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DIOCESE
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PRINCE GEORGE

Northern Catholic News



VOLUME XXIII, NO. 1

Winter

Celebrating furry friends

By: Rebecca Gilbert

PRINCE GEORGE - This year, in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, the students and staff of Sacred Heart School collected pet related items in exchange for a non-uniform day on November 7th.

This was the Sacred Heart Panthers' contribution to the annual Festival of Trees. Doing their part for the community and furry creatures, the students were excited to bring pet food, pet toys and pet supplies to school.

As St. Francis is the patron saint of Sacred Heart's Kindergarten/Grade One classroom, these students were extra excited about this special spirit-building event.

The Sacred Heart Panther Choir took time to sing at the Festival of Trees in late November. Many of the classes also enjoyed the beautiful displays that the community offered.



Sacred Heart School students display their pet related donations to the annual Festival of Trees. PHOTO BY: R. Gilbert

In addition, Izabella Roderick was presented with a special wall plaque recognizing her terrific fund-raising efforts for the local SPCA. Izabella raised over \$1000 in the "Paws for a Cause" campaign for BC in September. Well done Sacred Heart!



Keeping Christ in Christmas

Mary and Joseph as played by students at Sacred Heart School look lovingly at their infant child, Jesus. PHOTO BY: R. Gilbert

Bishop visits Kitimat



Over 325 parishioners of Christ the King Parish welcomed Bishop Stephen Jensen, pictured left, to a Parish dinner prepared by the Knights of Columbus, October 18, 2013. What was supposed to be a quick flight turned into a long drive for our Bishop when fog ensured no planes moved in the north for several days. Plenty of food and good entertainment made the evening worthwhile and people were grateful to the Bishop for the effort he made to participate. Before returning to Prince George Bishop Jensen celebrated the weekend Masses in the parish. PHOTO BY: G. Max Patzelt

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Walk in Ancient Forest



It was a spectacular fall day for the walking retreat held in the Ancient Forest with Rev. Richard Beaudette. Participants gather for a group photo following Mass in the outdoors. PHOTO BY: Chris Dugdale

Student donates diapers to orphanage

By: Terry Haynal

DAWSON CREEK - Natalia Duff, a Grade 2 student at Notre Dame School, is a girl on a mission.

At the beginning of September, she wanted to do something for a family friend who started the Mission of Grace Orphanage in Haiti. Natalia began painting and selling rocks and to date has raised \$200.

She used that money to purchase 30 cloth diapers for the orphans. Although Natalia is selling the rocks for 20 cents each, she is not shy if you happen to offer her more.

This is a wonderful mission in one so young. Good luck, Natalia and God Bless.

Pictured is Natalia Duff with the diapers she is donating.



Renowned author visits local school



Canadian author Troy Townsin gives an entertaining read of his book to students at Immaculate Conception School.

By: Sandi McEachen

PRINCE GEORGE - Immaculate Conception School combined Halloween with a touch of Christmas and a twist of Canada Day, to create an October 31st celebration with a difference.

To make the whole experience even more eclectic, author Troy Townsin joined the community to do a reading from his book, A Moose in a Maple Tree. He also introduced the students to his website where his books are animated, set to music and in at least one case, read by "That Guy" who is an amazing Don Cherry imitator.

In preparation for the event, students read the Canadian Christmas Books written by Mr. Townsin, to familiarize themselves with the many Canadian symbols that he uses in his books. They each picked an icon and created a

costume to wear to school on Author Day.

We had every symbol from the books represented: beavers, polar bears, totem poles, moose, hockey players, loonies, toonies, etc. We even had a giant cup of Tim Horton's coffee and two Tim Horton's servers.

Students greeted the author by parading into the gymnasium past him and the event began with the singing of "O Canada".

Mr. Townsin was fabulously entertaining when he read his books. He followed the reading by talking about how he became an author and giving some excellent tips on how to write a book.

He was very inspiring! Watch for the budding authors to emerge from our school!



In Exile

Rev. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Searching for a word filled with reality

Faith is not something you achieve. If you try to nail it down, it gets up and walks away with the nail. Faith works this way: Some days you walk on water, other days you sink like a stone. You live with a deep secret, the poet Rumi says, that sometimes you know, and then not, and then know again. Sometimes you feel the real presence, and sometimes you feel the real absence. Why?

Because, like love, faith is a journey, with constant ups and downs, with alternating periods of fervor and dryness, with consolation giving way to desolation, and with graced moments where God feels tangibly present eclipsed by dark nights where God feels absent.

It's a strange state: sometimes you feel riveted to God, steel-like, other times you feel yourself in a free-fall from everything secure, and then, just when things are at their lowest, you feel God's presence again.

Why does faith have this confusing dynamic? It's not that God is cruel, is playing games with us, wants to test our fidelity, or wants us to have to do something difficult to earn salvation.

No, the ups and downs of faith have to do with the rhythms of ordinary life, especially the rhythm of love. Love, like faith, too has its periods of fervor and of dark nights. All of us know that inside of any long-term commitment (marriage, family, friendship, or church) there will be certain days and whole seasons when our heads and our hearts aren't in that commitment, even as we're still in it. Our heads and hearts fade in and fade out, but we experience love as ultimately not dependent upon the head or even

the heart. Something deeper holds us, and holds us beyond the thoughts of our heads or the feelings of our heart at a given moment.

In any sustained commitment in love, our heads and hearts will fade in and out. Sometimes there's fervor, sometimes there's flatness. Faith works the same. Sometimes we sense and feel God's presence with our heads and our hearts and sometimes both leave us flat and dry. But faith is something deeper than imagining or feeling God's presence. But how do we come to that? What should we do in those moments when it feels as if God is absent.

The great mystic, John of the Cross, offers this advice. If you want to find God's presence again in those moments when God feels absent listen to a word filled with reality and unfathomable truth.

