

Northern Catholic News

VOLUME XXI, NO. 1

WINTER 2012

Father Simon Agboso retires



New Hazelton says farewell to Father Simon Agboso. PHOTO BY: Barbara Schwab

serve the missions of Holy Rosary in Moricetown and St Felix in Stewart.

A supper was held on September 27th to celebrate Father's retirement, his birthday and to express our deep appreciation for his years of service to our parish.

We wish Father a happy retirement as he plans to spend the winters in Ghana to escape the cold, snow and winter driving. He plans to return to Terrace for the summer months.

We have enjoyed having Father Simon with us and will miss his many stories. His steep driveway which is treacherous in winter and his encounters with bears on his trips to Moricetown provide many new memories he can relate in future stories.

By: Barbara Schwab
NEW HAZELTON – After serving St. Mary's Parish for five years, Father Simon Agboso made the decision to retire.

Father Simon ministered in London, Ontario, New York

and Boston after leaving his home country of Ghana. He then served three parishes in Newfoundland before coming to Northern British Columbia.

As well as providing pastoral ministry at St. Mary's in New Hazelton he also traveled to

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The Giving Tree

The Knights of Columbus sponsored "The Giving Tree" at the Festival of Trees in Prince George. During the live auction, the tree raised \$6,000 for Northern Health. PHOTOS BY: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin



Diocesan Study Days echo God's Word today

Joanne Chafe facilitated the Diocesan Study Days.
PHOTO BY: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin



input and offering the opportunity for personal reflection and small group discussion.

The purpose of the "Criteria for Catechesis of Children from Infancy to Age Eighteen" is to guide the renewal of our national catechetical series: Born of the Spirit and We Are Strong Together.

These two series developed by NORE are the catechetical resources approved by Bishop Wiesner for use in our Diocese

for the faith formation of children. They are available in three formats: Parish, School and Home editions.

Through four consultations over the past two years, the Canadian Bishops of English speaking and bilingual dioceses reviewed and approved the appropriate content and methodology for the faith formation of children by age level.

The criteria developed for infancy to age three will take the form of a handbook for parents to assist them as they reflect upon their crucial role of providing the human foundation for the life of faith for their children.

This handbook will be a new component among the resources to be developed. "On Good Soil: Pastoral Planning for Evangelization and Catechesis with Adults" was approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops at its Plenary Assembly in October 2010. The published text was made available in May 2011 through the CCCB Publication Services.

This resource is modeled on the General Directory for Catechesis – divided into five main sections with an introduction - with the General Directory providing its inspiration and orientations. Ms. Chafe highlighted approaches in "On Good Soil" that might be taken and the tools that are offered to assess current catechetical practice. "On Good Soil" is an engaging and practical resource that can be used by Dioceses and parishes to enhance their efforts in the work of evangelization and catechesis with adults. Each parish and school in the Diocese received a copy for its further exploration and use. Participants appreciated these sessions with Joanne Chafe and returned home with renewed energy and concrete suggestions for their ongoing efforts in the area of evangelization and catechesis with adults, children and youth.

By: Mary-Ann Bates, RSCJ
PRINCE GEORGE - This year the bi-annual Diocesan Pastoral Study Days, held at the Diocesan Office in Prince George September 29–30, saw approximately 70 participants from across the Diocese in attendance.

Among them were priests, religious, principals, pastoral life directors, pastoral associates along with parish catechists working with adults, children and youth. The two day formational event was entitled "Echoing God's Word Today: Catechesis in the Life of the Church".

This topic was chosen in light of the approval by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops last autumn of two catechetical documents for the Church in Canada: "Criteria for Catechesis of Children from Infancy to Age Eighteen" and "On Good Soil: A National Pastoral Plan for the Evangelization and Catechesis of Adults".

Joanne Chafe, Director of the National Office of Religious Education (NORE) in Ottawa, was the keynote presenter and facilitator for the gathering.

Ms. Chafe led participants through an exploration of these two documents giving

input and offering the opportunity for personal reflection and small group discussion.

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Correctional Centre Chaplain Frank Jamin holds the Sacramentary for Bishop Gerald Wiesner at the closing Mass of the Diocesan Study Days in September.
PHOTO BY: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin

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Editor: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin
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Gratitude shows belief in God

A walk through any mall or store in the weeks leading up to Christmas clearly shows that if there is a general characteristic that reveals a key meaning of Christmas it is that of gift giving and receiving.

Receiving gifts reminds us of the most important gift that has ever been given and received. It is the gift that God has given, namely, the gift of God's only Son, Jesus.

This gift has irrevocably transformed the history of humankind; history has never been and never will be the same since the birth of Jesus into our world.

Receiving gifts has an instinctive reaction on the part of everyone: gratitude and thanksgiving. We are eternally grateful for the gift of God's own Son. This season when we remember in a special way the gift of the Son of God, we are all lead more deeply into a spirit of gratitude.

We are reminded of the importance and centrality of gratitude in our lives by the words of the great spiritual master, Meister Eckhart who said: "If the only prayer you say in your life is "thank you" that would suffice".

A deeper look at gratitude indicates that not only is it the posture of praise, but it is also the basic element of real belief in

God. When we bow our heads in gratitude we admit that the works of God are good. We recognize that we cannot, of ourselves, save ourselves.

We proclaim that our existence and all its goods come not from our efforts but are part of the works of God. Gratitude is the alleluia of existence; it is the praise that thunders through the world as tribute to the ongoing presence of God with us.

