewski. The Catholic Women's League (CWL) donated the gold drapery, the pews were acquired with funds bequeathed by John Noll, and Herman Hendricks planted the trees on the grounds. The church was dedicated and blessed by Abbot Jerome Weber, OSB, on June 27, 1971.

Built in 1981, the present bell tower houses the two original bells from the first church, which were



**Bishop Donald Bolen visited St. Michael parish recently, celebrating Mass with Fr. Eugene Nwachukwu (right).**

- Photo by Bernice Jungwirth

originally acquired in 1929. The bells were given saint names St. Michael and St. Marie and the larger bell is inscribed “Post of St. Peter's Colony.”

The 50th anniversary was marked May 26, 1974 with a visiting choir and brass quintet providing the music at High Mass, with Abbot Jerome Weber and three former pastors concelebrating with resident pastor, Fr. Francis Lohmer, OSB. As well, two bishops, a vicar general and a chancellor were in attendance.

St. Michael parish continues as an active faith community in

Cudworth. On July 1, 2014, the parish welcomed Fr. Eugene Nwachukwu as its new pastor. He is originally from the diocese of Sokoto in Northern Nigeria. He was ordained in 1979 and served as pastor in numerous parishes in Nigeria before coming to Canada.

Nwachukwu is busy with weekday and weekend masses in Cudworth, as well as serving the parishes of St. Benedict in St. Benedict, SK and Canadian Martyrs in Middle Lake, SK on the weekends, and celebrating a weekly Mass at Bethany Home in Middle Lake.

### Year of Consecrated Life

*We recall with gratitude the service of the Benedictines in establishing St. Peter's Colony and nurturing the faith in parishes, at St. Peter's College, through The Prairie Messenger, and in the life of the Abbey.*



**Serena Saskatchewan board members hosted Serena Canada's AGM in Saskatoon this February, marking the organization's 60th anniversary.**

- Submitted photo

### Natural Family Planning:

## Serena marks 60th anniversary

**BY ANNETTE BENTLER**

*“We are too often afraid of the sacrifices we might have to make. But where there is love, there is always sacrifice.” - Mother Teresa*

Serena Saskatchewan hosted Serena Canada's annual general meeting Feb. 6-8. Delegates from across the country gathered at Queen's House in Saskatoon to talk business but also to re-ignite the fire that began in 1955.

To celebrate the milestone, Serena invited the public to celebrate the 60th anniversary – Ukrainian style. The caterer provided authentic Ukrainian dishes and the gathering was treated to three dances from Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble.

Serena President Couple, Don and Deb Larmour, presented a toast. Medical advisor Dr. Suzanne Parenteau-Carreau replied.

From Serena Canada's humble beginnings, with charts on drafting paper, grew a national organization, thanks to Giles and Rita Breault, Dr. Suzanne Parenteau, Raymond and Marie-Paule Doyle and many other pioneers.

In a culture where contraception is the norm, Serena is needed more than ever. Marriages and families are hurting. Natural family planning is not a bandaid, but a cure for this pandemic collapse.

Serena is all about health – healthy bodies and healthy relationships, which do not set up barriers or mask fertility but work with it, to ensure that couples can plan their families in order to be responsible parents.

Contact: sask@serena.ca or call (306) 934-8223 for more information or find Serena Saskatchewan on Facebook.

## Latin Mass community celebrates 25 years

**BY MARJ KORTE**

The traditional Latin Mass has been celebrated every Sunday in Saskatoon since April 1, 1990. It was first celebrated at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and moved to Our Lady of Czestochowa in 1996.

In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI, in the encyclical *Summorum Pontificum*, declared that the traditional (Tridentine) Latin Mass had never been abrogated. He established the traditional Latin Mass as an “extraordinary form of the Liturgy of the Church” and extended the use of the Roman Missal of 1962 to all priests.

Father Andrew Wychucki is the current celebrant for Sacred Heart of Jesus Latin

Mass Community. The Latin Mass is celebrated every Sunday morning at 9 a.m. at Our Lady of Czestochowa parish at 301 Ave Y South. For information and weekday Mass times: [www.saskatoonlatinmass.com](http://www.saskatoonlatinmass.com)

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Latin Mass community will celebrate its 25th anniversary on Sunday, May 3. The celebration begins at 4:30 p.m. and will include the crowning of the statue of Our Lady, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary, the Litany of Loreto, and benediction.

There will be a potluck supper in the church hall to complete the evening. Bishop Don Bolen will be in attendance. All are welcome to attend.

50 YEARS OF CHURCH CONSECRATION

**OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA**

ON 20TH & Y

**CELEBRATES GOLDEN JUBILEE OF CHURCH CONSECRATION**

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SUNDAY MASS TIMES: 9AM LATIN, 11AM POLISH



# Time Out For Moms provides enrichment and friendship

By ERIN HICKEY

Time Out for Moms (TOFM), a Catholic enrichment program, began its 18th year of ministry this fall. TOFM meets at Holy Family Cathedral Wednesday mornings to offer moms of all ages and stages the opportunity to grow in their faith in God and understanding of Catholic teaching. It also offers women support in their family life, and a chance to meet other moms from the Catholic community.

Most mornings include prayer, a speaker, discussion of the topic for the day and socializing. If moms so choose, childcare is provided by very generous volunteers, allowing one of the biggest treats for busy moms: breakfast and an uninterrupted cup of coffee. Some of the topics covered this winter session have been post-partum depression, prayer journaling, physiotherapy for moms, sacred music, and a question and answer period with Father Colin Roy.

What is it that has drawn (and continues to draw) women to TOFM for the past 17 years?

Shawna Kuntz, graphic designer and mother of 4 children has been attending faithfully for 12 years. For Shawna, TOFM offers the “whole package.”

“The speakers are very honest and



While children are cared for by volunteers, mothers gather to pray, to listen and learn, and to enjoy brunch together at Time Out for Moms.  
- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

thought provoking, and there’s always time for great discussion. There are wonderful ladies who look after and love my kids, and who have literally watched them grow up. But for me the most important reason I keep coming back is the fellowship,” said Kuntz.

“I think of all the wonderful friends who have come and gone through those doors. I have shared so many struggles, tears, joys

and laughter with so many faith-filled women. These women have walked with me through so many stages of raising children. It’s so special to be able to come together with like-minded friends and share our lives together, to be able to be completely vulnerable, knowing you will be welcomed, supported, not judged.”

Carmen Kolla, who had her first child

this year, appreciates the warm and inviting community she encounters at TOFM.

“I was a little nervous my first time going as I didn’t know what to expect. Everyone was very welcoming. I could see a strong faith-centred community and was grateful to have the chance to be a part of it,” she said.

“I really enjoy being around other moms who not only know what it is like to be a new mom, but who are there to help each other grow stronger in their faith. The talks have been inspirational and helpful. I enjoy getting out of the house and I look forward to coming to TOFM every week.”

There were 65 other women like Shawna and Carmen registered in the program this year who see the benefit of a ministry of this kind.

The support that TOFM has received from the Catholic community is an affirmation of the importance of a ministry for mothers as part of the domestic Church. Healthy moms are important for healthy and happy families and TOFM is a great source of support for them.

For more information about this program, or if you would like to volunteer as a caregiver for the children, contact Heather Hickey at registrar@tofmsaskatoon.com

## Lanigan parish strives to engage and build welcoming community

By MARIANNE KNAUS

As a parish council at St. Mary’s in Lanigan, we were asked the following question: “Why are you proud to be Catholic?” It was definitely a question which made for soul searching and prayer. Someone else posed the question “What are we going to do to engage our parish?” This discussion prompted us to open our hearts and minds to new ideas. The Holy Spirit was definitely among us at that meeting!

