

# The New Freeman

September 23, 2022

Vol. 122 No. 38



**OTTAWA** — A teepee stands in front of Parliament in Ottawa. A new papal statement on the Doctrine of Discovery is expected soon. Story page 6. (Michael Swan photo)



**VATICAN CITY** — The first task of a catechist is to love the Lord and to live the faith in a way that makes others want to live it, too, Pope Francis said. He was speaking at the International Congress on Catechesis in Rome. Story page 11. (CNS photo/Yara Nardi, Reutersphoto)



**SAINT JOHN** — (Photo above) Rocmuara Nursing Home in Saint John will celebrate its 50th anniversary at its fall gala by honouring the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception, who founded the home. The home opened its doors on December 16, 1973. Story page 12. (Photo Rocmaura Nursing Home)

**OTTAWA** — (Photo right) Canadians are seeking a welcoming Church, according to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishop's National Synthesis, one that looks at issues like reconciliation with Indigenous, clerical sexual abuse and welcoming LGBTQ people. Story page 3. (Michael Swan photo)



# MP vows to fight to maintain charitable status for pro-life agencies

By QUINTONAMUNDSO  
The Catholic Register

A bullet point on page four of the Liberal Party of Canada's 2021 election platform *Forward. For Everyone.* conveyed the party's intention to strip pro-life non-profits of their charity status.

According to the document, these organizations "provide dishonest counselling to women about their rights and about the options available to them at all stages of the pregnancy."

The fall session of Parliament begins September 20 — exactly one year since the most recent federal election — and this campaign promise has yet to be fulfilled. Conservative MP Garnett Genuis said he and his colleagues will try to muster enough public support to make sure it never is.

Genuis said a ruling party must not be involved in deciding which organizations should receive charitable status and will petition to bring attention to the matter.

"These petitions call on the government to maintain political neutrality in charity status determination," said Mr. Genuis.

*Forward. For Everyone.* did not shed light on how the federal government intends to achieve its goal. Two avenues at the Liberals' disposal include introducing a bill or tucking the measure within a larger omnibus package.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did offer a clue about the potential pathway in his mandate letters to Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland and Marci Ien, the minister for women, gender equality and youth. He instructed both ministers to work towards "introducing amendments in the Income Tax Act" to make pro-life organizations ineligible for charitable status.

Crisis pregnancy centres were singled out as an example of an entity providing "dishonest counselling," but Mr. Genuis said the intended purview is far-reaching.

"Schools, Catholic hospitals, summer camps, these are some of the institutions that are at risk," he said. "It is a much broader attack on the charitable status of organizations with a pro-life orientation."

The Liberals have already tried a similar tactic. In 2018 Canada Summer Jobs grants applicants were required to declare support for abortion to receive funding. This led to hundreds of summer camps and other or-



**Garnett Genuis** (Wikipedia photo)

ganizations losing funding for not signing the attestation.

The blowback was furious against the Liberals and the following year it was retooled to require applicants to declare they wouldn't infringe upon any Canadian's legal rights.

In contrast to the dynamic on Parliament Hill, Jutta Wittmeier, executive director of the Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre (CPCC), said she does her best to avoid investing time and energy in the political discourse surrounding her profession. She instead wishes to focus on doing meaningful work.

"We're not political. We're not involved in the debate. We do so much more. My concern is that there are many young families in difficult circumstances who need support, and that is who our organization is helping," she said.

For Ms. Wittmeier, the threat to its charitable status does not compute as there "already isn't enough agencies supporting young families as it is."

The CPCC, a registered non-profit since 1985, has an average clientele of 3,000 per year, including 700 first-time clients, said Ms. Wittmeier. An accredited member of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, the social support organization offers information and education on all pregnancy-related options, counselling, prenatal, parenting and life skill classes and adoption assistance.

Ms. Wittmeier is convinced that "even if (government) took (away our) charitable status" its donors would continue supporting the

(continued on page 3)

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:cletus_1773@hotmail.com)

**Saint John:** Natasha Mazerolle  
[natasha@maz-family.com](mailto: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.*

# Solutions sought for 'Church on the move'

By MICHAEL SWAN  
The Catholic Register

Canadians want a synodal Church, a listening Church, an active Church, a welcoming Church, a hopeful Church, according to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' *National Synthesis*.

The 10-page synod synthesis paper — assembled from conversations and surveys



**Father Gordon Rixon** (Regis College photo)

conducted at the parish and diocesan level over the second half of 2021 and into 2022 and now deposited with the Dicastery of the Synod of Bishops in Rome — was compiled and written by a committee based in Ottawa which included two bishops, a priest, a religious sister and two lay people. There are

## Pro-life agencies

(continued from page 2)

centre.

Though the CPCC is not primed to actively contribute to the political debate poised to come, Mr. Genuis said advocating on behalf of pro-life institutions will be a key priority for the Conservative Party this fall. He said he feels good about his party's standing heading into the new parliamentary session.

"I'm excited about the potential that our party has to make more of an impact reaching more people. The leadership race has been incredible for engaging with and mobilizing Canadians."

Mr. Genuis spoke with *The Catholic Register* on September 9, one day before Pierre Poilievre was chosen to lead the Conservatives. §

just two phases left in the three-year synod process — a continental phase that will see Canada's bishops meet with their American counterparts to discuss and produce a further synthesis, then the final meeting of bishops and experts from around the world in Rome October of 2023.

Through parish and diocesan forums and surveys, lay Catholics told their bishops they liked the synod and they want more of it.

"Synod participants expressed a deep desire to continue the experience of the synodal process in the Church," reads the National Synthesis. "Having lived this experience, they want it to continue into the future."

This enthusiasm is balanced against a degree of cynicism and distrust.

"Some expressed doubts about the outcome of the synodal process due to their perception of the Church as a rigid institution unwilling to change and modernize itself, or due to a suspicion that the synodal outcome had been predetermined," the bishops' committee reported.

Elsewhere in the report, the hierarchy came in for more scolding.

"Although many noted their appreciation for the freedom to speak out during the synodal sessions, some indicated a more general difficulty in speaking out freely and authentically in the Church, whether because of fear of being 'shut down' or fear that their contributions would have no effect," the report found.

Participants didn't want to keep meeting simply for the sake of having somebody to talk to on Zoom, however. There are challenges before the Church which these ordinary Catholics believe can only be met head-on by the whole Church in synod.

Reconciliation with Indigenous people, the continuing crisis of clerical sex abuse, the greying and thinning of the pews, the welcome afforded to LGBTQ people and leadership roles allowed to women, including their exclusion from ordained ministry, all require synodal solutions, said the report.