Thank you for the new day
 Thank you for this work
 Thank you for this family
 Thank you for our daily bread
 Thank you for the snow and the beauty and moisture it brings to our earth
 Thank you for the corrections that bring me to growth
 Thank you for the pets that bind us to nature
 Thank you for the necessary things that keep me aware of your goodness in my life
 Thank you for life and health
 Thank you for forgiveness

Without a doubt, unlimited gratitude saves us from the sense of self-sufficiency that leads to forgetfulness of God.

Praise is not an idle virtue in life. It says to us, "Remember to

whom you are indebted. If you never know need, you will not come to know who God is nor who you yourself are".

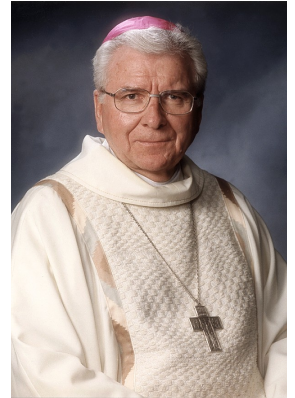
Need is what tests our trust. It gives us the opportunity to allow others to hold us up in our weakness, to realize that in the end only God is the measure of our fullness.

Once we know need we are better human beings. For the first time we know solidarity with the poorest of the poor. We become owners of the pain of the world and devote ourselves to working on behalf of those who suffer.

Finally, it is need that shows us how little it takes to be happy.

As we move through the Christmas season, and as we exchange gifts, may we remember the essential response to receiving gifts: gratitude. May we remember to live the spirit of gratitude as we celebrate the greatest gift that humankind – and we as individuals – have ever received: the gift of God's own Son.

Our gratitude can well take the form of that of our Blessed Mother: My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.



Bishop's Letter

Most Rev. Gerald Wiesner, OMI

Bishops' Schedule

Advent Parish Mission

November

21 Chetwynd
 22 Tumbler Ridge
 23 Dawson Creek
 24 Fort St. John
 25 Mackenzie
 27 Houston
 28 Smithers
 29 New Hazelton
 30 Kitimat

December

1 Terrace (also, blessing church renovations)
 2 Prince Rupert

4 McBride
 5 Sacred Heart Cathedral
 6 Domano Renewal Centre Advent evening
 7 St. Mary's, Prince George
 8 Immaculate Conception, Prince George
 9 Christ Our Savior, Prince George
 11 Burns Lake
 12 Fraser Lake
 13 Vanderhoof
 14 Fort St. James
 15 Tache

Diocesan Office closed December 23, 2011 to January 1, 2012 inclusive

January

3-4 Office
 5-8 Mission – Western Bishops Retreat
 10-13 Office
 15 Columbus Community Centre - Bishop's Levee
 17-20 Office
 24-27 Office
 28 Diocesan Pastoral Council
 31 Office

February

1-3 Office
 7-10 Office
 14-17 Office
 21-24 Office

25 Domano Renewal Centre - Lay Formation Mass
 28-29 - Victoria Western Canadian Conference of Bishops

March

1-2 Victoria - WCCB
 6-9 Office
 10 St. Mary's, PG – Knights of Columbus 50th Anniversary
 13-15 Office
 16-18 Smithers – Lay Formation
 20 Office
 21-24 Ottawa – COLF seminar and board meeting
 27-30 Office

No one is beyond the reach of the transforming grace of God. No pain is greater than the desolation of a lonely heart but Jesus came full of mercy, truth and grace.

Healing and support offered at centre

By: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin
PRINCE GEORGE – The annual fall banquet and fund raiser in support of the Prince George Crisis Pregnancy Centre drew double the participants in its second year. On October 22nd over 200 people enjoyed a delicious meal and an evening that focused on the need for post abortion counseling, healing and support.

As well as offering the Saved Sex educational program for youth and memorial services for those who have suffered a miscarriage or have had an abortion, the Centre provides support for women who experience an unexpected and/or unwanted pregnancy.

Executive Director Alison Townrow noted that their role when a woman comes

to the Centre is to ensure that each one knows they are not alone, that there will be someone to walk with them. “No matter what they choose we will love and support them,” she said.

Some women choose to keep their baby; others will choose to place their baby up for adoption. The Centre is there throughout the pregnancy to help in every way possible including providing a layette when the baby is born, Ms. Townrow said.

There are times when the woman chooses to abort the baby and the Centre is finding more and more women are turning to them, often later along the post-abortion journey, when they experience the trauma their actions cause.

The Prince George Crisis Pregnancy Centre is the only place that offers support for women - and their partners in some cases - after an abortion. Clients for the Post Abortion Support Plan have increased rapidly over the past year or so.

To emphasize the need for the service, a former client of the Centre was invited to tell her story.

She spoke about the pressure she felt from Social Services and the medical profession to terminate her pregnancy. Her long journey of anger, pain and self hatred brought her to the Centre

and, with the support of volunteers there, she was finally able to find healing.

“I was not judged,” the woman said, “but rather I experienced deep compassion. I felt safe to tell my story. There was acceptance and not condemnation as I thought there would be.”

Both this woman and keynote speaker Pastor Paul Berteig of Timbers Community Church emphasized the Christ-centered approach needed for healing.

“God comes to those who are broken,” Pastor Berteig said. “No one is beyond the reach of the transforming grace of God. No pain is greater than the desolation of a lonely heart but Jesus came full of mercy, truth and grace.”

Many people are not aware that the Centre offers post-abortion counseling and support. The name itself does not indicate the full extent of what they can provide for women in crisis. To make the post-abortion services known, the Centre plans to advertise under a different name and phone number.

Appeal Director, Renate Domning, pointed out that the current \$86,000 per year budget, which comes solely from private donations, would not cover this new service. They estimate another \$10,000 to \$15,000 will be needed.



