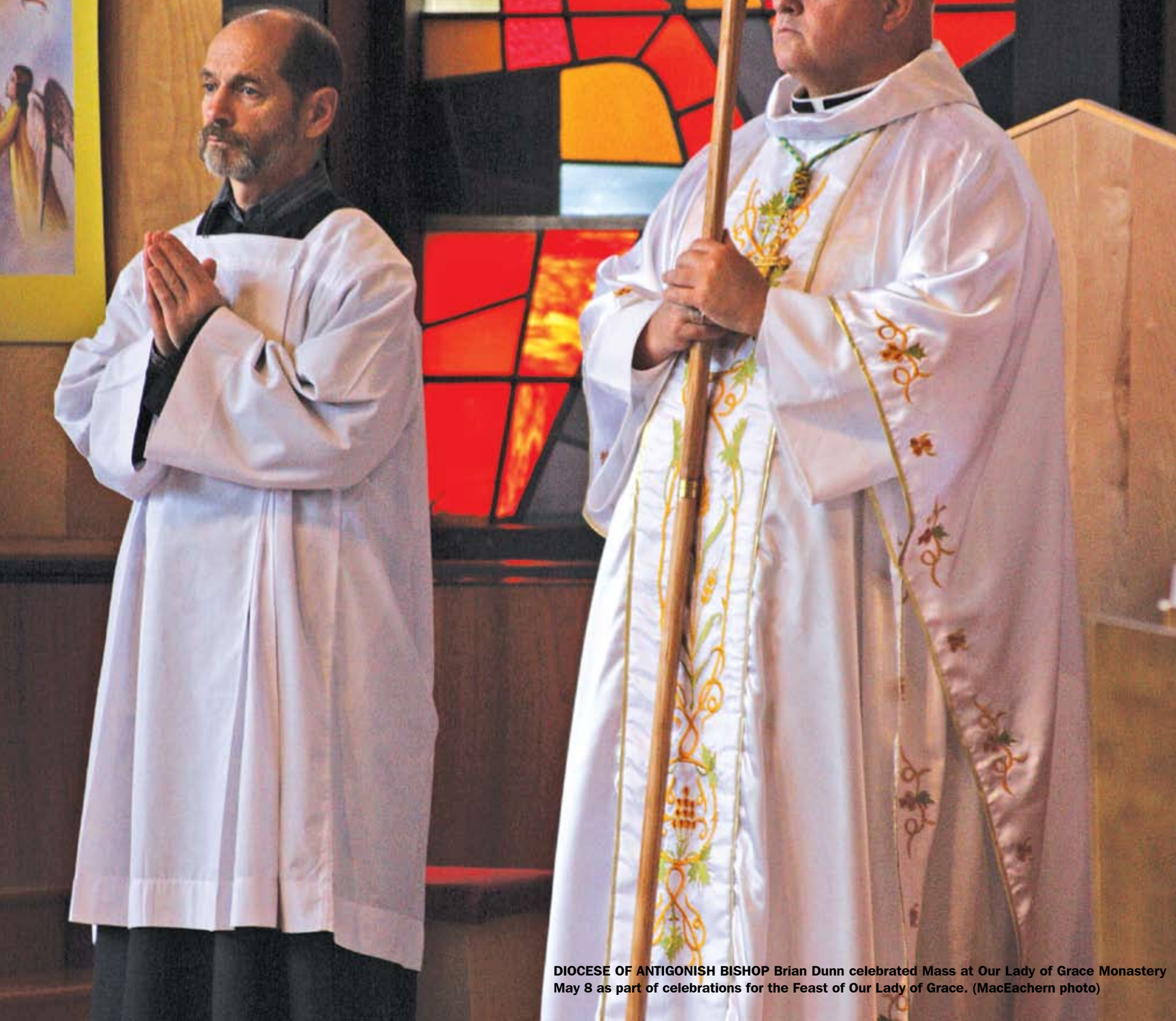


# The Atlantic CATHOLIC

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DIOCESE OF ANTIGONISH BISHOP Brian Dunn celebrated Mass at Our Lady of Grace Monastery May 8 as part of celebrations for the Feast of Our Lady of Grace. (MacEachern photo)

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Canada



# Regnum Christi Couple Perseveres Through Movement's Difficulties

By Nicole Myshak

As active members of the Regnum Christi Movement for nearly six years, Joe and Clare Yurchesyn were encouraged by a May 1 communiqué published by the Holy See Press Office concerning the Legionaries of Christ.

"It was positive," summarizes Clare.

The parishioner of Blessed Pope John XXIII Church in Dartmouth explains how the release was "very supportive of the Legionaries" in terms of the empathy and compassion it expressed for the "pain and sufferings they've experienced" on account of the revelation of the grave sins of the congregation's founder, Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, who also founded the Regnum Christi movement.

It provided hope, adds Joe of the communiqué, which relayed information about the apostolic visitation of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ and the reports offered by the five bishops in charge of the investigation.

The statement also noted Pope Benedict XVI "was present at one of the sessions, at which the visitors presented a summary of their reports."

## Extensive Investigation

The communiqué elaborated as to the nature of the visitation, which consisted in interviews with more than 1,000 Legionaries as well as examination of "hundreds of written testimonies." The release also said the visitors "went to almost all the religious houses and many of the apostolic works run by the congregation."

"They heard, orally or in writing, the opinion of many diocesan bishops of the countries in which the congregation works."

Additionally, "although it was not the subject of the visitation," these visitors "met many members of the 'Regnum Christi' Movement," especially those men and women who are consecrated.

While the document highlighted various areas of concern, it affirmed "the sincere zeal of most Legionaries" and asserted that a "great majority ... were unaware" of the troubling life of Father Maciel.

The release stated that the founder's behaviour — which was "very serious and objectively immoral" — "sometimes resulted in actual crimes, and manifests a life devoid of scruple and of genuine religious sentiment."



**CLARE AND JOE Yurchesyn joined Regnum Christi in 2004 as a way to deepen their faith. Despite controversies assailing the movement, the Dartmouth couple has persevered in this particular vocation, which continues to bring them joy. (Myshak photo)**

It also emphasized that "incontrovertible evidence has confirmed" these disturbing deeds of the now deceased priest.

## Moving Forward

The five visitors also "testified to having met a great number of exemplary religious who are honest and talented, many of them young, who seek Christ with genuine zeal and are offering their entire lives to spread the Kingdom of God."

Even so "the apostolic visit was able to ascertain that the behaviour of Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado has had serious consequences for the life and structure of the Legion, such as to require a process of in-depth revision." Moreover "the Holy Father will send a visitor to the consecrated members of the 'Regnum Christi' Movement, who have insistently requested this" and he will appoint "a delegate of his own and a commission to study the Legion's constitutions."

"Though each visitor acted independently, they came to substantial agreement and a shared viewpoint in their assessments," said the communiqué. These included the need to "review the exercise of authority" and "redefine the charism of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ, preserving its true core."

Furthermore the document specified

a "need to preserve, through appropriate formation, the enthusiasm of the faith of young members, their missionary zeal and their apostolic dynamism."

## Comforting Words

The Yurchesyns were heartened by the encouragement of the Pope included in the communiqué when it said "the Holy Father wishes to assure all Legionaries and members of the 'Regnum Christi' Movement that they will not be abandoned."

"The Church is firmly resolved to accompany them and help them on the path of purification that awaits them," it read.

Joe was particularly struck by this pledge of Pope Benedict's.

That sentence really jumped out at me, he attests. "I had an image in my mind of the Good Shepherd."

"This will also mean dealing sincerely with all of those who, within and outside the Legion, were victims of sexual abuse and of the power system devised by the founder," continued the communiqué. "They are in the Holy Father's thoughts and prayers at this time, along with his gratitude to those of them who, even in the midst of great difficulties, had the courage and constancy to demand the truth."