"In general, the synodal reports affirmed the importance of ecclesial governance formulated in terms of co-responsibility: between clergy and laypeople; and also between men and women," the report said. "Complaints were often heard that clericalism is still very present, marginalizing the laity, and women in particular, in carrying out the co-responsibility of the Church."

On reconciliation with Indigenous Canadians, the theological instincts of ordinary Catholics are correct, said Regis College president

and professor of systematic theology Father Gordon Rixon.

"Surely that (synodality) will be the best context to address the really challenging issues of reconciling with Indigenous communities in Canada... The concept of synodality would be just dead on in terms of what we've been talking about here — walking with others, listening with respect, drawing deeply on our tradition to illumine the way," Fr. Rixon told *The Catholic Register*. "That's synodality in its performance."

To doubt the priority of reconciliation would be to doubt the centrality of the Eucharist as the ordinary Sacrament of Reconciliation, said Fr. Rixon.

"The key to this is to track back to the performance of the faith — how we're living the Eucharist as the source and the summit — and try to walk with that in a life-giving way," he said.

Ecumenism was highlighted in several instances in the National Synthesis.

"It was noted that the Catholic Church could learn from the experience of other churches and ecclesial communities with respect to their living out of synodality," the report reads.

Again, the instinct of ordinary Catholics in the synod gets an A+ from seasoned, accredited ecumenists and theologians.

"By its very nature, the Church is synodal and by its very nature our ecumenical work is synodal," said Father Luis Melo, St. Augustine's Seminary professor of systematic theology and head of the Archdiocese of Toronto's Office for Promoting Christian Unity and Religious Relations With Judaism.

Fr. Melo believes a continued embrace of synodality can only advance the cause of ecumenism.

"If we have a synod on synodality, it's a wake-up call to live this synodality at this particular time in history. It's not a question of whether we have it or don't," he said.

Anglican ecumenist Bishop Linda Nichols, primate of Canada, said the synod simply makes sense from an ecumenical point of view.

"Every bishop knows that the fullness of ministry must include the voices of the laity and clergy and synodal processes create space for that to happen," she wrote in an email.

Bishop Nichols highlighted the Canadian Anglican Roman Catholic official dialogue's workbook *New Stories to Tell* as an example of how synodality finds practical application in ecumenism.

(continued on page 5)

## Openess to a flawed humanity: seeing with God's eyes

The Gospels present us with many stories told by Jesus. These parables offer glimpses of what God is like. In Luke's Gospel (Luke 16:1-13) we catch sight of the generous loving God as revealed by Jesus himself. This parable tells the story of a rich man who had a servant managing his wealth. The manager was accused of "squandering" his wealth and so was fired. Recognizing he was in a tight spot, the manager decided to change the debts owed to his former employer. This he thought would make him new friends at this difficult time. Surprise — the rich man commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. What a strange story! What is the point Jesus is making here? Perhaps there are many.

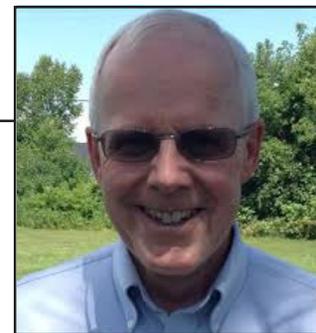
One key point is clearer when we see the location of this story in Luke's Gospel. It follows directly after a parable which is very familiar to us, the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Here the younger son of a man demands his share of the family wealth. He goes away and "squanders" his share. In dire straits, he decides to return home to his father. But filled with guilt he determines that he can no longer be regarded as a member of the family, only a slave to his father. Surprise — the father spots the son returning. Overwhelmed with joy, he runs out to gather the wayward one into his arms. No mention of the "squandering", no mention of the thoughtlessness of the son and his desertion of the family. These two parables shown together are revelations of how God sees us.

As persons, as communities, as a global humanity we are gifted with many resources, much wealth. These are ours to use, in trust from God. How do we use this wealth of resources human, natural, economic? Sometimes we "squander" what we have been given. The temptation to treat it as held only for our own use or to seize it from others can overtake us, as individuals, communities or nations. In this, like the manager or the younger son, we betray the trust.

The two stories reveal God's response. It is a surprising one. God's eyes are ever ready to see beyond the failings. The debts and sins, the hurts and broken trust cannot stand in the way of God's vision. God's

## Our sacred stories

### Father JOHN JENNINGS



unconditional love ever recognizes the goodness of each and every person, even if the person themselves may be blind to it.

Luke presents us with these two parables as Jesus' way of proclaiming a faith in God as ever ready to reconcile and heal. The stories express a faith in a God who challenges us with wealth, gifts and resources, in trust. At the same time, they present a God whose unconditional love can see beyond our failures to live up to this trust. It is a love that can see beyond our failures to the goodness with which God has gifted us.

The two parables express a further point, another challenge. The central characters in the stories, the prodigal son and the manager undergo conversions, changes of view and heart. In their own individual ways, each of them begins to see that their life is threatened and that they must change direction. Both recognized that what they thought was theirs, was in fact not something they held in permanence. The young man needed to reconnect with his family. The manager needed to find a new circle of connection with the debtors.

One might question the routes each character took for this change, but Luke indicates that the very effort to undertake a change of heart and direction does begin a rebuilding of trust and connection.

*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](mailto:jennings@stu.ca). §*

## Vatican announces contest to compose music for Holy Year 2025 hymn

### The Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The Vatican is looking for an original musical score for the official hymn for the Holy Year 2025 that will highlight its theme, "Pilgrims of Hope."

It must be an original and unpublished score for liturgical purposes and for voice and organ to accompany lyrics already written in Italian, it said. "Participation in the competition is free and open to everyone."

A section of the Dicastery for Evangelization, the Vatican office Pope Francis has tapped to coordinate the jubilee planning, announced September 17 that it was launching an international competition for the composition of the Jubilee hymn.

Participants can find the application to enter the contest at [jubilaum2025.va/en/inno.html](http://jubilaum2025.va/en/inno.html) and begin uploading their musical scores January 16; the deadline is March 25.

To participate, applicants must follow the competition regulations and specifications, which include composing a score that can be performed by a "schola cantorum" as well as by a church assembly.

The lyrics have already been written by Monsignor Pierangelo Sequeri, an Italian theologian, composer and musician.

"The composition must set to music the text of the hymn in the

Italian language," the dicastery said. "Once the winning composition is chosen, the dicastery will provide translations into the other major languages."