Prince George Crisis Pregnancy Centre Executive Director, Alison Townrow, passes the microphone to guest speaker, Elaine Holland at a fund raiser for the Centre in October.

PHOTO BY: Richard Collet



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Project Maluku: improving human lives, furthering human development

By: Marie Flouriot

PRINCE GEORGE - In 2006, Father Adrien Gesse, an Oblate priest from The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), knocked on the door at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince George.

Father John Garden opened the door and listened to the story of the harsh life of over 20,000 *shgues*, the street children and youth in Kinshasa.

Many come from broken homes and families dispersed by civil war and political strife. Others are abandoned by parents too poor to feed them.

They live in small gangs, earning a little money through menial jobs and petty crime. Their life expectancy is 25 years.

The Oblates had a plan, approved by their Superior General, to teach a trade to some 100 street youths every year, provide them with tools to practice their trade once their schooling is completed and to help them integrate into society.

They owned a piece of land in Maluku, a municipality of Kinshasa. They also had some good woodworking machinery, quite a few prospective students and even potential teachers. Lack of funds was the only barrier that prevented them from launching the project.

When Father Adrien made his request, Father John could not say no.

Soon the Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish Pastoral Council began fundraising activities for Project Maluku.

A small committee comprised of Barb Wallace, Beth Hodgson, Claudia Betz, Joe and Kathy Pereira and Marie Flouriot began work. In 2008 \$1,500 was donated via MAMI Lacombe to the Oblates for the project now headed by Father Willy Bundjoko.

Father John committed the parish to a five-year fundraising plan for Project Maluku.

In 2009 we held a Lenten rice meal followed by a conference on the Social Teachings of the Church given by Sr. Tarianne De Yonker. We also initiated the *Gift of Hope* Advent campaign through which parishioners could contribute to the purchase of



Sacred Heart Cathedral contributes towards the Oblate initiative *Cite des Jeunes* where these students, once destined for a short life on the streets of Kinshasa, can now learn a trade. For more information about Project Maluku visit the Sacred Heart Cathedral website at www.shcathedralpg.bc.ca

construction materials for the trade school: \$5,564.50 was raised.

In 2010 another Lenten rice meal was held followed by the screening of the very moving and informative documentary, *War Child*.

The youth group hosted a dance and concert in October and the Second Advent campaign focused on purchasing school supplies (including a computer), along with clothing and footwear for some students.

The generosity of the parishioners of Sacred Heart Cathedral did not weaken: \$5,487.16 was collected and sent to Maluku.

We cannot help but be impressed by the generosity of our parish and we are very grateful to all those who have contributed to Project Maluku these past two years. This is money well invested as it works at improving human lives and furthering human development in a part of the world where these are continually challenged.

The trade school (*Cité des Jeunes*) opened on May 2, 2011. Its 90 students started their school life by improving their literacy skills. Three trades are taught: woodworking, construction and fitting.

In this our third year of fundraising, activities included another rice meal and a silent auction. Another silent auction took place in time for Christmas shopping along with our third *Gift of Hope* Advent Campaign.

Equipment is needed at the school in the construction and fitting sections and some students do not have appropriate clothing and footwear.

Our hope is that our parish will again open its heart to these young men in Maluku. In spite of all the difficulties of a childhood and a youth lived on the dangerous streets of Kinshasa, they are willing to accept the discipline of school, learn a trade and take their rightful place in society.

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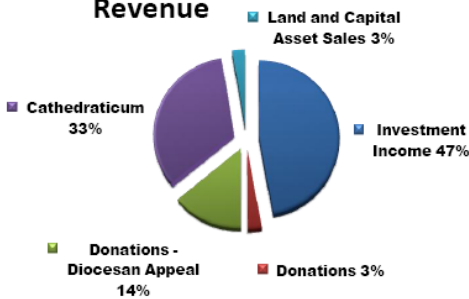
Come and Join us — New Members Welcome



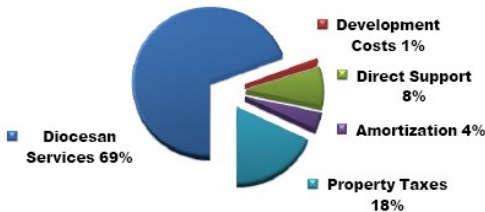
2010/2011 Diocesan Financial Report

Once again our financial statement for the 2010/11 fiscal year shows a small operating surplus: \$12,609. While the surpluses have not been large, they are significant in that the last three years have shown operating surpluses rather than the deficits we had seen for a number of years. Several factors have contributed to this: higher investment income, the funds from the Diocesan Annual Appeal that have replaced some of the subsidies that formerly came from the budget and the cost saving measures put in place over a number of years.

Revenue



Expenses



Diocese of Prince George

Statement of Operations

Year ended June 30, 2011

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
DIOCESAN OPERATIONS		
Income		
Cathedraticum	\$ 312,826	\$ 317,531
Assessments from parishes		
Donations	25,822	3,330
Catholic Missions in Canada, religious communities, charitable organizations, individuals and businesses		
Donations - Diocesan Annual Appeal	130,000	175,000
Faith formation and youth		
Investment Income	440,451	410,875
Lease of diocesan properties, investments, and the sale of resources		
Total Revenue	<u>909,099</u>	<u>906,736</u>
Expenses		
Direct Support	96,698	110,566
Subsidies to Renewal Centre and Domano Sisters and donations		
Diocesan Services	799,792	793,597
Offices of the Bishop, Vicar General, Chancellor, Pastoral Centre, Appeal, Archives and Administration and maintenance of diocesan properties		
Total Expenses	<u>896,490</u>	<u>904,163</u>
Total Diocesan Operations	<u>12,609</u>	<u>2,573</u>
SALE OF CAPITAL ASSETS		
Sales	24,420	1,235,005
Expenses		
Property Taxes	207,044	192,224
Land Development Costs	8,865	582,887
Amortization	42,804	47,327
	<u>258,713</u>	<u>822,438</u>
Total Land Investments	<u>-234,293</u>	<u>412,567</u>
Total Diocesan Operations and Land Investments	<u>\$ (221,684)</u>	<u>\$ 415,140</u>