(Please turn to Page 11)

# Catholic Honoured as an Associate of AST

By Nicole Myshak

Marilyn Sweet's association with the Atlantic School of Theology (AST) helped influence both the trajectory of her life and her ministry within the Church.

"For me it's been an extraordinary grace," she asserts of the school and God's providence at work in her life. "All of it is."

Having the opportunity to first study at, and then serve the school, has been just one of the great blessings of my life, she continues. "I consider it an extraordinary privilege."

These contributions of Sweet to the AST community were acknowledged during a May 1 convocation ceremony when she was presented with the Associate Award, an honour bestowed on a person who is "valued and appreciated by the school in a particular way."

From what Sweet shares about the Atlantic School of Theology, it's clear such sentiments are mutual.

The wife and mother of three adult children recounts beginning her studies at AST in 1988 when her "children were in high school." "It was a very important time in my life," she affirms of her years at the Halifax school. "Everything fell into place for me to go."

Although Sweet recalls not really understanding "anything about ecumenism" at the outset of her education, she soon learned to "recognize and then appreciate the differences in each of the faith traditions represented at the school."

A result of this was that Sweet came to a "deeper appreciation for the Roman Catholic tradition." She calls this one of the "great blessings of studying" at the ecumenical and tri-denominational theological school.

"My studies and the relationships that I formed with people in my own tradition and people in other faith traditions helped me to become wider and broader in my faith understanding and deeper and more committed to the Roman Catholic faith tradition," she notes.

Sweet also explains that, during her education, she immersed herself in Catholic teachings and, in doing so, discovered that the more she studied within her own faith tradition, the more she perceived "the richness and the commonality that we had with other faith traditions at the school."

"What I came to appreciate very quickly is the truth of our common beginnings and the centuries that we were all together," she says.

The Liturgy Director for the Archdiocese of Halifax also came to understand "the rich sources that we have in common," such as the Church Fathers and Scripture, as well as "the practice of being Church for a whole



**THE REVEREND CANON Eric Beresford, President of the Atlantic School of Theology, recognizes Marilyn Sweet as an Associate of AST during the May 1 convocation at the Cathedral Church of All Saints in Halifax. Grateful for a life "full of blessings," Sweet says one of these "major blessings has been the opportunity to learn" as much as she has "and to develop good strong understandings" which she has, in turn, been able to share with others throughout her ministry. (Myshak photo)**

millennium and beyond that."

Additionally, as part of her schooling, Sweet grew in appreciation of history including that of the Church worldwide as well as within Canada and in Nova Scotia. The latter was then embodied in her thesis, which concentrated on the preaching of Archbishop James Hayes from 1964 until his retirement in 1990.

Then, following graduating with a Master of Divinity, Sweet began her work at the Archdiocese of Halifax. "I've been here ever since in a variety of roles," she says. These have involved work in youth ministry, catechetics, adult faith formation and communications.

Besides this, Sweet has served as a member of both the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) National Council for Liturgy and the Advisory Committee on Adult Faith Development for the National Office of Religious Education.

In addition to these many responsibilities, Sweet's involvement with—and her instruction thanks to—AST did not cease after graduation for she served as the Vice-Chair and Chair of the AST Board of Governors for several years. "I learned an awful lot in my time as chair of the board," she notes.

Amongst these lessons was a newfound awareness, "in a whole different way," of the "significance of the Atlantic School of Theology for the whole Christian tradition in Atlantic Canada and beyond."

The Director of Programs for the Archdiocese cites the significant consequences

of having people from "different faith traditions" studying together.

She insists this enhances communion among people and "the common sense of what it is to be the Church" as well as who the Lord

is. "It's a sense that we take with us wherever we go," she perceives.

"The school embodies ecumenism in really practical ways," Sweet adds. "People are together and they learn to talk with each other" and "to see each other as colleagues and companions on this journey of faith."

"That creates a wonderful net of relationships throughout the whole Christian tradition" which "plays out in so many different ways," she states.

Sweet provides the examples of the support shown during recent Church sexual abuse scandals including Bishop Raymond Lahey's arrest last fall for possession of child pornography.

"It has been very comforting to know that people of other faith traditions, when they gather for Sunday worship, have actively prayed for the Catholic Church by name to support us in these hard times," she says. "That's huge."

While Sweet acknowledges the small size of the school and its student body, she recognizes the great impact it's had on the broader community and individuals such as herself.

"The works that the school does and the learning experience that people have while they're there is really profound and continues to have a strong effect for a person's continued life and work in ministry," she testifies. †

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# Love One Another

While on the road recently, I had the privilege of attending a vibrant, Catholic Church, where the crowd at the 7:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday morning would put many of our local church crowds to shame.

Not to say that there aren't any vibrant parishes in our coverage area, because there are. However, it seems that more often than not these days the pews are not as full as they should be, responses are minimal and there is a general lack of enthusiasm.

In his homily, the priest at this Maine parish noted that in the Gospel Jesus instructed us to "love one another as I have loved you." Not only that, said the pastor, but our Lord told us that His disciples would be known by their love of one another. He pointed out that Jesus did not say our primary duty is to love our

enemies, but to "love one another."

The priest noted how profound this concept really is and how little attention we usually give it. But it makes complete sense. Jesus knew that if His church was not founded upon the kind of love that He exhibited – the self-sacrificing, through thick and thin kind of love – then the result would be too shaky to last.

The priest also pointed out that we cannot love our brothers and sisters in Christ if we do not know them. Yes, there is a love we are called to when we meet the stranger, but we are called to know, and thereby love, our fellow parishioners on a deeper level. These are the people we are called to work alongside within our local church. If we go to Mass once a week at our parish and then file out as quickly as possible afterward, not to see each other again for another seven days, then we are missing the point. That is not a community based on love, but rather a community based on blind obligation. To know each other we must spend time together, time outside of the 60 minutes we share at Mass. There are endless possibilities for this time outside of Mass, as a parish community – social gatherings, Bible studies, prayer groups, charitable works, etc.

A friend said recently that if you are looking for the leaders in your community and you look to your left and then to your right, and see none, then the leader is you. Love requires action. Sometimes all it takes is someone stepping forward to initiate programs that will help parishioners get to know one another and build upon the love that is supposed to identify us as Christians.

Of course, it's one thing to initiate and offer these programs, but the real challenge is getting people to actually participate. Motivation for church-related activities seems to be lacking these days. Why? Many reasons, really, but mainly people have a different set of priorities than they did 50 years ago. When church pews were filled and parish groups were bustling, there were no organized sports games or tournaments on Sunday. People's lives didn't revolve around hockey arenas, soccer fields, the Internet, iPods or unlimited shopping opportunities.

Priorities. At one time people automatically ordered their priorities with God and faith on top, but that is no longer the case. We can't necessarily change people's priorities, but, if, as the song says, "they'll know we are Christians by our love," then we will never stop trying to come up with creative ways to get people involved in their faith, in their parish communities, and thereby, drawing them closer to Christ.

The third verse of the abovementioned song says "We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand. And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land." We need to make this a reality. By putting into action Jesus' commandment to love one another as He loved us and all that entails, we can't go wrong.

God Bless. †

The Atlantic  
CATHOLIC

Editorial

## IN LAYMAN'S TERMS

# It's All about Saving Lives

Development ministers from eight of the richest nations in the world wrapped up a recent Halifax meeting by agreeing to a set of guidelines to reduce maternal and child mortality in poor countries.

Bev Oda, Canada's minister for international co-operation, said the plan, though short on detail, will be flexible enough to allow each G8 (Group of Eight) country to determine how it can contribute to the health of women and children under five years old in poorer, developing nations.

Oda claimed significant progress had been made on maternal and child mortality and that the issue will be a Canadian priority when G8 leaders meet in Huntsville, Ont., in June. She said the ministers gathered in Halifax agreed on the need to improve nutrition, disease prevention and that a range of care ought to be offered to pregnant women and their young children before, during and after delivery.

