

The New Freeman

December 2, 2022

Vol. 122 No. 48



"All children should have the right to grow within their family, the right to study and also the right to education, says Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny. Talking about human rights for children is a Catholic response in a cruel world that sees more than 36 million children worldwide displaced from their home. Story page 3. (Michael Swan photo)



TORONTO — Christian Elia, executive director of the Catholic Civil Rights League is concerned that Bill C-11, the federal government's proposed Online Streaming Act, could limit the free speech of Catholics on issues that might run up against federal policies. Story page 2. (The Catholic Register photo)



BETHLEHEM — Bethlehem's Basilica of the Nativity dates to the fourth century. The Greeks, Armenians, and Latins (Roman Catholics) share the Basilica. Story page 7. (Wikipedia photo)



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis during an interview with America magazine at the Vatican, talked about polarization in the church, the role of women, the ministry of bishops, and more. Story page 8. (CNS photo/Antonello Nusca, America Media)



The weekend, December 3rd & 4th, marks the second week of Advent

Civil rights league concerned with Bill C-11

By QUINTON AMUNDSON
The Catholic Register

TORONTO — The Catholic Civil Rights League [CCRL] is concerned that Bill C-11, the federal government's proposed Online Streaming Act, could limit the free speech of Catholics on issues that might run up against federal policies.

League executive director Christian Elia pointed in particular to Catholics with pro-life views, which run contrary to the official stances of the governing Liberals, who have outlawed people with pro-life views from running for office under the federal Liberal banner.

"The League submits that in a free and democratic society efforts to limit free speech must be opposed in favour of open communication, which includes opinions that the government might view as dissentient," wrote Mr. Elia in an email to *The Catholic Register*. "We support the dignity of the human person from conception until natural death in our opposition to abortion and euthanasia. We hope that broadcasters will allow such voices to be heard in a robust way, rather than submit to government diktat."

Mr. Elia said the CCRL "have worked hard to use digital means in advancing fair hearings for Catholic positions on issues of public debate in support of law and policy compatible with a Catholic understanding of human nature and the common good for a better Canada."

Bill C-11 could represent a threat to those efforts.

If the bill becomes law, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) will be armed with regulatory power over audiovisual content transmitted or retransmitted on online platforms, including monetized content on social media services.

"The CCRL fears that Bill C-11, or any attempt to regulate and shape communications by broadcasters, will lead to greater incursions to our freedom of speech, and freedom of conscience and religion," Mr. Elia said.

Experts from every corner of the Canadian — and global — media ecosystem have testified to the Standing Senate Committee of Transport and Communications over the past two months on the legislative proposal originally authored by Minister of Canadian Heritage Pablo Rodriguez. Mr. Rodriguez

said the act "will make a direct contribution to the vitality of Canadian culture" by mandating online streamers "to do their fair share, no more, no less, to fund, create, produce and distribute Canadian content."

Opposition voices state this bill will diminish the country's online prosperity and harm individual content creators' freedom of expression, including a former vice-chairman and telecommunications president of the CRTC.

"With YouTube, for example, if they promote Canadian content in Canada, they are going to have to depress (the videos) elsewhere to make it fair because they have to treat all their clients with the same set of rules," said Peter Menzies, now a senior fellow of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute in Ottawa. "This shrug you get from people, this 'so what, they can do whatever they want,' I find that very alarming. It really is sort of a 'build that wall' approach when it comes to content."

"The Internet gives Canadian content producers access to every Anglophone or Francophone in the world. It's just a much bigger market than Canada. Why would you do something to wreck that? It's just crazy," he said.

If Bill C-11 passes the Senate and receives royal assent, any Catholic publication posting audio or video on streaming platforms, and the Church itself, would fall under CRTC jurisdiction, said Mr. Menzies.

"Religion has always been an area of concern for the CRTC when it comes to broadcasting. A lot of it has to do with its history. A matter of concern means they keep a close eye on it. Basically, with some of the priorities that the government has in terms of the tone and mood and things that it wants to take place, there are traditional Catholic teachings that would very much be a concern of the CRTC."

Mr. Elia points to the Statistics Canada finding in August that acts of anti-Catholic violence rose 260 per cent from 2020 to 2021 as a product of the lack of civility accorded to Catholic beliefs in the public square.

It appears Bill C-11 is inching closer to a resolution in the Senate. The Standing Senate Committee of Transport and Communications re-convened November 23 to conduct a clause-by-clause consideration of the Online Streaming Act. §

The New Freeman

One Bayard Drive
Saint John, NB E2L 3L5
Tel: (506) 653-6806
Fax: (506) 653-6818
E-mail: tnf@nb.aibn.com

Office Hours:
By Appointment.
Please telephone or email.

Publisher:
Most Rev. Christian Riesbeck, CC

Managing Editor: Margie Trafton

Correspondents:
Fredericton: vacant

Miramichi: Shawn McCarthy
cletus_1773@hotmail.com

Saint John: Natasha Mazerolle
natasha@maz-family.com

Single Copy: \$1.00
Annual Subscription: Canada
\$25.00 (HST included)
USA/Other Countries: \$35.00

Advertising Rate:
\$15.00 per column inch *for most ads.*

Publishing Date: Friday
Deadline: Monday noon prior to the publishing date.

Printed & Distributed by
St. Croix Printing Co. Ltd.

*We acknowledge the financial support
of the Government of Canada.*

Canada

The New Freeman is a
not-for-profit organization.

*The opinions expressed in letters/ commentaries
published in The New Freeman, do not
necessarily represent the views of
The New Freeman, its publisher, staff, board
of directors or the Diocese of Saint John.
All submissions, including advertising, are
subject to review and editing.*

‘They have the right to be children’

By MICHEAL SWAN
The Catholic Reigster

In far off places, I’ve seen children under armed guard, fenced in, sitting in the dust, holding themselves up on the edges of human existence — exiled to places where any notion of the rights of children seems fanciful, even sadly comical.

In Dollo Ado, on Ethiopia’s southern border with Somalia, I saw children play soccer, volleyball and foosball. They studied plumbing, barbering, tailoring and even mathematics thanks to the efforts of the Jesuit Refugee Service — while their fathers snuck back into Somalia to try to earn money and their mothers sat in one-room tin huts under punishing heat, waiting for that magic hour when water flowed from the hilltop through pipes into the refugee camp.

In Kilis, on Turkey’s southern border with Syria, the chain link fence rose three metres more or less around refugee children. The young Syrians leaked out of their enclosure, past the men with automatic weapons, to sell tea and fruit on the side of the highway. Their families had brought these few unwanted, unneeded trade goods with them as they escaped the murderous chaos unleashed by the Assad regime in 2015.