The hymn "is a song charged with the hope of being freed and supported. It is a song imbued with the hope that it will reach the ears of the one from whom all things flow. It is God who as an ever living flame keeps hope burning and energizes the steps of the people as they journey," the dicastery said. §

## CARLETON

### FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORIUM

337 Lockhart Mill Road Jacksonville NB E7M 3S5

Ph /Fax (506) 328-8430

Funeral Director

Arthur Smith

[www.carletonfuneralhome.ca](http://www.carletonfuneralhome.ca)

"Serving All Faiths & within the Means of All"

## On being jealous of God's generosity

"The cock will crow at the breaking of your own ego – there are lots of ways to wake up!"

John Shea gave me those words and I understood them a little better recently as I stood in line at an airport: I had checked in for a flight, approached security, saw a huge lineup, and accepted the fact that it would take at least 40 minutes to get through it.

I was all right with the long wait and moved patiently in the line — until, just as my turn came, another security crew arrived, opened a second scanning machine, and a whole lineup of people, behind me, who had not waited the forty minutes, got their turns almost immediately. I still got my turn as I would have before, but something inside of me felt slighted and angry: "This wasn't fair! I'd been waiting for forty minutes, and they got their turns at the same time as I did!" I had been content waiting, until those who arrived later didn't have to wait at all. I hadn't been treated unfairly, but some others had been luckier than I'd been.

That experience taught me something, beyond the fact that my heart isn't always huge and generous. It helped me understand something about Jesus' parable concerning the workers who came at the 11th hour and received the same wages as those who'd worked all day and what is meant by the challenge that is given to those who grumbled about the unfairness of this: "Are you envious because I'm generous?"

Are we jealous because God is generous? Does it bother us when others are given unmerited gifts and forgiveness?

You bet! Ultimately, that sense of injustice, of envy that someone else caught a break is a huge stumbling block to our happiness. Why? Because something in us reacts negatively when it seems that life is not making others pay the same dues as we are paying.

In the Gospels we see an incident where Jesus goes to the synagogue on a Sabbath, stands up to read, and quotes a text from Isaiah — except he doesn't quote it fully but omits a part. The text (Isaiah

## Church on the move

(continued from page 3)

"Canadians already are engaged ecumenically," she said. "This is not doing ecumenism differently, just deepening and strengthening the ties we already have."

The National Synthesis reveals that many Catholics still think of the Church as simply the hierarchy of bishops, priests and deacons and struggle to think of it in terms of the entire "People of God," said independent Catholic theologian Christopher Duncanson-Hales from Sudbury, Ont. Hales has been collecting diocesan and parish synod reports to build up a detailed snapshot of the Church in Canada now.

"Being a synodal Church means that we are the Church," said Mr. Duncanson-Hales, referencing Vatican II's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, which called the Church the "People of God."

Instead of fully embracing that vision, synod responses are often narrowly focused on Sunday Mass and how the local parish is functioning, Mr. Duncanson-Hales said.

"It's all about the people who aren't coming into our space, because we're not being welcoming or we're not doing this," he said. "But it's not about us going out and meeting people where they are."

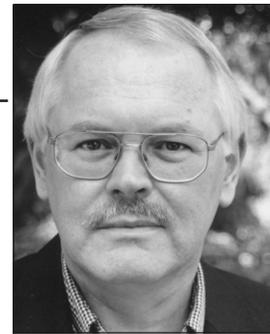
Mr. Duncanson-Hales finds the most relevant image of a synodal Church in the Gospel of Luke.

"The road to Emmaus is the animating image for synodality," he said.

"It's a Church on the move."§

## In Exile

**RON ROLHEISER, omi**



61,1-2) would have been well known to his listeners and it describes Isaiah's vision of what will be the sign that God has finally broken into the world and irrevocably changed things. And what will that be?

For Isaiah, the sign that God is now ruling the earth will be good news for the poor, consolation for the broken-hearted, freedom for the enslaved, grace abundant for everyone, and vengeance on the wicked. Notice though, when Jesus quotes this, he leaves out the part about vengeance. Unlike Isaiah, he doesn't say that part of our joy will be seeing the wicked punished.

In heaven we will be given what we are owed and more (unmerited gift, forgiveness we don't deserve, joy beyond imagining) but, it seems, we will not be given that catharsis we so much want here on earth, the joy of seeing the wicked punished.

The joys of heaven will not include seeing Hitler suffer. Indeed, the natural itch we have for strict justice ("An eye for an eye") is exactly that, a natural itch, something the Gospels invite us beyond. The desire for strict justice blocks our capacity for forgiveness and thereby prevents us from entering heaven where God, like the Father of the Prodigal Son, embraces and forgives without demanding a pound of flesh for a pound of sin.

We know we need God's mercy, but if grace is true for us, it must be true for everyone; if forgiveness is given us, it must be given everybody; and if God does not avenge our misdeeds, God must not avenge the misdeeds of others either. Such is the logic of grace, and such is the love of the God to whom we must attune ourselves.

Happiness is not about vengeance, but about forgiveness; not about vindication, but about unmerited embrace; and not about capital punishment, but about living beyond even murder.

It is not surprising that, in some of the great saints, we see a theology bordering on universalism, namely, the belief that in the end God will save everyone, even the Hitlers. They believed this not because they didn't believe in hell or the possibility of forever excluding ourselves from God, but because they believed that God's love is so universal, so powerful, and so inviting that, ultimately, even those in hell will see the error of their ways, swallow their pride, and give themselves over to love. The final triumph of God, they felt, will be when the devil himself converts and hell is empty.

Maybe that will never happen. God leaves us free. Nevertheless, when I, or anyone else, is upset at an airport, at a parole board hearing, or anywhere else where someone gets something we don't think he or she deserves, we have to accept that we're still a long way from understanding and accepting the kingdom of God.

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com) Facebook [www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser](http://www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser) &*

Father Ron Rolheiser's column *In Exile* is sponsored by

Brenan's Funeral Home

111 Paradise Row, Saint John, NB

506-634-7424 [www.brenansfh.com](http://www.brenansfh.com)

# Statement on Doctrine of Discovery imminent

By MICHAEL SWAN  
The Catholic Register

A date for a new papal statement on the *Doctrine of Discovery*, promised by Pope Francis on his way home from Canada to Rome, has not been announced. But whenever it happens it will address core concerns of Indigenous people in Canada and in many other parts of the world.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops [cccbb] is working with Vatican officials in Rome on the wording for a new statement rejecting an entire tradition of legal reasoning, said CCCB spokesperson Jonathan Lesarge.



