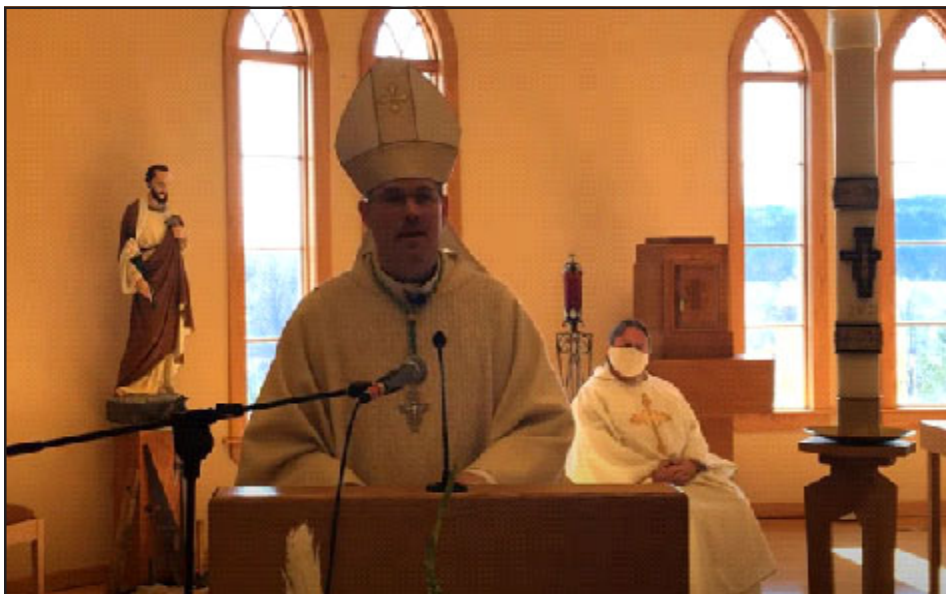


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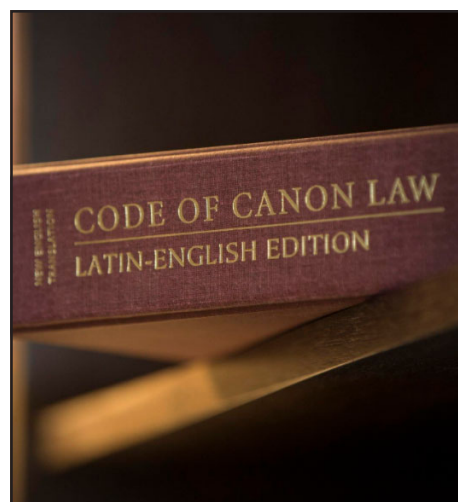
ROTHESAY — Father Stanislas Paulin (right) pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Rothesay listens as Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC (left) of the Diocese of Saint John speaks to parishioners at mass the weekend of May 15-16. With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, the bishop has resumed his parish visits beginning on the Saint John Region of the diocese. Story page 3. (Natasha Mazerolle photo)



OTTAWA — In keeping with the celebration of the Year of St. Joseph, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) National Liturgy Office and the Office national de liturgie have composed a Novena and an Act of Entrustment to St. Joseph. Story page 6. (The image of Joseph and the Child by Saskatchewan artist Gisele Bauche was chosen by the CCCC as its official image for the Year of St. Joseph)



SEABIRD ISLAND, B.C. — Elders in the Seabird Island community built this bell tower at their local church. Local resident Richard Moses Louie believes the Christian faith provides guidance for healing and reconciliation. Mr. Louie attended school in Kamloops in the 1960s. (Photo contributed to BCC)



A Latin-English edition of the Code of Canon Law is pictured on a bookshelf. New canon law provisions approved by Pope Francis are expected to help the Catholic Church safeguard against abuse. Story page 9. (CNS photo/Nancy Phelan Wiechec)

In the footsteps of Christ – Bishop Riesbeck encourages faithful to holiness and mission

By NATASHA MAZEROLLE
Correspondent

SAINT JOHN — As pandemic restrictions continue to be lifted Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC, of the Diocese of Saint John has resumed his pastoral visits, focusing on parishes in the Saint John Region of the diocese.

On the weekend of May 15-16, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Rothesay, the bishop spoke of the importance of making a personal decision for Jesus.

“The free gift of eternal life is ours, but we still need to say yes to what God did for us on Calvary, for he doesn’t force his salvation upon us,” he said. “And we say yes by choosing to accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, embracing his free gift through repentance and faith, and by being baptized so that we can be filled with the Holy Spirit, and live a new and abundant life in his family, the Church.”

“If we want to follow in the footsteps of Christ as his disciples then we must become evangelizers too. In fact, this is why the Church exists: to evangelize,” he said. “Evangelization means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation.”

For those who feel ill-prepared to share the Good News of Jesus, Bishop Riesbeck had some encouraging words. “Sometimes we look for excuses not to participate in the mission, we feel we’re not holy enough, we’re not gifted enough, we’re too old, we’re too young,” he said. “Just look at the 12 apostles, they were not perfect. But they were eager, they were zealous and enthusiastic, they said yes. They gave God permission and the Lord used them powerfully.”

Catholics called to make government pay for ignoring conversion therapy ban concerns

By BRIAN DRYDEN
Canadian Catholic News

OTTAWA—A Conservative MP wants Catholics and other Canadians of faith to remember during the next election that the federal Liberal government is ignoring their concerns about a bill that would ban conversion therapy for youth that critics say could make some religious discussions about human sexuality illegal.

Conservative Ontario MP Marilyn Gladu, like almost all critics of Bill C-6, said she supports the idea of banning aspects of conversion therapy, but the devil is in the details and the wording of the proposed federal bill worries many religious

Bishop Riesbeck continued to encourage the faithful during his visit to Blessed Trinity Parish (St. Anthony’s Church, Upham; St. Alphonsus Church, Hampton; and St. Bridget’s Church, Summerville) on the weekend of June 13-14.

“The ultimate goal of all our efforts, our ministry, our preaching, the preparation for the sacraments, pastoral and social outreach, the witness of our very lives, is to draw people into a personal relationship with Christ and help nurture that relationship in the Church,” he said. “It’s in that initial encounter and on-going relationship with Jesus that we find true love and our love for others is awakened. Our mission is to love.”

The bishop told parishioners of Blessed Trinity that sharing the Good News means telling people who Christ is, what he offers each person, and why the need is present for what he offers.

“Our God is crazy about us, and he yearns for us to know him personally. Ultimately, he is inviting us into the most satisfying life — friendship with him — the ultimate relationship,” Bishop Riesbeck said. “This is the dynamite message we are called to embrace, to live out and to proclaim to others. Good news is meant to be shared!”