What might he mean by that? How does one listen to a word filled with reality and unfathomable truth? How does one even find such a word? To be honest, I'm not exactly sure what he means, even as his words explode with possible meanings inside my mind. The phrase might be easier to untangle if he was telling us to look for an experience that's deep and filled with reality; for example, giving birth to a child, being awed by exceptional beauty, or having your heart broken by loss or death. These kinds of experience are real, unfathomably true, and jolt us into a deeper awareness; so, if God is to be found, shouldn't God be found there?

But John isn't directing us towards an in-depth experience; he's asking us to look for a word that carries reality and

depth. Does that mean that when we are unsteady and in doubt we should hunt for texts (in scripture, theology, spirituality, or in secular literature and poetry) that speak to us in a way that re-grounds us in some primal sense that God exists and loves us and that because of this, we should live in love and hope?

I suspect that this is exactly what he means. God is one, true, good, and beautiful, and so the right word about oneness, truth, goodness, or beauty should have the power to steady our shifting minds and hearts. The right word can make the Word become flesh again.

But what words have the power to do that for us? We're all different and so not everyone will find truth and depth in the same way. Each one of us must therefore do our own, deeply personal, search here.

For myself, the words of various authors have carried this kind of truth for me at different times in my life. Therese of Lisieux', The Story of a Soul, has steadied me in some moments of doubt; John Steinbeck's, The Grapes of Wrath, can still refocus my vision when it gets cloudy; various passages from Karl Rahner, John Shea, Raymond Brown, and Henri Nouwen can help steady my ship when I feel it rocking; and some words of Dag Hammarskjöld can make me want to live so as to mirror more the greatness of life.

But each of us needs to search in our own way for words which, for us, are so filled with reality and unfathomable true so as to evoke a felt-presence of God.

Brothers honored as clan members

By: Therese Stafford

FRASER LAKE - Brothers Roy Joseph and Walter Lobo have settled in to their new home here after moving from Vanderhoof this past summer.

The Franciscan order originally came from India in 2002 to serve the mid-west region of the diocese from their friary in Vanderhoof. The Brothers have served two at a time since then with Brothers Peter, George and Joy, in succession, returning home to continue their work in India.

Brothers Roy and Walter moved into a rented apartment in Fraser Lake and are happy to live in the midst of the community they serve. Their ministry is now exclusively among the people of Fraser Lake, Stellat'en and Nadleh Whut'en.

The Brothers follow the spirituality of the patron saint of their congregation, St. Francis of Assisi. They are humble and caring and always present for those in need or suffering – the lonely, the sick, the dying.

While ministering to anyone in need, especially when the parish priest is unavailable, their work is mainly with the First Nations people. Since coming to Canada they have also helped Father Vince James, OMI, with the preparations for the Rose Prince Pilgrimage each summer.

The Brothers are well loved and respected by those they serve. A great honor was bestowed on them when the First Nations people welcomed Brother Roy into the Bear Clan and Brother Walter into the Frog Clan.

Brother Roy is known for his sleight of hand and many in the diocese have been entertained by his skills as a magician. He is also a very talented artist. Brother Walter is a hard worker, known for his cheerful, distinctive laugh and his rapport with children.

We are truly blessed to have these caring men serving the people of this area.

Brother Roy, left, and Brother Walter, right, visit with Clarence Luggi.



Building Together in Faith: Annual Diocesan Appeal 2013-2014

As we go through our mail each day, we find appeals from many different groups and organizations asking for monetary support. We might look at the request to contribute to the Annual Diocesan Appeal in much the same light as we see all those other requests.

Contributing to cancer research, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and many other worthy causes is important. But why is the Annual Diocesan Appeal unique?

Through the Appeal we are invited to participate in a particular way in the mission of the Church and in the building up of God's Kingdom.

While not all of us can teach or preach, visit the sick, lead healing programs, celebrate the sacraments or participate in many of the other host of ministries and services provided in our Diocese, we can be part of it all through our contribution to the Annual Appeal.

The Appeal provides the funding for so many initiatives. Each baptized person has the responsibility to continue the mission

of the Church, and the Annual Appeal is one way in which we can fulfill that responsibility.

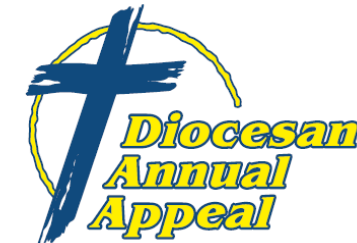
Each member of the Diocesan Church can also benefit in some way from the Appeal. Through our contribution to the Appeal we can participate in such things as Returning to Spirit, Lay Formation, summer camps and other programs at Camp Morice and Camp Emile, Youth and

Young Adult programs including the Diocesan Youth Conference, Catholic education through our schools, the Rose Prince Pilgrimage.

We also have opportunities to celebrate our faith because the Appeal helps keep our small parishes functioning. It helps fund the education of seminarians so we can continue to have priests in our parishes and young people can be encouraged to be our future priests and religious.

There are many other ministries and programs funded through the Appeal. And through the services we provide as the Diocesan Church we affect the society in which we live. Together we build the Kingdom of God.

A special thanks to all who have pledged so far to the Annual Diocesan Appeal. The title, "Building Together in Faith" reminds us what we are about when we contribute to the Appeal and when we get involved in the life of our parish communities.



2013-2014

BUILDING
TOGETHER
in faith

CWL executive meet in Kelowna

By: Evelyn Rigby

KELOWNA - White Ribbons were on display recently at the Seton House of Prayer.

The occasion was the fall mid-term meeting of the BC & Yukon Provincial CWL Council which took place during the Pornography Hurts! campaign of the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

Six Diocesan Presidents were in attendance including three new to mid-term deliberations. Each reported on the progress of "Catch the Fire" and learned about its sequence "S'mores".

They suggested ways diocesan and/or provincial personnel could be useful resources for parish councils seeking help. Despite the

packed agenda, attendees enjoyed pockets of social time.

President Doreen Gowans guided members through the agenda which contained not only exciting preparations for the 2014 Provincial Convention to be held June 5-7 in Kamloops, but also the creation of a new subsidy which would help members get there.

It was confirmed that Catholic Missions in Canada would have a booth at the event. A further initiative to help members attend the 2015 National Convention in Vancouver was also approved.