**Robert Miller**  
(Sandra Day O'Connor Law School,  
Arizona State University photo)

“Galvanized by the calls of our Indigenous partners and by the Holy Father’s remarks, Canada’s bishops have engaged and are actively working with the Vatican with the goal of issuing a new statement from the Church,” he said. “We do not have a confirmed timeline for when the Holy See intends to release this statement, however the work is ongoing and we hope to have an update in the coming weeks.”

American legal scholar Robert Miller estimates the key 1823 United States Supreme

Court decision that entrenched the Doctrine of Discovery into common law around the world has been cited by courts in Canada 70 times and is the very foundation of property law in the United States.

“How do we acquire title (to property) in the United States?” asked the law professor. “Either you got it from the King of England, or you got it from the King of Spain, or you got it from the King or Queen of France. And you got it from the colonies and then you got it from the Continental Congress and our articles of confederation, or you bought it from the United States government we have now. The U.S. got it by treaties or by conquest. That is all based on the Doctrine of Discovery.”

Mr. Miller teaches at Arizona State University’s Sandra Day O’Connor Law School and is a member of the Eastern Shawnee. His lineage traces back to General Tecumseh, who went to war against the United States allied with the British in 1812, fighting against U.S. expansion into Indigenous lands. Mr. Miller is a leading expert on the *Doctrine of Discovery* and the essential U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Johnson v. McIntosh*, in which European justifications for colonizing the New World were first codified into a legal doctrine.

Among those justifications cited by Justice John Marshall in his 1823 decision were the 1493 papal bull *Inter Caetera* issued by Pope Alexander VI.

In his extensive writing, including the 2010 book *The Doctrine of Discovery: The International Law of Colonialism*, Mr. Miller argues it’s past time for the United States to come up with some alternative, morally justifiable, basis for property law.

The result is nearly 70 million acres of Indigenous land in the United States that Indigenous people cannot fully own. Instead, Indigenous people and nations are “beneficial owners,” while Washington retains trust ownership in much the same way as the Crown in Canada holds

Indigenous lands in trust.

Mr. Miller entertains no illusion that any statement or gesture by Pope Francis will put a legal dent in *Johnson v. McIntosh*.

“The pope’s statements today do not make law. If the pope were to do such a thing it would be a monumental educational moment.”

Countries are beginning to sever their legal ties to *Johnson v. McIntosh* by signing onto the non-binding United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. After rejecting the declaration in 2007, Canada last year passed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. The preamble to the new federal law declares, “all doctrines, policies and practices based on or advocating the superiority of peoples or individuals on the basis of national origin or racial, religious, ethnic or cultural differences, including the Doctrines of Discovery and terra nullius, are racist, scientifically false, legally invalid, morally condemnable and socially unjust.”

Despite assumptions of terra nullius and the Doctrine of Discovery in the 1763 Royal Proclamation, which is one part of Canada’s constitutional architecture, Canada no longer wants anything to do with *Johnson v. McIntosh* or the Doctrine of Discovery, said Department of Justice spokesperson Ian McLeod.

“The Government of Canada’s position is that these ancient doctrines have no place in modern Canadian law and do not inform our ongoing relationship with First Nations, Inuit and Metis,” Mr. McLeod said in an email.

Canada’s Supreme Court declared in the 2014 *Tsilhqot’in* decision that terra nullius never applied in Canada, he said.

Next up for the Government of Canada is developing a “Covenant of Reconciliation” that will specifically reject the Doctrine of Discovery and respond to Call to Action #46 of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report to work “collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society.”

If the Church’s response includes a papal statement that pulls the threadbare moral justifications out from under *Johnson v. McIntosh*, that will be a shot heard round the world, said Mr. Miller.

“It’s not meaningless. It has a symbolic, educative, name-and-shame importance,” he said. “But will it change one legal title in the United States or in your country? No.”§



**MIRAMICHI — St. Samuel’s Church, part of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish in Miramichi, held its annual picnic on Sunday, September 11th from 2-4pm on the church grounds. Free games, a BBQ, ice cream and a jumping castle were the highlights of the day. (Brett Gallant photo)**

# France won't extradite priest, 92, to Canada, but Oblates might expel him

By FRANÇOIS GLOUTNAY  
Catholic News Service

MONTREAL — The French Ministry of Justice announced that France will not extradite Oblate Father Joannès Rivoire to Canada.

However, the priest's congregation, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, said it was moving to expel the former missionary accused of sexual assault against children in parishes he directed in northern Canada in the 1960s to early 1990s. Father Rivoire, now 92, left Canada in 1993 and now lives in France.

On September 14, during a meeting with a delegation of six Inuit from Canada, Father Rivoire denied the accusations made against him.

Shortly before this meeting, the members of the Nunavut delegation, including an alleged victim of Father Rivoire and the two children of another victim, Marius Tungilik, now deceased, spoke with Father Vincent Gruber, superior of the Oblates in France.

Fr. Gruber confirmed in a statement that his congregation's authorities are "determined to continue their efforts to convince Joannès Rivoire to appear before the Canadian justice system," but he refused to listen to them.

The Oblates then revealed that "proceedings for dismissal (from the congregation) have been initiated" against the former missionary, who was in charge of three parishes — in Igloolik, Nauyasat and Arviat — in the Churchill-Hudson Bay Diocese between 1960 and 1992.

"This process of justice is important for the alleged victims, for the Inuit people, for the Oblates and for the church," the Oblate superior said.

Fr. Gruber hopes "that a memorial commission will be set up to

account for past silences."

On September 13, Dominican Sister Véronique Margron, president of the Conference of Religious of France, also met with the Inuit delegation.

In a phone interview with Presence info, she proposed that an inquiry commission be formed to "get to the truth" about the "30 years that have passed" since Fr. Rivoire's hasty departure from Canada.

By examining the archives of the Oblates of Canada and of France, as well as those of the Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay, a team of historians could finally shed light on a series of questions that have remained unanswered for three decades, she said.

"Why did Fr. Rivoire return to Europe? What did the Oblates in Canada, Rome and France know at the time? What was the role of the successive bishops of the Churchill-Hudson Bay Diocese? And why do we find ourselves, 30 years later, still dealing with this matter?" she asked.

She said she had a "meeting of great dignity" with the members of the delegation, but also witnessed "lives full of pain, haunted by crimes." She said she was still moved and shaken by the testimonies heard during the two-hour meeting.