Venezuelan kids I saw on the streets of Boa Vista, Brazil, and in the camp set up by Brazil’s army in 2019 existed in an endless time loop, neither oppressed nor welcomed, growing up in limbo while President Nicolás Maduro’s incompetent regime managed to keep most Venezuelans entirely divorced from the billions of petrodollars flowing into their country.

At the Gregorian University in Rome on November 17, Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny spoke of the rights of these children — rights they possess in theory and in law but cannot touch with a 10-foot pole.

“All children should have the right to grow within their family, the right to study and also the right to recreation. They have the right to be children,” Cardinal Czerny told the 15th annual symposium on the World Day of Action and Prayer for Children. “Unfortunately, many of them have no choice but to migrate. And migration puts all those rights in jeopardy.”

It may seem quixotic, far fetched, but talking about the human rights of children is a practical and a Catholic response to a cruel world filled with 89.3 million forcibly

displaced people, 41 per cent of them (36.5 million) children under the age of 18, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

“The concept of rights has been part of the Catholic tradition since at least the 16th century,” St. Jerome’s University professor Scott Kline said in an email. In other words the concept of rights is how the Church responded to modernity, the Protestant Reformation and harsh realities of colonialism. The Catholic argument about rights and slavery was laid out by Dominican friar Bartolome de las Casas while the castles of Europe were being covered in gold dug from the mountains of Mexico and Brazil, while kings and queens were swaddled in furs trapped by the Cree, Iroquois and Mohawk in Canada.

On which side of that history does the Church stand? In the 17th century, the Age of Enlightenment, “the Church resisted the concept of human rights largely in response to liberal French, British and German social thinkers who challenged the Church’s authority,” said Mr. Kline, who teaches the history of Catholic social thought at St. Jerome’s, on the campus of the University of Waterloo.

A century-and-a-half of reaction against Enlightenment champions of human rights gave us the word “reactionary” — applied first to Cardinal Czerny’s Jesuit forebears who defended the papacy against modernity through most of the 19th century.

The reactionary tradition in Catholicism ended in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

What Pope Leo XIII started by talking about the limited but undeniable right to property, balanced against the rights of workers, has only grown.

“In the wake of the conscience-shocking consequences of fascism, Naziism and empires run amock, the Church began to join the call that led to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948),” Mr. Kline recalled. “The Cold War brought to light that human rights could serve as a powerful force against communism.”

Cardinal Czerny’s Czech family fled a communist regime that played word games with rights. The Czernys chose to live in the modest, solid reality of human rights in Montreal. When Cardinal Czerny speaks about human rights and naturally applies them to children, he is expounding a living, Catholic tradition — the one the 76-year-old grew up in.

“Pope John Paul II greatly expanded the

concept of rights in Catholic social doctrine when he, for example, reiterated the rights and dignity of workers in *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and fought for religious freedom,” said Mr. Kline. “Pope Benedict XVI praised ‘human rights, especially freedom of faith and its practice,’ as the ‘true conquests of the Enlightenment’ ” (Christmas greetings to the Roman curia, 2006).

This is not an argument about political theory or philosophy. Rather, it’s about the kind of society human beings were made, by God, to live in.

As the pandemic hit, Pope Francis began to speak about human dignity and human rights. In a livestreamed general audience from the Apostolic Palace in those days of lockdown the pope said, “We want to recognize the human dignity in every person, whatever his or her race, language or condition might be... awareness of the dignity of every human being has serious social, economic and political implications.”

The implications come to us in the form of human rights.

“Catholic social teaching emphasizes that human rights have both an individual and a collective sense, which we Catholics often call the common good,” said Mr. Kline.

“When we talk about rights, we’re highlighting the responsibilities of governments to ensure that people have access to the basic resources and opportunities they need for their wellbeing,” said Sister Sue Wilson, who runs the Office for Systemic Justice for the Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada. “We’re not just talking about basic human rights (e.g., the right to be free from discrimination) but also the social and economic rights which have been delineated by the United Nations.”

For Sr. Wilson, talking about human rights and children’s rights makes sense of Catholicism’s “preferential option for the poor.” If the key to understanding and to justice is to begin by looking at how the most vulnerable fare in our world, it makes sense to start with children.

“Such talks (as Cardinal Czerny’s address at the Gregorian University) should challenge Catholic dioceses around the world to become involved in protecting these rights by urging their governments to put systems in place to protect these rights,” said Sr. Wilson. “Certainly, in Canada, we have failed to protect the rights of migrants by unjustly detaining some migrants, not protecting access to health

(continued on page 5)

Waiting around in Advent

Waiting is never easy. Whether it is in a hospital waiting room, an airport, a bus stop or simply to meet with a long-absent friend. It's hard to be patient when we do not know when or what is coming. I am sure that first-time parents have a tough time waiting for the arrival of their first (and even later) little ones. There are lots of questions, many uncertainties and a fair share of anxieties. How do we wait and how do we prepare?

Our ancestors in the faith, the first generations of Christians, lived in expectations that the promised Kingdom of God would soon come in its fullness. They were waiting for God's Advent which seemed to them imminent. As so often, the waiting seemed long and they sought to know "WHEN".

This is reflected in Matthew's Gospel (chapter 24). Matthew captures the questions of the disciples and Jesus's response. In Matthew's telling of the story, he presents us with many of the Old Testament's (e.g. in Daniel) apocalyptic images, events of destruction, persecution, threats and challenges. The early Christians were already experiencing some of these images and we can see this expressed in the Book of Revelation.

What the Gospels relate expresses the core message of Jesus — the Kingdom of God is among you. Those apocalyptic images drawn from the Old Testament are meant to promise a transformation of all Creation into the full and completed Kingdom of God. This Kingdom is to be a world marked by love, by peace and by justice, healing and reconciliation for all peoples. The "Coming of the Son of Man" will see for all peoples and generations what Jesus revealed by word and action.

As Matthew puts it, the question of "when" is not answerable. We are told to "stay awake" and "be ready" for the "Coming", or what is sometime called "the Day of the Lord" when the created world will end and Jesus will come in glory as judge of all the world. This very literal reading is tempting and it leads us, like the early Christians to all kinds of questions of when and how this "Coming" might occur.

But the "Coming" or "Day" may be read in a different more present way. It refers to something much closer to the Incarnation. God has already come and shares our humanity in Jesus.

Advent watching includes noticing God at work in daily life, pope says

By **ROBERT DUNCAN**
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Being so distracted that one does not notice God's presence in daily life is a warning sign that one is not being vigilant enough, Pope Francis cautioned.

Vigilance during Advent is key, Pope Francis said, because Jesus "warns us: there is the danger of not realizing his coming and being unprepared for his visit."

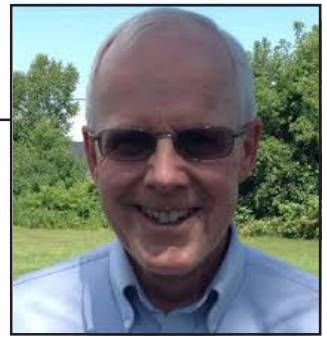
Speaking to pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square for the recitation of the Angelus prayer on the first Sunday of Advent, November 27, Pope Francis urged Christians to be watchful for the signs of God's presence in ordinary life.

