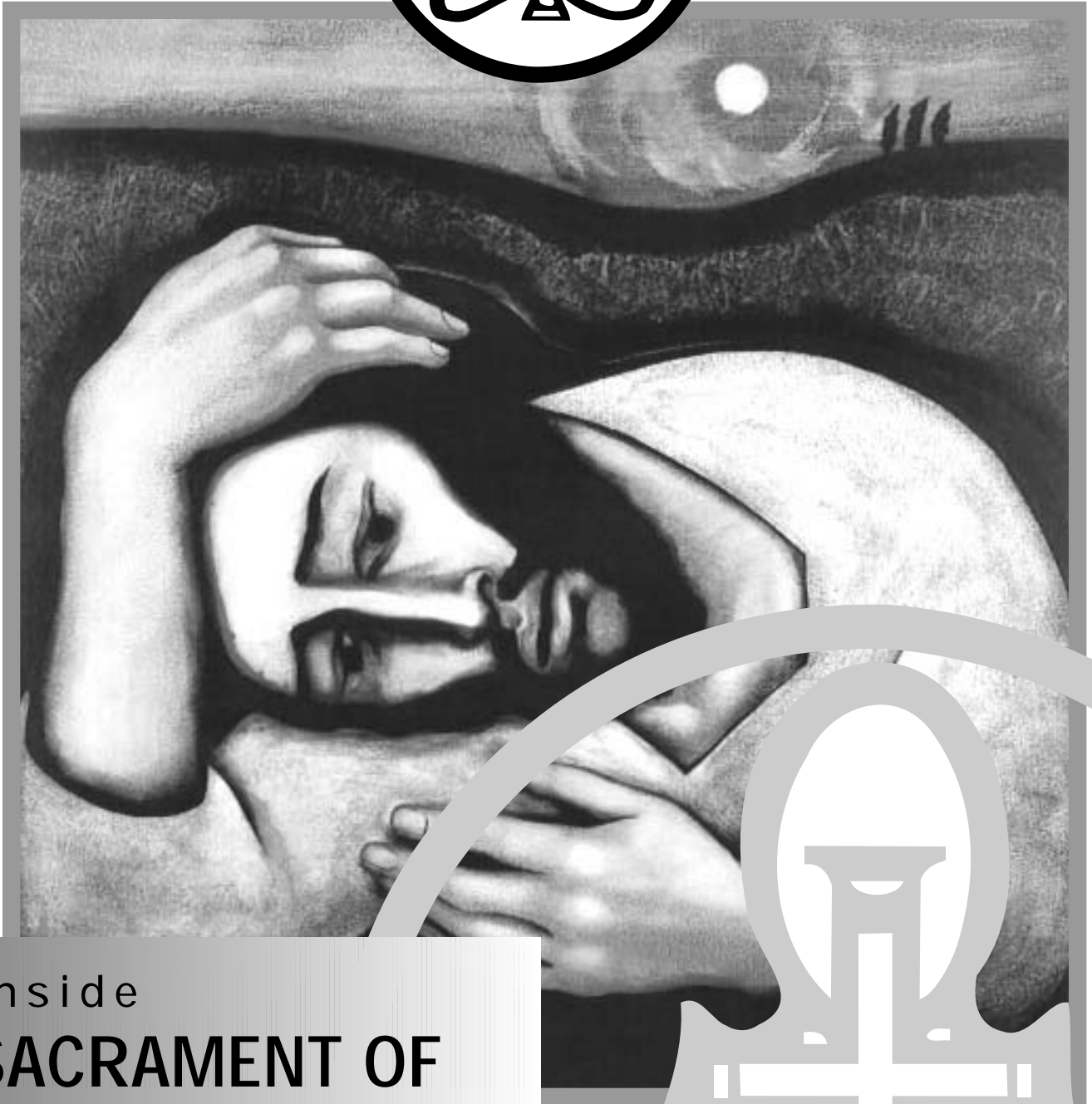


Companions of the Cross



Inside
**SACRAMENT OF
RECONCILIATION**



WATCH



Fr. Bob Bedard

FOOD FOR LIFE

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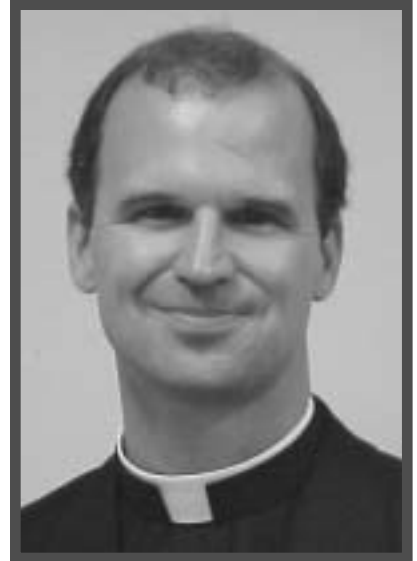
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Feature

Models for the Church

Fr. Bob Bedard

Following are my thoughts on approaches to pastoring. The one I and my contemporaries were formed in I will call the “former” model. The one that we are being directed to now by the highest authority in the Church (Vatican II) I will refer to as the “restored” model. This latter, I firmly believe, is desperately needed by the Church in our day.

Former Model

Our first priority, it seems to me, was to make the Mass and the Sacraments as available as possible. This led us to multiply Masses, setting them at convenient hours so that everybody would have a chance to “get to Mass”. Many parishes had Sunday Mass on the hour. This necessitated neat, efficient, somewhat rushed liturgies, the clearing of the parking lot between Masses being of prime importance. I must confess that this was a pretty sore point for me and others like me who had participated in the liturgical movement through the fifties and sixties before the Council.