One suggestion was the publication of a parish pictorial directory as a way to get to know new families, however, this would

be a huge undertaking. Instead, the decision was to post pictures on a display in the parish welcoming area. For families who didn’t have a family picture, someone would take a picture after Mass.

St. Mary’s has been blessed with parishioners who are new to Canada. The parish has reached out in different ways to welcome and include them, and help them to feel like part of the parish family. During last year’s Share Lent campaign there were two displays in the welcome area: one with craft items from the Philippines and the other with items from Ukraine (even though Ukraine was not part

of Development and Peace, new parishioners from that country are part of the parish). On Solidarity Sunday, both groups brought traditional baking for coffee time, which is held regularly after Sunday Mass. Chelsea Pratchler also attended and described her recent mission trip to Africa.

Recently, a group of Filipino youth in the parish stepped forward and asked if they could provide upbeat music at Mass – in response to their willingness to dedicate time and talent, the parish was called to be open to change. Parish priest moderator Fr. Clement Amofah has also been a blessing to music min-



The new youth choir at St. Mary’s parish in Lanigan recently performed at Telemiracle.  
- Photo submitted by Marianne Knaus

istry, as have Parish Life Directors Don and Bonnie Courchene, who are always supportive, with words of encouragement, praise and prayer. This year, the new youth choir performed at Telemiracle, proud to take part in this Saskatchewan tradition.

St. Mary’s parish in Lanigan is

experiencing success with God’s grace and guidance and we never want to take it for granted. The most important factor has been actively reaching out to people to discover their talents and encourage them to feel like they are a part of the parish. There are many ways to show that we are proud Catholics.

## Goals and initiatives outlined at Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools annual meeting

By KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) annual meeting of electors was held Feb. 2, providing an overview of the 2013-14 school year.

With some 16,000 students and 2,000 staff, GSCS operates 45 schools, serving the communities of Saskatoon, Biggar, Humboldt, Martensville and Warman, as well as several rural subdivisions southeast of Saskatoon. GSCS also jointly governs Humboldt Collegiate Institute with Horizon School Division.

“Our schools are welcoming communities where we nurture faith, encourage excellence in learning and inspire students to make a difference in the world. We love because He first loved us (John 4:19),” said GSCS Board Chair Diane Boyko, who presented a report on behalf of the board of education.

Other trustees are Debbie Berscheid, Tom Fortosky, Tim Jelinski, Alice Risling, Ron Boechler, Jim Carriere, Todd Hawkins, Lisa Lambert and Wayne Stus.

Boyko outlined the Catholic school division’s priorities in a number of key areas, including celebrating and promoting Catholic education, improving student learning and achievements, building relationships and partnerships, and promoting stewardship.

She described the work of a “Together in Faith and Action Committee” to connect with families and parishes, to develop guidelines

for school liturgies and Masses and to support the faith formation of staff.

When it comes to building partnerships, GSCS has close ties with the diocese of Saskatoon and the Ukrainian Catholic eparchy, and with local school community councils, Boyko described.

GSCS also works in partnership with the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Central Urban Métis Association. “Improving academic outcomes of First Nations and Métis students has been a key goal of our division, and has now become a primary goal of Saskatchewan’s ministry of education.”

Stewardship – including the planning, building and renovating of facilities – is another board priority, Boyko said. “As board members we have been entrusted with gifts of people, finances, facilities and environment.”

During the last school year, renovation work continued at Holy Cross High School, Ecole St Matthew and at Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School. Construction also continued on Holy Family Catholic School in Saskatoon’s Willowgrove neighbourhood.

“And although there are no shovels in the ground, our division has contributed significant time and energy to the P3 planning process for the new schools that are scheduled to be built throughout the province,” Boyko added. The P3 model establishes government and business partnerships to build schools.

GSCS has been given the go-ahead for

the construction of six new elementary schools: four to be built in Saskatoon (in Evergreen, Hampton Village, Rosewood and Stonebridge), one to be constructed in Martensville and one in Warman.

“It was in 2010 that we amalgamated with the newly-formed Catholic school board in Martensville and we were pleased to have a similar opportunity in 2014, with the Catholic school board that was formed in Warman,” said Boyko.

Greg Chatlain, GSCS Director of Education, highlighted a number of educational priorities and achievements in 2013-14, the 102nd year of operation for Saskatoon’s Catholic school division.

“In presenting a summary like this, there is always the tendency or the danger that we lose sight of the face of each child or young person that we serve, and the staff who serve them each day – but it is because of their journey, their growth and their service that we exist,” he said.

It was another year of growth in the school division. “In 2013-2014 we served 16,380 pre-kindergarten to Grade 12 students, an increase of some 300 students from the previous year. Within that number there were roughly six percent, or 930 students who had some degree of intensive learning need,” Chatlain reported

An increasingly diverse community means that more students are receiving extra support in English as an Additional

Language, he noted.

In addition, almost 17 per cent of GSCS students access second language programming such as French immersion, Ukrainian bilingual and Cree bilingual programs.

“Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools believes our role is to support families as primary educators of their children, and develop – to their full potential – the God-given talents of each and every child,” Chatlain said. “We seek to help develop all facets of the human person: intellectual, emotional, social and physical.”

Spiritual growth permeates all areas, he noted. “Our approach to education is distinct.”

Chatlain highlighted areas of academic focus in the Catholic school division, including working on the reading skills that enable students to move from “learning to read” to “reading to learn,” literacy intervention, a web-based “Mathletics” program that reinforces math concepts taught in class, math coaching initiatives, and changes to the Grade 11 (20 level) science curriculum.

“We are proud of the work that our staff has done to meet the ever-changing needs of our students,” he said.

To conclude the meeting, Superintendent of Administrative Services Joel Lloyd presented the financial statement and treasurer’s report for 2013-14.



Diocese of  
SASKATOON

BRAZILIAN

sharing

partilha

BULLETIN

Archdiocese of  
MACEIÓ (BRAZIL)

NEWS FROM THE SASKATOON MISSION IN BRAZIL

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

# Diocese of Saskatoon legacy project: renovated Community Centre meets diverse needs

**INTRODUCTION**  
**BY SR. CLAIRE NOVECOSKY, OSU**  
Bishop Don Bolen visited the Brazil mission in February 2014, a few months before we four remaining missionaries were to return to Saskatchewan in July. During his visit, the bishop announced that special legacy projects would be undertaken in the two parishes where the Ursulines and the Sisters of Mission Service were working and that the Saskatoon diocese would “foot the bill” with resources from the Brazil Mission Fund.

We two Ursulines (Sr. Louise Hinz and Sr. Claire Novacosky) spoke with the pastor of St. Peter the Fisherman parish and, after some discussion, we agreed on a plan to renovate the Community Centre (in the village of St. Rita where we lived), as it badly needed a repair job, and the expense of renovations would be beyond the possibility of the community there. The project was accepted and pastor Frei Everaldo, OCD, oversaw the entire process with great responsibility. I asked him to give us a picture of what all happened after the construction was completed and how the Centre is being used today. The following is his report.