"God is hidden in our life," Pope Francis explained; "he is concealed in the most common and most ordinary situations in our life."

The pope contrasted the watchful spirit of Advent with the attitude common in the "days of Noah," when people went about their daily activities without paying attention to God's voice in their lives.

Our sacred stories

Father JOHN JENNINGS



God's reign is already among us and we live with the spirit of Jesus in each and every human being. To "stay awake" and "be ready" is all about awareness. It is to be open to recognizing this ever-present God that we meet in one another and in every moment of our day.

We live between two Advents. The first was the Incarnation and the gift of Jesus the Christ. With that "Coming" we realized that our humanity and all Creation is filled with the Spirit and life of our loving God. We encounter our life-giving God of love in every person, every experience. This is to live in a way that honours and respects the whole of creation. We are to build a world marked by love, harmony, peace, freedom and justice. To do this is to "stay awake" and "be ready" in our day. Between two Advents, we are in fact, building the second Advent, every moment of our lives. In the last Book of the New Testament John gives us a view of God's Dream in the Second Advent:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth....

He will make his home among them;

they shall be his people, and he will be their God....

He will wipe away all tears from their eyes;

there will be no more death and no more mourning or sadness.

The world of the past has gone....

Now I am making the whole of creation new.

Revelation 21:3-5

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. §

"People in the time of Noah ate and drank and 'did not know until the flood came and swept them all away,'" Pope Francis said, quoting the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew. "They were absorbed in their own things and did not realize that the flood was about to come."

The truth is that God is present "in our daily work, in a chance encounter, in the face of someone in need," Pope Francis said. "Even when we face days that seem grey and monotonous, it is right there that we find the Lord, who calls to us, speaks to us and inspires our actions."

During Advent, Pope Francis said, "Let us be shaken out of our torpor and let us awaken from slumber!"

To help the process, he suggested people ask themselves, "'Am I aware of what I am doing? Am I alert? Am I awake?'"

Doing this, the pope explained, people will be ready not only to celebrate Christmas, but their souls will be ready when Christ comes again at the end of the world.

"If we are unaware of his coming today, we will also be unprepared when he arrives at the end of time," the pope said. §

God's anger — and our feelings of guilt and shame

My early religious training, for all its strengths, placed too heavy an emphasis on fear of God, fear of judgment, and fear of never being good enough to be pleasing to God. It took the biblical texts about God being angry and displeased with us literally. The downside of this was that many of us came away with feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred, and understood those feelings religiously, with no sense that they might have more of a psychological than a religious origin. If you had feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred, it was a signal that you were not living right, that you should feel some shame, and that God was not pleased with you.

Well, as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel [a Germanic philosopher] famously taught, every thesis eventually spawns its antithesis. Both in the culture and in many religious circles today, this has produced a bitter backlash. The current cultural and ecclesial ethos has brought with it a near-feverous acceptance of the insights from contemporary psychology vis-à-vis guilt, shame, and self-hatred. We learned from Freud and others that many of our feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred are really a psychological neurosis, and not an indication that we are doing anything wrong. Feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred do not of themselves indicate that we are unhealthy religiously or morally or that God is displeased with us.

With this insight, more and more people have begun to blame their religious training for any feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred. They have coined the term “Christian neurosis” and have begun speaking of “being in recovery” from their churches.

What's to be said about this? In essence, some of this is healthy, a needed corrective, though some of it also suffers from its own naïveté. And, it has landed us here. Today, religious conservatives tend to reject the idea that guilt, shame, and self-hatred are mainly a neurosis (for which our religious training is responsible), while religious liberals tend to favour this notion. Who is right?

A more balanced spirituality, I believe, combines the truth of both positions to produce a deeper understanding. Drawing on what is best in current biblical scholarship and on what is best in contempo-

The right to be children

(continued from page 3)

care, labour rights... The Church absolutely has a role to play in protecting human rights. Catholic social teaching tends to use the language of human dignity, but human dignity can be protected only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.”

For Cardinal Czerny children's rights line up with the hope and love embedded in a family.

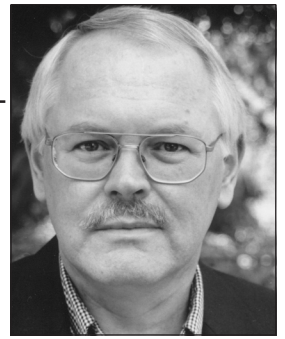
“Children also have the right to a healthy and secure family environment,” he said.

Seeing children without rights, or rather children whose right to childhood has been stolen, is to be a witness to history — important history. It has been the greatest privilege of my life as a journalist. I have no doubt that when politicians who bestride our headlines and shocking revelations that fill our social media feeds have become too obscure to include in future editions of *Trivial Pursuit*, the real history of this century will be the history of great migrations rebalancing our global population. To see it as a journalist is to touch the trauma and sometimes the glory of our times.

Faith demands we keep our eyes open. Faith demands we know our tradition. Faith cannot relinquish the rights of even one child. §

In Exile

RON ROLHEISER, omi



rary psychology, a more balanced spirituality makes these assertions.

First, that when our biblical language tells us that God gets angry and unleashes his fury, we are dealing with anthropomorphism. God doesn't get angry with us when we do wrong. Rather what happens is that we get angry with ourselves and we feel as if that anger were somehow “God's wrath”. Next, most psychologists today tell us that many of our feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred are in fact unhealthy, a simple neurosis, and not at all an indication that we did something wrong. These feelings only indicate how we feel about ourselves, not how God feels about us.

However, that being admitted, it is too simple to write off our feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred as a mere neurosis. Why? Because even if these feelings are completely or largely unmerited, they may still be an important voice inside us, that is, while they don't indicate that God is displeased or angry with us, they still can be a voice inside us that won't be silent until we ask ourselves why we are displeased and angry with ourselves.

Here's an example. There is a wonderfully enlightening exchange in the 1990s movie, *City Slickers*. Three men are having a conversation about the morality of having a sexual affair. One asks the other, “If you could have an affair and get away with it, would you do it?” The other replies: “No, I still wouldn't do it.” “Why not?” he is asked, “nobody would know.” His response contains a much-neglected insight regarding the question of guilt, shame, and self-hatred. He replies, “*I would know, and I would hate myself for it!*”

There is such a thing as Christian “guilt neurosis” (which incidentally is not limited to Christians, Jews, Muslims and other religious persons, but is universal among all morally sensitive people). However, not all feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred are neurotic. Some are trying to teach us a deep moral and religious truth, that is, while we can never do a single thing to make God angry with us for one minute, we can do many things that make us angry with ourselves. While we can never do anything to make God hate us, we can do things that have us hate ourselves. And, while we can never do anything to make God withhold forgiveness from us, we can do things that make it difficult for us to forgive ourselves. God is never the problem. We are.