Long hours were scheduled for Confessions in most parishes and penitents were shuffled through at a fairly rapid clip. There really wasn't time to give much individual attention to people no matter how badly in many cases this might have been needed.

Baptism was administered without much preparation, and the other Sacraments suffered varying degrees of the same fate.

But the important thing was to make the Sacraments as available as possible. It

was as though they were able to work automatically and, as long as people received them often enough, all would be well. *Ex opere operato* was pretty well our battle cry. If one wanted to grow in one's faith, he was advised to receive the Sacraments more often. If one was alienated from the Church, he was said to be “away from the Sacraments”, and the solution to this situation for him was “to get back to church”. If he would simply do this, his chances for salvation were once again deemed to be promising.

Of course, all of this providing of the Sacraments was something only a priest could do. The ministry of the parish was seen as flowing exclusively from the ordained clergy.

The rest of our time was spent instructing potential converts to the Church, visiting parish schools, organizing and attending meetings, listening to people's troubles, and taking care of the material administration of the parish plant. The last-named was considered to be the preserve of the pastor alone and tended to consume a large portion of his time.

There was very little room in all of this for lay people to exercise their own apostolate. It was assumed that all gifts for ministry resided in the priesthood. The solution for any problem of deficiency in ministry was more priests. Our inability to answer completely the people's needs for ministry was blamed on that perennial problem, the “shortage” of priests. Just how short we were of clergy is open to debate. I can well remember when four priests were full-time on staff at St. Patrick's church downtown – largest parish in the Archdiocese of Ottawa.

And, of course, religious orders were able to do better still. St. Joseph's parish, also downtown, had six or seven priests on staff, with one or two religious brothers as well!

The lay person's participation in parish ministry was pretty well limited to such things as taking up the collection and counting it (though not usually depositing it in the bank), ushering at Sunday Mass, serving at the altar, singing in the choir, sacristy work, answering the telephone, locking the parish hall, and organizing and running various fund-raising activities such as teas and bingos.

Lay people who felt a call to serious and sensitive ministry, to make the Church present in the market place, the temporal order, tended to operate largely outside parish structures. These were the pioneers in the social apostolate, usually known as “Catholic Action”. These were a prophetic people, ahead of their time. They met regularly, studied the social encyclicals, and supported one another in what they truly believed to be their mission from God. But again, this type of thing, while enjoying official Church approbation, was largely suspect in the minds of the clergy and was very tenuously connected to parish life if at all.

All of this is not to say that the former model was all bad. No doubt it was able to answer, in many ways, the needs of the time. And I imagine that many of my own biases are reflected in my description, making it inaccurate to some degree. But the fact remains. It simply will not do the job today. This is not my bias, but the official stand of the Magisterium. A restored

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model of ministry has emerged from the Second Vatican Council.

Restored Model

Describing the Vatican II vision of pastoral ministry as “restored” makes an important point. It is not new. It is reflected very directly in Scripture and finds fulfilment through the history of the Church when the Church was most effective.

According to Vatican II, embracing the restored model requires of the priest that he identify with the Lord’s vision for his people on earth. Jesus founded the Church so that all men (and women, too) could be redeemed and the whole world brought into the family of God. The scope of the work is enormous. The Church is commissioned to reach out and minister to everyone: non-believers as well as believers, unchurched as well as churched, the wounded and the healthy, people of all ages, backgrounds, and occupations. The Church’s mandate is to evangelize everyone fully and bring all into a personal relationship with the Lord. The Church’s assignment from God is to speak a prophetic word of justice and peace to a broken world and to work toward achieving it. And the Church is to celebrate the good news of life in joyful and meaningful liturgy. For the Church’s mission to be successful, all this has to be happening in every parish.

The task is, to say the least, staggering. To even begin in any parish to realize the vision, the priest must understand that, even though he bears the full responsibility, he does not have to do it all. Just as the bishop has the responsibility for the Church’s mission in the diocese and delegates it to the ordained clergy in specific areas, so the pastor of a parish must delegate the tasks to lay people.

The Council has made it plain that all the gifts needed for ministering to God’s people and to the world are present in the Body of Christ. It is the pastor’s role to see these gifts in the people. It then becomes his responsibility to call these people forth, give them some training and preparation, and send them out to minister. He must then continue to work with them and support them. Since most of these lay people will have only a limited amount of time to give to ministry, there will have to be a great many of them. Although the lay person’s apostolate derives, as the Council makes clear, from his Baptism, it must, to be in the order the Lord intends, be exercised in submission to the pastor. Just as the priest’s ministry is out of order unless it is in union with that of the bishop, so the lay person’s ministry makes no sense unless it is done in concert with and directed by the pastor.

All of this presupposes, it seems to me, that a pastor exercises his ministry as the head of a team. There is no way he can do it alone. There is no way the Church can be properly present to the world in all its needs without fully putting to use all the gifts our people have. It is not enough for them to be urged from time to time to “get out there and do it”. There needs to be recognition that not every person’s gifts are the same and that giftedness without training will be largely ineffective.

In short, it remains the pastor’s task to head a sizeable team of people in his parish to make it possible for the Church’s mission to be adequately carried out.

The reality we face, and the principal problem as I see it, is that we as

priests have little training to do the kind of pastoring that Vatican II calls us to do. We need to be co-ordinators of ministries and are ill equipped to do the job. Even those of us who understand what the Council calls for and want to move with it could not properly do it without training.