"I was not there to defend anything," she warned, "but to be,

first and foremost, vulnerable to the tragedy they have experienced, to the abyss of questions they are asking and to the very legitimate anger that is theirs."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged that he discussed the "Rivoire affair" with Pope Francis in a private meeting held during the pope's visit to Canada in July.

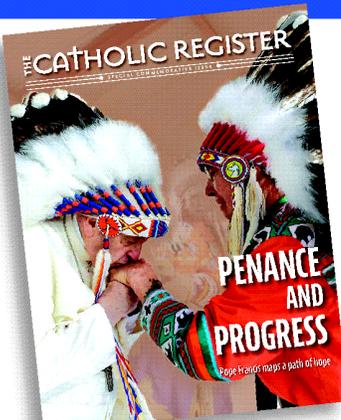
The prime minister asked that the Vatican "make available the documents on residential schools, address the Doctrine of Discovery" and ensure justice for survivors, including in the Fr. Rivoire case.

In July, the day before Pope Francis arrived in Nunavut, the government of Canada confirmed that a formal extradition request had been filed against Fr. Rivoire with the French authorities.

*Mr. Gloutnay writes for www.presence-info.ca in Montreal.*



**Father Johannes Rivoire** (Submitted by Lieve Halsberghe)



## PENANCE AND PROGRESS

A special Commemorative Magazine that marks Pope Francis' historic penitential pilgrimage to Canada

**ORDER TODAY**  
1.855.441.4077 Ext. 404  
[www.catholicregister.org](http://www.catholicregister.org)

*Special Rates available on Bulk Orders*

\$15.99 ea.

(Includes Tax/S&H)

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_ copies at \$15.99 each (inc. S+H/tax) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CHEQUE  VISA  MC Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Name (on card) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: The Catholic Register, 1155 Yonge St., Suite 401, Toronto, ON M4T 1W2  
[www.catholicregister.org](http://www.catholicregister.org) [books@catholicregister.org](mailto:books@catholicregister.org)

# Germany's fourth synodal assembly ends with proposals for reforms

By The Catholic News Service

FRANKFURT, Germany — The fourth plenary assembly of the Synodal Path in Frankfurt ended September 10 with a series of far-reaching reform resolutions.

They concern, for example, the position of women and trans people in the church, sexual morality, gay priests and the future national leadership structure of the Catholic Church, reported the German Catholic news agency KNA. It said all texts involving changes to church doctrine were formulated as proposals for consideration by the pope and not as independent dogmatic changes by the German church.

KNA reported that several proposals could not be discussed because some debates, which got emotional, took more time than planned. Nevertheless, Irme Stetter-Karp, president of the lay Central Committee of German Catholics, said: "We have achieved a lot, and we are not going to stop here."

Participants discussed the position of intersex and transgender people in the Catholic Church. An emotional debate centered on a paper calling for more acceptance, with 94.5% voting in favor of it on first reading.

The paper calls for changes, including making it possible in the future to omit the gender in the baptismal register or to use the term "diverse" when baptizing children with an unclear gender identity, KNA reported. Transgender Catholics should be given the opportunity to have their civil status and first names easily changed in the baptismal register, the paper said.

"If believers who are transgender or intersex are denied the sacrament of marriage, they should be able to have their partnership blessed," stated the text, which a working group will now revise.

Only once did the Frankfurt assembly come to a standstill. At the very beginning, when a fundamental text on the renewal of Catholic sexual morality came up for a vote, a blocking minority of bishops prevented its adoption, KNA reported. Only 33 out of 60 bishops present voted yes — not enough to achieve the required episcopal two-thirds majority. There was great disappointment among the majority; tears flowed and members of sexual minorities left the gathering in protest.

The conference presidium drew lessons from the upset. The speaking time was doubled to two minutes. The representatives of the conservative minority, including a

number of bishops, were able to present their concerns in a more nuanced manner, and a serious debate ensued, in the course of which some opinions apparently changed, KNA reported.

In addition, a measure was introduced by Bishop Georg Bätzing, president of the bishops' conference. Before each sensitive vote, he called the bishops together for a separate 20-minute consultation behind closed doors. After this break in proceedings, the bishops returned to the plenary — and the bishops did not block any more votes.

KNA reported that in this way, and through important speeches in the assembly, Bishop Bätzing, co-president of the Synodal Path, was able to influence the course of the assembly. He succeeded in lessening the animosity that had erupted after the upset of the first day and also shielded conservative brethren from polemical criticism.

There were several debates about whether to vote by name or anonymously. Despite protests, the plenary made voting by roll call compulsory and enforced it several times.

In the debates, speakers from the reform-oriented majority often referred to Pope Francis. Cardinal Reinhard Marx, one of the founding fathers of the Synodal Path, stressed that the pope wanted a "synodal church" and that the church in Germany was progressing along this path.

Several speakers said the reform proposals, which are far-reaching by the standards of the worldwide Catholic Church, were an important impetus for the church in other cultures and countries.

Numerous delegates referred to the large number of people leaving the church in Germany and said the exodus could only be stopped with decisive reforms. Another of-

ten-cited argument was sexual abuse by clerics. The church owed it to the victims to change its doctrine and structure in such a way that these crimes could no longer happen, said Gregor Podschun, chairman of the Federation of German Catholic Youth.

The meeting's outcome met with praise and criticism.

The pro-reform group We Are Church, which has been demanding change for decades, called the three-day meeting a "reflection of the dramatic situation within the church."

"What was frightening was the at-times simple argumentation and the obvious polarization within the German bishops' conference as well as the refusal of many bishops and auxiliary bishops to participate in the substance of the debate ahead of the Synodal Assembly as well as here in Frankfurt."

By contrast, Dorothea Schmidt of the conservative Catholic group Maria 1.0 wrote in the newspaper *Die Tagespost* that she had "witnessed the hostile takeover of the Catholic Church." In her mind's eye, she saw tanks drawing up "to make room for the German-nationalist-permissive-feminist-gender church." The majority "pushes through what they want to push through ... without regard for the minority and church teaching."