Members were spiritually enriched by the presence of Provincial spiritual advisor, Father Edwin Kulling.

As well as celebrating Mass and leading the Liturgy of the Hours, Father Kulling gave a reflection on the life of Elizabeth Ann Seton who, spurred on by her faith, used her talents and determination to deal with the many and varied challenges in her life.

A second reflection by Father Kulling outlined a comprehensive list of Catholic methods to raise the mind and heart to God, attesting to the proven beneficial effects that prayer has on our lives and on those for whom we pray.

During the meeting, Past President Nancy Simms reported that one parish council had successfully applied for a grant from the Women's Inter Church Council to be used for their dental health outreach (Toonies for Teeth) to the needy.

Each participant received a copy of "Walking with Pope Francis", a small book of daily reflections on his encyclical Lumen Fidei, as well as a resource kit from the Canadian Catholic Organization for Life And Family (COLF) containing helpful booklets and pamphlets on all aspects of Christian family life.

Provincial Officers were honored to receive invitations to the John Diefenbaker Defender of Human Rights and Freedom Award. It was confirmed that several present would be able to attend and witness the presentation to Cardinal Zen.



Diocesan CWL Presidents present at their Fall mid-term meeting included, from left to right: Laura Esposito (Prince George Diocese), Alice Hallgren (Nelson Diocese), Carol Vanderbyl (Whitehorse Diocese), Sharon Ciebin (Vancouver Archdiocese), Catherine L'Heureux (Kamloops Diocese) and Kathy Weswick (Victoria Diocese). PHOTO BY: Evelyn Rigby

CWL member honored for faithful service

By: Therese Stafford

FRASER LAKE – St. Andrew's Parish Catholic Women's League kicked off the new season with a barbeque for women in the parish on September 11, 2013.

Spiritual Advisor Father Vincent James, OMI, along with Brothers Roy and Walter, joined the approximately 36 women who

attended at the home of Ron and Yvette Appleton.

A Maple Leaf Service Pin was presented to Lilly Schulz for her dedicated and faithful service to the children in our community. For over 15 years Lilly has shared her faith with countless children in catechism classes, Children's Liturgy and the Holy Childhood.

This day was also Brother Roy's birthday so we wished him God's blessings with cake and song.

The evening provided time for women to catch up on the events of the past summer and enjoy an evening together. It was a great social and our hostess and host were superb!

Waste reduction challenges school

By: Nuala Power

PRINCE GEORGE - "Which bin does this go into?" This was a question often heard in our Kindergarten/Grade 1-St. Francis of Assisi classroom in September.

By October the students were ready to enter the annual REAPS Waste Reduction Challenge. The contest involves sorting and weighing classroom garbage for one week of school. This tied in so well with our commitment to the environment with St. Francis as our role model.

The winning entry is the classroom in Prince George with the lowest weight of garbage per student at the end of the week. With bins for paper, beverage containers, worms and



compost available in the classroom, waste matter alone usually ends up in the garbage can.

The total waste for five school days weighed 178 grams, which was the winning entry. A certificate and cheque for \$200 soon arrived. This just goes to show there is treasure in (a little) trash!

Surrounded by recycling bins, Sacred Heart School Grade 1 student, Jessica, displays the winning certificate her class received in the REAPS Waste Reduction Challenge. PHOTO BY: Christine Murphy

Service of Remembrance at Sacred Heart School

By: Nuala Power

PRINCE GEORGE - The students and staff of Sacred Heart School gathered on November 8th at Sacred Heart Cathedral to mark Remembrance Day.

The solemn occasion began with a color party procession piped in by the RCMP Chief Superintendent Rod Booth assisted by Staff Sgt. Major Doug Pack.

Those present heard readings from St. Paul on the theme of peace. This was followed by a reading and reflection on the Beatitudes by Principal Rebecca Gilbert. The service continued with a minute of silence, the singing of O Canada and a sign of peace before the final blessing.

The Sacred Heart Players then performed a drama, "The Butterfly", based on an event in World War II when a French mother secretly harbored a Jewish family in her home. When her daughter accidentally discovered "the secret that lived in the basement" events took an unexpected course.

The Grade 2/3 class concluded the ceremony with a musical rendition of Dr. John McCrae's poem, "In Flanders Fields".



The Sacred Heart Players dramatize "The Butterfly" at the school's Remembrance Day Services held at Sacred Heart Cathedral. PHOTO BY: Christine Murphy



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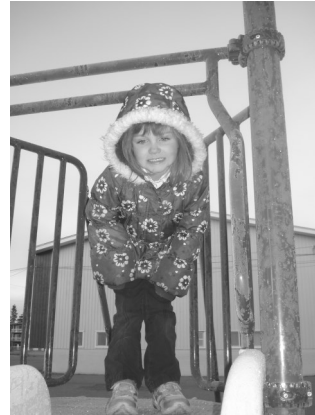
Bathrooms, bike racks and slide

By: Nuala Power
PRINCE GEORGE - The sound of hammering, sawing and power tools were heard all through the summer at Sacred Heart School. By September 4th two sparkling new bathrooms were ready for use. Many students were so delighted with the renovations it was difficult to keep them

from visiting the facilities a little more regularly than necessary! We are so grateful to Rob Galvina and his father for carrying out much of this work. They were assisted by John Gomes (Modern Countertops) who provided the new counters and vanity fittings. Meanwhile, outside a new double slide was put in place which has been a great hit with students.

In addition, four new bike racks, presented to the school by Integris Credit Union as a result of our participation in the Bike to School and Work Week last May, were anchored to the ground. This work was organized and carried out by Jay Lazarrin to whom we are most grateful.

Thank you, gentlemen, for all your hard work on these projects.



At the top of the new slide Madalynn, a Kindergarten student at Sacred Heart School, contemplates: "Will I or won't I?"
PHOTO BY: Christine Murphy

Kindergarten and Grade 1 students from Sacred Heart School stand beside their new bike rack.
PHOTO BY: Christine Murphy



School embraces healthy living

By: Nuala Power
PRINCE GEORGE - Friday, November 15th, was designated "Healthy Living Day" at Sacred Heart School.