“The new evangelization needs a new Pentecost,” Bishop Riesbeck said. “And the New Evangelization needs ‘spirit-filled evangelizers...fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit’,” Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n.259.

Natasha Mazerolle is a correspondent for The New Freeman. She can be reached at natasha@maz-family.com. §

organizations.

“We know that the purpose of the bill is to ban conversion therapy, to make sure that children cannot be forced into conversion therapy, and to make sure that advertising or benefiting materially from conversion therapy is also banned. These are all good things,” Ms. Gladu said.

“The issue is the definition in the bill, which is overly broad. It would criminalize things that are not conversion therapy,” she said.

What is on a government website regarding the effort to ban conversion therapy for youth states “these new offences would not criminalize private conversations in which personal views

(continued on page 11)

The New Freeman

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We all share in this tragic episode, say theologians

By MICHAEL SWAN
The Catholic Register

In morning headlines and evening newscasts the 215 unmarked graves on the Tk'emlups to Sewepemc First Nation are a scandal and a tragedy. While Catholics certainly know this to be true, the Church must also confront its theological failures, several theologians told *The Catholic Register*.

Academic theologians spent four days in virtual meetings of the Canadian Theological Society from May 31-June 3. In the meetings, theology professors spoke extensively about how they are responding to the discovery at the Kamloops Residential School and the entire residential school tragedy.

At Ottawa's Saint Paul University the faculty of theology has invited First Nations representatives to speak with them.

"We are committed to listening and learning first and foremost," said professor of systematic and historical theology Catherine Clifford.

Ms. Clifford is aware of the many apologies issued over the years by religious orders and dioceses directly involved in administering the schools. The idea that there is no such thing as a national, Canadian

Catholic Church or the argument that dioceses and religious institutes not directly involved cannot apologize for things they did not do are not convincing, she said.

"All of this ecclesiological hair splitting is lost on Canadian Catholics and Indigenous people looking for a way forward on the path to reconciliation," she said. "Catholics supported the residential school system spiritually, morally and financially. We regularly prayed and took up collections for the missions and gave unquestioning support to a form of evangelization that we have come to see was shamefully far from a faithful reflection of the Gospel."

All of Canada's bishops speaking together would make it clear that Catholics, who ran about 70 per cent of the schools, know their responsibility.

"We all share, in varying degrees, and are complicit in this tragic episode of history and have need to repent of it, collectively," she said.

"Penance, public penance, conducted by leaders in the Church," would constitute a "theologically coherent response," said Atlantic School of Theology professor David Deane.

"Pressure on Rome for an apology, from

all quarters, is a no-brainer. We need to do it," Mr. Deane said. "The pope should apologize."

Ms. Clifford points to the example of St. Pope John Paul II's millennium confession at the doors of St. Peter's, when the pope pleaded for forgiveness for those times when the Church allowed coercion and even physical violence to drive conversions of Indigenous people,

Regina archdiocesan theologian Brett Salkeld cautions against making demands of Canada's bishops without knowing how the prelates may be working on reconciliation away from the public spotlight.

"Bold public statements by theologians who feel the need to call bishops out may serve to make theologians look good, but they can make the delicate work bishops are doing harder, especially if they are not well informed," Mr. Salkeld said.

Ms. Salkeld wants theologians to teach the Church how and why Catholics fell into sin running the schools.

"The Church failed on this file, not because it followed its own lights and stood against the culture, but precisely because it abandoned its own best lights on matters of evangelization and culture," he said. §

Faith provides way forward: Seabird Island elder

By AGNIESZKARUCK
The B.C. Catholic

SEABIRD ISLAND, B.C. — When news of a burial site at Kamloops Indian Residential School reached the First Nations community of Seabird Island, local elders handed out potted pansies as gestures of honour and remembrance.

Seventy-four-year-old Richard Moses Louie made a home for some of the blooms on his veranda.

"There has to be truth and reconciliation," said the Seabird Island man in an interview with *The B.C. Catholic*. "They brought that up in the past, a few years ago now, and it seems when things like this that sound horrific come up, we remember that we had the Truth and Reconciliation [Commission] and how this fits in."

Mr. Louie once lived at Kamloops Indian Residential School. When the news broke about the discovery of the remains of 215 children buried there last week, he was shocked that some of the stories he had heard generations ago may have been true.

"It was really something to hear the sto-

ries and the hurt and the anger. It was hard to believe, but when we do the Creator's work, that's what we have to do: listen to the people and try to console them."

Mr. Louie had attended a school nearer to home and his Indigenous Catholic family in the early 1960s, but he dropped out in 1963 after a car accident killed his parents and two of his brothers.

After some time, he mustered the will to go back to school and it was arranged for him to go to Kamloops. There, he lived in a dorm at the residential school (which in the 1960s ceased running classes and was converted into a residence) and took a bus to nearby St. Ann's Academy. He remembers the girls on the top floor, the boys on the bottom floor, and a soccer field just outside the junior dorms. He also remembers meeting people of various nationalities at St. Ann's, something he said prepared him for the real world.

"I was really surprised there is a grave down there that involved so many people."

After a year in Kamloops, Mr. Louie returned to Seabird Island where he has lived and been an active member of the small

community's Immaculate Conception Church decades.

Mr. Louie believes his faith provides him guidance on how to move toward healing.

"We have to remember that we have love, forgiveness, and understanding. It's really pretty hard to forgive the abuser, but I guess that's where Jesus came in when he said, 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do,'" he said.

"So I guess that's what we should focus on, bringing us together and giving us an opportunity to love, forgive, and understand. [Jesus] has been trying to do that for so long. It's alright to be doing that in everyday life, but this brings all the people together and we all have to learn to love, forgive, and understand. It's uniting the people."

He added he hopes the remains will be identified and returned to their families or communities. He also hinted he might like to hear an apology from Pope Francis.

"People are uniting across Canada, the USA, and around the world to ensure this doesn't happen in the future, that our people are safe." §

Living with our past — journeying to our future

Most often, the greatest wounds are those that hurt our relationships — with family, with friends and with colleagues. The primary wounds are those that do not honour and acknowledge the goodness and wonder of who they are as persons. We may differ from each other in many ways. But each of us has a goodness and giftedness that is a special gift of God.

As much as we face this reality in our personal lives, we face it as well in our social, cultural, religious and national life. Our Catholic Christian church has a long history, some 2000 years of it. In that long history we can acknowledge that our faith has made significant contributions to the family of humanity. At the same time, our Catholic faith often fails to live up to the catholicity that names our faith community. In some of our story, our faith community has been closed and narrow, even abusive in our relationships, and in how we encounter the many peoples and cultures of the family of humanity.