The consensus was that funding must come from the G8 countries to combat the estimated 500,000 pregnancy-related deaths that occur each year.

But Canada has been pilloried by delegates from other G8 countries, by this country's opposition parties, by international aid groups and in media commentaries for insisting that abortions for Third World mothers will not be funded through Canadian aid.

So, access to and funding for abortions is OK for Canadian mothers but not for Third World mothers, argues a columnist in the *Chronicle Herald*.

An editorial in a top British medical journal says it's "hypocritical and unjust" that Canada get in the way of abortions abroad when Canadian women can have them at home.

In the House of Commons, Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff chided: "Why is the prime minister denying the fact that maternal health must include access to safe and legal abortions be it in Canada, or be it outside of Canada."

Vocalizing his liberal bent, Ignatieff underlines the great abortion contradiction. A safe abortion is impossible. Any procedure that brutally ends the life of an innocent and unborn baby can hardly be called safe.

Delving further into the now muted abortion debate, it's best to debunk that other popular abortion myth. Columnists and activists alike accuse the Canadian government of being disingenuous and hypocritical in allowing abortions at home while trying to deny them in poor countries. Abortion here in Canada is not illegal. That doesn't mean that it's right. Abortion still ends the lives of unborn babies and it is simply wrong no matter how vehemently it is defended as a woman's basic reproductive right by Ignatieff, NDP Leader Jack Layton and the pro-abortion American administration led by President Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

What kind of countries, what kind of governments and what kind of laws defend the rights of women to choose while abandoning the rights of the most vulnerable and helpless?

In this topsy-turvy, politically correct society of ours, those who oppose abortion are now denounced. A group of University of Calgary students face expulsion for refusing to take down an anti-abortion display. The pro-life club's display compares abortion with past historical atrocities, such as the Rwandan genocide or the Holocaust. It includes graphic photos of fetuses and victims of genocide. The display has been set up on the Calgary campus eight times since 2006.

The University of Calgary, that paragon of free speech that championed the right of controversial and bigoted right-wing American activist Ann Coulter to speak on campus, doesn't like the anti-abortion message.

The university takes that indefensible position maintained by many pro-abortionists. Fetuses are not real people and abortion is a matter of choice, but yet depicting aborted fetuses on signs and displays is somehow reprehensible. Like others who spew the pro-abortion message, the University of Calgary wants to have it both ways: There is no life before birth but showing the end of this non-life is somehow gross and despicable.

The reasons women choose abortions and the ensuing and long-lasting remorse have been well documented. Because of overwhelming family or social pressure, some feel that abortion is the only choice, albeit a difficult and heart-wrenching one. But a new program in Vancouver offers at least one alternative.

A recent Canadian Press story described the Angel's Cradle program launched in early May at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. New mothers who want to give up their infants because they face addiction, poverty or are still children themselves can walk away after dropping them off anonymously.

(Please turn to Page 5)

## THOUGHTS FROM ROME

## Thoughts on the Anglican Constitution

By Fr. Bernard O'Connor

This past November, the BBC reported that a text message sent by Canadian Transport Minister John Baird caused quite a reaction among government officials. The message read: "Thatcher is dead."

Calls to verify details were promptly forwarded to 10 Downing Street and to Buckingham Palace. Baird, however, was referring to the demise of his 16-year-old tabby, named for the famed Iron Lady. The Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, had been informed that it was Baroness Margaret Thatcher, former British Prime Minister, who had died. Characteristically, of course, she was proven to be very much alive and well.

Embarrassing? Definitely.

It is remarkably easy for confusion to arise, not only where a three-word message is concerned, but in terms of something with the complexity and implications of another document also issued in November, Pope Benedict's Anglican Constitution, perhaps better known by its Latin title, *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, together with its Complementary Norms.

I have been asked numerous questions in regard to the Constitution, including:

1. Was *Time* magazine correct to describe the move on the Holy See's part as "capitalizing on a rival's friction?"

*Time's* assertion (Nov. 2, 2009) is baseless. The Constitution was issued, not owing to a "predatory" strategy, but mainly in response



FR. BERNARD O'CONNOR works in the Vatican's Congregation for Eastern Churches.

to the petition of more than 38 bishops and Vicars General of the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC).

Their dissatisfaction with present-day Anglicanism has been widely known and publicized. The text of their "Portsmouth Letter" of Oct. 5, 2007, addressed to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), was explicit.

"We accept that the Church founded by Jesus Christ subsists most perfectly in the churches in communion with the See of Peter" (art. 2). Further, "we seek a communal and ecclesial way of being Anglican Catholics in communion with the Holy See" and "we seek the guidance of the Holy See as to the fulfillment of these our desires" (art. 4).

2. Does the Constitution mean that one can be simultaneously Anglican and Roman Catholic?

This is not the meaning of the document. Those Anglicans

seeking full communion are expected to profess *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Const. art I, no. 5). The Anglican signers of the Portsmouth Letter (P. L.) indicated their belief that said *Catechism* represents the "most complete and authentic expression and application of the catholic faith" (P. L., no. 3).

3. Does the Constitution intend to address only a minor 'fringe' of the Anglican Church?

Not at all. It is meant to speak to all similar-minded Anglicans, including those who may not belong to TAC (established in 1990). TAC's membership, however, is the primary population of those who have manifested their express initiative and concern to request unity with Roman Catholicism.

Since the Constitution's publication, 99 Anglican parishes in the USA and 45 in Canada have indicated their intention to seek admission in accord with the Constitution. TAC asserts that it is now present in six continents, though predominantly located in India and Africa. Its current Primate resides in South Australia. Overall, an estimated 400,000 persons are said to identify with TAC.

Exactly how many of these will actually embrace the Constitution's provisions remains yet to be determined. As the TAC Primate (John Hepworth) stated on Jan. 16: "Regional gatherings of bishops, clergy

and people are being organized in each part of our (TAC) Communion." The process is evidently reflective, appropriately critical and profoundly discerning and prayerful. Following their "full meeting of the College of Bishops," set for this Eastertide, "a formal response to the Holy See" is anticipated.

4. What should be our attitude as this process unfolds?

In an Address to the Bishops of England and Wales during their *Ad Limina* visit to the Holy See (Jan. 2), Pope Benedict referred directly to the Constitution. He encouraged the bishops in their "important work" of promoting "ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue."

**"Without the dialogues of the past forty years, this recognition would not have been possible . . ."**  
— Joint Statement of Anglican and Catholic churches

And he asked that they be "generous in implementing the provisions" of the Constitution, "so as to assist those groups of Anglicans who wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church." The Pope's view is that "if given a warm and open-hearted welcome, such groups will be a blessing for the entire Church." That same mentality of receptivity and sensitivity should then characterize each of us.

5. Does the Constitution contradict efforts at ecumenical dialogue between the Anglican and Catholic Churches?

There are those who may interpret the Constitution as a betrayal of Anglican-Catholic dialogue. This is as unfortunate as it is inaccurate. The exact opposite was the motivation for a Press Conference on Oct. 20, 2009, in which the Prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Secretary of the

Congregation for Divine Worship participated with the Archbishop of Canterbury (Anglicanism's Rowan Williams).

Their theme was the relationship between both Churches. In a Joint Statement on the announcement of the Constitution, they said: "Without the dialogues of the past forty years, this recognition would not have been possible... This Constitution is one consequence of (our) ecumenical dialogue." That dialogue promises to continue in "close collaboration."

On Nov. 19, 2009, the Archbishop of Canterbury gave a lecture in Rome for the Willebrands Symposium where he emphasized "the strong convergence" realized in formal Agreements between the Anglican and Catholic Churches, notably in terms of ecclesiology (e.g. the shared doctrine of the Church as community).