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Financial Statement: Year Ended June 30, 2011

The Diocesan Operations portion of the statement shows some variation from last year's operation: less income from the parishes through Cathedralium but more donations, less from the Annual Appeal but more from our investments. Taken all together, we had a slightly higher income from the previous year. Our expenses were also slightly lower than the previous year. Even with the lower contribution from the Annual Appeal to the work of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre, we have still maintained our balance on the positive side.

While the Annual Appeal assists tremendously with the financial cost of many programs, ministries and missions, the Diocese still directly supports and subsidizes various ministries and programs out of its own revenue. In order for the mission of the Church to continue, it must be supported financially. Catholic Missions in Canada continues to provide substantial funding for some of our missions and parishes but we are seeking to reduce that funding and become more financially self sufficient. We realize that there is still a long way to go, but the diocesan administration and the Diocesan Finance Council are committed to the goal of eventual self-sufficiency.

Diocese of Prince George

Statement of Financial Position

As at June 30, 2011

	2011	2010
Assets		
Cash, Accounts Receivable and Other	\$ 427,094	\$ 330,962
Investments	5,642,658	5,679,244
Land, Buildings and Equipment	2,838,790	2,842,868
Total Assets	<u>\$ 8,908,542</u>	<u>\$ 8,853,074</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts Payable	\$ 1,821,357	\$ 1,544,205
Net Assets		
Opening	7,308,869	6,893,729
Current (Deficit)	-221,684	415,140
	7,087,185	7,308,869
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 8,908,542</u>	<u>\$ 8,853,074</u>

Investment Income

Our investment income comes from various sources. Our major land leases – the College Heights Manufactured Home Park and the Chevron station on Domano Boulevard provided \$355,000. We also received \$29,500 from rentals and royalties on our various gravel pits. Interest income was \$58,000. The investments that we have at present are very sound with guaranteed principal; the downside is that the return is fairly low for the most part. We are working at diversifying our portfolio to provide a higher return on our investments. The Diocesan Finance Council is keenly aware that our investments are the patrimony of the whole Diocese and we cannot take undue risks with that money.

We continue to market parcels from our land holdings. While we did not have any significant sales during the past fiscal year, work proceeded on a sale that had been pending for some time and that sale will show in next year's statement. There is continued interest in some of the commercial land the Diocese holds so we are optimistic that we will have more sales in the near future which will add to our investment portfolio. Again, the Finance Council recognizes that the land we hold is also part of the patrimony of the Diocese and must be managed prudently and with an eye to our future needs.

Administration Costs

In previous reports, details of cost saving measures were outlined. We have control over some costs, such as salaries and services, but it is the costs over which we do not have control that have resulted in higher administration costs this year. These include higher gas prices (vehicles and heating), higher heating costs because of longer periods of cold weather, etc. We are subject to the same kinds of cost increases as your household.

We continue to seek means of maintaining or reducing the expenses of the Diocesan Centre. We strive to serve the needs of the Diocese with a smaller staff which means each staff member continues to take on more work as it becomes necessary. We closely monitor our spending for new equipment, making the best use of what we presently have and only replacing equipment that no longer functions. We have tried to reduce meeting costs by doing more conference calls and less travel and will continue to use this method whenever possible. We will continue to explore ways of serving while reducing our expenses.



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Diocesan Annual Appeal

Our 2010 Appeal was quite successful. We had anticipated lower total revenue again given the continued economic situation in our country. That was borne out in the results. We exceeded our goal of \$400,000 but only \$61,331 was returned to the parishes as rebates compared to \$78,692 the previous year.

You will note that the whole \$400,000 was allocated according to the case outlined in the brochure. While the particulars of the allocations may shift each year every dollar contributed to the Appeal is used for the intended purpose. There have been some major shifts this year – Returning to Spirit received an extra \$30,000 in funding from the Appeal. This program, which seeks to bring about healing between aboriginal peoples and the rest of our society, has had great response in our Diocese and we have been sponsoring more workshops. Some missions received more and others less according to their needs. The same applies to the allocations under Youth.

There are no administration costs shown for the Appeal as those are borne by the Diocesan Office – none of the money raised is used for office expenses or salaries.

Diocesan Special Collections

A total of \$115,442 was collected in parishes for the needs stated below. Many parishes and individuals also donated directly to Development and Peace for designated relief efforts. The generous people of this diocese continue to provide much needed support for the upkeep of religious sites in the Holy Land, Development and Peace, Evangelization of Nations, the Pope's pastoral Works and Catholic Missions in Canada.