One of the frustrations that I experience regularly is running into eager lay people, obviously gifted to minister, who have little opportunity to get involved in the Church’s mission. I would say the pews in each church are crowded with people who are both capable of significant contribution to the real work of the Church and very enthused and ready to give some of their time, money, and priority to it. But all this is doomed to ineffectiveness until priests are prepared to embrace fully the role the Council says is theirs.

I guess the recommendation has to be obvious. We need to set up a training program for priests. It would have to do three things:

1 convince us that the Council’s way is the only way;

2 give us a whole renewed theology of ministry;

3 give us training in the principal dynamic and all the techniques of heading and working with a team of lay people.

Naturally, some of us are going to feel threatened at what might seem, at a glance, to look like an attempted takeover of the Church by the laity. Much work needs to be done on how we see ourselves, our identity as priests. In fact, I see this as one of the keys to the whole thing. We need to know who we are and how we fit into the whole mission of the Church. We need to know that, although the lay person is coming back into his own, as the Council teaches he must, there is still a crucial need for the priest. Actually, the priest is more important today than ever. Without the one whose gift is to preside and co-ordinate, nothing can happen.☺

It is the pastor’s role to see these gifts in the people.

.....
Fr. Bob’s ministry has included teaching high school, full-time renewal work and pastoring St. Mary’s parish in Ottawa. He has spent the past number of years founding and working with the Community.



Feature

A Practical Guide to Understanding and Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation

By Fr. Ross Lambton

The Sacrament of Confession, also known as reconciliation or penance is a wonderful way to experience the mercy and forgiveness of the Lord. Through the ministry of the priest, sins are forgiven and reconciliation of the penitent with God and the Church is effected. This booklet was developed out of a need to help people better understand the reason for the sacrament and its origins, and so encourage its use. It was created also to aid penitents in their preparation, and so celebrate the sacrament well, receiving in abundance the graces it promises.

“TEACHER WHAT MUST I DO...?”

In the first chapter of his letter on Christian morality, *The Splendor of Truth*, Pope John Paul II invites us to reflect upon the dialogue of Jesus with the rich young man who asks the question, “Teacher, what good must I do to have

eternal life?” (Mt 19:16). At this incredible encounter the rich young man asks Jesus about the full meaning of life. This important and unavoidable question about how one ought to live is asked by every human heart. The young man knew, and Jesus confirmed it, that there is an essential connection between the meaning of life and the moral good which must be done. The desire to know the truth and fully live it can only be completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

WE ARE CALLED TO CHOOSE THE GOOD

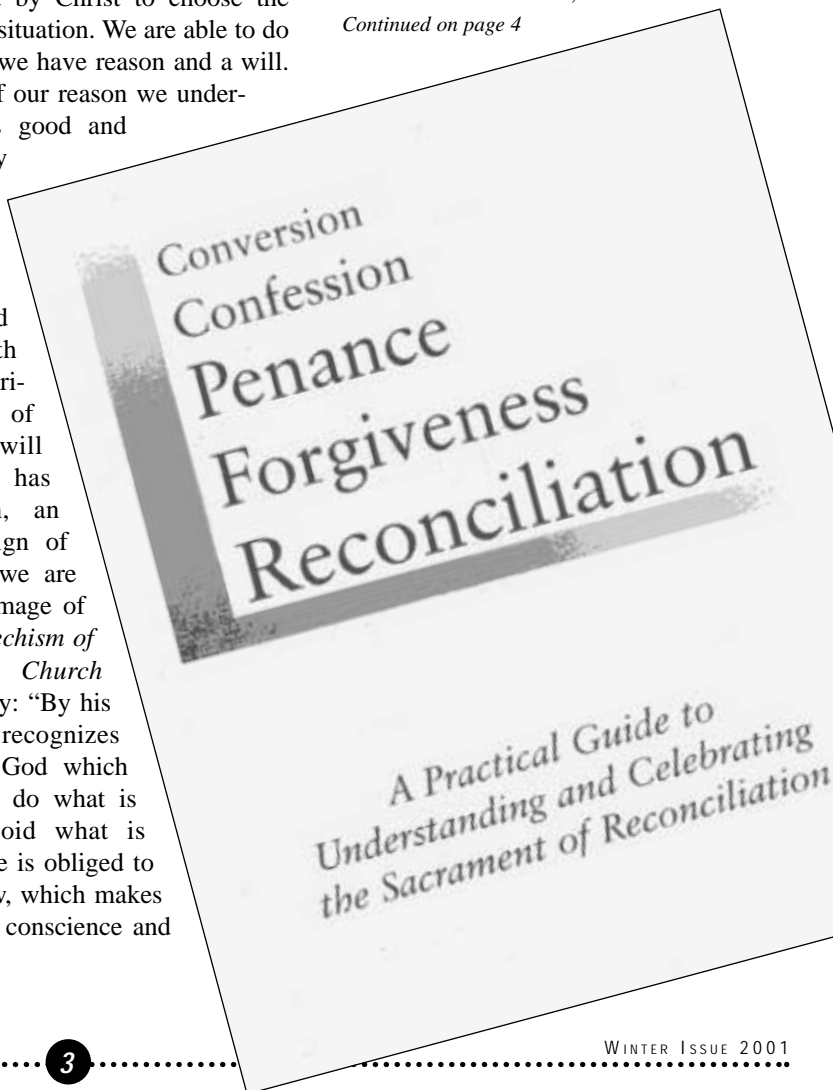
We are called by Christ to choose the good in every situation. We are able to do good because we have reason and a will. By the light of our reason we understand what is good and what is evil. By the power of our will we are able to choose the good and avoid the evil. With these two “spiritual powers” of reason and will each person has true freedom, an outstanding sign of the fact that we are made in the image of God. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it this way: “By his reason, man recognizes the voice of God which urges him ‘to do what is good and avoid what is evil.’ Everyone is obliged to follow this law, which makes itself heard in conscience and

is fulfilled in the love of God and neighbour” (#1706). God wants us to be happy both now and forever with him. By living according to the laws that God has given us to follow, we fulfil his plan for us and so become both more human and more like God. As a result, we experience true happiness and spiritual well-being.