The Synodal Path is due to end with a fifth plenary assembly in Frankfurt in March. §

• Commercial • Industrial • Residential • Construction
<b>JOHN FLOOD &amp; SONS</b> <b>(1961) LTD.</b> SINCE 1848
<b>634-1112</b> <b>32 Frederick St.</b> <b>Saint John</b>

## Psalm of September

### Psalm 88

Save me, Lord my God!  
By day, by night, I cry out.  
Let my prayer reach you;  
turn, listen to me.  
I am steeped in trouble,  
ready for the grave.  
I am like one destined for the pit,  
a warrior deprived of strength,  
forgotten among the dead,  
cut off from your hand.  
You tossed me to the bottom of the pit,  
into in the regions dark and deep  
Your anger lies heavy upon me,  
you overwhelm me with all your waves.



c. Lectionary Weekdays, 1993

Speak aloud. Are there verses or parts of verse where you are speaking directly to God?

# Pope: Religions must be purified of extremism, self-righteousness

By JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES  
Catholic News Service

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan — As war, violence and extremism in countries around the world threaten the lives of countless men, women and children, religions must rise above differences and be examples of peace and harmony, Pope Francis said.

"It is time to realize that fundamentalism defiles and corrupts every creed; time for open and compassionate hearts," the pope said September 14 at the plenary session of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

"We need religion in order to respond to the thirst for world peace and the thirst for the infinite that dwells in the heart of each man and woman," he said.

On the second day of his visit to Kazakhstan, the pope addressed 80 religious leaders and hundreds of delegates participating in the interreligious meeting September 14-15 in the Palace of Independence, a blue-glassed trapezoid-shaped building in the heart of the Kazakh capital, Nur-Sultan.

The congress, which is held every three years, was the initiative of Kazakhstan's first president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, as a way of promoting dialogue among religions, the congress' website stated. It also aims to prevent "the use of religious feelings of people for the escalation of conflicts and hostilities."

Arriving at the meeting, the pope took his place at a huge round table with the other leaders and was immediately greeted by Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of Al-Azhar in Egypt. Smiling, the pope affectionately embraced him.

The event began with a moment of silent prayer.

After the formal session, Pope Francis held private meetings with a dozen of the leaders, including the sheikh, but also with Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, head of external relations for the Russian Orthodox Church. The metropolitan took the place of Russian Patri-



**NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan — Pope Francis greets Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of Egypt's Al-Azhar mosque and university, during the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions at the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)**

arch Kirill of Moscow, who canceled his attendance at the congress.

Metropolitan Anthony told reporters his 15-minute meeting with the pope was "very cordial" and that the pope had asked him to pass his greetings to the patriarch, whom the pope had hoped to meet in Nur-Sultan. The patriarch's withdrawal from the congress was seen by many observers as a protest of Pope Francis' decision not to meet Patriarch Kirill in Jerusalem in June because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and of Patriarch Kirill's support for the war.

"We had worked to prepare the second meeting (between a pope and patriarch — the first was in Havana in 2016), and then it was canceled by the Vatican," Metropolitan Anthony told reporters at the Palace of Independence. "We'll see what we can do" to arrange a new meeting time.

Asked if Patriarch Kirill was still bothered by Pope Francis' comment in May to an Italian newspaper that "the patriarch (continued on page 11)

## 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**

## LEGERE'S GARAGE LTD.

137 CITY RD.  
PH: 635-8710  
OR 642-7995

OPEN  
MON - SAT

**RELIABLE, EFFICIENT,  
COURTEOUS  
MECHANICS**

# Mother Teresa filmmaker says new documentary is 'work of the Holy Spirit'

By KURT JENSEN  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A new documentary about St. Teresa of Kolkata, produced by the Knights of Columbus, aims to show how her mission and spirit continues in the work of her order, the Missionaries of Charity.

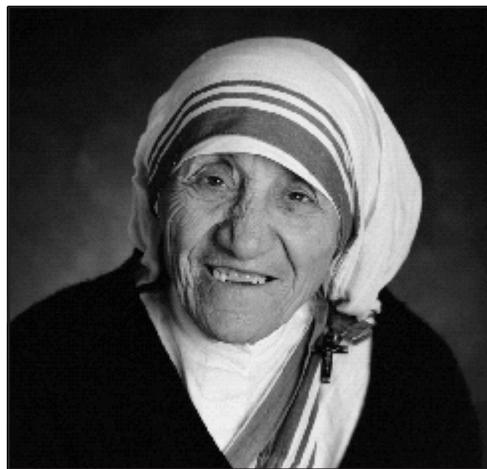
*Mother Teresa: No Greater Love*, directed by Emmy award-winning filmmaker, David Naglieri, was shown at the Vatican September 2 and had its American premiere September 11 at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington. On October 3-4, the film will be shown in about 900 theaters as part of Fathom Events' Saints series.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly told the audience that the film intends to reach a younger audience that might not be as familiar with the work of the saint who died 25 years ago.

He also said Pope Francis praised the film in a letter.

The papal letter of August 25 says: "Thank you for promoting this type of initiative that helps, in a creative manner, to make accessible the zeal for evangelization, especially for the young generations promoting the desire to follow the Lord who loved us first."

The Washington screening capped a weekend of events dedicated to the saint, including a special mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the dedication of the Mother Teresa Institute in Washington, designed "to preserve, protect, promote, and develop the authentic legacy of St. Teresa of Kolkata to the church and to the



**St. Teresa of Kolkata is seen in this undated photo. (CNS photo/courtesy MotherTeresaMovie.com)**

world." The institute will offer resources to scholars and researchers.

During the mass, which marked the 25th anniversary of the death of Mother Teresa, Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory encouraged the faithful to look to the holy woman as a role model and "continue to fill up what she left undone in serving and loving the poor."

"While we admire her work and extraordinary example of love, mere admiration is not enough when it comes to saints who inspire our lives," Cardinal Gregory said. "St. Teresa was a woman of uncanny abilities, and she used all the gifts that God gave her for others. Her example must spur us all on to emulate God's Mercy in caring for those whose lives continue to be at risk."

The cardinal noted that Mother Teresa "has not been exempted from criticism in our contemporary world that always needs some how to find fault in even the most generous and loving individuals."

"St. Teresa herself would be the very first to acknowledge that there was so much more that she could and would have loved to have done to care for God's poor," Cardinal Gregory said. "Becoming a

saint does not mean that a person has done everything perfectly — just that they did everything that they did do heroically and generously."

In a panel discussion about the new documentary after its screening, Mr. Naglieri said the process of filming new interviews and finding footage for the new documentary took 11 months and was "very much the work of the Holy Spirit."

The particular challenge was that there's not much vintage film footage of Mother Teresa available. She was not a seeker of personal publicity and didn't become well-known until British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge made a 1969 documentary, *Something Beautiful for God*, about Mother Teresa's work beginning in 1948 in India serving the physical and spiritual needs of "the poorest of the poor."