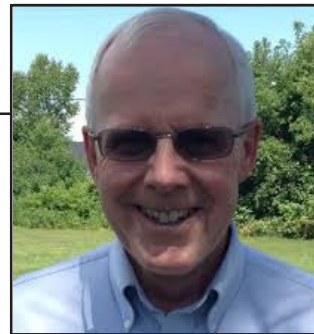
In meeting other cultures we have not been open to them, not acknowledging that they, like us hold a true and wondrous relationship with God. This has led us to be domineering, demeaning and even violent as we encounter them. We speak as wanting to share our faith with them. But frequently this has taken the form of imposing our faith upon them,... not honouring the good they already hold.

Our Canadian history is part of the broader European colonial story. The expansion of Europe into the Americas is like much of human history. When cultures encounter one another, it is often a story of conquest. Rather than building a mutual relationship which can enrich both, a colonializing power overruns the other and attempts to assimilate the other into its culture. The story reveals an effort to dominate and change the culture into which it has moved.

This has been the story of the residential schools that are part of our Canadian history, an effort to assimilate First Nations into Canadian society of the time. Our Catholic Church joined in this effort, seeing an opportunity to share the faith we held. Unfortunately, beyond a few isolated instances, there has been little recognition, that

Our sacred stories

Father JOHN JENNINGS



the peoples of the First Nations already have a deep and rich spiritual tradition and that we can meet in mutual relationship.

Mark's Gospel reveals Jesus speaking with parables. In Mark 4:26-34, we hear of a farmer planting seed. The contact of the seed with the soil leads to growth. In the story, beyond the sowing of the seed, the sower cannot control the growth. He has to trust in the coming together of the two elements. "Controlling" does not produce growth. Encounter does.

Faith and love are shared through respectful encounter, a meeting in which a life-giving relationship is planted and nurtured. In the shadow of the residential school experience perhaps it is time to discover our encounter of cultures, honouring both, sharing each and respecting all.

Apologies are certainly needed. As a priest in the Catholic community, my own apologies go out to our sisters and brothers in the First Nations for the many hurts we have brought upon you. But more is demanded. Our society needs to let go of control. This is a national conversion/change of heart. We need to learn to "listen" deeply to each other in a relationship that is open, and honours and respects all. We cannot, must not forget the past hurts. But we can, we must grow a more open relationship, sowing seeds of new life together, honouring the cultures we share.

Father John Jennings, retired priest of the Diocese of Saint John and St. Thomas University, reflects on the previous Sunday readings with the intent to be a form of on-going adult faith formation. He can be reached at: jennings@stu.ca. §

Pope will meet with Canadian Indigenous leaders in the Vatican

By BRIAN DRYDEN

Canadian Catholic News

OTTAWA – Indigenous leaders will meet with Pope Francis in the Vatican before the end of 2021 to address the Catholic Church's role in Canada's residential schools that will hopefully lead "to a shared future of peace and harmony between Indigenous Peoples and the Catholic Church in Canada," Canada's bishops announced on June 10.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) said it has been working for years to arrange such a meeting and had hoped it would have been held earlier this year but that was sidelined by the COVID pandemic.

In a statement released June 10, the CCCC said the meeting in the Vatican that will include representatives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations "represents an important step on the journey of reconciliation and shared healing for Indigenous Peoples and the Church in Canada."

"The recent discovery of children's remains at a burial site of a former residential school in Kamloops, British Columbia, remind us

of a tragic legacy still felt today," Canada's bishops said. "With the strong encouragement of Pope Francis, the bishops of Canada have pledged true and deep commitment to renewing and strengthening relationships with Indigenous Peoples across the land."

Although an exact date has not been given, Indigenous leaders with the Assembly of First Nations and the Métis National Council, along with Canadian politicians such as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, have re-

(continued on page 5)



Perry Bellegarde (Wikipedia photo)

A Eucharistic prayer

As a seminarian, I was privileged one summer to take a course from the renowned liturgist, Godfrey Diekmann. This was back in those heady days shortly after Vatican II when it was very much in fashion to frown on prescribed ritual prayers and write your own. This was particularly true for the Eucharist Prayer, the “Canon” of the mass, which a number of priests began writing for themselves. Diekmann, it turned out, was not a great fan of this. Asked about it in class one day, he said, “It seems today that everyone who has a tiny bit of imagination and even less theology feels obliged to write a Eucharistic Prayer.”

Because of the Covid restrictions this year, I have often celebrated some form of the Eucharist virtually. At first, leading those services, my thought was, what’s the value of a Eucharistic prayer if there is to be no communion? Therefore, I simply jumped from the Liturgy of the Word straight to the Lord’s Prayer. Eventually though I deemed that something more might be offered. Thus (with Godfrey Diekmann’s words now forty years distant) I wrote a Eucharistic Prayer for a virtual mass.

What is a Eucharistic Prayer? Most people would say it’s that part of the Eucharist where the priest consecrates the bread and wine, but that’s only part of it. The Eucharistic Prayer is that part of the Eucharist where we make *memorial* (*Zikkaron*, in Hebrew) of the major event by which Christ saved us, in order to make that event present for us to participate in today. We come to the Eucharist not just to receive the body and blood of Christ, but (just as importantly) to participate in an event, namely, the saving action of Christ as he undergoes his *Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost*. The Eucharist is the Christian Passover Supper and, like the Jewish Passover Supper, its purpose is to make a past event present to us.

How does this work? We don’t have a metaphysics within which to understand this. In sacred ritual, in the Eucharist, as in a Passover supper, something happens that transcends time. This doesn’t contradict the intellect, the imagination, or the laws of nature; it only takes them beyond their normal limits.

Here’s a Eucharistic Prayer for those times when there is no bread

Canadian Indigenous leaders in the Vatican

(continued from page 4)

newed their calls for a meeting with Pope Francis in which they hope the Pope will agree to apologize for what happened in residential schools in Canada that were run by the Catholic Church and other Christian faith groups.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde said such a meeting with the pope is important for Canada’s Indigenous people.

“It’s a very big part of healing,” Mr. Bellegarde told the CBC in an interview. “Our missing children have not received the same dignity nor respect in death or in life that every human being deserves.”