The day began with an assembly during which Ms. Ruddy shared a video of herself kissing a turkey in fulfillment of a promise to do so if certain funds were raised by the Terry Fox Walkers in October. The students really enjoyed that movie; the turkey didn't seem that impressed!

Students and staff were sporting very fetching moustaches in support of the Movember Men's Health initiative. Sue MacDonald then led the Assembly in a series of healthy moves to music which blew the cobwebs away.

During the day she visited all the classrooms where she conducted a series of workshops on the theme of physical fitness. Students and staff were encouraged to wear their Sacred Heart Panther shirts in return for a donation to the Development and Peace Philippines Disaster Relief Fund. Over \$650 was sent to the parish office as a contribution to the parish collection for the Fund.

Roewyn, a Grade 1 student at Sacred Heart School, enjoys a juggling session with scarves as part of the healthy living activities.



New hall enhances annual event

By: Pat Forster
FORT ST. JOHN - Resurrection Parish Catholic Women's League held its annual Winter Wonderland Tea and Bazaar on Saturday, November 2, 2013.

It is truly a blessing to have such an event in our new hall. We are known for the wonderful lunch CWL members prepare in the kitchen as well as the squares donated by both members and other parishioners for the tea.

The enlarged area allowed for 72 people to sit at one time and this number was repeated another one and a half times. There was also ample room to accommodate the 13 vendors who rented tables.

Parishioners, CWL members and junior servers worked together to make this annual event a very successful endeavor. A special thanks to husbands who helped set up on Friday and then came back after the sale to clean up after us.

At right 50-year CWL member Marie Gejdos is seated with Gerry Ross at one of the tables during Resurrection Parish's Winter Wonderland Tea and Bazaar.
PHOTO BY: Pat Forster



New members welcomed in neighboring parish

By: Therese Stafford
FRASER LAKE - Five members of St. Andrew's Parish Catholic Women's League traveled to Immaculata Parish in Burns Lake to present membership pins to seven new members, September 15, 2013. Susan Steiner, Maria Mendes, Therese Stafford, Lynn Wiggins and Anna Marie Pond participated in Mass where, following his homily, Father Tom Shymko blessed the

membership pins and invited the new members from his parish to receive their pins from Anna Marie Pond, St. Andrew's Council president.

Present to receive their pins were Colleen West, Lorena Betemps, Marian Mills, Andrea Thom and Elizabeth Varghese. Donna Fowler and Evelyn Hutchinson were unable to attend.

Members from Burns Lake will be part of the St. Andrew's Council for now, with the hope that they will form their own Council in the future. They have attended meetings in Fraser Lake, helped with the luncheon following the opening Mass at the Rose Prince Pilgrimage and supported each other in prayer. The event provided a great opportunity to visit with a neighboring parish.

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For the Life of the World

Rev. Douglas Jeffrey, OMI

At our September Diocesan Study Days, Bishop Brian Dunn of Antigonish, Nova Scotia spoke about his experience of the Synod on the New Evangelization held in Rome, October of 2012.

Included in his presentation was a reaffirmation of the wonder and beauty of Jesus' earthly life as expressed through gospel stories where Jesus encountered people in need.

This raised some significant pastoral points. What would happen in the Church if, like Jesus, I was more welcoming of the people in my community?

Hospitality, welcoming and being welcomed is really the heart and soul of any process of evangelization.

Bishop Dunn noted that world-wide, Catholics are struggling with their commitment to the Church. The working document for the Synod, which represented ideas and insights from around the world, suggested that the struggle Catholics are having with their commitment to the Church impacts the ability of the Church to carry out its mission.

It suggests that the decline in commitment could be traced to five general sources:

- General weakening in faith of believers and lack of personal involvement in its transmission
- Insufficient spiritual guidance for the faithful in their faith journey
- The excessive bureaucratic character of Church structures
- Excessively formal character of liturgical celebrations
- Counter witness of some Church members

Each of these 'sources' merits a good discussion because it seems Catholics around the world are saying similar things.

As a Church we have real issues that need to be addressed if we are to consider ourselves faithful witnesses of Jesus.

Saying that something is fine does not make it so; neither does saying it louder and more frequently.

We need good witnesses in daily life. I highlight this need because, while I may not be able to do much about Church structures and liturgy, I am capable of determining whether or not I am a good witness.

The strength of my witness can encourage others to deepen their faith and their involvement in sharing faith and it is a sign of God's presence among us.

Recently we heard the story of Zacchaeus. We have no idea why he was looking for Jesus but we know he is so determined to see Jesus that he climbs a tree.

The story is exciting because we discover that his desire to see Jesus is surpassed only by the desire of Jesus to see him. Jesus looks at Zacchaeus and not content simply to see him, he wants to 'stay with him for the day'.

For Jesus it is not simply a desire, it is a necessity: "I must stay..."

When observers discover Jesus spending time with Zacchaeus they grumble; they critique Zacchaeus' worthiness suggesting that as a tax collector he has cheated people. To his credit, Zacchaeus does not point fingers at anyone. He takes responsibility for his actions and makes a commitment to right any wrongs he may have committed.

As members of the Christian community we can follow the example of Zacchaeus.

What would happen if, as a baptized member of the Body of Christ, we lived our

commitment with the same enthusiasm and ownership as Zacchaeus?

If I refused to blame others when things went wrong, if I took responsibility for my sins, if I did not make excuses for others who had sinned, if I honestly searched each day for Christ and if I willingly spent my days with him, what might our homes, churches and communities look like?

What is readily apparent is that we do not need anyone's permission to be a holy people. We do not need the approval of the pastoral or financial council, we do not need a letter or certificate from the pastor or the bishop, nor do we need a special ceremony.

We need only the commitment of our heart. Whether we are alone or gathered with others we can be a sign of God's presence in the world.

Pope Paul VI once wrote: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."