**“The Flame of Gratitude will Remain, Illuminating Your Dear Presence Among Us...”**  
**BY FREI EVERALDO PONTES, OCD,**  
*Pastor, São Pedro Pescador, Maceió (St. Peter the Fisherman) parish*

**TRANSLATION FROM THE PORTUGUESE**  
**BY SR. CLAIRE NOVECOSKY, OSU**

It was with great joy and in a spirit of prayer and gratitude that we accompanied the October 2014 celebration in Saskatoon of 50 years of missionary work by the Saskatoon diocese in the land of Brazil. The only words that arose from our hearts were: “May God reward the wonderful work of evangelization that was carried out by the missionaries.” During the visit of Bishop Donald Bolen to our parish of St. Peter the Fisherman in February 2014, he proposed the creation of a special project to symbolize the work and presence of missionaries from the diocese of Saskatoon with the people of God in the state of Alagoas, Brazil over the past 50 years. Such a project would serve as a



remembrance of the past and a legacy for the future — a small and humble tribute to the many “adventurers of Christ,” who for decades had spread the “good aroma of Christ” (2 Cor 2:15) in this northeastern region of Brazil. After prayer and reflection with the Ursuline sisters, it was agreed that an appropriate location for this project of the Saskatoon diocese would be the St. Rita village Community Centre which was much in need of repair and thus had not been in use for several years. We concluded that a renovation of that space could be well-used by the community for its day-to-day needs, and thus was born the idea of the *Centro Missionario Irmãs Ursulinas* (Ursuline Sisters Missionary Centre). Since the completion of the renovations, little by little, various activities related to the deepening of the Christian faith — human, professional and intellectual formation for children and young people — have taken shape in the centre. It also provides space for artisans and for meetings of local community leaders, with the aim of improving health, education and the infrastructure of the village. According to the coordinator of the Centre, the renovations, carried out with the financial assistance of the diocese of Saskatoon, have given the community a beautiful place of support for the entire village and for meeting the diverse needs of our people. It also provides space for a large number of people to gather for celebration of the greater liturgical feasts, since the chapel is small. An explanation of the logo of the *Centro Missionario Irmãs Ursulinas* / Ursuline Sisters



Sr. Claire Novacosky, OSU, Frei Everaldo Pontes, OCD, and Sr. Louise Hinz, OSU (l-r): the legacy of the Ursuline Sisters in the diocesan Brazil Mission continues in the cultivation of the many good seeds planted in the parish of São Pedro Pescador, Maceió

Missionary Centre is as follows: At the center is the cross, the sign of a Christian. Through it we understand the love of God and the mission of the Christian: Then Jesus said to his disciples: “If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mt. 16: 24). The cross is the companion of the missionaries who left their land to bring the greatest of treasures: the Risen Lord. With Him our suffering people were strengthened during the 50 years of the presence of the missionaries who came from the Saskatoon diocese and planted seeds of hope, faith and charity in search for better days. Under the cross in the logo is the image of a heart, a reminder of the heart’s role as the vital organ which circulates the life blood in the body. This symbol demonstrates the most beautiful sentiments of the human person. The heart includes the colours of the flags, Canadian and Brazilian, expressing clearly the deep sentiments that developed between the two peoples through the Canadian missionaries whose love entered into the hearts of the Brazilian people. Their friendship enlightened and strengthened many people of the Archdiocese of Maceió. As one young participant of the Centre said, “The *Centro Missionario Irmãs Ursulinas* recalls the witness of life and active participation in the lives of our people, for the missionaries greatly contributed to the Christian and social development of the community.” She also spoke of the *saudades* (nostalgia) she experienced with the return of Sisters Claire and Louise to Canada. In the logo, the name *Centro Missionario Irmãs Ursulinas* encircles the heart, thus presenting the idea that whoever experiences the love of God “in the heart” will give of themselves to the community, to the Church and to society. That is the proposal of the Reign of God, to give life to others. Sister Claire, knowing the reality of the

Church and of the Brazilian people, wrote a letter which was read to the community during the inauguration of the Missionary Centre on Oct. 12, the feast of *Nossa Senhora Aparecida* (Our Lady who Appeared), patroness of Brazil. Sr. Claire wrote: “I am absolutely sure that our beloved Lady of Aparecida is very happy and will say to you, ‘Do whatever He tells you’. I believe that everything the Mission Centre will offer will help you to understand these words of Mary and give you the strength and the joy to put into practise anything that Jesus asks of you.” The cross in the center of the logo’s heart is brown in colour to signify the Carmelites. This mission region, which has long been served by missionaries from the diocese of Saskatoon, has now passed into the pastoral care of the Carmelite Fathers who took over the parish of Peter the Fisherman with the intention of continuing the work of evangelization, making Jesus known to the many hearts thirsting to know Him. The Carmelites are immensely grateful to the diocese of Saskatoon for the cultivation of the many good seeds planted in this parish. We firmly believe that the seeds planted over these 50 years will now receive a new ardour through all that is and will be offered in the Missionary Centre. So, in this way, the diocese of Saskatoon will continue to care for the many who have come to know the person of Jesus Christ through the work of the missionaries. On the day of the Inauguration of the Centre, we installed a plaque and a lamp with an eternal flame, both of which will remain permanently on the wall. Thus the light of the witness of the missionaries and the entire diocese of Saskatoon over these many years will always be in our midst. As well, this light will symbolize our gratitude for the missionaries’ friendship and for the ways they have helped us to understand the greatest of all goodness — the living Jesus in our midst.



Sr. Louise Hinz, OSU, and Sr. Claire Novacosky, OSU, among the people at the local community centre in the village of St. Rita.

- Submitted photos

**Year of Consecrated Life**  
We recall with gratitude our Brazil missionaries from religious orders:  
Franciscan Sisters of St. Elizabeth (OSE)  
Sisters of Sion (NDS)  
Ursulines of Prelate (OSU)  
Sisters of Notre Dame d’Auvergne (SND)  
Ursulines of Bruno (OSU)  
Sisters of Mission Service (SMS)  
Order of St. Benedict (OSB)  
and we pray for the Carmelite (OCD)  
priests providing ministry in Brazil.



## Diocesan Brazil Fund grew and adapted over the years: now used for projects, retirement support for missionaries

BY MARGARET SANCHE  
BRAZIL MISSION  
AWARENESS COMMITTEE

With the winding down of the Saskatoon Diocesan Mission in Brazil and the return home to Saskatchewan of the last four missionaries – Ursulines of Bruno Sr. Claire Novacosky and Sr. Louise Hinz, and Sisters of Missionary Service Sr. Jeannine Rondot and Sr. Marie-Noelle Rondot – it is an appropriate time to present an update about the Brazil Mission Fund.

The Brazil Mission Fund was established as soon as plans for a diocesan mission in Brazil were set in place in 1964. From that time on, the people of the diocese, who had embraced this new missionary endeavour with open hearts, began to raise funds to support the work and ministry of the mission team in the archdiocese of Maceió in northeastern Brazil.

At first, the money raised went directly to the support of the mission team and, for a number of years, the funds raised were barely enough to cover the expenses.

As the years went on, the people of the diocese of Saskatoon (and St. Peter's abbacy, Muenster, prior to 1998) continued to offer financial support to the mission(s) – through fundraising events sponsored by parishes, schools and Catholic organizations, direct individual contributions through the Brazil Mission Fund collection

taken up in the parishes each Advent and, for long-term ongoing support down the road, estate bequests in wills.