Feelings of guilt, shame, and self-hatred do not of themselves indicate whether we have done something wrong, but *they do indicate how we feel about what we have done* — and that can be an important moral and religious voice inside us.

Not everything that bothers us is a pathology.

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
Castle Fallsview Funeral Home
309 Lancaster Ave, Saint John, NB E2M 2L3
506-634-1701 www.castlefnh.ca

To enrich, clarify doctrine, theologians must risk new studies, pope says

By CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Theologians must explore and "venture" out further to help enrich doctrine while catechists must stick to established, "solid" doctrine, never anything new, Pope Francis told theologians.

"The theologian dares to go further, and it will be the magisterium that will stop him," the pope said in an audience with members of the International Theological Commission.

"The vocation of the theologian is always to risk going further because he is seeking, and he is trying to make theology clearer," the pope said.

Catechists, on the other hand, must only present doctrine that is precise, correct and "solid," he said, "not the possible novelties, some of which are good."

Never give children and adults any catechesis "with new doctrines that are not sure," he added.

The International Theological Commission is a papally appointed board of religious and lay theologians from different parts of the world

who examine "doctrinal issues of great importance and relevance," according to the Vatican, and advise the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

When Pope Francis concluded his address by thanking members for their valuable service, he added: "Perhaps it would be important to increase the number of women." Of the 28 members on the current commission, five are women.

He said the reason is "not because they are the trend, but because they think differently from men and make theology something more profound and even more 'flavorful.'"

The commission members are working on three themes: emerging anthropological issues "of crucial significance for the journey of the human family in the light of the divine plan of salvation"; the theology of creation from a Trinitarian perspective; and the relevance of the Christological faith professed by the Council of Nicaea, according to the pope.

The commission is led by Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the doctrinal office, and its secretary general is Monsignor Piero Coda. Members serve a five-year term. §

Spiritual consolation is deep joy that motivates one to 'do good'



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis leads his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square Nov. 23, 2022. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The spiritual practice of discernment, of seeing where God is at work in one's life and what God is calling one to do, includes examining what brings a sense of consolation and spurs one to do good, Pope Francis said.

Spiritual consolation "is a profound experience of interior joy, consisting in seeing God's presence in everything. It strengthens faith and hope and also the ability to do good," Pope Francis said Novem-ber 23 at his weekly general audience.

Since late August, the pope has been using his general audience talks to explain discernment, especially as taught by St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. Although focused on making deci-sions, as a spiritual practice it involves not only looking at what is

good and bad, but also examining one's life and feelings to notice where God is at work and where God may be urging one to go.

Of course, everyone would like to experience spiritual consolation, the pope said. But it is a gift of the Holy Spirit and brings a joy that is not superficial.

"Consolation is an interior movement that touches our depths," the pope said. "It is not flashy but soft, delicate, like a drop of water on a sponge," as St. Ignatius described it.

Consolation is seen in the lives of "many saints who were able to do great things, not because they thought they were magnificent or ca-pable, but because they had been conquered by the peaceful sweet-ness of God's love," he said. "This is the peace that St. Ignatius dis-covered in himself with such amazement when he would read the lives of the saints" and "the peace that Edith Stein felt after her con-version."

"To be consoled is to be at peace with God, to feel that everything is peacefully settled, everything is harmonious within us," the pope said.

But, he said, the consolation from God does not make a person want to just "sit there enjoying it, no, it gives you peace and draws you to the Lord and sets you on the way to do things, to do good things."

"In times of consolation, when we are consoled, we get the desire to do so much good, always," he said. It is the opposite of when a person is in spiritual desolation or sadness and has the urge to with-draw "and do nothing. Consolation pushes you forward, in service to others, to society, to people."

However, the pope said, "we must be attentive. We must distin-guish between consolation that is of God and false consolation," which is a weak imitation.

"If authentic consolation is like a drop on a sponge, soft and inti-mate, its imitations are noisier and flashier," he said, and it leads peo-ple to focus only on themselves and not reach out to care for others.

"False consolation can become a danger if we seek it obsessively as an end in itself, forgetting the Lord," the pope said. "As St. Bernard would say, this is like seeking the consolations of God rather than the God of consolations." §

Christmas in Bethlehem with Orthodox Christians

By ALBERTO ELLI and CLAIRE RIOBÉ

Reprinted with permission from St. Anthony Messenger

For Orthodox Christians in the Middle East, the celebration of Christmas begins around the time many American Catholics are taking down their ornaments and packing away their Nativity sets. Visitors to Bethlehem from all faith traditions can look forward to a rich tapestry of rituals to celebrate the birth of Christ.

While Latin, or Roman Catholic, Christians celebrate on December 25, the Orthodox celebrations begin in January and include solemn processions, beautiful hymns, and liturgies in a variety of languages.

Because they follow different calendars, members of the Greek Orthodox, Syriac Christian, Coptic Orthodox, and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches celebrate Christmas Eve on January 6 and Christmas Day on January 7. Those who belong to the Armenian Orthodox Church in the Holy Land celebrate on January 18 and 19.

Greek Orthodox: The ‘Mother Church’ leads the way

In the Middle East, more Christians belong to the Greek Orthodox Church than to any other Christian group, an estimated 65,000 in Israel and the Palestinian Authority Territory. The Greeks, Armenians, and Latins (Roman Catholics) share Bethlehem’s Basilica of the Nativity, each group having certain rights there under the Status Quo agreement (see sidebar this page). The centuries-old agreement, created in response to tensions over schedules and the use of spaces in Bethlehem and Jerusalem, details which Churches are responsible for specific sites and when they can conduct their religious services.

On the afternoon of January 5, Jerusalem’s Greek Orthodox patriarch makes a solemn entrance into Bethlehem and is greeted by Greek Orthodox Christians and visitors from around the world. He is also officially greeted by representatives of the Palestinian Authority, whose

territory includes Bethlehem.

The highlight of the Greek festivities is the procession to the city’s Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The president of the Palestinian Authority often attends the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on January 6, as he does for the Franciscans’ celebration on December 24.

The Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem bears the title of “Mother Church” of the Christian Churches. Its patriarch is regarded as the direct successor of James the Just, the first bishop of Jerusalem (Acts of the Apostles 12:17, 15:13, and 21:18).

Syriac Orthodox Christians: celebrating the language of Jesus

The morning procession of the Syrians to the Basilica of the Nativity begins at the Armenian monastery. The atmosphere is solemn but joyful; the air is filled with the sound of the drums and bagpipes of Scout groups around Bethlehem.