As we prepare for the great seasons of Advent and Christmas we are reminded once again of who we are and who we are called to be. We are called to be salt, leaven, light and source of hope for the world.

We can do this. We do not require special programs, formal training or letters of permission; we need only the conviction that Jesus is looking for us and would like to spend the day with us.

As snow falls and temperatures drop, may we look for Jesus and may we be found by him. May we spend our days with him and may our daily actions on behalf of Jesus bring healing, reconciliation and new hope to our Church which is a light for our world!

REACH team reaches out to schools

By: Donncha O'Callaghan

PRINCE GEORGE - At the end of October the three Catholic schools in Prince George were delighted to have the opportunity to have all Grade 6 and 7 students attend a retreat facilitated by the visiting REACH Retreat Team.

The full day event involved many lively activities along with singing, prayer, testimonies and time to reflect. It was also a great opportunity for the students from Immaculate Conception, St. Mary's and Sacred Heart Schools to get to know each other better.

This was a powerful event for our students to see young adults witness to their faith and so excited about it. Thank you to Eunice Hii at the Diocesan Youth Office for facilitating this prayerful event for our schools.



A REACH team member shares her story with Grade 6 and 7 students from the three Catholic schools in Prince George

Youth gather with new Diocesan Coordinator



Eunice Hii, recently hired as Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator for the Diocese of Prince George, is pictured with young people of St. Andrew's Parish and Mission in Fraser Lake. PHOTO BY: Lilly Schulz

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“Ask Jesus what he wants of you and be brave!”

BY: Eunice Hii

PRINCE GEORGE - Before August I'd never been further north than Kelowna!

Answering God's call to Prince George has definitely been an adventure, one I'm sure the many Frontier Apostles who came here before me can identify with.

In April of this year, Pope Francis, having just ordained 10 men to the priesthood, turned to the young Catholics present and exclaimed, “Ask Jesus what he wants of you and be brave!” This message inspires me to continue to persevere with courage and I believe it's a message we can bring to our young people; that of reaching for more and striving to be Jesus' disciples.

In the few months since my arrival, I've met and begun to work with many of you. Thank you for a wonderful first two months in the diocese and I look

forward to continuing to meet more of you!

If you ever want to chat, please contact me directly ehii@pgdiocese.bc.ca.

I want to share a couple of highlights of how I see God working in our diocese through the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office:

Fostering Young Adult Fellowship:

The beginnings of a young adult community both at UNBC and in the city of Prince George are underway. We kicked the year off with the monthly SUMMIT night, a night of Eucharistic adoration as well as a theology on tap event with visiting priest, Father Mark Miller, CSsR.

The plan for the upcoming year is to have regular faith studies on campus using the resources of

Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO). In addition, we will fundraise to send young adults to CCO's annual conference, “Rise Up”, which will take place in Ottawa

REACH-ing Further:

In October we welcomed the REACH Ministry team from Montana for its 33rd annual retreat at Christ Our Savior Parish. This year, REACH was also welcomed into all three Catholic schools in Prince George as well as St. Anthony's in Kitimat and Veritas in Terrace.

The team also held another retreat for the youth at Sacred Heart Parish in Terrace. Thank you Alyssa Dugdale, youth ministry coordinator at Christ Our Savior Parish and Gorette Pires at Sacred Heart Parish for their hard work in promoting this ministry!



Members of the REACH team along with participants in the annual retreat pose for a picture at Christ Our Savior Parish in Prince George. PHOTO BY: Eunice Hii

Rev. Thomas Magusin, OMI: 1927-2013



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Father Thomas Magusin, OMI, at Notre Dame Parish in Dawson Creek, October 28, 2013.

Gathered with members of Father Tom's family were a large number of parishioners

from Notre Dame Parish and other parishes in the diocese, Bishop Stephen Jensen, five diocesan priests and fellow Oblates Fathers Frank Salmon, Vince LaPlante and Richard Beaudette.

Thomas Magusin was born on October 28, 1927 in Hostie, Slovakia to parents Tomas and Etela Magusin. His father preceded the family to Canada, and in 1932 older brother Joe, Tom and their mother joined him on the homestead in Farmington, BC.

As a young man Tom stayed home on the family farm for about 15 years, logging and working in the sawmill. He then felt called to resume his education in preparation for ministry in the Church.

After serving as a Frontier Apostle, Tom entered the Oblates and in 1978 he made his first vows; he was ordained in 1980. As a priest Father Tom served a number of parishes including St. Mary's and Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince George, Notre

Dame in Dawson Creek and Christ the King in Kitimat.

Before his illness he returned regularly to provide replacement ministry in parishes throughout the Diocese.

Father Tom was held with fond regard in the Diocese of Prince George during his many years of ministry among us. He was close to his family and a testament to the love that they had for him is seen in the number of family members participating in the prayers and funeral Mass. Present to say good-bye to Father Tom were his five remaining siblings, 22 of his 24 nieces and nephews, along with their spouses and children.

Father Tom died in Dawson Creek on October 20th at the age of 85 years. In remembrance of him, on the day of his burial the church bell tolled in the village of Hostie where he was born.

Marking the end of the Year of Faith



Pope Francis led a Mass in St. Peter's Square on November 24th to mark the end of the 'Year of Faith.' He shared these words in his homily:

“The Scripture readings proclaimed to us have as their common theme the centrality of Christ. Christ as the centre of creation, the centre of his people and the centre of history.

The apostle Paul, in the second reading, taken from the letter to the Colossians, offers us a profound vision of the centrality of Jesus. He presents Christ to us as the first-born of all creation: in him, through him and for him all things were created. He is the centre of all things, he is the beginning. God has given him the fullness, the totality, so that in him all things might be reconciled (cf. Col 1:12-20).

This image enables to see that Jesus is the centre of creation; and so the attitude demanded of us as true believers is that of recognizing and accepting in our lives the centrality of Jesus Christ, in our thoughts, in our words and in our works. When this centre is lost, when it is

replaced by something else, only harm can result for everything around us and for ourselves.