Name	Amount Collected	Use of Funds
Canadian Church	12,489	Needs of the Church in Canada
Development & Peace (Share Lent Collection)	37,367	Projects in developing countries and education in Canadian parishes
Development & Peace – Special	4,750	Designated relief efforts
Evangelization of the Nations	15,624	World-wide mission efforts
Holy Land	24,270	Maintenance of sites of the Holy Father
Holy Father		
Pope's Pastoral Works	9,516	Charitable works of the Holy Father
Catholic Missions in Canada	11,426	Missionary efforts in Canada

Diocesan Annual Appeal

Statement of Operations

	2010
Revenue	
Donations	\$461,331
Less: Parish Rebates	61,331
	<hr/>
Diocesan Goal	400,000
	<hr/>
Disbursements	
Home Missions	
Franciscan Brothers	5,000
Our Lady of Peace, Chetwynd	5,000
Our Lady of Snows, Fort St. Jam	2,000
Replacement Ministry	10,000
Rose Prince Pilgrimage	10,000
St. Anthony's, Houston	6,000
St. Mary's, New Hazelton	18,000
St. Patrick's, McBride	11,000
St. Theresa's Mission	12,000
Youth	
Camp Morice	25,000
Camp Emile	5,000
Diocesan Pastoral Centre	25,000
Faith Formation	
Returning To Spirit	38,000
Pro-Life	5,000
First Nations Retreat	2,000
Diocesan Pastoral Centre	105,000
Catholic Independent Schools	60,000
Vocations	
Seminarians	40,000
Formation - Priests	7,000
Administration	9,000
Total Disbursements	400,000
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Sometimes life is not easy. There are days when nothing seems to work, when, however hard you try, nothing turns out right.

I used to blame myself when things like this happened. I figured I wasn't organized enough, clever enough or good enough. But then I took the Returning to Spirit workshops and I realized that every day and every moment can be a victory.

It all depends on how you look at things.

One day this summer I was running up a hill. I am not good at running and hills are especially hard for me. But on this day it was especially hard.

I got to thinking about the people I had met during the Returning to Spirit workshops; how hard life had been for some, how difficult every single day still was for others.

Running up a hill isn't anything like what an abused person has to deal with everyday. But as I remembered the people and their stories, I began to see how my struggle was a metaphor for those days when putting one foot in front of the other seems like a monumental task.

As I ran I thought about the people who had shared their painful pasts and troubled pre-

sents; their stories of abuse, disappointment and heartache. And I remembered that when we reconciled, the words eventually became ones of happiness and joy.

All of a sudden I knew where I would find the strength to carry on. If the people I met at Returning to Spirit could forgive these profound hurts then I could meet my challenges ... one step at a time.

It dawned on me that I had to be patient with myself. I had to find a new pace and a new rhythm for how I would live my life now.

I channelled these thoughts into my running. I named the people I had met. I recalled their humor, their tenderness and their trust. I used their determination and energy to help me.

I thought - really thought - about what they had shared with me and how that had made me feel. I didn't give up and I kept moving.

When I finally acknowledged my need for acceptance and love I began to feel the Creator's power in the earth beneath my feet.

I began to take pleasure in moving forward and I felt the promise of laughter as the rain hit my cheeks.

I topped that hill in what felt like an instant. It happened before I could feel more fatigue, more soreness and more

breathlessness.

Energy, power and ultimately success came with the realization that my spirit was complete and that I could live my life with intentionality and purpose.

The conversations I had during Returning to Spirit are alive in me.

Thank you to members of the Takla First Nation, the Nak'az-dli First Nation and the Stel-lat'en First Nation who shared their stories with me. I revere your memories and because of your generosity, I am blessed.

I promise that the gift of your stories is a trust I will not break. They are part of me now and they have made me open to life's creative opportunities - wherever those might lead me.

Musi Cho.



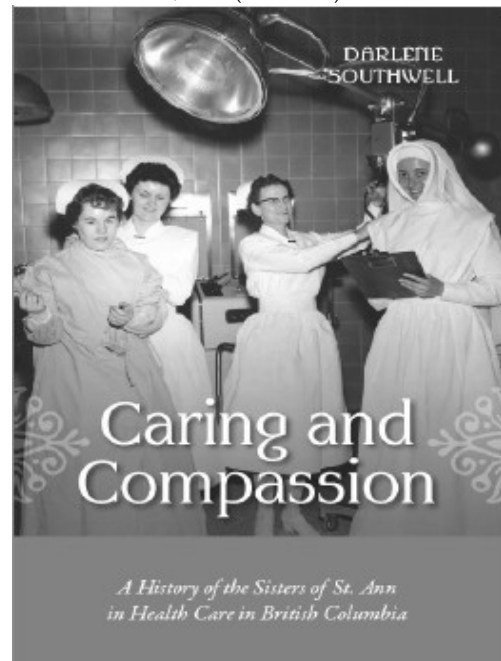
From the Archivist's Notebook

By: Jo-Anne Allison

Caring and Compassion: A history of the Sisters of St. Ann in Health Care in British Columbia

by Darlene Southwell

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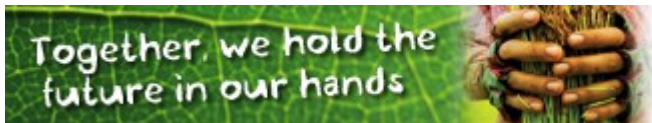
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...ecological justice is based on the belief that the earth is sacred and that the dignity of the human person requires particular attention to the needs of the marginalized and the poor,...

Ecological justice explored at annual meeting

By: Sergio Petrucci

FORT ST. JAMES – Over the past five years, Development and Peace has focused its efforts on the exploitation of natural resources.

Whether related to the mining industry, to the conversion of farmland for agro-industrial use or to threats posed by the privatization of water resources, these issues are at the heart of challenges faced by many countries in the world.

On September 23-25, representatives of Development and Peace from around the Diocese gathered to hear about the new five-year program. The weekend was held at Camp Morice, a great setting for our new focus on ecological justice.

This new program is an opportunity for Development and Peace to take a new approach to the issues addressed during the past five years.

Ecological justice celebrates the interconnection and interdependence of all beings and recognizes our human respon-

sibility to coexist in harmony for the well being of the Earth community.