Admittedly, important differences remain and these should not be ignored or minimized. There is ample latitude, he said, for discussion and debate. And speaking at Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. March 6 the CDF Prefect, Cardinal William Levada, reiterated that the Constitution "was not created in a vacuum," but is the reasonable and logical development of the official dialogues" between the Churches.

The Constitution ensures that for those Anglicans who now enter into full communion, the "distinctive elements in the Anglican world which foster Catholic unity" can be retained with their admission. We see this in the example of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. In 2003, elements of the BCP were "revised and adopted" for usage by Roman Catholics coming from an Anglican background.

Where there is openness to mutual understanding, there is surely ... hope!

NOTE: *Part II will focus upon specific provisions of the Constitution.* †

## It's All about Saving Lives ...

Mothers can place the babies in a bassinet in a secure area in the hospital. An alarm alerts hospital staff within 30 seconds of the drop-off. The baby is then assessed and placed in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Neither hospital officials nor police will make any effort to track down the mother, but if she later decides she wants her baby back, the mother has the option of contacting the ministry and arranging a meeting with social workers.

It's difficult to know our government's agenda in opposing funding for abortions for mothers in developing countries. But, whatever Stephen Harper's motivation might be in saying that there's plenty for Canada to spend its development dollars on besides abortion, the prime minister ought to be applauded for refusing to embrace the culture of death.

If only he had that same conviction about the innocent unborn in his homeland. †

# Distilling ‘Smear’ Campaign against Pope

## *Father de Souza addresses recent scandals*

By Nicole Myshak

There were few seats to spare at Father Raymond J. de Souza’s Neuhaus Lecture in Halifax last month.

The attendance of approximately 175 people, who filled the Scotiabank Theatre in the Sobey Building at St. Mary’s University (SMU) to near capacity, could be said to reflect both the significance of the inaugural event and the caliber of the speaker.

The April 22 lecture, which was sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas Canadian Martyrs Parish in cooperation with SMU, was held in memory of Father Richard Neuhaus, a Canadian-born religious scholar, writer and activist who was also the founder and editor of *First Things*.

“Father Richard was a very important man in my life and so it’s a particular honour to be asked to give this lecture,” noted Father de Souza of his friend and mentor who passed away last year.

Calling the event “an important initiative,” Father de Souza expressed his hope that in time it would “flourish here in Halifax and be imitated elsewhere.”

“The Catholic voice in the public square is not something that we can take for granted,” he insisted.

Pointing to “recent cases before our Human Rights Commissions,” the *National Post* columnist emphasized there are cultural forces that “seek to limit the free proclamation of the Christian faith” and drive religious voices to the margins of public discourse.

Accordingly he suggested that, “in such an environment, the Catholic public witness requires the wit and courage to make” oneself heard. As well it demanded the “creativity to present the Christian faith to those who are listening.”

Father de Souza recommended Father Neuhaus as a “great model of how this could be done.” “We need many more like him,” he exhorted.

### **Change of Topic**

While the theme of Father de Souza’s talk was intended to be an engagement of the question of whether religious voices are being

silenced in Canada, the chaplain for the Newman House at Queen’s University opted — in light of current media accusations leveled at Pope Benedict XVI — to veer slightly off topic to address this controversy.

In doing so he aimed to demonstrate how there was, at the heart of this media frenzy, “a desire to push to the margins the Church’s voice and to marginalize the Church’s role in our public life.”

Father de Souza addressed this explication by arguing that the recent events embroiling the Catholic Church were “sparked by false allegations against Pope Benedict XVI printed first in the *New York Times* of March 25 and subsequently amplified in literally thousands of other stories around the world.” These stories, he said, were “focused on Benedict’s alleged personal complicity and the covering up of two cases.”

The priest of the Archdiocese of Kingston emphasized how this original story was “false in its charges, suspect in its sources [and] unsupported” by its own documents. Hence he perceived that these happenings have been part of an “orchestrated campaign to take down the Pope.”

Not desiring to have the entirety of his presentation dominated by an in depth substantiation of the particulars, Father de Souza invited interested parties to visit his website, [www.fatherdesouza.ca](http://www.fatherdesouza.ca), where his extensive writings on this topic could be found.

With that Father de Souza turned his attention from an illustration of the intricate proofs of this troubling situation to an discussion of the broader drama. In doing so he asserted that, within this present circumstance, the question more pertinent to the “topic of the Church’s voice in public life” has become “how does the Church tell the truth when faced with falsehoods?”

“The challenge of the last few weeks has been to tell the truth about those who are peddling falsehoods” which is an “entirely different phenomenon” than the sexual abuse scandals of previous years, he maintained.

With the latter Father de Souza expounded that the great burden upon the whole Church had been to tell the truth about what happened to innocent victims and what had not happened to the perpetrators.

Such scandals — as occurred at the Mount Cashel Orphanage or within Boston — may have evoked embarrassment, shame and anger, yet they concerned true things, he said.

“This is different,” Father de Souza proposed of recent media reports targeting Pope Benedict XVI.

The unmistakable gist of recent coverage by the CBC, CTV, the *Globe and Mail*, even parts of the *National Post*, was that as we speak, right now, April 2010, that the Catholic Church led by the Pope is engaged in a widespread cover-up of sexual abuse endemic in her midst, summarized Father de Souza. “That’s the general gist of the story that we’ve been presented with and that is false in at least four dimensions.”

### **Answering the Accusations**

The diocesan priest advised that the first dimension of falsehood could be realized, and countered, by an acknowledgement that there is no such evidence.

We have now, as opposed to 1980 or 1990, an enormous amount of research on this issue of sexual abuse of minors and there is no evidence that the incidence of sexual abuse is any greater in the Catholic Church or amongst the Catholic clergy than elsewhere, relayed Father de Souza.

That’s not a great point of pride obviously, he acknowledged. “But it’s true.”

Father de Souza also stressed that the impression that such abuse is a “current, ongoing problem is false.” “The cases that we are discussing are not current cases but from decades ago,” he continued.

Further, incidences of abuse — contrary to what media coverage may lead individuals to believe — are actually decreasing rather than increasing.

Father de Souza went so far as



**NATIONAL POST** columnist Fr. Raymond de Souza was the guest speaker for the Neuhaus Lecture held at St. Mary’s University in Halifax April 22. Instead of addressing the original theme of the talk — an engagement of the question of whether or not religious voices are being silenced in Canada — Fr. de Souza chose instead to speak to the recent accusations aimed at Pope Benedict XVI. (Myshak photo)

to suggest that the Church could be argued to be amongst the safest places for children in contemporary society thanks to serious reforms made on account of past abuse. “What happened in 1985 is not happening in 2010,” he assured. “And that’s an important point to be made. Those are truths that our own Catholic faithful need to hear.”

Too many of our own believe what is manifestly and demonstratively not true, he added.

### **Why Speak Up**

Father de Souza observed “there have been few” who have given a “forthright and robust defense of the Holy Father” which can be attributed to a number of factors. “Many have offered nary a public word in his defense because it is thought that to do so would be, or appear, too defensive or insufficiently contrite,” he suggested.

Another contributing factor to Catholics’ silence is the mistaken belief that “to criticize the messengers, even if they’re passing along false

messages, is somehow to minimize the reality of the original message” of the underlying sexual abuse itself.

However, Father de Souza noted that such inactivity is flawed on multiple counts. “First, I think telling the truth is good in itself,” he said, adding that too often this elementary point is forgotten.

Additionally, the alumnus of Queen’s and the University of Cambridge maintained that “allowing falsehood to go unchallenged” results in the sowing of “serious doubt in the Catholic faithful” which ends up undermining trust in pastors whether that be the Pope, bishops or parish priests.

Father de Souza also stressed that when “the Church appears too weak to defend herself, in the face of manifest falsehoods,” this only “invites further attacks from her enemies.”

Consequently, with all eyes on the Church, passivity communicates there are “no consequences for public animosity against the Church.” As

**(Please turn to Page 7)**

(Continued from Page 6)

a result the capacity of the Church “to teach hard truths in other areas is undermined.”