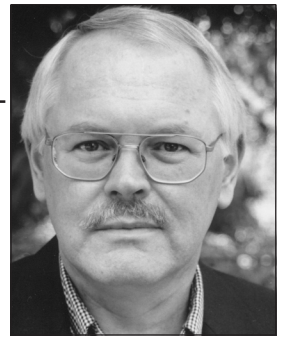
According to the CCCB, the meeting with the pope will allow residential school survivors to speak directly with the pope.

“This pastoral visit will include the participation of a diverse group of Elders/Knowledge Keepers, residential school survivors and youth from across the country,” according to Canada’s bishops.

“The event will likewise provide Pope Francis with a unique opportunity to hear directly from Indigenous Peoples, express his heartfelt closeness, address the impact of colonization and the implication of the Church in the residential schools, so as to respond to the suffering of Indigenous Peoples and the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma,” the CCCB said. §

In Exile

RON ROLHEISER, omi



and wine to be consecrated.

Lord, God, you break into our lives in extraordinary ways to manifest your love and save us.

For your chosen people you miraculously parted the waters of Red Sea and led them to safety by suspending the laws of nature. Then, in the desert, you miraculously fed them with manna and revealed to them the law within your heart.

Since only one generation walked through the parted waters of the Red Sea and only that generation ate your manna in the desert, You, Lord God, instituted the Passover supper as a ritual through which every generation until the end time could walk through the parted waters of the Red Sea and eat your bread in the desert. The Passover supper calls these saving events to mind in a way that, in your timelessness, makes them real again for us today.

This is true too for the saving actions of your son, Jesus Christ. His Passion was a new bondage; his trust in Death a new faith; your raising of him in the Resurrection and his Ascension a new Exodus; and his sending of the Spirit at Pentecost a new entry into the Promised Land.

Therefore, Lord God, on the night before he died, your son left us the Eucharist as a Passover Supper through which you make these saving events present again.

We ask you, therefore, to send your Spirit upon all of us gathered here to make memorial of your Son’s saving acts. Grant that through this ritual remembrance each of us, and all of us as one community, may be united with Christ in his Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and in his Sending of the Spirit. You who are beyond time, grant us today the grace of being one with Christ in his sacrifice, one with him in his dying and rising.

As we celebrate this memorial, help us know that we are one with Your Son, our Lord, Jesus, united with him as he is undergoing his Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost.

Lord, God, help us to know that the food of this Eucharist is the new manna by which You feed your people with heavenly food.

Lord, as we make this memorial, above all we ask you to help us break down everything that separates us from each other, all division in our world, so that You may be able to feed us all at one table, as one family, as one God of us all.

We pray all of this through, with, and in your son, Christ, our Lord ... Amen.

In the Eucharist, we don’t just eat the bread of life, we also die and rise with Christ.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser §

Father Ron Rolheiser’s column *In Exile* is sponsored by
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Canadian bishops compose a novena and Act of Entrustment to St. Joseph for Canada Day

By NATASHA MAZEROLLE
Correspondent

In his Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, Pope Francis writes that, “Each of us can discover in Joseph — the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence — an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

One of the ways to grow closer to St. Joseph this year is by participating in the Novena and Act of Entrustment composed by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC), which begins on June 22, 2021, and concludes on Canada Day, July 1, 2021.

This Novena and Act of Entrustment is especially significant for Canadians, as St. Joseph is the patron Saint of Canada.

The Novena asks St. Joseph’s intercession for the welfare of the entire country, for the many needs of society, and to pray in particular for those who passed away due to COVID-19.

The first two days of the Novena reflect on St. Joseph’s role as patron of the Universal Church, and patron of Canada, and feature reflections by Pope Leo XIII and St. John Paul II.

The remaining seven days reflect on the qualities of St. Joseph’s fatherhood that Pope Francis wrote about in his apostolic letter *Patris Corde*: a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a creatively courageous father, a working father, and a father in the shadows.

The various intentions for this novena include an end to the Coronavirus pandemic, those who have died, the family, the domestic church, an end to racism and discrimination, vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, youth and the elderly, workers (especially frontline workers) and the unemployed, and the needy, addicted and excluded.

The act of entrustment affirms the qualities of St. Joseph that make him, after the Blessed Mother, a saint worthy of imitation and trust.

As a saint who is “in solidarity with the human condition,” he can be trusted to help each person to remain faithful even in the midst of great difficulty. Through this entrustment St. Joseph is being asked to “draw us closer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, that we may easily turn to the Lord in every circumstance of our lives and, consecrated to him, we may know, in our vocation, the peace and joy of a holy life.”

The first five days of the Novena and Act of Entrustment, June 22-June 26 can be found below. The last five days, June 27 - July 1 will be published in the next issue of *The New Freeman*, June 25.

The complete set of documents and resources for celebrating the Year of St. Joseph, including the Novena and Act of Entrustment that begins on June 22, can be found at <https://dioceseofsaintjohn.org/year-of-saint-joseph>.

Natasha Mazerolle is a correspondent for The New Freeman. She can be reached at natasha@maz-family.com. §

Novena to St. Joseph

June 22: St. Joseph, patron of the Universal Church

Reflection: *Quamquam Pluries*, 4 (Encyclical by Pope Leo XIII, 1889)

Thus it is that we may prefigure the new in the old patriarch [Joseph, cf. Gen 37]. And as the first caused the prosperity of his master’s domestic interests and at the same time rendered great services to the whole kingdom, so the second, destined to be the guardian of the Christian religion, should be regarded as the protector and defender of the Church, which is truly the house of the Lord and the kingdom of God on earth. These are the reasons why men of every rank and country should fly to the trust and guard of the blessed Joseph. Fathers of families find in Joseph the best personification of paternal solicitude and vigilance; spouses a perfect example of love, of peace, and of conjugal fidelity; virgins at the same time find in him the model and protector of virginal integrity.

Prayer: For an end to the Coronavirus Pandemic

St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, we ask that you intercede with your Son, the Saviour of the world, for an end to the coronavirus pandemic, that the sick may experience healing, the dying, peace, healthcare workers, strength, and our leaders, wisdom.

V. Protect me, O God,
R. For in you I take refuge. (Ps 16.1)

Action: Implore God’s help, with increased fervour and constancy, for an end to this pandemic.

June 23: St. Joseph, patron of Canada

Reflection: *Redemptoris Custos*, 12 (Apostolic Exhortation by St. John

Paul II, 1989)

At the circumcision Joseph names the child “Jesus.” This is the only name in which there is salvation (cf. Acts 4.12). Its significance had been revealed to Joseph at the moment of his “annunciation”: “You shall call the child Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (cf. Mt 1.21). In conferring the name, Joseph declares his own legal fatherhood over Jesus, and in speaking the name he proclaims the child’s mission as Saviour.