SIN

Sin is an offense against God, our neighbour and our human dignity. Sin separates us from the life and love God has to offer. It is important, therefore, to know what sin is and what it is not. For someone to commit a mortal sin, that

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is, a sin that radically breaks-off his or her relationship with God, three conditions must be present:

1. The act is seriously wrong.
2. The person is aware of its seriousness.
3. He or she chooses to do the act with full freedom.

Mortal sin significantly separates us from the life of God that is within us. This is serious. Without the life of God we will find it very difficult to grow in virtue and we cannot inherit eternal life. All mortal sins must be confessed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Serious sin occurs when someone does an act that is 'serious matter', but does not know that it is a serious offense or does not do it freely. This type of sin is still significant, but because the person lacked enough knowledge or freedom the sin does not completely separate us from the life of God living within. It is, nevertheless, a sign that the person's life needs to get back into God's order. All serious sin should be confessed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Venial sin does not cut off our friendship with God. It consists of all the smaller things that we do and fail to do everyday. It is a movement away from God in 'little occasions' where we could do better but we do not. Venial sin interferes with our progress in virtue and weakens our charity. Although venial sin is not as severe as mortal sin, it can lead to mortal sin if left unchecked. Thus, venial sin should still be confessed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. God calls us to do our best, and that includes living as charitable a life as possible.



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

We are encouraged to examine our conscience daily, and in a particular way before we go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. During this examination we seek to find where we chose to turn away from God. Again, because God has informed us of his dislike for sin, and what actually constitutes a sin, it is very

important for us to know what is sin and what is not sin. In our reflection we should examine both what we did (the "sinful act") and the extent of our free participation in the "sinful act" (free choice).

The Ten Commandments are listed and elaborated upon below. They are a list of goods we should choose to obtain and evils that we should strive to avoid. When someone freely chooses something evil, then a personal sin, in the fullest sense of the word, occurs. The source of the Commandments is the Bible (Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21), as the Church interprets them, all of the evil acts that these commandments describe are "grave matter" and so are mortal sins if they are done with full knowledge and freedom. The commandments also can be broken in lesser ways; in which case venial sin occurs.

1. Love and Serve God Alone

Voluntary doubt - refusing to believe in God.

Incredulity - refusing to believe in an essential Truth of the Catholic faith.

Despair - not trusting in the truth that God has brought me salvation.

Presumption - thinking that I can save myself or I am guaranteed salvation no matter what I do.

Indifference - not reflecting on the goodness of God.

Ingratitude - refusing to acknowledge the goodness of God.

Superstition - placing my trust in magic,

fortunetellers, charms, horoscopes, psychics, etc.

Idolatry - putting a created thing in the centre of my life (e.g. money, power, pleasure, etc.)

2. The Name of God Is Holy

Abuse of God's name - improper use of the names of God and Jesus Christ.

Promises - making promises in God's name and then breaking them.

Blasphemy - words of hatred and defiance towards the Divine Name.

3. The Sabbath Day Is Holy

Deliberately missing Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of obligation (In Canada: Christmas, December 25th, and, Mary the Mother of God, January 1st) without a serious reason. Not treating Sunday as a special day of rest.

4. Honour Your Father and Mother

Disobedience - Children refusing to obey their parents.

Neglect - Parents failing to do their best to provide for the spiritual and material needs of children, or children failing to care for the needs of elderly parents.

5. Do Not Kill

Intentional homicide - murder.

Direct abortion - ending a pregnancy.

Euthanasia - ending the life of a sick or elderly person.

Scandal - leading others to do evil.

Disrespect of health - abusing the body with harmful drugs.

6. Do Not Commit Adultery

Adultery - sexual relations by or with someone who is married to another.

Lack of openness to life - marriage union is meant, if possible, for the procreation and rearing of children.

Contraception - acting directly against one's fertility. Every marriage act must respect the natural fertility cycles,

respecting both the unitive and procreative goods of marriage.

Lust - sexual pleasure sought for selfish reasons.

Fornication - sexual relations between unmarried people.

Masturbation - deliberate sexual self-stimulation.

Pornography - displaying or being an outside witness to sexual intimacy reserved for marriage.

7. Do Not Steal

Theft - taking of another's goods. This includes not paying what is owed to government, not paying a just wage, and not respecting business contracts.

8. Do Not Bear False Witness

Perjury - publicly stating an untruth.

Detraction - disclosing another's moral faults without a valid reason.

Calumny - false remarks about another person by which people make false judgments about the person.

Lying - speaking against the truth in order to lead someone into error.

9/10. Do Not Covet Your Neighbour's Wife or Goods

Greed - not helping others in society with our surplus.