It promotes human dignity, the self-determination of all persons and the development of sustainable economies with justice for all within a finite world.

From a Christian perspective ecological justice is based on the belief that the earth is sacred and that the dignity of the human person requires particular attention to the needs of the marginalized and the poor, a preferential option for the poor.

The theme for the first year of the five-year program is “Together we hold the future in our hands”.

We are asked to show support and solidarity for the small scale farmers in the Global South. More than two billion rural men and women in Asia, Africa and Latin America earn their livelihood from small plots of land.

Those who practice sustainable farming raise a variety of livestock and crops in close proximity. This facilitates com-

posting which increases organic matter in the soil, rebuilds soil fertility and crop health reducing the need for agrochemical fertilizer and pesticides.

Small scale farming can actually help reduce climate change and cool the earth by enriching the soil. Healthy soils trap up to 40 percent of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere every year.

Several of our partners in the South have organized to help each other. In Madagascar, for example, a group of small scale farmers discovered that replanting younger plants dramatically increased rice production. Today they teach this process to others.

Through a Development and Peace partner this process is now being spread to other parts of Africa and Asia.

For information about the five-year program check out the Development and Peace website at www.devp.org. Help to bring to light the destructive forces on our planet that negatively affect the poor in the Global South.



Parishioners help feed the poor

These Prince George women, under the direction of Mary Honeyman, meet every third Wednesday morning of the month in the kitchen at Immaculate Conception Parish and make sandwiches for St. Vincent de Paul. PHOTO: Pauline Parent, Elaine Hauck, Gabrielle St. Amand, Mary Honeyman, Becky Jang, Gloria LePage and Donna Nichols. PHOTO BY: Sr. Beverly Bobola, OP



Parish nurse: integrating faith and health

By : Marie Flouriot

PRINCE GEORGE – A presentation entitled Health Care and the Church was given by Father Mark Miller, CSsR, at the Domano Renewal Centre in November 2010.

Father Miller described the history of the development of institutions dedicated to the poor, the sick and the dying. He talked about the Sisters who came to Western Canada and created hospitals for the pioneers, effectively building the foundations of health care as we know it today.

He reminded us that the health care system developed by the Church was not just a set of practical solutions to recurring problems of poverty and illness. These are, after all, optional, especially now that the government has responsibility for providing care for its citizens.

The mission that the Church undertook from its beginning was mandated by Christ.

It is derived from Christ's healing ministry. Christ "healed every disease and every sickness among the people"; he sent the disciples "two by two into every city and place", saying to them, "Heal the sick who are therein and tell them 'the Kingdom of God has come near you'".

Just as we are still called to proclaim the Good News, we are also called to heal those who are "sick and afflicted with diseases and torments".

Today we have hospitals, doctors, nurses and other health professionals on which the sick and suffering people can rely. How then are we to carry out the ministry of healing to which Christ calls us? Who are the sick and the afflicted we must heal?

In response Father Miller introduced the concept of the parish as a community of care helped in its healing mission by a parish nurse.

He described the elderly, shut-ins, disabled people and all the vulnerable who live in the community, often alone and without family or a social network to care for them, to keep them involved in the life of the parish, to make them feel that their

life is worth something.

While they may have access to good medical care, they are left on their own until there is an emergency. These are the sick and the suffering we are called to heal, Father Miller said.



Father Mark Miller, CSsR, pictured here, introduced the concept of parish nursing in a talk he gave at the Domano Renewal Centre over a year ago. His words inspired local parishioners who are pursuing the idea in Prince George. PHOTO BY: Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin

A community of care is a parish attentive to the health and wellbeing of its members. It prays for the sick, visits the shut-in, brings the Eucharist to those who can no longer attend Mass. It reaches out to those who are isolated because of age, medical condition or family circumstances.

It is aware of the healing mission entrusted by Christ and it looks for ways to carry this out.

The parish nurse is the professional in this community of care.

The parish nursing movement began in Chicago in the 1980s and reached Canada in the early 1990s. The parish nurse is "a registered nurse with specialized knowledge who is called to ministry and affirmed by a faith community to promote health, healing and wholeness".

His or her mission involves visiting the sick and the elderly at home or in residential facilities, bringing the Eucharist, praying with them and offering them counseling (medical,

psychological or spiritual).

The parish nurse is able to help with referrals to health services or home care, provide support at medical appointments and advocate for those who fall through the cracks in the system.

With an office at the parish, the nurse is available to provide consultation and counseling and to organize clinics and information sessions on health topics. He or she can also train volunteers.

Each parish develops its own profile as a community of care and each parish nurse, guided by the needs of the community, gives his or her own stamp to the mission mandated by and rooted in Christ.

Most parishes do care for their members, pray for them and take communion to those unable to get to Mass regularly. Many parishes have good social outreach activities. But do they see themselves as places of healing? Do they realize that they have "a role in promoting wholeness through the integration of faith and health"?

While as yet we do not have parish nurses, recently parishioners of St. Mary's and Sacred Heart Cathedral began meeting to discuss what can be done to develop as more authentic communities of care. The long term objective is to hire a parish nurse who will increase the visibility of the spiritual aspect of health care and bear witness to the role of the parish as a place of faith and healing.

Steps are slowly being taken, inspired by parishes like St. Michael's in Burnaby, St. Philip Neri in Saskatoon and Holy Rosary in Bathurst which have parish nurses.

More information, including excellent articles by Father Mark Miller, can be found at http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/resources/Parish_nursing.cfm. Also, the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan published the manual *Community of Care: A Parish Ministry of Care*.