Prayer: For those who have died

St. Joseph, Patron of Canada, we ask that you intercede with your Son, the Saviour of the world, for those who have died, that all who have passed from this world may attain a share in eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven.

V. I will extol you, O Lord,
R. For you have drawn me up. (Ps 30.1)

Action: *Redemptoris Custos*, 32 Let us seek ways to learn from St. Joseph “how to be servants of the ‘economy of salvation’”.

June 24: St. Joseph, a beloved father

Reflection: *Patris Corde*, 1 (Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis, 2020)
The greatness of St. Joseph is that he [...] concretely expressed his fatherhood “by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a
(continued on page 7)

Novena to St. Joseph

(continued from page 6)

love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home”.

Prayer: For the family, the domestic Church

St. Joseph, beloved father, we ask that you intercede with your Son, the Saviour of the world, for the domestic church, that its members may imitate the Holy Family in practising the virtues of Christian family life so that, one day, they may delight in eternal rewards.

V. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,

R. Even as we hope in you. (Ps 33.22)

Action: Perform an act of selfless service for a member of your family.

June 25: St. Joseph, a tender and loving father

Reflection: Patris Corde, 2 (Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis, 2020)

Even through Joseph's fears, God's will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.

Prayer: For peace and unity in our country

St. Joseph, tender and loving father, we ask that you intercede with your Son, the Saviour of the world, that the people of Canada may know the peace which comes from God and be always united in a fraternal spirit.

V. As a father has compassion for his children,

R. So the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. (Ps 103.13)

Action: Explore opportunities to contribute to the building of peace and unity in our country and commit to engaging in one of them.

June 26: St. Joseph, an obedient father

Reflection: Patris Corde, 3 (Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis, 2020)

“St. Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood” and [...] in this way, “he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation.”

Prayer: For an end to racism and discrimination

St. Joseph, obedient father, we ask that you intercede with your Son, the Saviour of the world, that we may be given the wisdom and courage to address the persistent sins of racism and discrimination that we may work toward systems that support the dignity of every person and promote respect for all.

V. Blessed are those whose way is blameless,

R. Who walk in the law of the Lord. (Ps 119.1)

Action: Leaning on Gospel values, use a pastoral and nonpartisan lens to respond to concerns of family and community members about racism and discrimination, policing and public safety. §



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis meets participants in the "Faith Communication in the Digital World" project, sponsored by the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication, during his general audience at the Vatican June 9. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Vatican project aims to make digital space a place of encounter

By JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The Catholic Church can break new ground in fostering dialogue in the often-polarizing space of the digital web, said participants in a Vatican communications initiative.

The initiative, *Faith Communication in the Digital World*, was sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Communication and brought together 16 young communication specialists from around the world to address "how the church can and should be present online."

The U.S. participants chosen by the Vatican were: John Grosso, director of digital media for the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut; Alexandra Carroll, communications manager for social mission for the U.S. bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development; and John Lilly, communications specialist for the U.S. bishops' Office of Public Affairs.

The 12-month program, which includes meetings in Rome and online, is designed to develop proposals that will address "the main problems and issues users currently face with the internet."

"The COVID-19 crisis has led to an increased sense of urgency felt by many in the church to learn an effective communication approach and to ensure a social media presence that witnesses an evangelical 'style,'" the dicastery said.

Speaking with *Catholic News Service* June 11, Mr. Grosso said that while there isn't a "one-size-fits-all" solution to polarization on the web, the Catholic Church can help to ease tensions by "encountering and accompanying one person at a time on their journey of faith in digital media."

Ms. Carroll told CNS that she, like her colleagues, feels the weight of the "immense responsibility" of their roles in communicating the church's solidarity with all people, especially those on the margins.

"It was a great reminder of just how important my job is," she said.

(continued on page 11)

Prayer is like a musical score, giving life melody, meaning, pope says

By CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — People need to find harmony between prayer and the demands of everyday life, Pope Francis said.

"It is inhumane to be so absorbed by work that you can no longer find the time for prayer. At the same time, prayer that is alienated from life is not healthy," the pope said June 9 during his weekly general audience.

"The time dedicated to being with God revives faith, which helps us in the practical realities of life, and faith in turn nurtures prayer without interruption," he said.

The audience was held in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace, where the pope spent the first 30 minutes chatting at length with individuals, blessing them or objects they had brought, signing books and greeting children. While the pope was maskless, attendees were obliged to wear masks, but many ignored social distancing rules when they crowded along the barricades to greet and speak with Pope Francis.

In his main audience talk, the pope continued his series on prayer by looking at the importance of perseverance and praying unceasingly.

How is it possible to remain in a constant state of prayer, especially when people's lives are busy or filled with disruptions or distractions? the pope asked.

One tradition offers something called a "prayer of the heart" and is based on repeating with faith the words, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner," until these words match the rhythm of breathing, and it is spread throughout the day, he said.

"Indeed, we never stop breathing, not even while we sleep, and

prayer is the breath of life," he said.

Having a heart in a constant state of prayer, he said, is like having a flame perpetually lit even while carrying out daily tasks, taking a walk or standing in line. Even short, brief prayers, like "Lord, have pity on us" or "Lord, help me" are enough, he added.

"Prayer is a kind of musical score, where we put the melody of our lives," he said.

Prayer, then, is not meant to clash with everyday duties and obligations because it acts as "the place where every action finds its meaning, its reason and its peace," he said.

It is not easy to do, Pope Francis said, but just remember "that God, our Father, who must take care of the entire universe, always remembers each one of us. Therefore, we too must always remember" and find time for him.

Work and prayer are complementary, he said, like the symmetry of the human body with its two hands, eyes and ears.

So, while it is inhumane to have to work so much that it leaves no time for prayer, he said, it is likewise harmful to live a life of prayer alienated from real life. In that case, prayer becomes "spiritualism, or worse, ritualism."

Remember, he said, that Jesus did not stay forever in his glory on Mount Tabor but came down from the mountain with his disciples to resume his daily journey.

That spiritual experience remained in their hearts as the light and strength of faith and a light and strength for the days of trial that were coming, the pope said.

Prayer revives faith, which supports daily life and nurtures prayer, making a positive feedback loop keeping "alight that flame of Christian life that God expects of us," he said. §

Pope names new nuncio for Canada

By Canadian Catholic News staff

OTTAWA — The Vatican is sending a new diplomat to Canada, with Pope Francis appointing Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic as the new apostolic nuncio to Canada on June 5.