Envy - sadness at the sight of another's goods and an immoderate desire to acquire them. When harm is wished to a neighbour, it is a mortal sin.

comparing ourselves to our Lord, and his closest followers (and not our neighbour). Another source of information for one's conscience would be to look to specific places in the Bible where the action of the Holy Spirit regarding personal holiness is described, such as 1 Corinthians, chapter 13:4-11, or Galatians, chapter 5:22-23. The benchmark for evaluating our imitation of Christ is the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5,6,7). It is important to remember that venial sins often occur in the area of omission. For example, not being generous with our time toward the up-building of God's kingdom. Are you living in the light of Christ? Do you have zeal for His kingdom? Are your attitudes rooted in Jesus' life-giving Spirit? The following acronym (L.I.F.E.) may be helpful in assessing our inner attitudes: **Lift up others** - by giving honour, affirmation, and thanks to great and small alike. **Invigorate** Faith, Hope, & Love - by continually praising God and teaching the truth to others. **Faith Sharing** - by discussing spiritual things, confessing our faith, and testifying to God's power in our lives. **Encouragement** - building up, blessing, seeking God's will in all things and helping others to do the same.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

What Is the Sacrament Called?

The solution to our being alienated from God is found in the death and resurrection of Christ. When we sin and find ourselves away from God, Christ, through his Church provides for our reunion. This grace is primarily given to us through the sacrament that has many names: The Sacrament of Conversion, The Sacrament of Penance, The Sacrament of Confession, The Sacrament of Forgiveness, or The Sacrament of Reconciliation. The most common name

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VENIAL SIN

Because venial sin consists of "smaller" offences against charity and "lesser faults", it is impossible to give a complete list of them. Indeed, many venial sins may even be good "acts", but done for the wrong motive. A good way of examining our consciences regarding venial sin is to continually meditate on the life of Jesus and the lives of the saints. We need to be

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today is The Sacrament of Reconciliation. All of these names are useful, because they highlight one of the aspects of the Sacrament.

What Does the Sacrament Do?

Those who approach the Sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example and by prayer labours for their conversion. (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1422).

Why Must I go To a Priest?

Only God forgives sins (cf Mk 2:7). Since he is the Son of God, Jesus says of himself, "*The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins*" and exercises this divine power: "*Your sins are forgiven*" (Mk 2:5). Further, by virtue of his divine authority he gives this power to men to exercise in his name. Jesus said to them again, "*Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.*" When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained*" (Jn 20:21-23; *Catechism* #1441). Christ has willed that in her prayer and life and action his whole Church should be the sign and instrument of the forgiveness and reconciliation that he acquired for us at the price of his blood. But he entrusted the exercise of the power of absolution to the apostolic ministry which he charged with the "*ministry of reconciliation*" (2 Cor 5:18). The apostle is sent out "on behalf of Christ: with "God making his appeal" through him and pleading: "Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20; *Catechism* #1442).

Who Is This Sacrament For?

Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance for all sinful members of his

Church: above all for those who, since Baptism, have fallen into grave [mortal] sin, and have thus lost their baptismal grace and wounded ecclesial communion. It is to them that the Sacrament of Penance offers a new possibility to convert and to recover the grace of justification. The Fathers of the Church present this Sacrament as "the second plank [of salvation] after the shipwreck which is the loss of grace" (*Catechism* #1446).

The Duties of the Penitent

The person who comes to the Sacrament must do three things in order to properly respond to God's grace. First, he must be contrite. This means that the person has "sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again." Second, the person must confess (that is, tell the priest) all mortal sins that he is aware of having committed. Third, the penitent must make satisfaction (that is, repair the wrong done). Satisfaction can be made in two ways: 1) In a temporal way, if the damage done can be restored then it ought to be, for example, returning stolen goods, or restoring someone's reputation; and 2) In a spiritual way, making satisfaction entails doing penance, which is a sign to God of your desire to spiritually repair the damage done by the sin and to work harder at your conversion.

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

1. The penitent goes before the priest, either behind the screen or sitting in the chair, and says the following: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Make the sign of the cross.) Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been [amount of time] since my last confession."

2. The penitent tells his/her sins to the priest. The sins should be described in some detail (number and kind), for example, "I did bad things" is too general, but "I missed Mass on Sunday all last year" describes this sin properly.

3. In order to help the penitent, the priest may talk about the sins confessed or give some advice.

4. After the penitent confesses his sins, the priest gives a penance, usually a prayer to be said. The penance is to be performed after the Sacrament of Reconciliation is finished.

5. The penitent then says an act of contrition preferably by memory. An example of a simple act of contrition is the following prayer: "O my God I am truly sorry for having sinned against you because you are good and deserve all my love. I will try my best with the help of your grace to not sin again."

6. The priest extends his hand and says the prayer of forgiveness, known as absolution: "God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church, may God grant you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

7. The penitent says: "Amen."

8. The priest dismisses the penitent, saying: "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace." ☩

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This is a booklet published by Fr. Ross Lambton for St. Maurice Parish, Nepean where he is the pastor.



Feature

By Fr. Bob Poole



Lent

This is probably going to be one of those articles carrying a disclaimer to the effect that the views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the editor!

Lent is traditionally seen as a time of purification, when we are called to examine our lives in the light of the gospel, and undertake a “house-clean”. It is a season of preparation, of getting ready. Ready for what? Usually, the answer is “for celebrating the Easter event, when Christ burst the bonds of death and entered into resurrection glory”. I want to suggest a more pressing reason this Lent for us to get ready, to do more with what I believe Christ is about to do in the immediate future, rather than with what He did in the remote past.