Pope receives Canadian copy of Roman Missal



Canadian Conference of Bishops President Archbishop Richard Smith (far right) looks on as Pope Benedict XVI inspects an edition of the revised Roman Missal presented to him by the Canadian Conference. Also pictured are Conference General Secretary Monsignor Patrick Powers (far left) and Vice President Archbishop Paul-André Durocher.

By: Servizio Fotografico, Osservatore Romano

ROME - During a private audience with Pope Benedict XVI on November 7, 2011, representatives of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) presented the Holy Father with a specially bound edition of the first printed copy of the revised Canadian English-language edition of the Roman Missal.

The special copy included a dedication to the Holy Father.

The President of the Conference, Most Reverend Richard

Smith, Archbishop of Edmonton, also gave the Holy Father a copy of the book marking the opening earlier this year of the new building housing Saint Joseph Seminary in Edmonton.

This is the first volume in a series titled *Lieux sacrés/A Geography of Faith*.

During the audience, the Holy Father blessed a number of rosaries which the CCCB President and General Secretary later brought back to Canada as gifts.

The revised CCCB English-language edition of the Missal was officially launched on October 17th during the CCCB Plenary Assembly. On that occasion, the second printed copy of the Missal was presented to the Most Reverend Pedro López Quintana, Apostolic Nuncio to Canada.

All English-language celebrations of the Mass following the Roman Rite in Canada are obliged to use the revised CCCB edition of the Missal as

of November 27, 2011, the First Sunday of Advent.

The same day, all Eucharistic celebrations across Canada using the Roman Rite are also required to follow the revised liturgical norms in the General Instruction of the third typical edition of the Roman Missal, as approved by the Holy See and the Bishops of Canada, unless the celebration follows the "extraordinary form" of the Latin Mass from the 1962 Roman Missal.

During their audience with Pope Benedict XVI, the CCCB President and Vice President, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher of Gatineau, together with General Secretary Msgr. Patrick Powers discussed with Pope Benedict XVI the major pastoral orientations and also the challenges facing the Conference and the Church in Canada.

The delegation remained in Rome until November 18th, visiting major offices of the Holy See.

Bishops affirm compassionate, effective care needed for most vulnerable

By: Archbishop Richard Smith
CCCB President
OTTAWA - The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) welcomes the report by the Parliamentary Committee on Palliative and Compassionate Care, entitled *Not to be forgotten: Care of Vulnerable Canadians*.

The result of extensive consultations among groups and organizations across our country, the report examines a basic and urgent question that concerns most Canadians.

Our Conference has repeatedly and clearly affirmed that everyone is responsible for the wellbeing of others until their natural deaths.

"In order to respond to the physical, emotional and moral sufferings of people of all ages,

particularly those seriously ill or handicapped, including those in a terminal phase, we call on Canadians, including our elected representatives ... to promote palliative care and end-of-life care" (CCCB statement, September 22, 2005).

We are pleased that a number of our Members of Parliament have undertaken these extensive consultations and published this report out of their personal concern to see established in our country a national system of compassionate and effective care for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

The Bishops of Canada share that concern. The inherent beauty and dignity of human life from its beginning until its natural end summons us to attend to this need without delay.

Palliative and compassionate care is an essential priority. It respects the dignity of all people, and responds to all dimensions of their humanity, including the spiritual.

Furthermore, it responds to the most basic hopes and concerns of all humanity – that each dying person be assured of compassion, comfort, support and a human presence in ways that truly respect and protect the dignity and beauty of human life.

As follow-up to this report by the Parliamentary Committee, the Catholic Bishops of Canada will carefully monitor how our national, provincial and municipal institutions implement these important recommendations on palliative care.

Couples for Christ

By: Czarina Pacaide
PRINCE GEORGE - Two couples and five women renewed their commitment to strengthen the relationship between themselves, their family and God at Sacred Heart Cathedral, September 16-18, 2011.

This took place at the completion of the Couples for Christ (CFC)'s Christian Life Program, a 13-session integrated course leading into a renewed understanding of God's call to us as Christians.

The participants heard about the absolute basics of Christian life with an emphasis on an adult perspective. They also heard about the kind of life that God calls us to, the personal response involved in receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior and steps to help reorient their lives around Jesus.

Finally, they worked on committing

their lives in a serious way to Jesus. The sessions helped them appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit for their lives and provided the basics for continuing their spiritual growth.

Those who complete the Christian Life Program are invited to join Couples for Christ and become part of a small cell called a Household. The Household meets weekly for mutual support and encouragement in the Christian life.

Couples for Christ, a Vatican-recognized movement for Catholic Christian renewal, began in 1981 in Manila, Philippines. Through the years, CFC has blossomed into a worldwide ministry present in more than 160 countries and a major force for renewal of Christian family life.

Couples for Christ in



Canada began in 1993 in Richmond, British Columbia.

In 2010 a group of leaders from the Vancouver chapter renewed their plan to start a Couples for Christ chapter in Prince George. They made a presentation on the world-wide apostolic work of the group to the Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish Pastoral Council and Father Pier Pandolfo in January 2011.

Couples for Christ participants after completing the 13-session Christian Life Program.

Further information can be found at <http://couplesforchristglobalmission.wordpress.com/>

Bishop visits Fort St. John renovation site

Construction is in progress on a building that will provide space for large gatherings and meetings at Resurrection Parish in Fort St. John. This picture was taken when Bishop Gerald Wiesner visited the renovation site in September. PHOTO BY: Tony Jefferies.



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“In baptism we use your gift of water”

A new baptismal font is a beautiful addition to Sacred Heart Parish in Terrace.



By: Rev. Terry Brock
TERRACE - Sacred Heart Parish has a new baptismal font.