Besides being the centre of creation, Christ is the centre of the people of God. We see this in the first reading which describes the time when the tribes of Israel came to look for David and anointed him king of Israel before the Lord (cf. 2 Sam 5:1-3). In searching for an ideal king, the people were seeking God himself: a God who would be close to them, who would accompany them on their journey, who would be a brother to them.

Christ, the descendant of King David, is the “brother” around whom God's people come together. It is he who cares for his people, for all of us, even at the price of his life. In him we are all one; united with him, we share a single journey, a single destiny.

Finally, Christ is the centre of the history of the human race and of every man and woman. To him we can bring the joys and the hopes, the sorrows and troubles which are part of our lives. When Jesus is the centre, light shines even amid the darkest times of our lives; he gives us

hope, as he does to the good thief in today's Gospel.

While all the others treat Jesus with disdain – “If you are the Christ, the Messiah King, save yourself by coming down from the cross!” – the thief who went astray in his life but now repents, clinging to the crucified Jesus, begs him: Remember me, when you come into your kingdom” (Lk 23:42). And Jesus promises him: “Today you will be with me in paradise” (v.43). Jesus speaks only a word of forgiveness, not of condemnation; whenever anyone finds the courage to ask for this forgiveness, the Lord does not let such a petition go unheard.

Jesus' promise to the good thief gives us great hope: it tells us that God's grace is always greater than the prayer which sought it. The Lord always grants more than what he has been asked: you ask him to remember you, and he brings you into his Kingdom! Let us ask the Lord to remember us, in the certainty that by his mercy we will be able to share his glory in paradise. Amen!”

Financial Statements: Year Ended June 30, 2013

On the next page you will find our unaudited financial statements. Audited financial statements will be available for viewing at the Diocesan Office after the beginning of the New Year.

The Diocesan Operations portion of our financial statement shows a net operating surplus of \$81,054. While ordination expenses were high and expenses in most areas were slightly

higher than the previous year, income from donations and investments was also higher than anticipated and this resulted in a surplus at the end of June.

The Annual Diocesan Appeal continues to provide funding to the Pastoral Centre as well as other programs and some of our smaller missions and parishes. Contributions from the Religious Education Trust Fund also help

to finance the ministry of the Pastoral Centre.

The Annual Diocesan Appeal makes it possible for us to continue to provide the services necessary for the operation of the diocese. Subsidies provided by Catholic Missions in Canada are reduced, investment income is used and it is no longer necessary to take funds out of the investment portfolio.

Investment income

Our detailed financial statement outlines the sources of our investment income. These include leases (Chevron Gas Station, College Heights Manufactured Home Park, Telus tower site), rentals and royalties on gravel sales from several gravel quarries and the investment portfolio. This income provides funding for our ministry as a diocese.

Our land holdings are also categorized as an investment, but we report all activity dealing with these holdings under Capital Assets. Any net income realized in a particular year from land sales is added to our investment portfolio, not put into our operating budget. In this way, our investment portfolio continues to grow and provide more income for operations.

If you have any questions about the statements, or you wish to view them, please contact Lynn Monteith or Father Richard Beaudette at the Diocesan Centre, 250-964-4424.

Diocesan Special Collections

A number of special collections are taken up in the Diocese each year. These collections represent our solidarity within the universal Church and especially, with the poor and those in need.

Each year the CCCB informs dioceses of the dates of these collections and those who contribute to their parishes using preprinted envelopes find an envelope for each collection in their box on the appropriate date.

Below you will note the amounts collected in the Diocese of Prince George during the past fiscal year. None

of the \$120,229 raised is kept in the Diocese but is rather forwarded directly to the appropriate organization to be used as indicated.

The collection for the Canadian Church, which raised \$13,451 this past year, offsets the rate our Diocese is charged to support the work of the Canadian Church.

The Share Lent collection supports the ongoing work of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace as they fund projects in developing countries and provide education in Canadian parishes.

When disaster strikes our Share Lent contributions allow Development and Peace to send funds immediately. In the face of particular disasters, generous Canadian Catholics across Canada raise further funds and this makes it possible for Development and Peace to contribute more when it is most needed.

After a collection for a designated need, many parishes send the proceeds directly to Development and Peace; some send it into the Diocesan Office which forwards it to Development and Peace.

Name	Amount Collected	Use of Funds
Canadian Church	13,451	Needs of the Church in Canada
Catholic Missions in Canada	12,816	Missionary efforts in Canada
Development & Peace (Share Lent Collection)	39,189	Projects in developing countries and education in Canadian parishes
Development & Peace (Special Collection)	6,344	Designated relief efforts
Evangelization of the Nations	11,062	World-wide mission efforts
Holy Land	24,317	Maintenance of sites of the Holy Land
Pope's Pastoral Works	13,050	Charitable works of the Holy Father

Celebrating the saints

By: Julie Matte

BURNS LAKE – On the Sunday before All Saints Day, Immaculata Parish, in partnership with Our Lady of the Plains Mission, celebrated the saints with a party in their honor.

At this the third annual All Saints Day party, each participant was encouraged to dress up as his or her favourite saint or Bible character.

Some of the popular historical figures represented by those present were Eli, Samuel and Mary, as well as the beatified Mother Teresa and saints such as Kateri Tekakwitha, Francis of Assisi, Gianna, Philomena and Maximilian.

Part of the day's activities included a play depicting the Parable of the Sower as told in the Gospel of Matthew.

The performance brought to life the words our Lord spoke about the seeds that were sown on the path, on rocky soil, among weeds and in good soil. It was a visual representation of our faith journey, encouraging all to be "good soil" by allowing the Word of God to grow in us.

In this way, like the saints we may live lives that bear fruit.



Participants in an All Saints Day Party in Burns Lake.

Stories of several saints were shared including that of St. Anthony. We learned about a particular day when St. Anthony was in a city in Italy where a great number of heretics lived. True to his calling, he preached to them for days but they would not listen.

St. Anthony was divinely inspired to go to the river shore and call out to the fish: "Listen to the Word of God, O ye fishes of the sea and of the river, seeing that the faithless heretics refuse to do so."