I was struck by a talk Ralph Martin gave some time ago in Ottawa, when he indicated that in his writings of late, Pope John Paul II was prophesying that Jesus was about to manifest His presence in a sovereign way, such that the whole world would sit up and take notice. As I understand it, the Holy Father was not predicting an imminent end of the world, but rather a vivid and unmistakable display of Christ’s power and majesty, in the light of which everyone would see themselves as they stood before God and be challenged to take stock of their lives.

I was really excited to hear this from Ralph Martin, because for some time I had been sensing that only a dramatic and sovereign move of the Lord would shake the world out of its lethargy and apathy

towards the things of God. The more I follow the news, the more clear it is becoming that society as a whole has taken leave of God, certainly in the Western world at least. Regularly, the governments and the courts enact legislation and judgments that turn the moral laws of God on their head. We see Christian moral teaching ridiculed and trashed in our schools, abortion on demand available everywhere, same-sex unions given the same legal rights as marriages, euthanasia given legal acceptability in Holland, and genetic engineering which encourages scientists to play God, succumbing, in the recent words of the Pope “to the short-sighted pride of a science which accepts no limits”. We see all this and we know that the world stands under imminent

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judgment from God, and is inviting the punishments threatened throughout the Bible for abandoning God's commandments. To be frank, nothing less than a sovereign move of God to shake the world and bring it to its senses is likely to effect a change in people's thinking.

I read recently a passage from Mike Bickle's book "Growing in the Prophetic", and I quote it at length here, because I believe it echoes closely what the Holy Father has been saying, albeit from a Protestant perspective. In his book (pp.29-31) Bickle describes an encounter with God in a hotel room in Cairo way back in 1982, when God gave him this prophetic word: "I will change the understanding and expression of Christianity on the earth in one generation". Commenting on this prophesy, Bickle writes: "I understood that this reformation/revival would be His sovereign initiative. God Himself was going to make this drastic change in Christianity across the world. The phrase, 'The understanding of Christianity' meant the way Christianity is perceived by unbelievers. In the early church people were afraid to associate casually with believers partly because of the displays of supernatural power. In the 1990's most unbelievers consider the church to be irrelevant. God will change the way unbelievers view the church. They once again will witness God's wonderful yet terrifying power in the church. They will have a very different understanding of Christianity before God is finished with this generation.

"The phrase 'the expression of Christianity' meant the way the body of Christ expresses its life together. God is powerfully going to change the church so that it functions effectively as a healthy body in the power and love of God instead of just having meetings and programs based on its design and structure...Christians' relationships with God and each other, the way they are perceived by unbelievers, and even the structure and functioning of the church will be radically and suddenly changed by God Himself. This change will take place -not

in a month, a year, or a few years -but in one generation. That night in Cairo I had the sense that I was being invited to be a part of this."

My sense too is that God is inviting us to be a part of this sovereign move of His, in which I believe he intends to "shake the heavens and the earth, overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations" (Hg 2:22) and revive and restore His church: "I will fill this house with glory... Greater will be the future glory of this house than the former, says the Lord of hosts" (Hg 2:9). Far from being terrified at the prospect, I believe that we should be thrilled, "stand erect and raise our heads, because the day of our vindication is at hand" (Lk 21:28). It will be a time of tremendous harvesting of souls for the kingdom, when thousands upon thousands of people, including lapsed Catholics, will flood into the church. In this sense, we need to "get ready", to be able to receive and welcome them, provide the evangelizing, mentoring, healing and discipling they will need.

What does it involve then, this "getting ready"? Here is where this article begins at last to swing along more expected lines, and perhaps bring a sigh of relief from the editor! Firstly, it will involve repentance, on both a personal and corporate (i.e. church) level. We need to personally "house-clean", because any "shaking of the nations" out of complacency about sin will impact us, if we haven't taken the time **now**, to get our spiritual act together. I believe one of the purposes of these prophecies of coming revival is to give God's faithful an "early warning" as it were, a "wake-up call" so we can get our spiritual lives in order ahead of time. It is a sign of God's mercy, even if it feels at the time like a "severe mercy"— God wants us to be prepared for the coming move, when He will unleash a tidal wave of His Spirit, so we are able to reassure and pastor those who are going

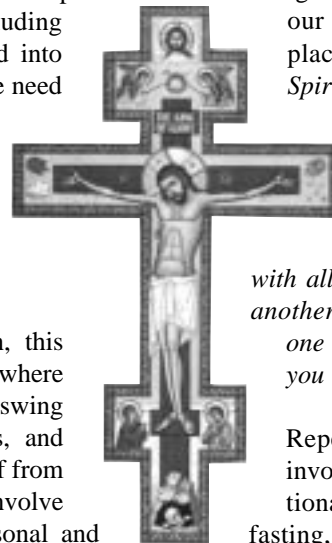
to be brought to their knees in repentance, like the thousands who heard St. Peter's Pentecost sermon in Jerusalem and "were cut to the heart, saying 'What must we do, brothers?'" (Ac 2:37). We won't know what to tell them, unless we have gone the way of conversion before them. We are exhorted in 2 Peter 3:11,14: "What sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the day of God...therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace."

This season of repentance must also operate at the level of the church, as I said above. If our churches are to be places of welcoming, healing, restoring, sanctifying, as God desires, we have to get serious about repenting, forgiving and reconciling with one another. Too often our church communities are places that "grieve the Holy Spirit" in the words of Ephesians 4:30, which goes on to insist, "all bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ" (Eph 4:31-32).