It was designed and built by Uli Gutmann with Joe Botelho as his primary helper, constructing the inner shell and doing all the running around and detail work.

Many parishioners assisted in this wonderful work that provides us with a beautiful baptismal font. Some gave their time and talent - plumbing, electrical and tile work - and others gave their treasure.

During the past year since the completion of renovations to our church building, all the liturgical furnishings have been replaced: altar, ambo, credence table, tabernacle stand and now, baptismal font. The new liturgical furnishings are all solid oak with granite marble-like tops.

Many parishioners and visitors alike have expressed admiration for the new look and are grateful for the donation of time and talent from so many skilled parishioners.

The previous liturgical furnishings, used over the past 40 years, were also beautiful. The parish is grateful to the builder and all who contributed to that project of years past and are

happy these furnishings have been donated to the Whitehorse Diocese for use in one of their churches.

The following directives for the construction of a baptismal font are all included in our new font:

“The Baptismal font should be stationary, gracefully constructed out of suitable material, of splendid beauty and spotless cleanliness; it should permit baptism by immersion, whenever this is the usage” (Christian Initiation, General Introduction #25).

“In order to enhance its force as a sign, the font should be designed in such a way that it functions as a fountain of running water; where the climate requires, provision should be made for heating the water”.
Msgr. Peter Elliot in Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite adds: “The best location is near the front door, not in an obscure corner, but in a prominent position ...”

When the church was renovated we prepared for the future font by putting drain rock into the foundation, hot and cold water pipes and electrical power for the pump.

Consequently our new font has a small pump to move the water from the lower pool to the upper font. The water is pumped up to a solid bronze shell shaped baptismal bowl for the baptism of infants.

Bronze has antibacterial properties that can be used to kill germs. The

plan is to bless the water twice a month at one of the three masses.

Upon entering the church parishioners have the option to renew their baptismal promises at the actual font or at one of the holy water fonts that are symbols of the baptismal font. Since there will be an abundance of clean water, every second week parishioners are free to take blessed water to their homes.

“Father, you give us grace through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power. In baptism we use your gift of water,



A detail of the new baptismal font at Sacred Heart Parish shows a bronze bowl to be used for infant baptisms.

which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament. At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the water, making them the wellspring of all holiness...” (Rite of Baptism, Blessing & Invocation of God over Baptismal Water)

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Parish says thank you to visiting priest

MCBRIDE - The last resident priest to live in McBride and serve St. Patrick's Parish was Father John Mulligan, OMI. He left in 1995 and since that time the parish has received sacramental ministry primarily from priests residing in Prince George.

However, for a number of years the parishioners of St. Patrick's Parish have also been blessed with sacramental ministry provided from priests in the Diocese of Kamloops.

The village of Valemount lies approximately 85 kilometres east of McBride and once a month, the pastor from Good Shepherd Parish travelled to celebrate Mass with the faithful of St. Patrick's Parish.

This connection between two dioceses came to an end on Sunday, September 18, 2011 when Father Emil Sasges made the journey from Valemount to McBride

for the last time. It seemed appropriate that this marked five years to the day from when he made his first journey along Highways 5 and 16 to celebrate Mass at St. Patrick's.

Diocesan boundaries were never seen as a barrier and the parishioners of St. Patrick's are forever grateful to Father Sasges for his dedication and spiritual care for them.

Following Mass, a lunch was held in his honour and he was presented with a variety of gifts, including home-canned foods, a gift certificate for a local Valemount restaurant and a finely carved locally crafted hiking stick.

The closing song of Mass that day was *Companions on the Journey*, and through our gifts, we wished to offer him some sustenance for his body as well as sign of our support for his continued journey.



Father Emil Sasges celebrated Mass at St. Patrick's Parish for the last time in September. The newly installed stained glass windows can be seen on either side of him. PHOTO BY: Kathy Shawara

Llama benefits in Terry Fox challenge



By: Nuala Powers
PRINCE GEORGE - Spear-heading Sacred Heart School's efforts in September for the Terry Fox campaign was Grade 6/7 teacher, Colleen Ruddy.

The students and staff completed the annual Terry Fox Walk on Friday, October 7th. The walkers were routed through Fort George Park

which was displaying all its autumn glory on a beautiful day for outdoor activity.

Ms. Ruddy is very passionate about the Terry Fox Foundation which raises funds for cancer research. She even participated in the fund-raising event in Korea when she was teaching there!

As the students returned to school in September, she challenged them to

outdo last year's total. Various events were planned as certain targets were reached.

To kick-off the campaign, our esteemed principal, Sr. Irene Baker, CSJ, was obliged to parade around the school showing off her wonderful collection of wigs! She even wore one of her wigs as she participated on the walk.

I wonder what the neighbours thought!

Later in the campaign, Mr. Durau agreed to dress in a very fashion-forward pink outfit much to the amusement of the Kindergarten & Grade 1 students. Ms. Neilly delighted the students and staff by baking delicious brownies for everyone.

Ms. Ruddy's master stroke was delivered at a recent assembly. To thank the students for raising a total of \$2,054 she kissed a llama. Yes, she kissed a llama and showed the video to all to prove she is a great sport!

Not to be outdone, Ms. Murphy also planted a smacker on the llama. We are sure that the llama thought all his birthdays had come together that day!



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Music workshop

Over 100 music ministers and others came from throughout the diocese on September 23-24 to learn new musical settings necessary in light of the revised Roman Missal.

Pictured here are Rev. Geoffrey Angeles and Bernadette Gasslein of the National Commission for Liturgical Music who facilitated the workshop.

PHOTO BY: Susan Campbell