For a number of reasons, including the increasing ability of the Brazilian people of the area to raise the funds needed by their parishes, with less reliance on resources from Canada, and the gradual growth of the Brazil Mission Fund during the period of higher interest rates, the financial resources of the Brazil Mission Fund increased beyond what was needed or could be used for the mission.

During a 2005 Mission Discernment Process undertaken throughout the Saskatoon diocese, there arose some questions about the possibility of using some of the Brazil Mission Fund's resources for other worthy diocesan projects, but, after much discernment, consultation and prayer, Bishop Albert LeGatt affirmed that all the funds which had been contributed as charitable donations to the Brazil Mission Fund must continue to be used for works and ministry in the Brazil Mission.

In the past several years, in addition to the ongoing support of the remaining missionaries and their pastoral and charitable works, the Brazil Mission Fund has been used for the travel of missionaries to and from Brazil, for the work of the Brazil Mission Awareness Committee, and for special



### Brazil Mission video viewing

At a gathering held at St. Francis Xavier parish in Saskatoon Feb. 3, Sr. Marie-Noëlle Rondot, SMS, (left) answered questions about her 19 years of service in the Brazil Mission. Rondot was a special guest at the parish event, held to show a diocesan video documentary *Walking Together in God's Mercy: the Joy and Suffering of the Brazil Mission*. The one-hour film was created to mark the 50th anniversary of the diocesan mission in Brazil, to commemorate the involvement of missionaries from both the Diocese of Saskatoon and St Peter's Abbey, and to reflect on the impact of the mission experience. A version with Portuguese subtitles was also created, and sent to parishes and partners in Brazil. The film, which was produced by Tim Yaworski, can be borrowed from the Msgr. Michael J. Koch Resource Library at the Catholic Pastoral Centre in Saskatoon or copies can be ordered for \$20 each. To order, contact diocesan communications office: [communications@saskatoonrncdiocese.com](mailto:communications@saskatoonrncdiocese.com) or (306) 659-5844

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Walking  
Together  
in God's  
Mercy

The Joy and  
Suffering  
of the  
Brazil Mission



projects in Brazil which were in keeping with the mandate of the diocesan mission and in solidarity with the poor of that area in the spirit of the Gospel.

One such project was *Project Bem Vindo Bebê*, undertaken by the archdiocese of Maceió with a large financial contribution from the Brazil Mission Fund of the diocese of Saskatoon, to assist pregnant women and their babies after the devastating floods in the mission area in 2011.

At the present time, with the completion of the diocese's involvement in Brazil and the return home of the missionaries in July 2014, the remaining monies in the Brazil Mission Fund will be used for legacy projects in the mission areas and for retirement/medical support for the returned missionaries and their religious congregations.

Some of the funds were recently used for the Brazil Mission 50th Anniversary Celebra-

tion at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in October 2014 and the production of the one-hour documentary film about the mission, produced by Tim Yaworski, entitled *Walking Together in God's Mercy: The Joy and Suffering of the Brazil Mission*.

Although the diocese of Saskatoon has not actively requested contributions to the Brazil Mission Fund for the past ten years or so, and the special diocesan Advent collection has been directed to the Diocesan Mission Works Office since 2005, there are still a number of generous people in the Saskatoon diocese who have the Brazil Mission listed as a beneficiary in their wills.

It would be helpful and a matter of good stewardship if such designations in individuals' wills could now be updated and the bequests redirected to other works in the diocese.

For more information about donations or bequests, please contact Major and Planned Giving Officer Jocelyne Hamoline of the Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation at 306-659-5949 or at: [jhamoline@dscatholicfoundation.ca](mailto:jhamoline@dscatholicfoundation.ca)

## Reflections on the diocesan mission in Brazil after 2014

BY FR. EMILE APRIL

We gathered at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon Oct. 19, 2014 to celebrate 50 years of our diocese's missionary presence in the archdiocese of Maceió, Brazil.

It was a wonderful day of encounter, sharing of memories, and celebration. The remaining four missionaries had returned home in July 2014, which forced us to accept the fact that this effort had come to an end.

So what is the future of mission in the Saskatoon Diocese? All of us

who had a direct involvement in the Brazil Mission are asking this same question.

I believe the relationships we missionaries have formed with the people of the state of Alagoas in northeastern Brazil should and will continue on a personal basis; we continuing to communicate with them and they with us, in whatever form that will take in the days and years ahead. But we also need to come to grips with the fact that our diocesan mission there is over, partly because they now have more priests and religious than when we

first went there, and partly because we no longer have enough for our own needs.

So, what about the missionary aspect of our pastoral life as diocese of Saskatoon?

It would be unrealistic to think of sending priests or religious from our diocese to some other part of the world at this time. But we do need to come up with a new form of missionary life.

Pope Francis has given us wonderful insights into our role as an evangelizing Church in and out of Catholic circles locally, but what

about our efforts beyond our diocesan and national borders?

There are several international efforts currently under way by local people, religious and laity, but we will need to come up with new forms of participation at the diocesan and parish levels. This will require prayer and reflection as well as the sharing of experiences and renewed efforts by the Diocesan Mission Office.

Hopefully, the next few years will provide us with new opportunities to proceed with a renewed diocesan missionary spirit.

## St. Thomas More College students work with Peace and Sustainability Movement as part of service-learning

BY JACQUIE BERG

Dr. Christopher Hrynkow, Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion and Culture at St. Thomas More College, was invited by the Secretary General of the Student Christian Movement (SCM) to co-facilitate a liberation theology exposure trip to El Salvador.

Hrynkow prepared students intellectually and philosophically through a series of pre-departure webinars, and travelled with the students to El Salvador to work with the Mesoamerica Movement for Peace and Sustainability in July 2014.

While there, Hrynkow worked in community with the movement to promote peace and sustainability through a variety of projects. The 10-day trip was equal parts education, cross-cultural dialogue, solidarity work, and practical volunteering.

Through his work co-facilitating the

program, Dr. Hrynkow saw the students undergo a "multi-layered transformative experience" that was representative of St. Thomas More College's vision of best practice in Community Service-Learning.

"Standing in front of impoverished people in the El Salvador communities we visited, I realized that local community members were educated in completely different ways – knowing things I did not," said Hrynkow. "It is one thing to study - but quite another to live it."

Recognizing the potential benefits of engaging in a short-term immersive service-learning experience, St. Thomas More College is now investigating the opportunity of taking 15 to 20 members of the STM community to El Salvador to participate in a week-long immersive service-learning experience during Reading Week in February 2016.



Students underwent a transformative experience during a 10-day trip to El Salvador in 2014. The next service-learning experience is planned for February 2016.

- Photo submitted by Dr. Chris Hrynkow

It would include pre-departure seminars that give theoretical and practical preparation for the immersive service-learning experience, as well as post-experience seminars that integrate

participants' in-country learning with their Canadian contexts.

For more information about the February 2016 service-learning experience contact: [chrynkow@stmcollege.ca](mailto:chrynkow@stmcollege.ca)



# CHAS has developed a Faith-Based Advance Health Care Directive booklet and form

BY SANDRA KARY, CHAS

“I’m so busy! I don’t have time!” Our world is fast-paced, and navigating it requires that we tend to the urgent and immediate. Focusing on personal advance health care planning is a contemplation and conversation that is all too easily delayed. We always think there’s more time, right up until we have a brush with illness or find ourselves journeying with someone to the end of life.

In October 2014, the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS) launched a new *Faith-Based Advance Health Care Directive* booklet and form. It invites you to consider your present and future health care condition, and how you might want to direct your care, specifically if you lose the capacity to make your own decisions. Clearly, there is no way to anticipate every variable and health care outcome, but the booklet and form does guide you through some key considerations.