At 3 p.m., the Syriac Orthodox community descends into the Cave of the Nativity and later celebrates in Aramaic the first of its three Christmas liturgies on an altar between the choirs of the Greeks and the Armenians. “Most young people no longer speak Aramaic,” says Abouna (Father) Shimon, a Syriac priest serving in Jerusalem.

Originating in southeastern Turkey, it was the first language of Jesus and many early Christians in the land where he lived. After the liturgies, the Syriac clergy meet in front of the basilica with dignitaries from the Palestinian Authority, who offer greetings first to the Greeks, then to the Syriac community.

Christmas in Bethlehem also requires patient waiting because several Christian communities are celebrating in the same church, following one another throughout the day. The Syrians must wait until midnight before they begin their second Christmas liturgy, celebrated on a small altar in the Armenian part of the basilica “loaned” to them for the day.

In the choir, women and men alternately sing psalms and antiphons as a tribute to the newborn child. “We attach great importance to

(continued on page 10)



A procession through Bethlehem is a key part of how Orthodox Christians from Ethiopia begin their celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. (St. Anthony Messenger photo)

Status quo: sharing churches

Bethlehem’s Basilica of the Nativity dates to the fourth century, when St. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, initiated its construction.

The current building dates from the 12th century. Its artwork of the Magi caused Persian invaders in the seventh century not to destroy it because these men looked like them. Jerusalem’s Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre and many other churches were not so fortunate.

The Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox clergy there were joined after 1342 by Friars Minor, whom Pope Clement VI designated as the Roman Catholic Church’s official representatives.

Tensions over schedules and the use of spaces in Bethlehem and Jerusalem caused Sultan Osman II in 1757 to issue the Status Quo agreement, affirming that current arrangements should continue, as well as indicating who is responsible for specific areas and when they can conduct their religious services. The agreement was reconfirmed in 1852 and 1853.

Major renovations (such as the spectacular ones carried out very recently in Bethlehem and earlier at Holy Sepulchre) must be jointly agreed upon and financed by the Greeks, the Latins, and the Armenians. Each group designates a representative to work jointly on all Status Quo issues. §

Pope Francis talks about church division, women, abortion

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In a wide-ranging interview with top staff of *America* magazine, Pope Francis decried increased polarization within the Catholic Church, affirmed the need to involve more women in church administration but ruled out women priests and emphasized the importance of the ministry of individual bishops over the role of a bishops' conference.

"The more polarization there is, the more one loses the Catholic spirit and falls into a sectarian spirit," the pope told staff from the Jesuit weekly. "What is Catholic is not either-or, but is both-and, combining differences."

Jesuit Fathers Matt Malone and Sam Sawyer, respectively the outgoing and incoming editors of *America*, executive editor Kerry Weber, Vatican correspondent Gerard O'Connell and podcast host Gloria Purvis interviewed Pope Francis November 22. The interview was released November 28.

Asked about abortion and the way the emphasis on church teaching against abortion seemed to be politicizing and polarizing Catholics in the United States, Pope Francis insisted the fetus is a human being and repeated his view that abortion is killing a human being to resolve a problem.

But, he said, the problem for the church "arises when this reality of killing a human being is transformed into a political question, or when a pastor of the church uses political categories."

"When I see a problem like this one, which is a crime, become strongly, intensely political, there is a failure of pastoral care in approaching this problem," the pope said. "We cannot deal with (abortion) as if it is only a civil matter."

Pope Francis did not explain how he thought a bishop or priest could explain church teaching in

a way that was pastoral but not political and he declined to give an opinion on whether the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops should present the fight against abortion as its preeminent concern.

"This is a problem the bishops' conference has to resolve within itself. What interests me is the relationship of the bishop with the people, which is sacramental," he said. "The sacramental part of the pastoral ministry is in the relationship between the pastor and the people of God, between the bishop and his people. And this cannot be delegated to the bishops' conference."

"Jesus did not create bishops' conferences," the pope said. "Jesus created bishops, and each bishop is pastor of his people."

On the question of women in the church, Pope Francis insisted that ordained ministry is open only to men but that the church has a feminine, Marian dimension that is even more important. But, he said, administrative roles do not belong to either theological category, and the church should appoint more women to those offices.

"That the woman does not enter into the ministerial life is not a deprivation. No," the pope said. The place of women, as a "mirror" of the church as mother and spouse, "is much more important," although he admitted the Catholic Church has not done a very good job developing that aspect of theology and explaining it.

On the question of Russia's war on Ukraine and on the Vatican's relationship with China, Pope Francis insisted that openness to dialogue is the

best way forward.

While many Ukrainians and others would like the pope to condemn Russia and Russian President Vladimir Putin by name, the pope said he did not think it was necessary. "If you have a martyred people, you have someone who martyrs them."

"Why do I not name Putin? Because it is not necessary; it is already known," he said, adding that "the position of the Holy See is to seek peace and to seek an understanding. The diplomacy of the Holy See is moving in this direction and, of course, is always willing to mediate."

As for China, the interview was conducted two days before a bishop was installed as "auxiliary bishop of Jiangxi," a diocese the Vatican does not recognize and an appointment the Vatican said it did not agree to, in violation of its controversial accord with China on the appointment of bishops.

Asked about criticism that the Vatican has been silent on China's human rights violations in exchange for having input on the appointment of bishops, the pope said: "It is not a matter of speaking or silence. That is not the reality. The reality is to dialogue or not to dialogue. And one dialogues up to the point that is possible."

"With China I have opted for the way of dialogue. It is slow, it has its failures, it has its successes, but I cannot find another way," Pope Francis said. "There are Christians there. They have to be cared for, so that they may be good Chinese and good Christians."§



Best Quality,
Service & Prices!

Laser Design Experts

Classic Memorials Inc.

*Classic uses only the very best granites available and
unconditionally guarantees every monument sold.*

Area Representatives

Office & Showroom: St. Joseph's Cemetery, 327 Westmorland Rd, Saint John, 653-6861