While Father de Souza agreed that “pastors of the Church should be reluctant to be combative” because the “figure of the shepherd” is principally about care, not combat, he noted “there are times too when the shepherd must fight.”

## Obligation To Be Informed

Another difficulty that Father de Souza highlighted — drawing upon the words of Father Neuhaus — was the “unseemly readiness on the part of many, including some Catholics, to believe the worst.”

“Lay Catholics have a responsibility to discover the truth,” he urged. “We have great access to information. There is good Catholic information available and we have a responsibility to find it and to share it.”

The Catholic who concludes — after reading two newspaper stories or catching a few minutes of television news — anything about the Church is being irresponsible, he cautioned.

With a touch of dark humour Father de Souza proposed that, “Catholics who are able to use the Internet expertly to find a cheap, all inclusive Caribbean vacation” or who access all types of statistics for sports “cannot blame others for not knowing what the Church tells them about pressing issues of great importance.”

“The faithful have the right to hold their bishops and priests accountable but that same right imposes an obligation too to become well informed themselves,” he encouraged.

## Smear Campaign

Acknowledging that he is “perhaps more convinced” than others on the matter of an “orchestrated campaign against the Holy Father” — which he insisted “does not minimize the sexual abuse story as a whole” — Father de Souza attributed his firm belief, in part, to having seen this type of situation before.

The priest of nearly eight years explained that in 2008 he spent time living and working in Sydney, Australia in preparation for World Youth Day. During the

days immediately preceding Pope Benedict’s arrival a story broke accusing Cardinal George Pell of improperly attending to a sexual abuse case concerning a priest within the archdiocese.

In the days which followed Father de Souza witnessed how the “most relevant facts of the case” were neglected and media reports were rife with a twisting of the facts in order “to create a false impression.” “It was a searing experience to be at the center of that storm,” he recalled.

Accordingly, when the recent situation with the Holy Father arose, Father de Souza recognized numerous similarities that enabled him to see this situation for what it was. “I’d seen it before and it was a smear,” he stated.

On account of this Father de Souza cautioned the Church’s shepherds. “Let every bishop know this,” he warned. “No matter how quiet, how contrite or how accommodating you hope to be, what was done to Cardinal Pell and what is being done to the Holy Father will be done to you in a heartbeat if they think it worthwhile.”

Defining “they,” Father de Souza said he was speaking not of “an international conspiracy against the Church” but of “those many in our culture-forming institutions who would like to see the Church’s role in our public life marginalized.”

“That is what Father Richard spent his whole life fighting against,” he noted. “That is what is behind so much of what we’ve faced this past month.”

Again quoting the writing of Father Neuhaus from 2002 Father de Souza insisted this “crisis must be permitted to do its work” which entails “scrupulous self examination, candid confession, firm contrition and a believable amendment of life.”

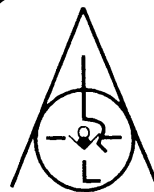
“And the doing of that hard work is chiefly up to the bishops,” he continued. “They are the ones who got us into this mess and, given what we believe is the divinely constituted structure of the Church, they’re the ones who have to lead in getting us out. Faithful Catholics owe it to the Church and owe it to their bishops not to let them off the hook.”

“And you shouldn’t let any one off the hook,” echoed Father de Souza. “Not our pastors, not ourselves and not our enemies.” †

## Mass of Thanksgiving for Priests



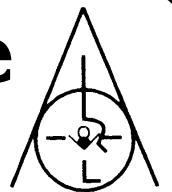
The Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, who have a charism connected to the priesthood, organized a Mass of Thanksgiving in honour of the Year for Priests that was held at St. Michael Parish in Spryfield April 19 with Archbishop Anthony Mancini as the main celebrant. (Submitted Photo)



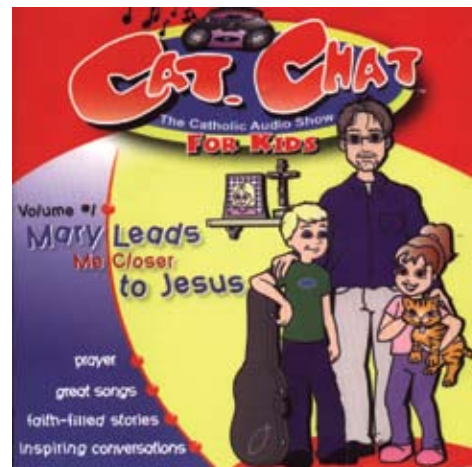
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# Canada's Nuncio Presents Credentials to GG

By Deborah Gyapong

OTTAWA (CCN) — The new apostolic nuncio is now officially recognized as the Holy See's Ambassador to Canada.

At an April 28 ceremony at Rideau Hall, Archbishop Pedro López Quintana presented his credentials to the Governor General, along with the ambassador-designates from Vietnam, Kuwait and Peru.

"The Holy See has an influential voice on the international stage in terms of spirituality, human rights, justice and peace," Governor General Michaëlle Jean told the formal gathering in her residence's ballroom. She also noted the role the Holy See plays in international diplomacy.

She noted Canada celebrated 40 years of diplomatic relations with the Holy See last year. She remarked on the 2008 Eucharistic Congress in Quebec that coincided with the 400th anniversary of Quebec's founding and looked ahead to celebrations this year important to the Catholic Church in Canada.

"June 24 will mark the 400th anniversary of the baptism of Mi'kmaq chief Henri Membertou, which is considered the first baptismal ceremony performed in Canada," she said. "Then, on October 17, the Holy Father will canonize an important figure in our history, Brother André, who was renowned for his generosity, devotion and gift of healing."

Brother André Bessette founded St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.

Jean also recalled her visit to the Vatican in 2006, saying she had wonderful memories of the warm welcome Pope Benedict XVI gave her and her family.

Archbishop López arrived in Canada in February after serving as apostolic nuncio to India and Nepal since 2003. He has also served in the apostolic nunciatures of Madagascar, the Philippines and India, as well as in the Holy See's Secretariat of State, where he served as Assessor for General Affairs.

Archbishop López has been busy meeting the Canadian bishops, in his key role as the Holy Father's representative to the Church in Canada. But he was unable to serve in an official capacity as ambassador until this ceremony took place.

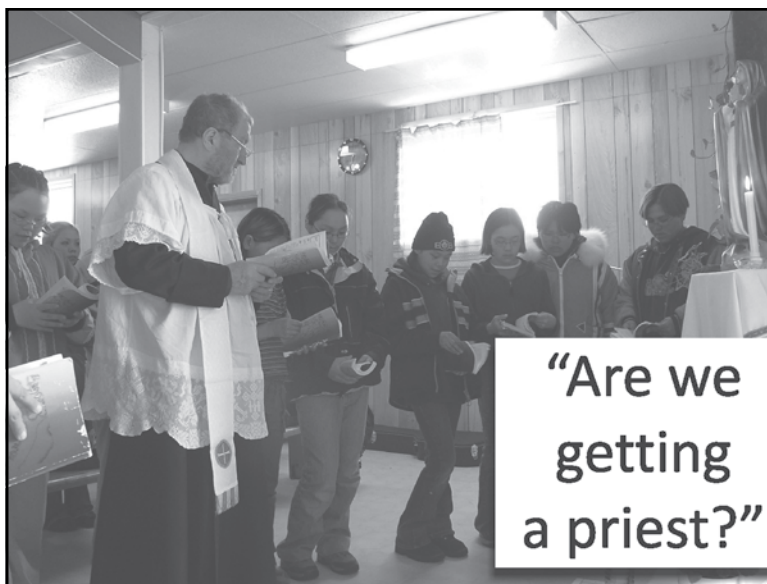
Born in Barbastro, Spain, Archbishop López was ordained a priest in 1980; entered the Holy See's diplomatic service in 1984; and was ordained a bishop in 2003.