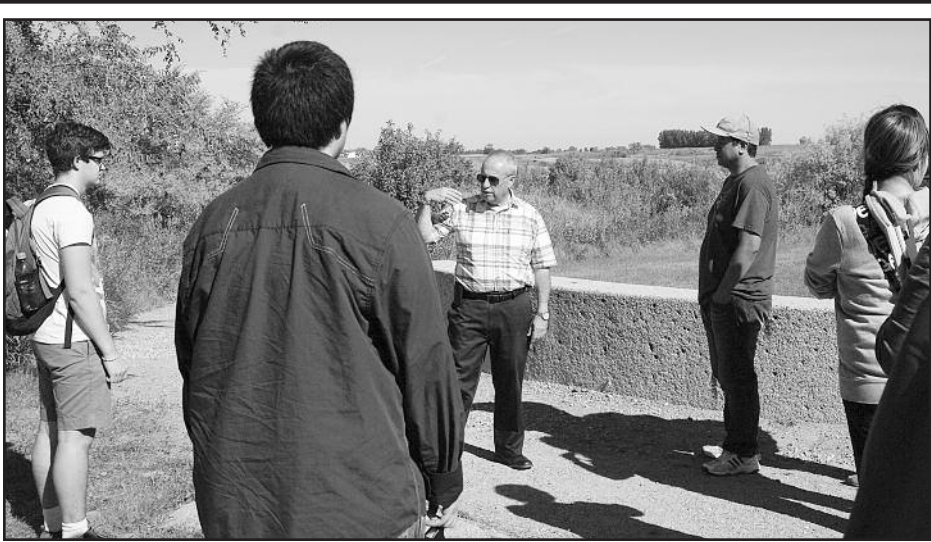
The booklet will inform you about what an advance health care directive is, why you should complete one, and why this resource is unique in its faith-based approach. It articulates some of the specific legislation in Saskatchewan regarding health care directives and substitute decision-making,

and clarifies the role of a Health Care Proxy (or proxies) versus a Power of Attorney. (This is the question we get asked most often, and the answer is: “yes, your health care proxy can be the same as your power of attorney, but the appointments should be made separately.”)

The advance care directive form included in the booklet detaches and, once completed, can serve as your legally-binding document that articulates your wishes. Copies of your completed directive can be made and offered to your health care professionals, loved ones and clergy if you wish.

At the end of the booklet, you will find definitions and footnotes that will help you better understand some of the medical terminology and key concepts that are referred to.

This resource is a booklet, not a comprehensive work on every situation or question you may encounter. The intent of this resource is to make the information approachable and understandable. It’s designed to invite you to carefully consider your wishes. It helps you start a conversation with loved ones. It gives you a way to communicate your wishes, in the event that you find yourself unable to make health care decisions for yourself.



## Aboriginal Student Achievement Program at STM

A walking tour at Wanuskeewin Heritage Park was part of a recent archaeology course at St. Thomas More College (STM). Historically, retention rates for Aboriginal students have been lower than for non-Aboriginal students. Yet there is also strong evidence to suggest that if students have a successful first year, the likelihood of them completing their degree is much higher. In 2013-14 two STM professors, Dr. Daniel Regnier (philosophy) and Professor Laura Foley (religion and culture), began working with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Program (ASAP) in the College of Arts and Science at the University of Saskatchewan to offer courses to Aboriginal students in first year Learning Communities. ASAP Learning Communities bring together Aboriginal First Year students who take a common set of courses, meet weekly with upper year students called Peer Mentors, and connect with Aboriginal role models. Regnier’s philosophy course, *Introduction to Indigenous Philosophy*, and Foley’s archaeology course, *The Human Journey*, were among the course options available to ASAP students this past year through STM.

- Photo by Jacquie Berg

Ideally, we hope this resource inspires you to find time to bring this important work of advance health care planning into the focus of today, knowing that it holds such benefit to loved ones and health care professionals to navigate any stressful or difficult health decisions that might be needed tomorrow.

Printed booklets are available for purchase from the CHAS office (306-655-

5330 or e-mail: [cath.health@sasktel.net](mailto:cath.health@sasktel.net)) for \$5 each, or at a bulk rate of \$3 each for 25+ copies, plus shipping. An electronic version of the booklet and form is also found online at [www.chassk.ca](http://www.chassk.ca)

If your organization or group would benefit from an educational session on end of life issues and Advance Health Care Directives, please contact CHAS to request one.

# Pure Witness Ministries seeking young adults to serve as missionaries

SUBMITTED BY PURE WITNESS

Pure Witness Ministries is moving into its fifth year of evangelization and service within

the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and across Western Canada. Each year Pure Witness Ministries recruits missionaries, 18 years and older, who wish to serve

the Church in the new evangelization, by using their gifts and talents to encourage youth and families to set Christ at the heart of their lives.

“A call to serve with Pure Witness is a call to experience a transformational year of radical, counter-cultural living, embracing the three-fold mission of community living, faith formation and outreach,” says Laura Rice of the Pure Witness Ministries team.

“By living in community with other like-minded young adults missionaries grow personally through the challenges and blessings of community living.”

“This opportunity equips them with skills in conflict resolution, self-sacrifice, and cooperation, which are healthy elements of married life, family life, religious life, and single persons’ lives.”

Pure Witness provides faith formation for the missionaries throughout their term of service, Rice adds. “This will help them develop an appetite for an on-going, life commitment to growing in faith

and deepening their personal relationship with God. Outreach is the call of every Christian, no matter your vocation, career, job, or educational circumstance. This preparation helps to equip missionaries to be part of the new evangelization in their day-to-day lives, even after their time of missionary service with Pure Witness.”

Pope Francis has made a particular appeal to youth to take up this work of the New Evangelization, notes Rice.

“In his words: ‘The best instrument to evangelize young people is other young people.’

“We are seeking those with gifts in music, public speaking, drama and youth ministry, who have a solid knowledge of the Catholic faith, and who demonstrate a firm Christian moral foundation in how they live,” she says.

“Not every missionary need possess all these gifts as personal strengths, (but) rather a willingness to develop their talents for building the Kingdom; after all, God does

not call the equipped... He equips the called.”

For more information about serving as a missionary with Pure Witness Ministries, e-mail Program Director Carmen Marcoux at: [carmen.marcoux@purewitness.com](mailto:carmen.marcoux@purewitness.com)

## Upcoming events

Upcoming events with Pure Witness include a May 2 Kids’ Purity Rally for parents and children up to 10 years old.

This year’s theme is “The Lord’s Army,” describes Rice. The day runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 2 at Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Saskatoon, at a cost of \$20 per person or \$60 per family. No pre-registration is required.

“If you’re grade 8 and older and have never taken in our monthly YEP (the Youth Evangelization Program), please join us for our year-end May 9 — a full-day event with a formal dinner and family dance (with a free photo booth) to follow,” Rice adds. Details about YEP can be found on the website: [www.purewitness.com](http://www.purewitness.com)

## Recent donations assist Kenya Orphanage Mission in constructing a school and caring for children

BY MICHELLE PETERS

Kenya Orphanage Mission: Jesus Leads Us has had a season of many blessings.

There have been many generous people donating towards the recovery of the school bus that burned in an electrical fire last year.

Two large donations were also received: one of \$20,000 towards the construction and another of \$25,000 towards housing/care/schooling of the orphans.