Archbishop Jurkovic's appointment comes at a time when the relationship between the Canadian government and the Catholic Church has been strained recently and there have been renewed calls in Canada

among politicians and Indigenous Canadians for the Vatican to officially apologize for the Church's role in operating residential schools in Canada after 215 bodies were discovered on the site of a former residential school in Kamloops, B.C., at the end of May.

Archbishop Jurkovic, who has served as the Apostolic nuncio previously in Belarus, the Ukraine, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan, has most recently served as the Vatican's Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva since 2016 and also acted as the Vatican's representative to the World Trade Organization and the International Organization for Migration.

When contacted by the Canadian Catholic News, staff at the Apostolic Nunciature to Canada, which is in Ottawa, said that at this point a date has not been set for when Archbishop Jurkovic will arrive at the Holy See's diplomatic mission in Canada.

Before Archbishop Jurkovic's appointment on June 5, the post had been vacant in Canada since December 10, 2020, when the previous nuncio in Canada Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi was transferred to Albania. Archbishop Bonazzi was nuncio in Canada from 2013 to 2020.

According to the Vatican's Catholic News Agency, Archbishop Jurkovic was born in southern Slovenia in 1952 and was ordained as priest of the Archdiocese of Ljubljana in 1977 when he was 25. After training for the diplomatic service of the Holy See he served in South Korea, Colombia, and Russia before Pope John Paul II named him apostolic nuncio to Belarus in 2001.

According to the Vatican, Archbishop Jurkovic's mother tongue is Slovenian but he can also speak English, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, German, Serbian, Croatian and Ukrainian. §



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is pictured with Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic during a meeting at the Vatican in this Jan. 17, 2020, file photo. The pope has named Archbishop Jurkovic, 68, as the nuncio to Canada. He had been the Holy See's representative to U.N. agencies in Geneva. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

What the new revisions to the Code of Canon Law mean for safeguarding

By CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The new series of laws and provisions set out in the revised section on crimes and penalties in the Code of Canon Law will help the Catholic Church in its efforts at safeguarding, said two canon law-



Claudia Giampietro
(CNS photo/courtesy Claudia Giampietro)

yers.

And yet, like with every new norm and measure, its success will depend on following through on enforcement, being mindful in interpreting still unclear aspects and working on remaining gaps, they said.

Pope Francis promulgated the new changes in "Book VI: Penal Sanctions in the Church," and they will go into effect December 8 — the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The revisions reflect almost two decades of work in updating, adding, clarifying and strengthening what the church considers to be crimes and what provisions for sanctioning are available.

Much damage has come from not understanding how applying sanctions is part of exercising charity and establishing justice, the pope said, as "charity and mercy require a father to commit himself also to straightening what at times becomes crooked."

Claudia Giampietro, a canon lawyer and project officer at the office for care and safeguarding for the International Union of Superiors General [IUSG], told Catholic News Service that this mindset of respect and protection is a significant change.

The ultimate principle of safeguarding "is recognizing that a wounded humanity needs respect, and this must inform every single act performed within and outside of the Catho-

lic Church," she told CNS in an email response to questions June 3.

It shows how the revisions have been informed by and reflect "the voice of victims and survivors of abuse, which is making the church aware and, therefore, responsible" in turning their requests "into canonical provisions which can support the healing process involving the entire ecclesial community," she added.

Also, she said, by putting abuse, indecent exposure, pornography and grooming in a new chapter that adds the term "dignity," — under the heading *Offences Against Human Life, Dignity and Liberty* — this shows an understanding that such crimes "harm the inalienable dignity of human beings acknowledged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and are not just a violation of the Sixth Commandment.

"I believe that this choice of language expresses at its best the mind of a legislator (the pope) who has been always defending the inestimable value of every human life in his pontificate and in his entire life," Ms. Giampietro said.

Monsignor Robert Oliver of the Archdiocese of Boston and formerly of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors told CNS that "the one thing that stands out for safeguarding is that the Holy Father has introduced legal requirements that suspected offences be reported and that bishops respond to these reports by making use of the church's penal procedures" for the restoration of justice, the reform of the offender and the repair of scandal.

In other words, where previous canons suggested what "can" be done when an offence has been committed, now the rules are what "must" be done and making sure the law is applied.

Ms. Giampietro said all the changes and new provisions created over the years "needed to be codified in the universal law to give clear normative directions to the whole church."

It also includes changes "that had to be included in the code more permanently," she said, such as those found in *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, which was promulgated "ad experimentum," for greater accountability of church leaders.

Another significant change is expanding the application of canons dealing with abuse to religious and laypeople who have a role, office or function in the church — not just to clergy, she said.

"It was a very much needed change as re-

ligious always felt that there was a gap in the legislation concerning them in relation to abuse cases," she said, underlining how the women's IUSG has a safeguarding office and organizes online formation together with the men's Union of Superiors General and the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

Here, "canon law is being studied and discussed as one of the instruments which can help to establish safe environments," she said, and "it is encouraging, as a laywoman, to see how much superiors general work together for the care and protection of minors and vulnerable persons."

One critical element still needing attention, Msgr. Oliver said in an email response to questions June 4, is "clarifying the definition of 'vulnerable persons,' a process that will include deciding individual cases of people, who were 'limited in their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence.'"

Other issues needing work to further help the church in its response to abuse, he added, would be publishing how cases are decided and explaining the reasoning behind those decisions.

"Now the task is to implement these principles and norms effectively and to work out areas that still need to be better related to one another," he said, saying "the size of this task can easily be underestimated."

"It will require that dioceses, eparchies and conferences of bishops and of religious build the necessary organizational structures, especially by investing in the training of experts to carry out the investigations and penal processes," he said.

Ms. Giampietro said she was "very hopeful that more positive changes concerning (lay)people will be implemented in canon law" in the future. For example, "we would need a greater balance with the inclusion of more ecclesiastical lay judges. This would help to tackle clericalism in the church, which Pope Francis has always discouraged."

Every document and decree drafted over the years, she said, are pieces compiling a larger picture of what it looks like to "care for humanity."

It shows "the will to learn from mistakes of the past and make sure that they are not repeated. Once we see these changes within this picture, we acquire the right disposition necessary to follow a path of universal healing," she said.

The Code of Canon Law, first published in
(continued on page 10)

'Respectful debate needed on pride flag'

By MICHAEL SWAN
The Catholic Register

LONDON, ON — Bishop Ron Fabbro wants a more intelligent and respectful debate about Catholic institutions flying Pride flags.

"It is unfortunate that public discussion around the flag is often not respectful and thoughtful," Bishop Fabbro told The Catholic Register in an email.