Reid's Funeral Home, Hampton, 832-5541

Fundy Funeral Home, Saint John, 646-2424

Four Generations of Monument Craftsmen

• Commercial • Industrial
• Residential • Construction

JOHN FLOOD & SONS
(1961) LTD.
SINCE 1848

634-1112
32 Frederick St.
Saint John

Halifax settles abuse claim for \$10 million

By QUINTON AMUNDSON
The Catholic Register

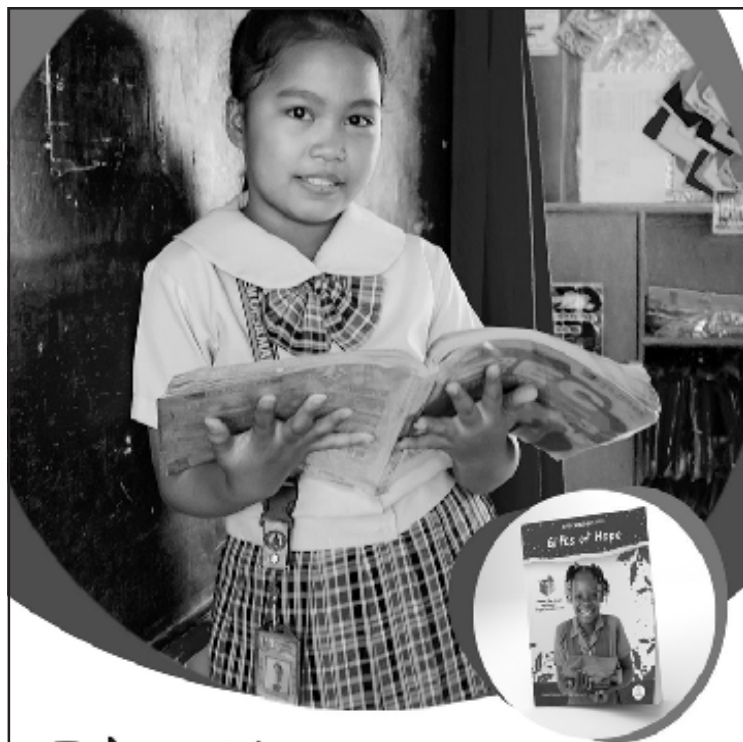
HALIFAX — The Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth will pledge up to \$10 million to settle a class action lawsuit over acts of sexual abuse committed by diocesan priests dating back nearly seven decades.

This figure was reached between the archdiocese and the plaintiffs, represented by Halifax personal injury lawyer John McKiggan, in September, over four years since the class action was first launched in August 2018. Justice Christa Brothers of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court gave the settlement her seal of approval November 14.

Upon the court's approval, Archbishop Brian Dunn said in all of this, the one thing that has to be kept in mind is the victims.

"While the class action suit is a constant reminder of the damage and great hurt that has been inflicted on individuals by members of the clergy, it is necessary to provide an opportunity for justice and healing for all victims. It is a hard thing to do but it is the right thing to do," Archbishop Dunn said in a statement.

The statement also emphasized that the archdiocese has "zero tolerance for sexual abuse of any kind — past, present or future."



Education opens
the future

Give *hope* to a child

To select your gift of Hope, check
out our 2022 Gift Catalogue

chalice.ca/gift-catalogue 1.800.776.6855



Archbishop Dunn shed light on the next steps in an interview with *The Catholic Register*.

"We have a month now to ensure the (agreement) is accepted. December 17 is the date when claimants can start coming forward, and they have a year to come forward," he said.

Mr. McKiggan told *The Canadian Press* that "the settlement will pay about 90 survivors between \$30,000 and \$350,000 each." He added that the total number of eligible claimants is "an estimate based on expert evidence and data collected from the American College of Catholic Bishops."

Back in 2012, Mr. McKiggan secured \$16 million in compensation on behalf of 142 victims of sexual abuse from Diocese of Antigonish clergy.

The lead plaintiff in the case against the archdiocese is 62-year-old Steven Gallant. The notice of action and claim reveals that Mr. Gallant "was raised in a very Catholic family in Halifax. He served as an altar boy for parish priest Father Robert McDougall."

Fr. McDougall, who passed away in 2008, served the parishes of Immaculate Conception in Truro, St. Lawrence, St. Catherine, St. Agnes and St. Patrick in Halifax, according to his obituary. He also served St. Thomas More in Dartmouth and St. Pius X in Fairview, N.S. In 1999, Fr. McDougall pleaded guilty to two counts of indecent sexual assaults for offences in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Chronicle Herald reported on May 19, 1999 that Fr. McDougall was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment, which could be served as a house arrest if he followed strict conditions, including having no unsupervised contact with any persons under the age of 18.

According to the statement of claim document, Fr. McDougall secured the trust of Gallant's family and invited young Steven to stay at his cottage. The document stated the following: "McDougall offered Steven alcohol and told him that he would have to sleep in McDougall's bed (even though there were three bedrooms in the cottage). McDougall sexually assaulted Gallant."

The abuse profoundly changed Mr. Gallant's life. He suffered depression and dropped out of high school. Mr. Gallant found out years later when he finally had the courage to speak out that two of his brothers were also assaulted by Fr. McDougall.

The document then details that Mr. Gallant and one of his brothers had several meetings with Archbishop James Hayes and Fr. McDougall to discuss the latter's conduct. The archbishop instructed the priest to receive treatment at the Southdown Institute north of Toronto. Upon Fr. McDougall's return, he was assigned pastor of St. Lawrence in Halifax.

According to the document, Mr. Gallant told the archdiocese that the decision was "dangerous and irresponsible." Mr. Gallant then arranged his own meeting with Fr. McDougall to bid him to stand down from his appointment or he would call the police. Fr. McDougall did soon step down from his posting at St. Lawrence, but he was still permitted to fill in at various parishes from time to time.

Ultimately, Mr. Gallant and his brother did file criminal charges against Fr. McDougall with the RCMP, which brought a criminal conviction.

Regarding the way ahead, Archbishop Dunn said the archdiocese and its member parishes "have worked really hard to ensure we have a safe environment for everyone in all of our parishes, and to really show we are concerned for those we serve."§

Christmas in Bethlehem with Orthodox Christians

(continued from page 7)

singing,” says Fr. Shimon. The small assembly is made up of about 40 faithful, most of whom come from Syriac Orthodox families in neighbouring villages.

The Syriac Orthodox meet in the early morning on January 7 for the last of three Christmas celebrations. They read from the Gospel of St. Luke in the basilica and then in the Cave of the Nativity below. The festivities end in the afternoon at the Armenian convent before the Syriacs depart for Jerusalem to celebrate Christmas with their families.

The Syriac Church traces its origins to the Church of Antioch, founded by the apostles Peter and Paul. Its spirituality is marked by asceticism and a liturgy inherited from the early Christians of Jerusalem, with a rich heritage of hymns.

The Syriac Orthodox Church today has nearly 300,000 faithful worldwide.

Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox: fasts and feasts

The Coptic Orthodox Church is present in Egypt and Ethiopia. Because they celebrate in Bethlehem on different days, the Copts are able to use the Armenians’ main altar in the north transept.

In the second century, Christmas and Epiphany were celebrated in Egypt on the same day. Now they are separate feasts. In fact, for centuries Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus, the Epiphany, and his Baptism as a single feast.

The Ethiopians celebrate not in the basilica but in a small monastery in Bethlehem. A celebration in Manger Square uses African rhythms to herald the arrival of their patriarch.

They observe a long fast before this feast. The midnight Mass on Christmas is preceded by the singing of long hymns and the reciting of psalms. After the liturgy, families usually join in a common meal. They may then play a type of hockey game, minus the ice.