Pope Benedict XVI announced his appointment to Canada in December.

He replaces Archbishop Luigi Ventura, who left Canada last October to serve as nuncio to France after eight years in this country.



GOVERNOR GENERAL Michaëlle Jean and Archbishop Pedro López Quintana. (MCpl Evan Kuelz, Rideau Hall photo)



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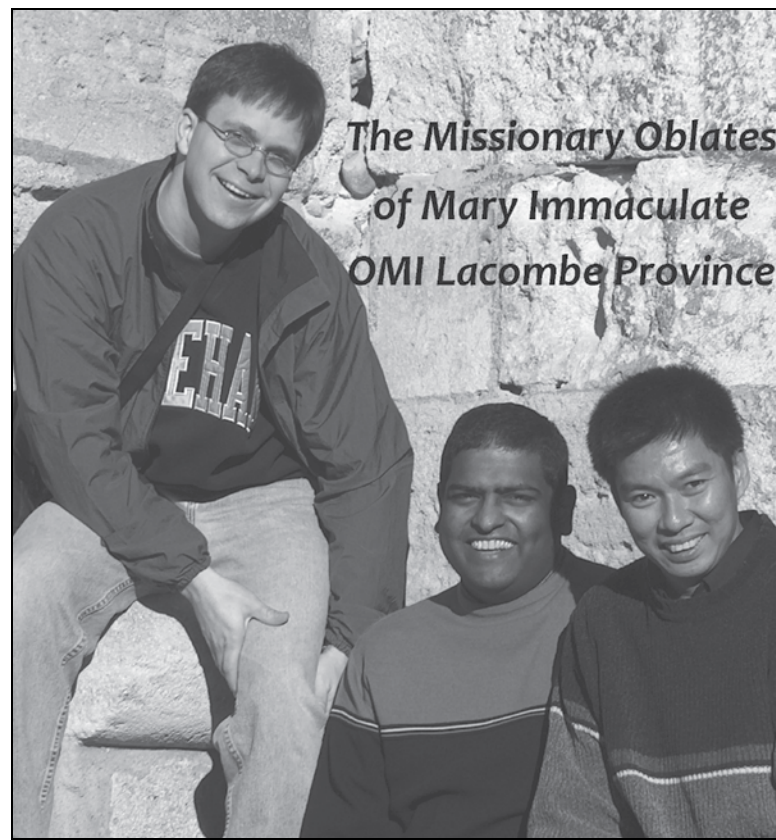
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## Civil Law vs. Canon Law

## Impaired Consent in a Marriage

The following is the second and final article by Fr. Evo DiPierro on spousal abuse and the annulment process within the Church. Fr. DiPierro is associate pastor at Stella Maris Parish, Pictou and Holy Name Parish, Westville.

By Fr. Evo DiPierro

The consent to marry may be impaired due to mental, personality or belief issues involving either spouse or both of them. A person with an aggressive and impulsive attitude is less inclined to understand the concept of the mutual good of the spouses.

An abusive husband who is traditional in the religious sense was probably that way before the consent. The victim may have agreed to marry him because she hoped he would cease his violent tendencies once they got married. The issue of informed consent is thus raised as well as the commitment to form a covenant relationship.

According to some researchers, men who abuse their wives fall



into any of three general groups. Fifty-percent of them are able to contain the violence at home and keep it clear of legal and criminal action. Another 25 percent are severely abusive, psychologically and sexually. About 20-25 percent of abusive men have alcohol and/or drug problems; they display a combined antisocial and impulsive personality disorder (Barry, 63-64; Walker, 281).

All three groups, however, share family histories of aggression and

anti-social behaviour. Walker also found that abusive men have a low self-esteem, a pathological jealousy, a dual personality, low stress tolerance and a traditionalist view of male supremacy (p. 289). Battered women tend to suffer from low self esteem, passivity, guilt, severe stress, a traditionalist view of the wife's position in the marriage and an acceptance of the responsibility for her abuse (Walker, 286).

Battered women who are religious may seek comfort from their faith. They tend to forgive their husbands and identify themselves with the suffering Christ (Nason-Clark, 304). They may have interpreted the Bible as decreeing that they remain in the relationship because divorce is seen as evil. The abused wife may have believed that, once married, her husband will have ended his abusive behaviour or sought professional help (Walker, 285).

The victim may feel that she

has a duty to maintain the marriage at all costs because of her own spiritual and ethical views. The essential qualities of the marriage, being mutual self-giving, a life-time partnership, respect and equality may thus have been absent in the mind of the abusing spouse.

The above findings are relevant to annulment cases because the consent to marry may be impaired under such circumstances. A violent or aggressive personality may show itself both before and after the consent. An abusive husband who is traditional in the religious sense was probably the same before the consent. The couple may have agreed, before the consent, that he would seek professional help but he then failed to do so. If she is also traditional, then she may have chosen to endure the abuse even though her husband failed to get help.

In a nullity case, the role of advocates is to safeguard their clients' legal rights — to argue

on their behalf and present a strong case for nullity. The facts proceeding from the divorce and the evidence of witnesses and mental health experts are all relevant. It is essential that advocates gain the petitioners' trust that they are acting in their best interests.

The best evidence in a nullity case is the petitioner's own. He or she is the witness of the violence that was suffered. Aruna Gnanadason points out that, for the victim, remembering is critical; otherwise the pain of the abuse remains unresolved. The Church should also be a supportive presence for her: "The Church needs to become a 'sanctuary of courage' ... where violated women know they will be nurtured and surrounded by care" (p. 18).

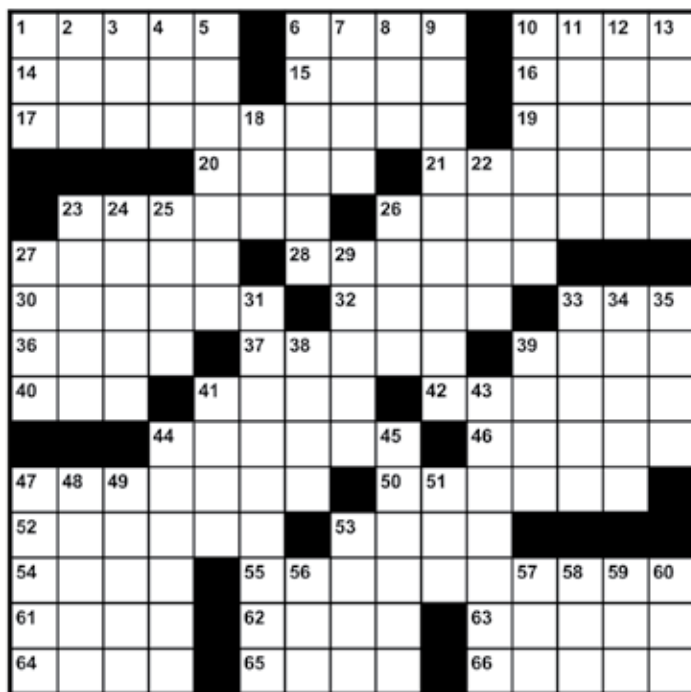
The advocate should obtain copies of all documents pertaining to the divorce under the divorce act, whether or not it was contested. The documents which were filed for the divorce, the transcripts of the evidence taken and a copy of the civil court's findings are useful for the following reasons: (a) they contain facts which no longer need to be proven; (b) they may contain

(Please turn to Page 10)

## Religious Crossword

## ACROSS

- 1 Saint of Lima and others  
6 \_\_\_ of David  
10 The Alphabet  
14 Got up  
15 Certain soft drink  
16 Unusual  
17 Leader of the Maccabees