While the London, ON, bishop is not endorsing King's University College's decision to fly the Progress Pride Flag for the month of June, he wants Catholics to read and understand the reasons King's has given for flying the flag.

"While King's and others have embraced the flag to be welcoming and inclusive, it is a source of confusion for others in the Catholic community," Fabbro said. "For many, it goes beyond being welcoming and inclusive and shows support for political causes that are at odds with traditional religious beliefs. Flags are symbols and as such are subject to various interpretations. The Church does not accept every interpretation that is given to this flag and for this reason I do not endorse raising the flag in our Catholic university and schools."

The version of the Pride Flag King's will fly adds an arrow-like chevron of additional colours to represent the transgendered, marginalized people of colour, people living with AIDS, those who have died from the disease and the stigma associated with AIDS.

"The Progress Pride Flag positions King's as a community that is seeking to care for the entire human person while affirming the identities of all people — a community that is learning, re-assessing and responding to our ever-developing collective knowledge as it relates to equity, diversity and inclusivity initiatives," said a King's media release.

King's makes the case for flying the flag as an expression of Catholic values.

"The Catholic tradition affirms that the encounter with Jesus Christ reveals the infinite love and mercy of God and transforms us, giving life 'a new horizon and a decisive direction,'" said the university, quoting Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*. "Grounded in the person and mission of Jesus, and enacting the principles of Catholic social teaching, we stand with all those who are positioned at the margins who suffer discrimination."

Bishop Fabbro agrees. "They are our sisters and brothers and we must

love them and walk with them. Unjust discrimination against them is wrong. This is the witness that we must all give by the lives we lead." §

New revisions

(continued from page 9)

1917 and revised in 1983, is still subject to alterations between revisions, according to Benedictine Sister Nancy Bauer, an associate professor of canon law at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Unlike legislatures in many nations, "the legislator is the Roman pontiff. It is the pontiff who can revise a canon or abrogate it," Sr. Bauer said. "It's not like the Synod of Bishops can get together and do this."

She added, "Individual bishops can legislate certain things for their diocese and the conference of bishops can legislate certain things for their territory, but they have very limited ability."

Last November, she noted, one canon was revised that governed the norms for who can establish an institute of consecrated life.

Between the 1917 and 1983 codes, "the code revision started in the late 1960s, went through the '70s, and was pretty much done by 1980. It was pretty much done by the time (St.) John Paul II promulgated it in 1983," Sr. Bauer told CNS in a June 4 phone interview.

Has the pace of canon law revision picked up? "I think Pope Francis has revised more than I expected he would," she replied. "He has a very pastoral heart, and I didn't expect that he would be as involved in the law, the legal part. But I think it's his pastoral heart that has prompted him to do this in many ways — the concern for the faithful, certainly the protection of minors and vulnerable adults."

However, Sr. Bauer said, "not all of the laws in the church are in the Code of Canon Law. The work of the church is to know where they are ... so if a case comes up, they can really know what is the current law, whether it's been revised or changed." §

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June 20, 2021 Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time

First Reading: Job 38.1-4, 8-11++

Here have I prescribed the bounds of the sea.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 107.23-24, 25-26, 28-29, 30-31 (R.1)

*R. Give thanks to the Lord;
his steadfast love endures forever.*

OR *R. Alleluia!*

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5.14-17

See, everything has been made new.

Gospel: Mark 4.35-41

Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

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Vatican project aims to make digital space a place of encounter

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"Sometimes I forget when I'm endlessly scheduling social media posts and wanting to be done with scheduling social media posts," but the gathering reminded her "that it's so much more."

For Mr. Lilly, social media posts on popular sites, such as Twitter, can often make "things seem very black and white, but that's not real, that's not how things are" in life.

Being in Rome and meeting with communicators face-to-face, he added, helped "to break down those walls" and as well as "frame your perspective a little bit broader, whereas I don't think you get that on social media."

A highlight for the three U.S. participants was meeting Pope Francis June 9 after his weekly general audience.

While briefly addressing the group, the pope — who often asks people to pray for him — asked in a way that deeply touched them.

Speaking in Spanish, Ms. Carroll recalled, the pope "stopped — and I remember because he made eye contact with me — and he broke into English and said, 'Pray for me because I need it.' But then he looks back at us and he goes, 'Not against (me) but in favour of me.'"

Ignoring conversion therapy ban concerns

(continued from page 2)

on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors ... doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members provide affirming support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation, sexual feelings, or gender identity."

"That is a great clarification. That is exactly what people were concerned about and exactly what they wanted to hear," Ms. Gladu said. "Unfortunately, however, judges have to judge by what is in the law, not what is on the government's web page."

A minority of federal MPs, mostly from the Conservative Party, have been raising concerns about how the wording of Bill C-6, which is currently at the third reading stage in the House of Commons, could end up criminalizing sexual orientation conversations between parents and children as well as such conversations with faith leaders.

It is that concern that is at the heart of the Catholic Church's opposition to Bill C-6, even though the Church is quick to condemn some aspects of conversion therapy.

"Like many Canadians, (the Church) is opposed to all forms of coercive and manipulative activities because they do not respect the sacred dignity of the human person and the freedoms inherent with that dignity. The protection of vulnerable Canadians from harmful acts is a necessary and important goal and one which the bishops irrevocably support," according to the Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), adding that the wording of Bill C-6 is too broad and will expose good faith efforts to address gender identity issues to the whims of the courts.

"It is generic in its scope and ambiguous in its language, and thus its application could be overextended and interpreted to include what are and should remain lawful activities," said the CCCB in a brief presented to the House of Commons regarding Bill C-6.

Ms. Gladu wants Catholics

The words, she explained, struck her because it reminded her of those who often take to social media and accuse the pope of causing division.

"I have a mentor who says that prophets are either believed or killed," Ms. Carroll told CNS. "Pope Francis has been opening our eyes and refocusing our orientation, not changing anything. He's calling us back to the call of the Gospel," especially in serving the needs of the poor and the vulnerable.

Mr. Grosso told CNS that being near the pope made him feel near to someone who "radiates holiness just with his smile and affection" but also someone who is "carrying a heavy burden, the heavy burden of the church and of the world."

"You can see it on him, and he does it with joy and with love," he said. "So, when he looks at you very sincerely and asks, 'Please pray for me, not against me,' I reflect a little bit on what I've seen these past several months — but also for his entire pontificate — on social media, it's sort of a call that I take very personally and very seriously."

"There has been so much difficulty and challenge to Pope Francis, and this is a man doing his very best for the church, and I believe that with every fiber of my being," he said. §

and other Canadians of faith to remember that such concerns about the wording of Bill C-6, which is one of the bills that the Liberal minority government with the support of the NDP and Bloc Quebecois, want to pass and get Royal Assent from the Senate before Parliament rises for its summer break on June 23.