Armenian Orthodox: a festival of music and prayer

Father Samuel Aghoyan is the superior of the Armenian community at Jerusalem’s Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

Every year, on January 18, he goes to Bethlehem to celebrate the birth of Jesus. In the Basilica of the Nativity, the Greek and Armenian Orthodox both have altars on the main level of the church. At their altar in the north transept, they celebrate a lengthy Christmas vigil presided over by the Armenian patriarch, currently Nourhan Manougian.

“The Holy Land is the cradle of Christendom, where Christ was born, died, and rose,” explains Fr. Samuel. “To live this festival in Bethlehem, within the Armenian community, is, therefore, something truly unique for every Christian, whether Armenian or not.

“On January 18, we celebrate the birth of Christ, his Baptism, and [the] Epiphany. This was the practice among early Christians until the fourth century, when other Christian denominations separated the holidays.” He notes that Armenian Orthodox Christians outside of the Holy Land celebrate Christmas on January 6.

“For rituals, I must say that music is very important to us. The Armenian community is renowned for its choirs and songs. I don’t like the organ that Catholics play during their celebrations. It’s too noisy,” he says with a laugh. “It is much nicer naturally, a cappella!”

The Armenians start with a procession preceded by Boy Scouts to the Basilica of the Nativity. The first liturgy begins around 2 p.m. at the altar above the Cave of the Nativity. They then have two liturgies—in the evening and during the night—at their altar in the northern transept of the basilica.

Around midnight, representatives of the Palestinian Authority hear



Monks sit near the low, narrow door through which each person must humbly pass in order to enter the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. (St. Anthony Messenger photo)

the Armenian patriarch’s message in the cave where Jesus was born. The festivities end around 6 a.m. on January 19. All liturgies are celebrated in classical Armenian.

Approximately 1,000 Armenians live in Jerusalem, many of whom join in the celebration. They are joined by pilgrims from all over the world. For local Christians and pilgrims alike, regardless of their faith tradition, the opportunity to celebrate the birth of Christ in the Holy Land can be a powerful experience of Christian unity.

“The mosaic of rituals and traditions that are observed among the various Christian communities, especially on Christmas, must not allow the world to forget that this is a time of peace,” says Father Aghoyan. “The Christmas celebrations are not meant as a spectacle staged for pilgrims but a witness, in the name of Jesus, in the name of his love, because we are all brothers.”

This text is adapted from six articles by two authors in the Winter 2019 issue of the Holy Land Review, used with their permission. Marie-Armelle Beaulieu, chief editor of the French version of the Holy Land Review, assisted with this article. For information about events at the Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington, DC, visit MyFranciscan.org.

Alberto Elli, a connoisseur of ancient languages and history, has long been fascinated by the rituals and traditions of Orthodox Christians. Claire Riobé is a student of journalism and international affairs who completed a one-year internship with the communication department of the Custody of the Holy Land.§

Latins celebrate on December 25

Roman Catholics (known locally as “the Latins”) gather in Bethlehem on December 24 to welcome the Latin patriarch, who comes from Jerusalem. The Friars Minor assemble in front of the basilica to accompany him into the church. The friars have represented Roman Catholics in this basilica since the 14th century and work closely with the Latin patriarch, who presides at the Midnight Mass celebrated in St. Catherine Church, which adjoins the basilica.

The mass concludes with a procession into the basilica and down to the Cave of the Nativity, where a statue of the infant Jesus is placed on a silver star under an altar used by the Greek Orthodox.

Masses are celebrated throughout the day in the nearby Grotto of the Manger. Because special tickets are needed for the Mass at St. Catherine Church, many Catholic pilgrims join in a mass at the Shepherds’ Field Chapel in nearby Beit Sahour.§

SMITH, MARIE 'MURIEL' LILLIAN — It is with great sadness that the family of Muriel Lillian (Burbridge) Smith announce her peaceful passing on Saturday, November 19, 2022 at the Church of St. John and St. Stephen Home with her family by her side. Born on May 7, 1940 in Pokemouche, NB, she was a daughter of the late Elisabeth (Noel) and Bernard Burbridge.

Muriel will be lovingly remembered by her children, Agnes Richard (Kevin) of Saint John, Edward Smith (Theah) of Minnesota, Wellington Smith (Deborah) of Saint John, Walter Smith (Margaret-Ann) of Moncton, Blair Smith (Tim Arsenault) of Riverview, Jacqueline Smith (Charles Carson) of Saint John and Louis Smith (Christina) of Quispamsis; brothers, Richard (Eileen), Robert (Linda) and Henry (Wanda); sisters, Lydia (the late Fred), Martha (Dale), Matilda (Nelson), Kathleen (Paul) and Pauline (Hector); sister-in-law, Jackie Burbridge; grandchildren, Melissa, Marc, Michelle, Craig, Rebecca, Matthew, Victoria, Zachery, Michael and Ryan; as well as several great-grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, Wellington, and her parents, Muriel was also predeceased by her siblings, David, Frankie and Barbara.

She rested at Brenan's Funeral Home, Saint John. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated from Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish (Stella Maris Church), Saint John. Interment in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Saint John.

TOZER, GENEVIEVE MARIE — It is with heavy hearts, the family of Genevieve M. (Ramsay) (Jardine) (Davidson) Tozer, devoted wife of Herb Tozer, announce her passing in the early hours of Sunday, November 20, 2022, at St. Joseph's Hospital. Born April 9, 1941, in Chatham, NB, she was a daughter of the late Mervin and Bernetta

(Doran) Ramsay. Predeceased by sisters: Florence and Theresa, her Son, Perry and Daughter Linda Jean.

In addition to her beloved husband of 44 years, Herb, Genevieve is survived by her children: Katherine Jardine (Leonard), Kevin Jardine, Twila Jardine, and Robert Davidson (Alicia); grandchildren: Linda, Tammy, Crystal, Adam, Will, Jessica, Tosha, Stephen, Jason, Melanie, Sabrina, Jacob, Quinn, Brooke. Great-grandchildren: Angus, Banen, Pepper, Gaby, Henry, Leah, Easton & Lola. Sister, Mary (Bill Bate); Brothers, Junior (the late Marie) and Billy (Patsy); several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She rested at Brenan's Funeral Home, Saint John. A funeral liturgy was celebrated from Brenan's Chapel, Saint John. Interment will take place at Our Lady of the Rivers in Red Bank N.B. at a date to be announced in the Spring.

HOELLWARTH, GUNTER R. — It is with heartfelt sadness that the family of Gunter R. Hoellwarth announce his passing on November 23, 2022, with his loving family by his side.

Gunter was born in Schwaz, Austria on August 28, 1928. He married life Theresia (Thea) in 1956.

He is survived by daughters, Ingrid (Graham) Rossiter and Nora (Kevin) Boudreau; daughter-in-law, Stephanie; grandchildren: Jessica, Joshua, Emilee, and Sarah; and great-grandson, Silas. He was predeceased by his wife of 65 years, Theresia (Thea); son, Peter; brother, Hermann; and sisters, Marianne and Fini.