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- 19 Test answer  
20 Travel on water  
21 Reverberated  
23 \_\_\_\_\_ Ladder  
26 Quantities  
27 Communion plate  
28 "Now the body is not one \_\_\_\_\_, it is many." (1 Cor 12:14)  
30 Seaport in the S Ukraine  
32 One of the gifts of the Magi  
33 Religious studies classes (abbr.)  
36 Promontory  
37 "I will bless those who bless you and \_\_\_\_\_." (Gn 12:3)  
39 Trunk of a tree  
40 Banned pesticide (abbr.)  
41 Major and bar ender  
42 A member of the clergy  
44 Containers for the wine and water at Mass  
46 Close friend  
47 Antelopes or certain Chevrolets  
50 Railway system  
52 Cylindrical wooden container  
53 Mixture  
54 Foul film  
55 Chief apostle  
61 Sea eagle  
62 As previously given  
63 Location of Vatican City  
64 French Christmas  
65 Not one  
66 Become confused
- DOWN**
- 1 Old Testament animal of sacrifice  
2 Pray, in ancient Rome  
3 Drunkard  
4 Superlative ending  
5 Advent and Lent  
6 Split between the eastern and western churches  
7 Labor  
8 Alias (abbr.)  
9 Looked like  
10 Legendary king of Britain  
11 Member of the nobility  
12 Container for the water or wine at Mass  
13 Sows  
18 Bill  
22 A college student  
23 Worn-out  
24 "This is just \_\_\_\_\_, had there been a real emergency..."  
25 Irish luck  
26 A minor prophet  
27 Small lake  
29 Heron  
31 Evil we commit  
33 Hot winter drink  
34 Dull sound of impact  
35 "...this very night before the cock crows, you will \_\_\_ me three times." (Mt 26:34)  
38 Certain Native Americans  
39 Roseanne \_\_\_\_\_  
41 Perry Mason's creator  
43 Congenital displacement of an organ  
44 Our Lady of Mount \_\_\_\_\_  
45 She asked for John's head on a platter  
47 Norwegian dramatist  
48 Very large in scale  
49 Dried plum  
51 Adult males  
53 Augury  
56 Wedding words  
57 Airport letters  
58 Bit  
59 Former measure of length  
60 Type of bread

AC 325

(Solutions on Page 11)

## Development and Peace

# Priest Facilitates Antigonish Workshop

by Heather MacAdam

The Church's social doctrine and faith-based action was the focus of a workshop held at St. Ninian Place May 1.

Father Paul McGillivray, co-ordinator of social justice ministry for the Diocese of Antigonish, facilitated the workshop which focused on the work of Development and Peace as a dynamic and far-reaching application of Catholic social teaching principles.

Father McGillivray said the workshop focused on the organization of Development and Peace, which has been active in the Church for about 40 years, and how it is an application of the Church's social teachings.

"The social teaching of the Church is, really, a component of the Church's overall teaching seen from a social perspective," he said.

The Church's social teachings respond to changes in the world, Father McGillivray said, to bring Gospel values to bear on the situations of contemporary society.

Development and Peace aims to reach out to people in need throughout the world, Father McGillivray said, including developing countries and those affected by extreme need.

"We had the recent earthquake in Haiti and the tsunami and other similar situations," he said. "There are areas of the world that are experiencing serious developmental needs."

Development and Peace gets involved, particularly, at a local level on a project basis, Father McGillivray said.

"[Whether it's] building a school or digging a well or helping to organize to improve living conditions. There are many projects of that kind that Development and Peace is linked to."

The organization is funded primarily through donations from Catholics and parishes across the country, Father McGillivray said.

Also a focus is the two main education campaigns held each year to bring awareness to the Canadian population of the needs in the developing world, Father McGillivray said.

"These focus on issues of development – it could be the need for water or the influence of certain enterprises like mining in developing countries. [It aims at] helping the Canadian population develop a greater awareness of situations of exploitation and what have you."

The discussion at Saturday's workshop was positive, Father McGillivray said.

Anne Cooke, one of the organizers of Saturday's workshop, said the workshops were held by the Diocesan Council for Development and Peace took place in Sydney River, as well as one in Antigonish. Another workshop was scheduled to take place in Mabou.

Cooke added she was really pleased with the turnout in Antigonish.

"It's a group of very interesting people," she said. "I also feel that people are comfortable openly discussing what their issues are."

Cooke said they wanted to have to the workshops to educate people on Development and Peace.

"Our whole basis is in the teachings of the Church. What we do reflects back to our mission as Christians and Catholics." †

# Impaired Consent in . . .

(Continued from Page 9)  
facts which pertain to the time of the consent; and, (c) they may contain reports from mental health professionals and the police.

Such information may indicate whether the psychological, intellectual or volitional requirements were lacking at the time of the consent.

Mental health experts can be utilized in nullity cases involving defective consent (c. 1680). Petitioners could undergo a mental assessment in order to show that they lacked a sufficient use of reason or judgement at the time of the consent to marry.

They may have been affected mentally by the abuse at or around the time of the consent. One partner may have believed the other when he or she promised that the situation would change after marrying or that help would be obtained. He or she may have been afraid or have married at the insistence of parents. If any religious factors influenced the decision to marry, then this is also relevant to the intention and the level of passivity. In short, the issue of defective consent may apply to both spouses.

The point is to obtain the annulment even if the issue of defective consent pertains to the petitioner. As a lawyer, I would explain to my client that, even though the abuse was not the client's fault, the assessment is needed because he or she may have consented to marry with the conviction that the abuser would change — to please him/her or other people; or even out of fear.

The client may have failed to appreciate or understand the implications of marrying an abusive person. The advocate must leave

no stone unturned even if it means that the client should undergo a psychological assessment when in fact it is the other spouse who has the issues. It is possible that both lacked a sufficient understanding of marriage in order to constitute valid consent.

To summarize: the evidence of petitioners is important and the advocate and the Church should

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**The point is to obtain the annulment even if the issue of defective consent pertains to the petitioner.**

---

support them in giving evidence on the basis of memories. All documents from the divorce should also be obtained for the nullity trial. The witnesses can be friends and family members. Both the petitioner and the respondent may need a mental assessment but the key point is that the annulment has to be proven even if the petitioner's consent was defective.

## Conclusion

The Divorce Act grants a divorce that is based on physical and mental cruelty as long as the court is satisfied that reconciliation between the spouses is unlikely to happen. In comparison, the Code of Canon Law states that a defect in consent renders the marriage null.

In the case of spousal abuse, defects in consent can arise most frequently in the contexts of mental illness, a grave defect in

discretionary judgement, ignorance, force or fear. The consent to marry may be impaired due to mental, personality or belief issues involving either spouse or both of them.

In order for these factors to be relevant in an annulment case, the cause for the annulment and the facts to support it should lead to the conclusion that the consent was impaired from the beginning due to such issues. The advocate can best reach this conclusion by presenting a strong case for the nullity and gaining the petitioner's trust even if the issue of consent also pertains to the client. †

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# Diocese of Antigonish Crunching Numbers

## *Priests gather to discuss financial future*

by **Connor MacEachern**

Diocese of Antigonish priests met in Port Hawkesbury, N.S. April 30 to discuss the financial future.

“That meeting was an update for the priests on where we are in terms of the first phase of the pooling of the liquid assets and the investments,” Diocesan spokesman Father Paul Abbass said.

“And then to help them to become familiar with what are the next steps.”

Bishop Raymond Lahey negotiated the legal settlement.

Father Abbass said the next phase of fundraising involves selling all land and “non-core assets.” Father Abbass said he expects the details of those sales to be released next week following regional parish and finance council meetings.

“We can presume following that, parishes will get notification as to which properties we foresee being the first ones on the market.”

Phase 1 – through which parishes transferred funds to the legal settlement – will be announced soon, Father Abbass said.

The Antigonish Catholic Episcopal Corporation is corporate head of the Diocese of Antigonish. The Episcopal Corporation is also the majority shareholder of The Casket Printing and Publishing Company.

Father Abbass said no decisions have been made as to the future of The Casket company.