Public fascination with this practitioner of "radical poverty" developed instantly and built for the rest of her life. Mother Teresa, born in North Macedonia in 1910, went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and was elevated to sainthood by Pope Francis on September 4, 2016.

"We didn't want to do a chronological biography," Mr. Naglieri said. Instead, the goal was to "show how her mission and her spirit continues today."

As a result, the documentary shows the Missionaries of Charity working with children and adults in Brazil, India, Kenya and New York City. The sisters are currently in more than 130 countries.

Sister Mary Bernice, a Missionary of Charity in the Bronx, New York, retells a story in the film about Mother Teresa encountering a gang-infested neighborhood in Chicago in the 1970s that quickly moved into legend.

She ordered the sisters: "Take me now to the door where they are shooting us."

"We could not believe it. As we were walking toward the door, all these buildings surrounding us, the rifles were pointed out and kept shooting at us. Not one bullet touched us. And when we reached the door, this big man said to Mother Teresa: 'Mother, you can't come in here. I have business in here.'

"And Mother put her head down. And she looked up at him and she said: 'I, too, have business in here. Let us make a deal.' The man was so shocked that Mother would speak this way. He said: 'You can come in here, Mother. I can't stop my business. But I will protect your sisters.'"

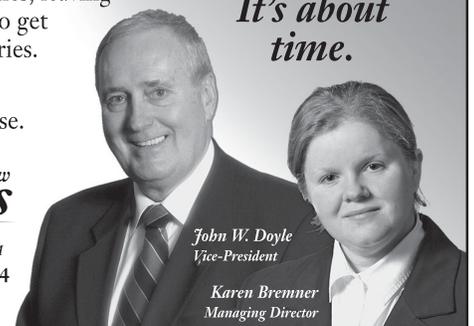
*Contributing to this story was Richard Szczepanowski, managing editor of the Catholic Standard, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington. §*

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.

**It's about time.**

That's why we think preplanning makes sense.

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



John W. Doyle  
Vice-President

Karen Bremner  
Managing Director

# Love for Christ leads to sharing faith in word and deed, pope says

By CINDY WOODEN  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The first task of a catechist is to love the Lord and to live the faith in a way that makes others want to live it, too, Pope Francis told more than 1,400 people attending the International Congress on Catechesis.

"Catechesis" is not simply a weekly, hourlong religious education class, but is a sharing of a "living experience of faith," the pope told the catechists, priests and bishops mid-September at the closing session of the three-day meeting. The congress was sponsored by the Dicastery for Evangelization and brought together national, diocesan and parish directors of catechesis from more than 50 countries.

Focusing on the third section of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 'Life in Christ,' the plenary sessions and study groups at the congress centered on "The catechist, witness of the new life in Christ" with a focus on forming the moral consciences of Catholics and helping them understand the social obligations of faith in Christ.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, who organized the congress, told Vatican

News that just as the early Christians gave witness to the faith by forming communities, sharing what they had and caring for the poor, Christians today also must show the concrete implications of their faith, including by caring for the environment.

Pope Francis told the catechists, "You are required to make visible and tangible the person of Jesus Christ, who loves each one of you, and therefore becomes the rule of our life and the criterion of judgment for our moral action."

"Never stray from this source of love, because it is the condition for being happy and full of joy, always and despite everything," he told them. "This is the new life that sprung forth in us on the day of our baptism, and which we have the responsibility to share with everyone, so that it may grow in everyone and bear fruit."

Every Christian, but especially catechists, priests and bishops, are called "to make the Gospel resonate in the heart of every person," he said.

Pope Francis shared with the group that one of his favorite things each week is his Wednesday general audience, which gives him a chance to explain an aspect of the faith and the life of the church to a large group of people. §

## Pope: Religions must be purified of extremism, self-righteousness

(continued from page 9)

cannot turn himself into Vladimir Putin's altar boy," the metropolitan said, "I can say it was something very unexpected, this interview, and it is clear that expressions of this kind are not helpful for Christian unity."

In his formal talk to the congress, Pope Francis said that "authentic religiosity" is needed to fight fundamentalism and extremism in religion and to show the world that it has no reason to distrust or have "contempt for religion as if it were a destabilizing force in modern society."

Kazakhstan and other nations of the former Soviet Union "are all too familiar with the legacy of decades of state-imposed atheism: that oppressive and stifling mentality for which the mere mention of the word 'religion' was greeted with embarrassed silence," the pope said.

Religion, he said, "is not a problem, but part of the solution for a more harmonious life in society."

Focusing on the meeting's theme, which reflected on the role of religious leaders "in the spiritual and social development of mankind in the post-pandemic period," Pope Francis said the COVID-19 pandemic was among several challenges that "call all of us — and in a special way the religions — to greater unity of purpose."

"COVID-19 put us all in the same boat," he said. "All of us felt vulnerable, all of us in need of help, none of us completely independent, none completely self-sufficient."

Now, he said, religions must not squander "the sense of solidarity" or act as "if nothing happened."

Instead, the pope said, religious leaders must confront the urgent needs of the world and be "promoters of unity amid the grave challenges that risk dividing our human family even further."

With the world "plagued by the scourge of war, by a climate of hostility and confrontation, by an inability to step back and hold out a hand to the other," he said, it is time for religions to purify themselves from evil, particularly the "presumption of feeling self-righteous, with no need to learn anything from anyone."

"Let us free ourselves of those reductive and destructive notions that offend the name of God by harshness, extremism and forms of fundamentalism, and profane it through hatred, fanaticism and terrorism, disfiguring the image of man as well," he said.

"And let us learn also to be ashamed: yes, to experience that healthy shame born of compassion for those who suffer, sympathy and concern for their condition and for their fate, which we realize that we too share," he said. §

---

### Obituaries

---

**CASEY, CAREY ANNE** — Family and friends are saddened to announce the passing of Carey Anne Ryan on September 14, 2022, at Bobby's Hospice. She was born on October 18, 1948, in Saint John, the eldest child of the late Honourable Justice Henry Ryan and Catherine (Boyle) Ryan. She was predeceased by her husband Fran McHugh (2022).

Carey is survived by her beloved brothers: Bill (Debbie), Joseph, and David (Wanda); sisters: Ellen (Richard), Mary Alice (Donald), and Elizabeth (John); sisters-in-law, Janet (Galen) and Joanne (Frank). She was predeceased by her sister, Eileen.