In response a large number of fish approached the shore and, keeping their heads out of the water, they looked attentively at St. Anthony. He began to preach to them. Hearing his

words, the fish opened their mouths and bowed their heads, glorifying God with bubbles and gurgling.

The people of the city, including those with hardened hearts, came quickly to see this miracle. St. Anthony began to teach them and they were converted.

Youth at the event ranged in age from four to 15 and they received prizes for their participation in a number of games representing aspects of Christian life: "Maze of Life", "Feed my Sheep", "Knock Down Vices", "Canonize the Saints" and "St. Peter's Boat".

The event concluded with participants marching behind a saxophone player who led the group in a lively rendition of "As the Saints Go Marching In".

Deceased members remembered



Christ the King Council 5148 held their annual Memorial Mass for past members, November 12, 2013. Despite a severe storm with heavy rain and snow, the Mass celebrated with Father Kenneth Uwaoma was quite well attended. The invited widows appreciated the efforts made by the Knights to remember their husbands. Grand Knight Frank Mauro thanked everyone for attending. Here the Knights and Father Kenneth pose following Mass. PHOTO BY: G. Max Patzelt

Parish celebrates Feast of All Saints and All Souls

By: Rev. Doug Jeffrey, OMI
VANDERHOOF - For our faith communities the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls signal the transition from autumn to winter. While autumn colours give way to thoughts of Advent and Christmas, the feasts invite us to remember what has been, the people who have been part of our lives.

St. Eugene de Mazenod, founder of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, once said that it is our task to "lead [people] to act like human beings first of all and then like Christians, and finally, we must help them to become saints".

As we gathered we asked ourselves four questions to ready ourselves for the celebration:

- Who are the 'holy' men and women, disciples of Jesus who have influenced my life?

- What is it about their lives that touched me?

- What prompted me to respond to them and what did my response look like?

- Who in my life is most in need of God's love and mercy?

Our reflection led us to remember how our lives have been transformed and shaped by the holy men and women around us. We were invited to share with others what had been given to us.

The Feast of All Souls was also marked by our celebration of the Eucharist and the enthronement of our Book of Remembrance. In

this book we write the names of those who have gone before us, those we want to pray for and remember.

They become a regular part of our prayer in November as we prepare for the end of the Church year.

At Holy Trinity Mission our Eucharist and remembering involved a short walk from the church to the cemetery where we gathered to pray with and for our brothers and sisters in a very physical way. Together we blessed water and sang the litany of the saints.

These simple actions were followed by visits to the graves of family members and friends scattered about the cemetery. With holy water in hand we blessed their graves and recalled with gratitude the moments of blessing and challenge that mark our journey home to God.

As November unfolds we mark Remembrance Day; the wars and the pursuit of peace which have taken the lives of many young men and women from our communities. While it is our prayer that peace be achieved through dialogue, still today our brothers and sisters are called upon to uphold peace through the sacrifice of their lives.

Their gift is remembered with both sorrow and gratitude.

While winter awaits, the promise of spring is never far away. The death of Christ gives way to resurrection and it is with this confidence that we embrace both life and death as we celebrate those who have gone before us.

While family and friends are gone from this earth they are not forgotten as we are one with the communion of saints in Christ.



Graveyard was featured in Holy Trinity Mission celebration of All Saints and All Souls Days.
 PHOTO BY: Rev. Doug Jeffrey, OMI.

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Financial Statements: Year Ended June 30, 2013

Diocese of Prince George

Statement of Operations

Year ended June 30, 2013

	2013	2012
DIOCESAN OPERATIONS		
Income		
Cathedraticum	\$ 308,944	\$ 309,889
Assessments from parishes		
Donations	39,596	47,790
Catholic Missions in Canada, religious communities, charitable organizations, individuals and businesses		
Donations - Diocesan Annual Appeal	126,500	118,506
Faith formation and youth		
Investment Income	609,498	424,621
Lease of diocesan properties, investments, and the sale of resources		
Total Revenue	<u>1,084,538</u>	<u>900,806</u>
Expenses		
Direct Support	197,649	93,706
Renewal Centre, Domano Sisters and donations		
Diocesan Services	805,835	809,508
Diocesan Centre and maintenance of diocesan properties		
Total Expenses	<u>1,003,484</u>	<u>903,214</u>
Total Diocesan Operations	<u>81,054</u>	<u>(2,408)</u>
CAPITAL ASSETS		
Sales	-	813,550
Expenses		
Property Taxes	218,674	210,933
Land Development Costs	1,911	40,401
Amortization	45,226	45,018
Total Expenses	<u>265,811</u>	<u>296,352</u>
Total Capital Assets	<u>(265,811)</u>	<u>517,198</u>
Total Diocesan Operations and Capital Assets	<u>\$ (184,757)</u>	<u>\$ 514,790</u>

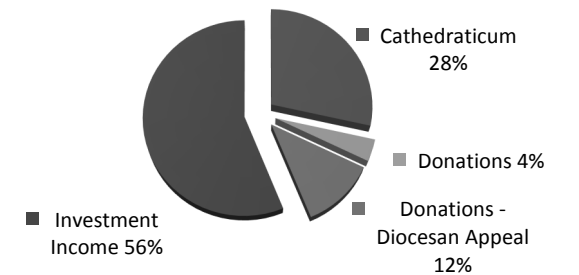
Diocese of Prince George

Statement of Financial Position

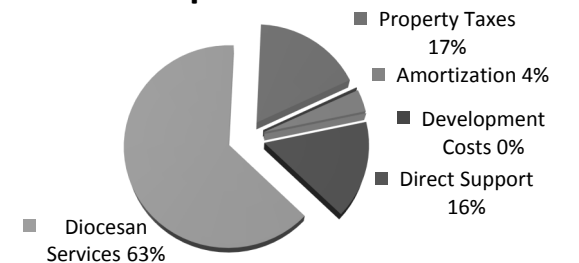
As at June 30, 2013

	2013	2012
Assets		
Cash and Accounts Receivable	\$ 381,044	\$ 317,594
Investments	6,109,520	6,289,777
Land, Buildings and Equipment	2,766,656	2,777,809
Total Assets	<u>\$ 9,257,220</u>	<u>\$ 9,385,180</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts Payable	\$ 1,840,002	\$ 1,783,205
Net Assets		
Opening	7,601,975	7,087,185
Current (Deficit)	(184,757)	514,790
	<u>7,417,218</u>	<u>7,601,975</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 9,257,220</u>	<u>\$ 9,385,180</u>

Revenue



Expenses



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Town prays for victims and survivors of Philippine super typhoon

SMITHERS - The Filipino community in Smithers held a prayer service for the victims and survivors of the super-typhoon Haiyan at St. Joseph's Parish, November 18, 2013.