He rested at Castle Funeral Home, Saint John. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated from Holy Spirit Parish (St. Rose Worship Site), Saint John. Interment will take place at a later date in St. Augustine's Cemetery, Grand Bay-Westfield. §

'Dream big,' take small steps for peace each day, pope tells students

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis told Italian students to "dream big" like St. John XXIII and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. about the world of peace and justice they would like to see. And at the same time, he wished them a good Advent journey "made up of many small gestures of peace each day: gestures of acceptance, encounter, understanding, closeness, forgiveness and service. Gestures that come from the heart and are steps toward Bethlehem, toward Jesus, who is the prince of peace." Pope Francis met November 28 with some 6,000 Italian schoolchildren, teens and their teachers, who have been participating in the program of the National Network of Schools for Peace.

The program is focusing on the theme, "For Peace. With Care," and Pope Francis told them that the second part is essential. "Usually, we talk about peace when we feel directly threatened, as in the case of a possible nuclear attack or a war being fought on our doorstep," the pope said. And "we care about the rights of migrants when we have some relative or friend who has migrated." But even when war is not near or threatening someone known, "peace is always, always about us! Just as it always concerns another, our brother or sister, and he or she must be taken care of," the pope told the students. §

Violence against women is a 'scourge'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Violence against women is "a social scourge that is also linked to cultural attitudes, ingrained mentalities and prejudices," so education, prevention and swifter justice are needed to end it, Pope Francis said. Noting the commemoration November 25 of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the pope met with members of the central anti-crime directorate of the Italian state police November 26 and offered his support the next day to a group that marched through Rome to draw attention to the use of violence against women as a weapon of war. The British Embassy to the Holy See, the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and the Vatican sports team, Atletica Vaticana, co-sponsored the walk to St. Peter's Square on the eve of an international conference on preventing sexual violence in conflict situations. Greeting the marchers after the recitation of the Angelus November 27, Pope Francis said that sexual violence against women is "unfortunately a general and widespread reality everywhere and also used as a weapon of war. Let us not tire of saying no to war, no to violence, yes to dialogue, yes to peace — particularly for the martyred Ukrainian people." §

It's all about having the time now to make choices that make sense for you and make it easier for your family. It takes very little time to leave them your wishes, leaving you all plenty of time to get on with making memories.

That's why we think preplanning makes sense.

Paradise Row
Brenan's
 FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORIUM
 111 Paradise Row 634-7424
 www.brenansfh.com

It's about time.

John W. Doyle
 Vice-President

Karen Bremner
 Managing Director

Changes in the Diocese of Saint John

SAINT JOHN — The Most Reverend Christian Riesbeck, C.C., bishop of Saint John announces the following clergy assignments:

Reverend Dr. Michael McGowan is appointed chancellor of the diocese effective January 1, 2023.

Father Douglas McNeill completes his term as episcopal vicar for Temporal Affairs, effective December 9, 2022. Temporal Affairs will become the responsibility of the vicar general, Monsignor Brian Henneberry.

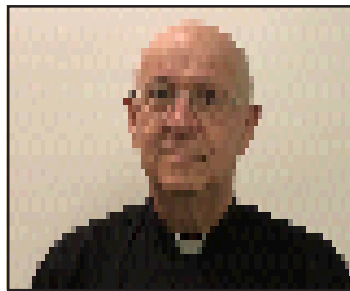
Fr. McNeill is appointed pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Saint John, effective February 15, 2023.

Father Ralph McRae, episcopal vicar, is appointed rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Saint John, effective February 15, 2023.

Bishop Riesbeck also announces the following parish changes:

Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Fredericton, is merged in an extinctive union with Our Lady of Peace Parish, Fredericton. Our Lady of Fatima Church will close after a final mass has been celebrated there on January 8, 2023. St. Anthony's Church, Fredericton, St. Theresa's Church, Fredericton, and St. Patrick's Church, Stanley, will remain.

An announcement on Our Lady of Hope Parish / Paroisse Notre-Dame de l'Esperance, Miramichi will be forthcoming. §



Reverend Dr. Michael McGowan



Father Douglas McNeill



Monsignor Brian Henneberry



Father Ralph McRae

COP27 deal 'not enough' says D&P delegate

By MICHAEL SWAN
The Catholic Register

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt — Money for the damage done isn't the same thing as preventing even more damage. That simple distinction left Yusra Shafi, Development and Peace-Caritas Canada delegate to the COP27 climate change conference, disappointed as she flew home from Egypt.

"This simply isn't enough to deal with the climate catastrophe we have on our hands," the 21-year-old student and Development and Peace activist said via WhatsApp from Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, as delegates dispersed.

The gathering of 90 heads of state, about 35,000 delegates and 190 countries ran almost two days beyond the conference's scheduled two weeks and ended up with a first-ever agreement to set up a loss and damage fund to help poor nations that have suffered

through disasters caused by climate change — floods, droughts, catastrophic storms, etc. But no commitment was made to phase out fossil fuels, the main driver of climate change.

"It is shocking to see that the world still cannot agree on that," Ms. Shafi said. "I'm excited to follow the developments of the loss and damage fund, and I do think it is meaningful — but it is only one factor out of many, many others."

Development and Peace came out in support of the African bishops' conferences, saying that the sum of money available through the loss and damage fund is less important than what it is spent on. The Catholic development and humanitarian aid agency wants the money available for ecologically sustainable agriculture that keeps poor families on their land, growing food.

Development and Peace chimed in with the African bishops' conferences of SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar) in calling for "a new culture based on integral

ecology by putting peasant agroecology at the heart of adaptation and mitigation solutions."

At Kairos, the Canadian ecumenical social justice collective, Global Partnership Coordinator for Africa and climate justice Radia Mbengue also highlighted how the loss and damage money should be spent.

"We need to ensure these funds are truly accessible to the most vulnerable and that developed countries, including Canada, are held accountable for the impact of their resource extraction companies around the world, especially on racialized communities," she said. §

Saint John Christmas Exchange

The Saint John Christmas Exchange is a non-profit agency, coordinating with churches/agencies in the Saint John area. Our goal is to provide food for Christmas dinner to those in need.

Our office opens Monday, November 14, 2022 and the last day for registration is Wednesday, December 9, 2022. We are asking individuals/families, to register early. Please contact the church to see when their registrations start. You can register for Christmas Exchange at only one place. Duplication of registrations will result in delays.

Churches require current Government ID, for each household member. The Exchange checks all those registered for duplication.

The church/agency where you register provides for you, and will advise when you can pick up your Gift Card or Basket. The Christmas Exchange Organization does not give Gift Cards to individuals.

The Christmas Exchange does not take registrations.