Fr. Modestus Ngwu accepted an invitation to visit the mission in December. This was no easy task for him. His cousin, Sr. Augustina

Ngwu, was the missionary who bought the land and began the school. She died in a car accident in 2011.

Fr. Modestus was welcomed by the children and sisters, and came back with many interesting stories and reports of the school and orphanage, including the detailed way in which the school is handcrafted.

Parishes or others who are interested in a weekend presentation, or anyone seeking more information, can contact Michelle Peters at (306) 682-0775, [peters.michelle@jesusleadsus.com](mailto:peters.michelle@jesusleadsus.com)

# Enriching travel experiences offered in upcoming pilgrim journeys

SUBMITTED BY MINISTRY TO TOURISM

Ministry to Tourism’s most recent winter 2015 program started from Miami, touching much of Central America, Panama Canal, and Ecuador, before it concluded with a stay in Peru. Fr. Ralph Kleiter, Ministry to Tourism, said that “bridging the Americas truly expressed the heart of the experience.”

Kleiter said that each and every “port of call” helped the small party from Saskatchewan discover the birth of cultures and peoples.

The group saw clearly the impact of the Conquistadors (European powers from the 16th century) which were followed by centuries of struggle for independence and

freedom. There were signs of this new found freedom and independence now taking root and bearing fruit in the countries visited. Peru, where most land touring time was spent, illustrated this point, he said.

Kleiter pointed out that Peru is becoming a destination of choice for people wanting a rich and varied experience beyond the usual escapes that some tourism often offers. Although Peru has had an agonizing history, it has moved a long way in fusing different cultures and faiths which are now leading more fully to the recognition and care of the poor, he said.

There will be a continuation of some exploration in South America in January when the Ministry to Tourism’s program will

touch briefly in South America at Santiago, Chile. From there the group will sail to Robinson Crusoe Island, Pitcairn Islands, and the mysterious Easter Island, as well as French Polynesia.

Kleiter said it is hoped that this exposure to other areas in the “global village” will be another opportunity to observe fusions between cultures and faiths.

For more information on this January 2016 program contact Fr. Ralph Kleiter at (306) 244-3747 or e-mail: [Kleiter@shaw.ca](mailto:Kleiter@shaw.ca) or visit Ministry to Tourism’s website at [www.pilgrimjourneys.ca](http://www.pilgrimjourneys.ca)

Other upcoming pilgrim journeys that were recently highlighted at a “Traveller’s Gathering” held April 10 at St. Paul’s Co-

Cathedral in Saskatoon included 2015-16 travel programs to Oceania and the Holy Land.

A Pilgrim Journey to Biblical Lands will take place Sept.-Oct. 2015. Gisele Bauche, artist and scriptural guide, gave a presentation on the Holy Land experience at the recent Traveller’s Gathering.

“Oceania and a New Zealand Mini-Snowbird Experience” is being offered Jan.-Feb. 2016.

For more information on any of these Ministry to Tourism opportunities, contact Fr. Ralph Kleiter at (306) 244-3747 or e-mail: [Kleiter@shaw.ca](mailto:Kleiter@shaw.ca) or visit the website at [www.pilgrimjourneys.ca](http://www.pilgrimjourneys.ca)



## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults WCC 2015 - Rites of the RCIA Presented by Team RCIA June 5-6, 2015

The Western Conference of the Catechumenate presents  
**"Rites of the RCIA,"** June 5-6 at Holy Spirit Parish in Saskatoon.  
**Speakers are Nick Wagner and Diana Macalintal of Team RCIA.**

To mark the 25th anniversary of the WCC,  
 the 2015 conference is being offered at a special rate of \$99.

Join us in celebrating 25 years of forming the RCIA ministry in Western Canada!

### Learn more about:

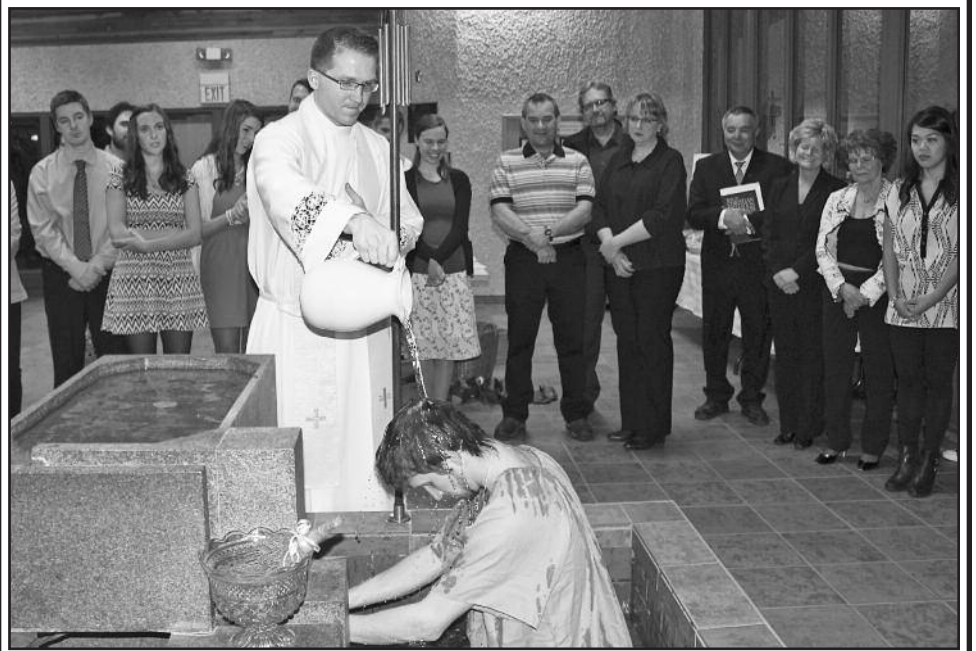
- How to prepare the assembly for full, conscious, and active participation in the rites
- How to apply the 12 liturgical principles and the four elements every liturgy requires
- How to catechize directly from the rites
- When to adapt the rites and when to follow the book

### Schedule:

- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Friday, June 5 (*includes a wine and cheese social*)
- 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, June 6 (*includes a business meeting over lunch*)

### Registration:

Register online at: <http://western-catechumenate.blogspot.ca> or  
 Contact Michelle at (306) 358-2057, [cic.michelle@saskatoonrcdiocese.com](mailto:cic.michelle@saskatoonrcdiocese.com)



### Easter baptism

Robert Dixon was baptized by Fr. Daniel Yasinski at the Easter Vigil in 2014 at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon. Last year two others were also baptized, and eight already-baptized candidates were received into the church at Holy Spirit parish, while in 2015 two were baptized at the Easter Vigil and eight candidates were received into the church. Those who have been journeying through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process now enter a period of post-baptismal reflection, known as "mystagogy."

- Photo submitted by Arch McKay

## Announcements & Upcoming Events

**There will be a Saskatoon City Deanery meeting** from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. **Wednesday, April 22** at St. Paul Co-Cathedral, 720 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon, featuring two speakers. Fr. Gerard Cooper, dean of Saskatoon City Deanery, and Blake Sittler, co-director of Pastoral Services in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Everyone is welcome.