Father Rectorino Tolentino led the service which brought together the Filipino community of Smithers, Catholics and non-Catholics and pastors from different churches in response to the devastation experienced in the Philippines.

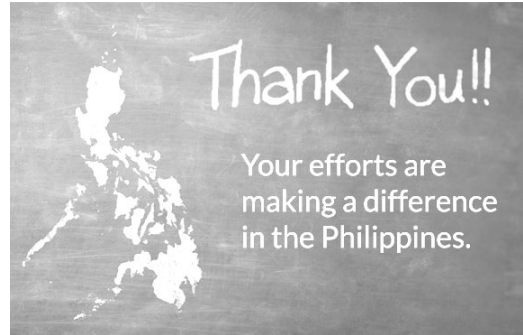
It was a touching moment when everyone lit a candle and offered it for those who were affected, both the living and the dead.

"When a tragedy such as this happens, we cannot ignore that we are part of all of humanity," Father Rector said in a recent interview. "We cannot remain blind, deaf and mute to what we are seeing and hearing on the news."

"As part of humanity, their pain is our pain too. In this time of loss and need, let us reach out in prayer and generosity."

At the prayer service Father Rector said that the destruction and devastation caused by the typhoon had led the people of Smithers to "come together and show our sympathy and solidarity with those who suffer".

"Our gathering tonight is to let our suffering sisters and brothers know



they are not alone in their journey, in their agony," he said.

The gospel story read at the prayer service tells of Jesus rebuking the wind and stopping a storm. Father Rector said this could cause people to question why God did not stop the super-typhoon Haiyan.

"I struggled to make sense with the Gospel that was proclaimed," he said. "The fact that God permits physical and even moral evil is a mystery that God illuminates by his Son Jesus Christ who died and rose to vanquish evil."

"Faith gives us the certainty that God would not permit an evil if he did not cause a good to come from that very evil, by ways that we shall fully know only in eternal life."

"Sisters and brothers, in God's time we will know the definite answer to our questions."

"Let us be consoled by the fact that as part of creation, as part of humanity, we are one," Father Rector continued.

"Yes, we are one body in Christ. We are allowed to get hurt, to feel pain and we are not exempt from suffering. But we are not alone. We are part of the Body of Christ."

"The massive destruction in the Philippines probably triggered many negative feelings and reactions. But the love and solidarity that is pouring in from all over the world in the wake of this disaster should bring us consolation."

"Sisters and brothers, as we pray for the victims and survivors, I invite us to see also the real value of life and the time given to us to live in this world. May we take advantage of our lifetime to do good, to care, love, forgive, reconcile and to work for justice and peace!"

"Thank you to all who are here to be one with us in prayer," Father Rector concluded. "It means a lot to me and to my fellow Filipinos. On behalf of all the Filipinos in the Bulkley Valley and in the Philippines, thank you very much - maraming salamat po - for reaching out in love, in prayers and in generosity."

A collection taken up during the service resulted in 9,001 Canadian dollars and 4,120 Filipino pesos. All money collected will go to the survivors and their families through the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and will be matched by the Canadian Government until December 9th.

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After five long years the Bokongoles arrive

By: Rev. Rectorino Tolentino Jr.

SMITHERS - At the end of a long journey the Bokongole family arrived in Vancouver, not quite their final destination.

Their first experience of northern travel started that evening when their

plane was unable to land at the fogged-in Smithers Airport. It carried on to Fort St. John to refuel and then returned to Vancouver.

After a night in a hotel (thank you Air Canada!) and most of a day in Vancouver, they boarded a plane for Terrace and then a bus to Smithers.

I'm not sure who was more joyful and thankful, the Bokongoles or those who waited so long for their arrival on that October 25th evening. After five long years they were finally here. Their journey started in 2005 when they fled the Democratic Republic of Congo and arrived as refugees in Uganda. The refugee committee at St.

Joseph's Parish in Smithers first got to know them as a family on paper. But over the years email messages allowed us to get to know David, the father of this family.

Whenever we felt that this journey was taking too long, we thought of the family in Uganda, knowing that they had a much harder wait.

Since their arrival it has been such a joy to travel with this determined, enthusiastic, Christian family. We have come to know them as individuals and not just as a name: welcome David and Winnie with your children Serge, Francis, Christian, Pamela and granddaughters Belvette, Joelle, Judith, Esther, Josue, Naomie, Gracie and grandson Moisie.

They had prepared themselves as much as possible to come to Canada, even learning "O Canada". We know that they will continue their journey to a new, independent life in Canada.



Grade 5 students from St. Joseph's School in Smithers are pictured loading boxes and bins of non-perishable food for delivery to a refugee family just arrived from Africa. The staff and students of the school wanted to welcome the 14-member Bokongole family by helping to fill their pantry. Pictured here are, from left to right, Tavis Knibbs, Sean Malbeuf, Finn Rourke, Anthony Alvarado and Tristen Beaubien.

Pastor surprised by belated Birthday party



Father Vincent James, OMI, was shocked when what he thought was a parish gathering on September 2nd, turned out to be his 70th Birthday party. Parishioners of St. Andrew's Parish in Fraser Lake organized the surprise party at the home of Ray and Therese Steiner. Pictured here are children from the parish presenting their pastor with cake and gifts. PHOTO BY: Therese Steiner

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