Despite the concerns being expressed by critics and some Conservative MPs, Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole and other high-profile Conservative MPs such as Alberta's Michelle Rempel Garner support the bill.

"Twelve million people in Canada are Catholics. I want them to remember at election time that the Liberal government is trying to erode their freedom of speech and their freedom of religion," Ms. Gladu said.

"If a person is a member of other faith communities like the Evangelical Fellowship, Baptists, Muslims and Jews, they are also having their rights eroded," she said. "I want them to remember that. There are 24 million of them in this country," Ms. Gladu said of Canadians who identify with faith communities. "If they all vote for their freedom of religion and freedom of speech, then the government will have to listen. That will be very important."

But not every Catholic MP accepts Ms. Gladu's characterization of how Catholics and other religious Canadians view the government's effort to ban conversion therapy for youth.

Ontario Liberal MP Mark Gerretsen said Ms. Gladu and other critics of Bill C-6 are raising a "red herring" to try and stop Bill C-6.

"I will have her know that I am one of those 12 million Catholics," Mr. Gerretsen said about Ms. Gladu's comments.

"I am a practising Catholic," he said, adding "I can tell her there are many Catholics out there who are against conversion therapy in all forms, not just forced conversion therapy."

"For the member to suggest that this bill does not give the right for families to have conversations is nothing more than a red herring," Mr. Gerretsen said during Bill C-6's third reading debate in the House of Commons.

"She has to come to terms with whether she will support this bill because it will protect and save Canadians lives, or whether she is going to get hung up, like so many other Conservatives, on this definition and these nuances of the definition." §

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At home in a 100-year old church

By WENDY-ANN CLARKE
The Catholic Register

COLEMAN, AB — On the ceiling above what used to be the front counter of the Blackbird Coffee House in Coleman, AB, is a striking fresco depicting Jesus clothed in red, kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemane. His right arm reaches delicately towards an angel.

Not the usual view one would have should they look up after paying for a cup of java, but for property owner Kym Howse, it is the perfect setting.

The fresco is part of what remains from the property's former glory — nearly 100 years as Holy Ghost Catholic Church. It's been Ms. Howse's since 2007 when she purchased the 100-year-old church.

Ms. Howse was always struck by the property while passing it numerous times on the Crowsnest Pass during the three-hour drive from Calgary to Fernie, B.C., to visit her brother. The clay artist, former boutique owner and mother of three didn't know what she would do with it at the time but says Catholic churches have always represented for her a place of "peace." It has been her heart's desire that the old church would bring a sense of serenity to many others.

"I really think that this place is for people just to take a breath," said Ms. Howse. "Every time I come from the city, I walk into that building and literally just pause. Whether you're seeing the light as the sun comes up through the stained-glass windows or as the sun comes down on the other side, there's something about it that just gives you a breath. It's very calming. It is like a bit of solace, I think."

And it gave her son something to be proud of. Just three years old at the time, he thought it an exciting fact to share with the kids at school.

"My son was asked at school what made him original and he got up at the time and said, 'I'm original because I live in a church,'?" Ms. Howse said with a chuckle.

Ms. Howse and her husband Doug have their hands deep in renovations at the property now. The plan is to split their time between Coleman and Calgary, renting it out as a vacation home for part of the year.

The history of Holy Ghost Church, later called Holy Spirit Church, is intertwined with the settlement of the area. It was built in 1905 under the direction of Father E. DeWilde as Coleman developed into a min-

ing town at the turn of the century. Demand for churches and schools grew with the population. It was constructed on land donated by International Coal and Coke, a mining company that had been selling lots for residential and commercial development.

It remained a functioning church within the Calgary diocese until late in the century, when on May 1, 1997 then Calgary Bishop Paul O'Byrne closed the parish following a diocesan review of viable parishes.

A decade later Ms. Howse sold her house in Calgary to buy the church. She built a house around the back and lived there with her family from 2007 to 2013.

The sale of a church is covered under canon 1222.2 of the Code of Canon Law. A sale is allowed under certain conditions, including that it not be used for a "sordid" purpose, the bishop has obtained consent of those who could claim lawful rights over the building and also that he must be sure the good of souls will not be harmed by the sale.

While the church may no longer function as it was planned, it doesn't mean it is forgotten, said Carol Hollywood, archivist at the Calgary diocese.

"Churches may close but the people haven't closed," said Ms. Hollywood. "The people that lived in the rural areas took their faith with them and they pass it on. It's very sad for the communities for whom it signifies the loss of the community they once knew. But generally speaking I think there are masses of thanksgiving for the service that the building has produced. We are pilgrims so we don't stay put."

After Ms. Howse purchased the church, from time to time musicians would come to play there, taking advantage of the fantastic church acoustics, and Ms. Howse evolved the space into a café as a result. Since shutting the door on that venture around 2018, the property pretty much laid dormant for a few years. As COVID uncertainty hit, Ms. Howse considered selling it. However, as she stepped back into the one-and-a-half storey building, taking in the age and character of the stained-glass windows depicting the stations of the cross and the gothic-influenced architectural details, she became enamoured with it once more.

"With the pandemic, I really had the time to go there and sit in the building and I just really fell in love with it all over again," said Howse. "Especially with everything that's been going on it was just a very safe area



COLEMAN, AB — The choir loft of the former Holy Ghost Church in Coleman, AB. (Kym Howse photo)

to go back into and sit down. I honestly feel that every time this building is shown some love, it almost feels like it's thanking you. It's sort of coming back to life. It's an incredible feeling."

Though not an overly religious person, Ms. Howse has always felt a pull towards Catholicism. It may have something to do with her father, who grew up in a staunch Catholic family in his native Australia. She was not raised religious but says the church was something she found on her own later on in life. After graduating high school, she travelled to Australia and lived in England for four years and found herself drawn to the places of worship. She went on to study art history.

Ms. Howse continues to enjoy relaxing in her favourite spot, the choir loft where the ceiling art is within arm's reach. Many have asked why she hasn't undertaken more restorations of the painting and windows, but Howse remains committed to maintaining the character and integrity of the old church.

"It's over a hundred years old and that's what it should look like," said Ms. Howse. "Replacing things is really not what it's about. My hope for the space is for people to be able to get away from their otherwise really busy lives and be able just to sit down, relax, read a book or do absolutely nothing but stare up at the ceiling and at the old lights. It's not a museum or a designer home put into a church. It is a home in a church." §