**Webcast Conference - Inspiring Catholics:** Saskatoon is a Host Site for the New Evangelization Summit – a conference that has been designed to inspire Catholics and help them live out their personal call to evangelize. Join over 4,000 Catholics across Canada and the USA on **April 24-25** to hear 8 world-class Catholic speakers on the New Evangelization – people like Scott Hahn, Fr. Michael Gaitley, Ralph Martin, Patrick Coffin and JoEllen Gregus, to name a few. Be inspired, receive formation, and connect with other Catholics. Register now at [www.newevangelization.com](http://www.newevangelization.com). Location: St. Anne's Parish, 217 Lenore Drive, Saskatoon, April 24 7:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. and April 25 9:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Cost: \$50 dollars, includes lunch.

**Springtime of Faith at St. Therese, Bruno** - join students for week-long faith and learning conferences, **April 26-May 1** Ignatian Discernment or The Apostolate of the Christian Family; **May 3-7** "Into the Heart" Theology of the Body with Christopher West; **May 10-15** Heralds of the New Evangelization. See: [www.st-t.ca/SotF](http://www.st-t.ca/SotF) or call (306) 369-2555.

**What Can Evangelicals Learn From Catholics, An Evangelical Perspective** - The Saskatoon Evangelical-Catholic Dialogue presents a free public event featuring well-known Evangelical theologian and spiritual director Dr. Gordon T. Smith of Ambrose University, Calgary, at 7 p.m. **Thursday, April 30** at the Cathedral of the Holy Family, 123 Nelson Road, Saskatoon. For information contact Pastor Harry Strauss, (306) 933-2266 [harry@forestgrovecc.com](mailto:harry@forestgrovecc.com) or Nicholas Jesson, (306) 659-5814 [jesson@ecumenism.net](mailto:jesson@ecumenism.net)

### Program in Ecumenical Studies and Formation June 23-26, 2015

#### Queen's House of Retreats, Saskatoon

This accredited three-year program is dedicated to forming Christians in the theology, history and practice of ecumenism.

This program is for all those who wish to increase their knowledge of the ecumenical movement for greater participation. It will be offered each year in Saskatoon during the final week of June. Students who complete all three years will receive a certificate in Ecumenical Studies and Formation from St. Andrew's College and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism. Registration fee: \$350.

For more information and registration form see the website:  
[www.pcecumenism.ca](http://www.pcecumenism.ca) or call (306) 653-1633

**Spiritual Direction Formation Program deadline** - Please request an application form by April 30, 2015 for this program to run from January 2016 to July 2017 at Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre. The two-year Spiritual Direction Formation Program prepares mature adult Christians for the ministry of spiritual direction and accompanying of leaders and laity in parishes and congregations, vocation and ministry. Co-directors are Bishop Emeritus Gerry Wiesner, OMI, Gisele Bauche and Dianne Mantyka. For further information contact Queen's House at (306) 242-1916, or Dianne Mantyka at (306) 931-7118 or e-mail: [dimantyka@sasktel.net](mailto:dimantyka@sasktel.net)

**GSCS Foundation "Swing into Spring"** Fashion Show and Dinner in support of Catholic education, **Thursday, April 30** at Prairieland Park in Saskatoon. Tickets: (306) 659-7003.

**Pure Witness Kids' Purity Rally Saturday, May 2**, for parents and children up to 10 years old, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 2 at Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Saskatoon, at a cost of \$20 per person or \$60 per family. Pre-registration is not required. [www.purewitness.com](http://www.purewitness.com)

**Rory Allen: Tribute to the King on Saturday, May 2** at Fox Valley Community Hall: pub night, auction, silent auction. Tickets are \$35. Please call Candice 306 666-4449 or Mary Ellen 306 666-4610. This event is hosted by St. Mary's Parish, Fox Valley. All money raised will go to the St. Mary's Parish Sidewalk Fund.

**A Trinity of Sound** – celebrating the music and traditions of the Chaldean, Ukrainian and Latin churches will be held at 2 p.m., **Sunday, May 3** at Holy Family Cathedral in Saskatoon. A choir from each of three rites of the Catholic Church will sing a chant, a traditional song and a contemporary song from their particular tradition. Everyone is invited to stay for refreshments after the performance. Food from Iraq, Ukraine and Italy will be served after the concert. Free will offering. For info contact Sharon: (306) 659-5831 [foundations@saskatoonrcdiocese.com](mailto:foundations@saskatoonrcdiocese.com)

**Saskatchewan March for Life** will be held **Thursday, May 7** in Regina, with the theme "Parental Consent will Save Babies." Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. at Christ the King, 3239 Garnett Street, Regina, followed by 12:30 pm welcome and opening remarks; 1:30 p.m. greetings and messages at the Legislature; with the 2:30 p.m. March for Life walk from the Legislature grounds to Victoria Avenue, followed by silent witness on Albert Street. Find more info: [www.saskprolife.com](http://www.saskprolife.com)

**Thank God for Marriage: A romantic evening of entertainment, dessert and wine**, sponsored by St. Anne's parish. An inspiring theatre piece of love, marriage and God's good grace, the production will be held on **Saturday, May 9** at St. Anne's Church, 217 Lenore Dr. Saskatoon. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., show will be 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$40 per couple, (not suitable for children or infants). Wine available for purchase. For more information, go to the website at: [www.rooneyandpunyi.ca](http://www.rooneyandpunyi.ca)

**"Seeking light: Collaboration and Searching of Three Artists"** is an art exhibit being held at Queen's House **May 9-10** featuring the work of siblings Gisele, Dean and Brian Bauche. There will be a Coffee House from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. **Saturday, May 9** (with an artist talk at 8 p.m.) and a Mother's Day Tea 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. **Sunday, May 10**. Queen's House is located at 601 Taylor Street West in Saskatoon.

**St Mary's CWL Lanigan** - We are celebrating our 50th anniversary this year! The celebration will take place on **Sunday, May 24** starting at 4 pm with Mass, followed by supper and entertainment. All present and former St. Mary's CWL members are invited to attend. Please confirm attendance by **May 1** to Laura Novecosky: [lauralibrary@hotmail.com](mailto:lauralibrary@hotmail.com) or to St. Mary's Parish office at (306) 365-2999 or e-mail: [st.marys@sasktel.net](mailto:st.marys@sasktel.net)

**50th Anniversary of Priesthood celebration** for Monsignor Raymond Senger will be held **June 8, 2015 at Tramping Lake, Sask.**, beginning at 4 pm with Mass at St. Michael's Parish, followed by supper at the Tramping Lake Community Hall. Supper tickets are \$15 each. For tickets contact Chris at (306) 755-2174 or Diane (306) 834-5142. Deadline for tickets is June 1. **50th Anniversary of Priesthood celebration** for Monsignor Raymond Senger will be held **June 6 in Saskatoon** at Holy Family Cathedral, beginning with Mass at 11 a.m. with Bishop Don Bolen. There will be a tea at Holy Family Cathedral from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., everyone welcome. Tickets for a 5 p.m. banquet at the cathedral are \$25 for adults; call Erla at (306) 931-7328 or (306) 281-9757.

**Blackstrap Youth Camp** offers weekly camps for youth ages 8-13, **beginning July 5 - 10 and running each week to August 2 - 7**, including canoeing, tenting, arts and crafts, praise and worship, swimming, camp out, variety night, mud pit and dance. Apply for Blackstrap Camp online: [www.blackstrapyouthcamp.org](http://www.blackstrapyouthcamp.org) or call (306) 934-1838.