She will be missed tremendously by her special nieces: Celia, Claire (Phil) and Kathleen (Rob) Ryan and nephew, Aaron (Ashley) Hughes-Ryan. Her great nieces and nephews: Bridget, Alistair and Maura Ouellette, Michael and Maeve Arsenault, Isaiah Ryan, and Heath Hughes-Ryan were the apples of her eye.

Arrangements were under the care and direction of Brenan's Funeral Home, Saint John. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Saint John.

**LOWE, ANN CATHERINE** — The family of Ann Lowe is saddened to announce her death at Orchard View Long Term Care Home on Friday, September 16, 2022. Ann was born in Saint John, New Brunswick on September 7, 1940, the daughter of the late Edmund and Mary Lowe (Barrett). She is survived by her brother, Gerald (Gerry) Lowe of Saint John, her niece Allison Lowe and great nephew William Kiely of Ottawa. Ann will also be missed by her aunts, cousins and friends.

Arrangements were under the care and direction of Brenan's Funeral Home, Saint John. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Saint John. §

# Rocmaura to celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, honouring the Sisters of Charity

SAINT JOHN, NB — Plans are underway to celebrate Rocmaura Nursing Home's 50th Anniversary. Rocmaura will be honouring the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception at its annual Dinner, Auction and Dance at the Saint John Trade and Convention Centre on Saturday October 29, 2022. This will be the nursing home's 23rd gala and is the main fundraiser for the foundation.

The Rocmaura Nursing Home Foundation, which was founded in 1993, organized its first gala in 1998.

"This has become a longtime tradition in our community, and has gone through some changes in recent years," says Sally Cummings, executive director for the foundation. "In 2020 the event was turned into a virtual armchair gala where viewers watched online from home, via zoom. In 2021 we were not able to hold a gala at all, due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

This year the gala is going back to 1972 when Rocmaura first opened, and the foundation is throwing a party with the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis. Two-time World Champion tribute artist Thane Dunn & the Cadillac Kings will be shaking things up at the event.

"After more than two years of being in isolation, we want to provide a fun filled evening," says Ms. Cummings. "Life has been challenging during this pandemic, with fundraising events on hold, and visitor restrictions in place. This will be a time to celebrate and raise funds to enhance our 150 resident's quality of life. We will have lots of social media photo opportunities around the room including a wedding chapel, and vintage pink convertible Cadillac, like Elvis would have driven."

This year's theme is Viva Las Vegas and is to be hosted by Cindy Day.

Gala goers this year will have a unique opportunity not only to bid on auction items for themselves but also to purchase items for the residents, like musical instruments and drums and padded rehab equipment to prevent pressure sores. "People don't need more "stuff" says Ms. Cummings. Instead of bidding on elaborate gifts for themselves, they can purchase items for the residents to enjoy.

Sister Anita Holmes, who was Rocmaura's third administrator, says "Over the years changes have been made according to the changing

needs of our most vulnerable, and I see that happening again. I've always been impressed when I come back for a visit, and I see the department heads and staff carrying on with that same spirit that was here when we began and will continue." With continued generous support from the community, volunteers and staff, Rocmaura Foundation says it can help make life better for the residents in their "home away from home."

For more information on the gala and to purchase tickets, contact Sally Cummings, Rocmaura Foundation 506-643-7090 [foundation@rocmaura.com](mailto:foundation@rocmaura.com).

## Rocmaura's next major project

Foundation Executive Director Sally Cummings says "New Brunswick has the fastest aging population in the country, and our frail and elderly are unfortunately far too often overlooked. Rocmaura Foundation helps provide the 'extras' that are not funded by government, to enhance residents' quality of life."

Funds raised at this year's Rocmaura Nursing Home Foundation Gala, to be held at the Saint John Trade & Convention Centre, October 29, 2022 will go toward a major project to build a new palliative care suite. "Our hope is to provide a private, comfortable place for families to share with their loved ones at end of life. We believe this time should be as dignified and peaceful as possible, that each resident and their family deserve privacy and compassion." The foundation hopes to create a serene and comfortable space for families to spend together.

With residents moving into the home later in life and in frailer condition than they did in the past, it is not uncommon to have more than one resident at a time seriously ill or at the end stage of their life. "With generous gifts from donors we will be able to support our residents and their loved ones with grace and dignity," says Ms. Cummings.

Oftentimes, if one family is already occupying the palliative care suite upstairs, a second family must visit their loved one in a shared room lacking privacy. There is little space for visitors, and noise from daily operations can be distracting.

Jennifer Wilcox appreciated the use of the palliative care suite when her mother died in June. "It gave us time to be there and grieve. It was calm and quiet." She says they were able to play Theresa's favourite music and have a warm blanket or make a cup of tea, and didn't have to drive home at night.

Rocmaura Foundation funded the home's first palliative care suite in 2006 on the second floor at a cost of approximately \$65,000. It is presently pulling together estimates and project designs to build a second suite on the first floor of the home. Plans include a quiet area for all residents to enjoy daily, with a water wall feature which will be peaceful and relaxing.

The project is a major undertaking and could take a year to complete. With prices constantly fluctuating, the costs associated with renovations, structural changes, etc and then new furniture, etc. expenses are estimated to be near \$100,000.

The Foundation is asking for contributions to help with everything from furnishings to construction costs. "We want to create a tranquil space that will accommodate families overnight, with a bathroom, living room and small kitchenette," says Ms. Cummings.

Additional funds raised will also go toward a long list of smaller wishes for residents, including a blanket warmer, therapy pets and babies, rehab equipment, and music therapy programs, which bring joy to residents through improving memory, movement, and calm. §

## History of Rocmaura Nursing Home

Rocmaura Nursing home can trace its roots back to 1888 when the Diocese of Saint John erected the very first nursing home in the city, the Mater Misericordiae Home which was operated by the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception [SCIC]. The Sisters had opened orphanages and schools and cared for the poor and began to see a growing need among the elderly.

As time went on and needs grew, a new, state of the art home large enough for 150 residents, was constructed on the rocky ground in the city's north end, named Rocmaura. Translated into Gaelic, it means 'Rock of Mary'. Rocmaura opened on a stormy Saturday on December 16, 1972, when many of the Sisters who were schoolteachers at the time, were able to come and help with the move.

Sister Mary Beth McCurdy, SCIC congregational leader describes Rocmaura as having a special energy that makes it feel different. "It's an energy of love and caring and compassion and respect and dignity" and she says that was always the intention of the facility.

"You can feel a sense of warmth and compassion when you walk in the door," says the home's current administrator, Sheana Mohra. "The work that we do here is a mission, not just a regular job." §