Repentance and conversion involves all the disciplines traditionally associated with Lent: fasting, praying, and almsgiving, and more besides – but with a more radical spirit of broken-heartedness over our sin than ever before in view of the forthcoming move of God. I don't know when this will be, of course, but as I prostrated myself in repentance before the altar one recent Thursday night during our weekly prayer meeting at Lift Jesus Higher, I felt a voice speak into my heart with vivid urgency: "It is close!"

Happy Lent! ☺

Fr. Bob Poole is from England and is currently with Jesus Gathers His People community in Vanier.



Lay associates corner

Thanks be to God for the gift of faith

By Jack Egan

To know so little as I do, yet to believe so much is the best gift our Father in heaven could have given me. Some seven years ago if someone had said that one day you, Jack Egan, will write your conversion story in a Roman Catholic newsletter, I would have asked that person to give their head a shake. Yes, I was raised a Catholic, however all through my teens and up to my late thirties, I had as much contact with the Church as I did the tooth fairy. As a matter of fact, I did not go to confession once between the ages of 12 and 38. Just to show how unconditional God's love is for us, during all this time he blessed me with the love of wonderful grandparents and parents and sent me a beautiful wife, Cathy, and blessed us both with four special children. He did this all for me even though I made no time for him in my life. Never have the words from Jeremiah or John rung more true, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jr 31:3). "Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God but that he has loved us and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins" (1 Jn 4:10).

I was as far away from the Church and the teachings of Jesus Christ as a man could get. I would need twice the space allotted to me to properly explain just how far I had wandered from God and his Church. Suffice it to say that doing things my way had landed me in a drug and alcohol rehab program, cost me close friendships, left me with two criminal convictions and greatly affected my career path. Cathy's love of family and God's loving mercy kept me from losing my wife and family.

Everything changed for my family in the summer of 1994. Good friends of ours, Alex and Debbie Sinclair, had suggested to Cathy that we take our kids to a church called St. Mary's in Centretown in Ottawa. Unbeknownst to me at the time, Cathy had been praying a daily prayer asking God to direct our family to a good parish with faithful priests so that our family would be healed. I grew up some five or six blocks from St. Mary's yet I literally had never

heard of this church. I saw my role at this time as the chauffeur, to make sure the kids and my wife got to church that day. The Lord had other plans in mind!

During Mass I was a little taken aback by the music, the raising of hands and all the prayers and singing. The homily by Fr. Bob Bedard that day is what did it for me. To this day I cannot tell you what he spoke about, I can only recall that what he said was undeniably true. I wanted this priest to go on talking as I found his words to be so comforting. He spoke in black and white to a person who lived in the grey zone. The following Sunday I was parked in the laneway waiting for Cathy and the kids so we would not be late for Mass. My second visit to St. Mary's was even more compelling. Upon walking through the back doors of the church I saw nothing else but Jesus hanging from the cross at the left side of the church. At that moment it was as if he spoke to my soul saying: "Jack, it is your sins that have nailed me to this cross." Instantly I felt directed to the Resurrected Jesus hanging above the tabernacle and sensed him saying, "But welcome to My Home."

You must understand that I did not know how to pray the Our Father or the Hail Mary. Presented with a picture of Adam and Eve in the Garden, my guess would have been Tarzan and Jane in the jungle. Confused, bowled over, comforted by the truth and on the verge of tears, would all be descriptions of how I felt after Mass. We have not missed a Sunday since. This is a family that would grudgingly go to Mass on an irregular basis even though we are less than five minutes away from a church. We now drive 20 plus minutes to get to St. Mary's and I can't wait to get there. I have so much more that I could share with you. I have only scraped the surface of how God's love, through his Son's merciful cross, and the Holy Spirit's healing gifts have healed me physically (back), emotionally (I no longer have a "need" for alcohol) and how these and other healings have touched my family's life.

I would like to conclude by speaking to those brothers and sisters in Christ who have spouses, children, parents or friends who do not know our Lord and Saviour. Do not lose hope and keep praying. I am fully convinced that all prayer goes to help build his kingdom and he uses our prayers in his way and in his time. I'm equally convinced that it was someone's prayers that opened my heart to accept God's gift of faith. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths" (Pr 3:5-6). ☩

Jack and his wife, Cathy, have four children and are parishioners of St. Mary's parish in Ottawa. Jack is currently a member of the Executive Council of the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross.

LAY ASSOCIATES

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday February 21
St. Mary's church
Healing Mass with Fr. Bob Bedard
7:30 p.m.

.....

Thursday March 29
St. Maurice church
Healing Mass with Fr. Bob Poole
7:30 p.m.

.....

Wednesday April 18
St. Mary's church
Healing Mass
with Fr. Francis Donnelly
7:30 p.m.

.....

Friday May 4
St. Mary's church
"Foundation Day" Mass
with priests and seminarians
7:30 p.m.

After each of these Masses
there will be a reception in the hall.



Feature

By Fr. Sean Wenger

My Identity in Christ:



Son of God, Son of the Church

I recently made a pilgrimage to Rome and other sites in Italy. It was a very blessed time and there is much I could write about. Certainly one lasting effect has been to root my identity more deeply in the mystery which is the Church.

One effect of sin is to misunderstand our identity. For example, the serpent tempted Adam and Eve saying, “*You shall be like gods*” (Gn 3:5). The importance of our identity is seen in the life of Jesus as his ministry is inaugurated with the Father saying, “*You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased*” (Mk 1:11).