“We have said from the beginning that all non-core assets of the Diocese are on the table,” he said.

“It certainly is a live discussion.”

Central administration costs are also being scrutinized, Father Abbass said.

“What it means is that we’re looking at all the programs and trying to best discover how we can continue to deliver a range of programs with very little financial



**Father Paul Abbass is the spokesman for the Diocese of Antigonish. (File photo)**

resources,” he said.

“That could lead to some cutbacks, which could, I suppose lead to some lay-offs.”

Any lay-offs would be made at the central administration level, Father Abbass said. Individual parishes would make their own staffing decisions, he added.

Father Abbass said parishioners can donate directly to programming such as religious education or youth work.

“Places where we feel we could have some impact.”

If specified for a particular program, the donation will not be transferred to the legal settlement fund, he added.

The regional meetings will be held May 18 at St. Ninian Place, Antigonish, May 17 in Port Hawkesbury and May 19 in Sydney River.



*“This was all predicated back at the very beginning when we said we would do our very best to make the process transparent.”*

**Father Paul Abbass, Diocesan spokesperson**

The Diocese must raise about \$18.5 million to cover a legal settlement and other legal costs associated with sexual abuse allegations. Former Antigonish

“This was all predicated back at the very beginning when we said we would do our very best to make the process transparent,” he added.

The total money raised during

## Regnum Christi ...

(Continued from Page 2)

### *All Is Grace*

For her part Clare particularly appreciated the closing lines of the communiqué in which the Pope renewed “his encouragement to all the Legionaries of Christ, to their families, and to all the lay people involved in the ‘Regnum Christi’ Movement, during this difficult time for the congregation and for each of them.”

“That was what struck me,” says Clare.

This concluding paragraph of the statement went on to note that the Holy Father urges these individuals “not to lose sight of the fact that their vocation, which originates in Christ’s call and is driven by the ideal of being witnesses of His love to the world, is a genuine gift from God, a treasure for the Church, and the indestructible foundation

upon which each of them can build their own future and that of the Legion.”

Clare acknowledges how these words helped her recognize the manifold gifts of God, which are evident in having “the grace to persevere through difficult times” and even the desire to want to persevere. “It’s just an encouragement,” she says.

In this the mother of four perceives the truth of Romans 5:20 wherein St. Paul assures believers that where sin increases, grace increases all the more. “We’re able to, with God’s strength and His grace, to continue on,” she says.

As she continues on in her vocation within the movement, the Dartmouth woman insists that hope and encouragement can always be found in the one thing that’s certain. “We know that God is always with us,” she states. †

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# Why Abortion Is The Issue

By Julie Culshaw

The legalization of abortion, 40 years ago in Canada and 37 years ago in the US, marked the beginning of a cataclysmic change in thinking. This was the point at which we took the fate of individuals into our own hands.

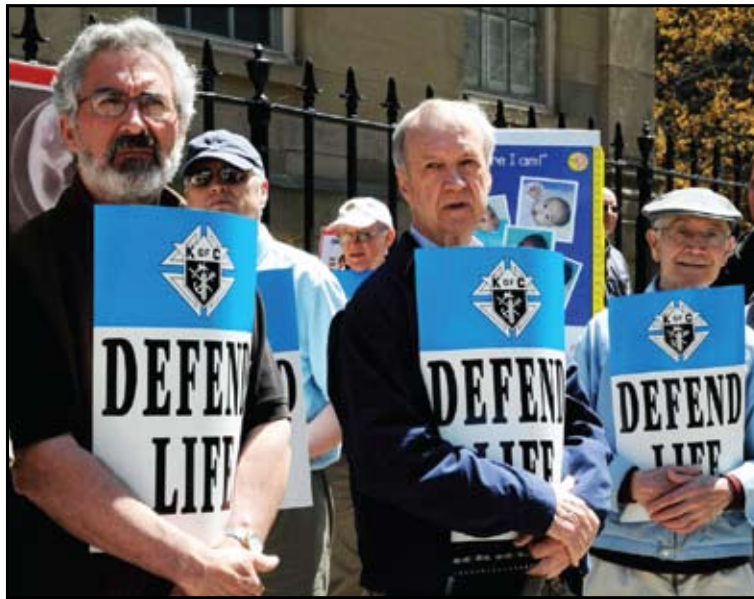
Unlike capital punishment in which the legal system decides that someone should die for his crime, or war in which leaders of nations make that momentous decision, abortion places the fate of someone's life in the hands of an individual.

The culture of the western world has been unique in its humane consideration for life, manifested in social policy, in law, and in the treatment of the sick and dying. The Judaeo-Christian ethic is to be credited for this.

This ethic has been the basis for most of our laws and much of our social policy. The reverence for each and every human life has also been a keystone of western medicine (A New Ethic for Medicine and Society, California Medicine, Official Journal of the California Medical Association (Sept. 1970)).

Legalized abortion changed all that.

With the ruling that a mother can assess the value of her baby's



RAY HODGSON, Tom Roach and Al Balawyder participated in a Pro-Life demonstration in Halifax in May 2009. (Myshak photo)

life and terminate that life if its value proves insufficient, all life can now be subject to the scrutiny of individual judgment. Abortion changed our thinking that life is intrinsically valuable, and with that doubt we have opened the door to all the other ways in which life can be devalued.

Embryonic stem cell research, in-vitro fertilization which chooses some fertilized embryos and discards the rest, induced labour to bring about the death of disabled infants, euthanasia of infants as

performed in Holland, euthanasia and assisted suicide for those whose lives at the other end of life don't seem worth living. All of these became possible when we approved abortion.

"Abortion is the cutting edge, the initial wedge, for 'the new ethic.' It is the tip of the iceberg in the proposed revision of what it means to be human. ... In the acceptance of abortion-on-demand, there occurs a subtle but profound shift in the attitude of society toward all people who are unwanted,

imperfect, and dependent. ... When we choose to offer death as an alternative to suffering, the list of those who qualify under 'the new ethic' expands greatly," states Jean Staker Garton in *Who Broke the Baby?*

Twice in the last week, I came across the comparison of abortion with the tragedy of Hiroshima. When the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, no one anticipated the aftermath of that mushroom cloud. No one was prepared for the numbers of people who would survive to live with irreparably damaged bodies, with cancers caused by radiation, with the psychological suffering of nightmares and fear; no one anticipated the numbers of medical personnel required to look after those affected.

The same is true of abortion. Seen as a measure to help women solve a problem, abortion leaves in its wake damaged and broken women, guilty men who regret lost fatherhood, siblings who have lost brothers and sisters and carry the guilt of knowing that they survived the abortion holocaust.

We are beginning to recognize the health effects of the abortion

epidemic — increased risk of breast cancer, subsequent premature deliveries of babies who may have disabilities, infertility in many women who have had induced abortions. And of course the millions of individuals lost to society, people we will never know because they didn't get their place at the table of life.

Perhaps the worst fallout from the mushroom cloud of abortion is the hardness of heart that has developed in us as human beings, our indifference to the tragedy.

"Evil, suffering, violence — all these are bad in a society, but what is far worse is becoming used to them, tolerating them, and learning to live with them ... We become as the crowd around the cross at Golgotha. We recognize the injustice, we see the suffering of the innocent and abhor the violence of the act, but like those on the day of Christ's crucifixion, we do nothing," states Garton.

Yes, abortion is THE issue because it is the point at which we cast aside our respect for life; by allowing the small, dependent life in the womb to be terminated at will, we declared open season on all life. †

## Thank You, Father



Ann Bradbury, president of the Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta Council of the Catholic Women's League, presents a card to Father Gilbert Bertrand, OMI following a Year for Priest celebration at the Halifax parish May 5. Father Bertrand is one of a dozen priests who will join Archbishop Anthony Mancini on pilgrimage to Rome next month in celebration of the Holy Year. (Myshak photo)



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