**Helping kids to attend camp** - Blackstrap Youth Camp is building a fund to help underprivileged youth to attend camp. Tax-receipted donations can be made on the website at: [www.blackstrapyouthcamp.org](http://www.blackstrapyouthcamp.org) or check out and share the Blackstrap Camp's "crowdfunding campaign" at [www.indiegogo.com/projects/summer-camp-for-underprivileged-youth](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/summer-camp-for-underprivileged-youth)

### Queen's House of Retreat and Renewal Centre

601 Taylor Street West, Saskatoon; (306) 242-1916; [www.queenshouse.org](http://www.queenshouse.org)

**The Book of Exodus** with Facilitator Fr. Paul Fachel, OMI, 10 a.m. first Wednesday of the month **May 6, June 3**; Cost: \$15/session.

**Centering Prayer** 7 p.m. **Monday evenings**, except on statutory holidays, September to June. Cost: by donation.

**Taizé Prayer for Christian Unity** - 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. second Tuesday of the month **May 12, June 9**. Cost by donation.

**A Day Away** - Facilitator Gisele Bauche 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. **Wednesday, May 13**. Cost: \$25 with lunch.

**What is Truth? Pilate's Perennial Question and its Relevance For Today** with Facilitator Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. **April 25 and May 23**. Cost: \$35 with lunch; \$25 bring your own lunch

**Scriptural Themes for Seniors and Friends** - "Empire" with Facilitator Rev. Dr. Vern Ratzlaff from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. **Thursday, April 30, and every Thursday in May**. Cost: \$40 if you can pay.

**Transitions: Your Journey of Transformation Through Grief and Loss** with Facilitator Sarah Donnelly from 7 p.m. **Thursday, May 28 to lunch Sunday, May 31**. Cost: \$390 (live-in). (Retreat will be repeated **Oct. 22 - 25**.)

**Tai Chi Chih Joy Through Movement** - Facilitator Donna Aldous, 9 a.m. **Friday, June 19 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, June 20**

**Eight-Day Silent Directed Retreat** - Facilitators Dianne Mantyka, Bishop Gerry Wiesner, OMI, 4 p.m. **June 28 to 3 p.m. July 5**. Cost: \$850 live-in. "

**Summer Stillness 2015: Spirituality and the Seasons of Our Lives** with Facilitator Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, 5:30 p.m. **Monday, July 13 to 1 p.m. Thursday, July 16**. Cost \$200 commute; \$400 live-in.

The Msgr.  
Michael J. Koch  
Resource Library  
is supported by

**Bishops**  
ANNUAL APPEAL



### Msgr. Michael J. Koch Resource Library

Bishop Donald Bolen was one of this season's guest readers at Children's Story Time held 10 a.m. **Thursdays** at the Msgr. Michael J. Koch Library. The resource library at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 123 Nelson Road (second floor of the Cathedral of the Holy Family) is open to the public **Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** (closed over the noon hour). Come and check out new materials – including the new Robert Barron DVD study series.

- Photo by Mariel Marciniuk



**St. Michael Anniversary**

The 60th anniversary of St. Michael's parish in Saskatoon was marked March 15, 2015. The 60th anniversary celebration began with Bishop Donald Bolen and parish priest Fr. Iheanyi Enwerem, OP, presiding at celebration of the Eucharist, followed by a potluck brunch. In attendance were Clara Zakreski, one of the original members of the congregation, and several other past parishioners, including all five of Clara's children.

- Photo by Sandy Klassen



**Year of Consecrated Life**

We recall with gratitude the service of the Redemptorists in our diocese, especially in establishment and service to St. Mary's Parish, in care of the surrounding neighbourhood, as well as ministry to Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, and to the Spanish community.



**St. Mary Saints Day Party**

A Saints Day Party was held Nov. 1, 2014 at St Mary's parish in Saskatoon (left), with 16 young saints playing games such as "Pin the Rose on St. Therese," "Ligouri's Limbo," "St. Peter The Fisherman's Pinata," "St. Isidore's Pass The Hot Potato," and "St. Cecilia's Musical Chairs." Prizes for the young children were provided by Universal Church Supplies.

- Photo by Elaine Rogal

**Changes this year, but Bishop's Dinner continues to support diocesan priorities**

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

For nine years, the Bishop's Dinner has brought members of the Catholic community together for a memorable evening of fine dining and entertainment in the company of friends and colleagues, while raising funds for the highest priorities of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Those same features will again be hallmarks of the ninth annual Bishop's Dinner on Friday, May 8 at TCU Place, says Jacquie Ackerman, chair of the organizing committee.

The proceeds this year will go toward the diocese's Catholic Hospital Chaplaincy office, which provides pastoral care and ministry

to patients at Royal University Hospital and Saskatoon City Hospital.

In recent years, the Bishop's Dinner has raised funds for prison ministry and for refugee outreach in the diocese, after originally being launched to help build a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre.

One change to the Bishop's Dinner in 2015 is a reduced ticket price; it has dropped from \$350 to \$150 per person. (A partial tax receipt will continue to be issued to those purchasing a ticket.)

"It was time to make a change, and, in consultation with the bishop, we decided to reduce the price of the

ticket and make a few other adjustments," Ackerman said, noting the change is an effort to make the evening more accessible, without sacrificing the style and the camaraderie that the evening is known for.

The hope is that some who could not attend in the past will be able to make 2015 the year they will join Bishop Don Bolen for an enchanting evening of fun and fellowship, Ackerman said.

"The dinner itself will be as spectacular as ever, and there will be complimentary wine on the tables." However, this year, patrons will be asked to pay for their drinks. The committee is also taking a more hands-on approach with the décor, which will be created by volunteers.

As usual, high-quality entertainment will be part of the Bishop's Dinner, with diners serenaded throughout the evening, as well as a dance, featuring the music of Special Event Band.

"Really, the entire event is all about community," stressed Ackerman. It's a night of socializing – meeting old friends and new is the highlight.

"When I first got involved, I thought I might not know anybody. I was amazed to find that there were so many people there that I knew. It really is an evening to come and visit, while contributing to a good cause."

The Catholic Hospital Chaplaincy office is coordinated by Céline Hudon, who works with a team of some 25-30 volunteers, as well as full-time chaplain Fr. Rhéal

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon  
presents the

*Bishop's Dinner*

in support of Hospital Chaplaincy

May 8, 2015  
TCU Place  
6:00PM  
Champagne Reception  
Dinner to Follow  
\$150 per person  
(partial tax receipt issued)

For tickets:  
Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation  
(306) 659-5851  
cgilje@dscatholicfoundation.ca



**Reflecting on salvation history in glass art**

Sharon Powell, coordinator of the diocesan Foundations: *Exploring Our Faith Together* program, and speakers Agnes Pelletier and Bishop Don Bolen (l-r) stand with the Covenant stained glass window in the background at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon, during a Lenten Foundations series that examined salvation history in light of the stained glass art at the cathedral. The series included reflections on creation and covenant, the Annunciation and incarnation, and resurrection and glory.

- Photo by Kiply Yaworski

Bussiére, and five parish priests who cover calls on weekends.

The goal of the diocesan chaplaincy office is to provide loving spiritual and pastoral care to Roman Catholic patients at Royal University Hospital and Saskatoon City Hospital. Spiritual care has always been part of the Catholic ministry of St. Paul's Hospital, but

the diocesan office provides this care at the other two hospitals, under a memorandum of agreement between the bishop and the Saskatoon Health Region.

Tickets for the Bishop's Dinner can be purchased by contacting Cathy Gilje at (306) 659-5851 or cgilje@dscatholicfoundation.ca