I think we better understand individual identity than corporate identity and yet both are a part of the Scriptures. One of the things that characterize our culture to this point is individualism. We are often aware of “me”, “mine” and “my rights”. There is even a tendency to personalize the Scriptures: “*For God so loved (insert your name) that he gave his only Son . . .*” (Jn 3:16). It is true that God loved me, Sean, enough to give his Son for me but he also loved the entire world and for it gave his Son. The Scriptures reveal both that God loves us personally and that he loves us corporately, that is, as a group. Psalm 139 speaks of God who “*formed my inmost being . . . [and] knit me in my mother’s womb*” (Ps 139:13). He also says in Isaiah 43: “*But now thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you O Israel: I have called you by your name and you are mine*”. The object

of God’s forming now is not an individual but “Jacob” and “Israel”, the people of God. We are formed by God to be both individuals and members of his people.

We are members of something bigger than we are. Even on a natural level we can feel small and insignificant. For this reason people often attach themselves to



famous people – entertainers or athletes and teams. Sometimes it takes the form of nationalism or ethnic identification. In its fallen form it is xenophobia: a hatred of those not in my group. It births every-

thing from gang rivalry to racism, religious persecution and ethnic cleansing.

A positive understanding of corporate identity is a real protection against egoism. It even is a protection against destructive forms of group identification if I realize I belong to something that extends beyond my neighbourhood, race and country.

Personally, I have not been tempted to identify with any particular cultural identity. Each of my grandparents is from a different European culture. To choose to identify with one of the four would be arbitrary. I, at times, have felt this as a lack. My own country, Canada, is so young and now I do not want to share in many of the directions it is going so it is not the source of my corporate identity. To have an identity is to have a sense of rootedness. So much changes with the days, months, years and centuries and now we have crossed into a new millennium. Identity is a sense of what does not change, what is in common, even across many ages.

In a wondrous way God has answered my longing. He has made me a member of the Church. This is not an arrangement of convenience, not simply safety in numbers, not because we can get more work done together – to be a member of the Church is part of my identity. I am unique, a son of God. I am not solitary or self-sufficient but a member of God’s



people, a son of the Church. I have always been a Catholic but after a deeper conversion to Christ I've gained a greater love for his Church. As well, being ordained a priest has helped me enter more deeply into this mystery, for now I have a new relationship to the Church.

Having said all this, I now turn to my pilgrimage this summer. We began in Assisi, the home of St. Francis and St. Clare. I've read so much of Francis that walking the streets he walked and praying one quiet morning next to his tomb, was indescribable. I realized clearly that the stories I read were no fables. Knowing Francis to be real makes my relationship to him more real and it makes him more my brother.

We were also in Siena and in a room where St. Catherine prayed, she who had a profound effect on history by telling the Pope to return to Rome. I was in Cascia and saw the incorrupt body of St. Rita. I

was in a cave where St. Michael the Archangel appeared in the 4th Century. I was also in Loreto to see the house of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth. Pilgrims, like me, have been coming to these places for hundreds of years. Near the cave of St. Michael, there are inscriptions in Latin by pilgrims from the city of Rome. In the marble base around the Holy House of Loreto there are grooves worn by pilgrims passing around the house on their knees. I was part of this flow of praying and believing people.

Our pilgrimage continued to San Giovanni Rotondo to see the room where Padre Pio lived and prayed. Then to Lanciano to see the Eucharistic miracle from the 8th Century. Again this story was familiar to me and it was a wonder to behold it with my own eyes. I have even more reason now to keep re-telling the story.

Finally, we went to Rome . . . ah, Rome the Eternal City. The World Youth Day

began Tuesday night in St. Peter's Square. The Square was jammed with over 500,000 young people and I believe the Holy Father said, among other things, "Young people you have come to Rome and now Rome is yours." If he didn't say that exactly, I haven't been able to find it in the text of his speeches, I certainly felt it at least. All that I was experiencing was mine. I am a son of the Church and Rome and the other holy sites in Italy speak of my heritage, my patrimony.

There was still more . . . Thursday we made pilgrimage to St. Peter's and passed through the holy door. We saw the church and the tomb below the altar of the Apostle Peter. The same day we passed through the holy door at St. Mary Major. The week culminated with the outdoor vigil Saturday night and the Mass Sunday morning with the Holy Father and two million other people – the Great Jubilee of Youth during the year of grace.

My pilgrimage continued Monday as I visited St. John Lateran, the Pope's cathedral and passed through its holy door. Over the altar encased in gold busts are the skulls of Sts. Peter and Paul. Finally, I went to St. Paul-Outside-the Walls. Here I went through the holy door, the last of the four major basilicas. What a moment to kneel near the actual, physical remains of the great St. Paul, he whose life and writings I admire so.

Truly, I am blessed. God has given me life and his love. In Jesus heaven's doors are re-opened. God has revealed to me my true identity as his son and called me to continually draw closer to him in the midst of his people, the holy Church of God.☪

Fr. Sean Wenger was ordained in 1995. He is currently the Associate Director of the Catholic Charismatic Center in Houston, Texas.



The Companions of the Cross

Deacons & Seminararians 2000-2001



Francis Ching
Toronto, ON



Brian Christie
Sarnia, ON



Phil Cummings
Kitchener, ON



Marty Cutting
Guelph, ON



Tim Devine
Kitchener, ON



D'Arcy Dufresne
Kitchener, ON



Patrick Dursi
Halifax, NS



Mark Goring
Pembroke, ON



Richmond Guillermo
Saint John, NB



Phil Halldron
Birmingham, England



Randy Hendriks
Vineland, ON



Jeremy Heynen
Aylmer, ON



Dan Jeffrey
Nepean, ON



Andy Korvemaker
Regina, SK



Erik May
Grand Rapids, MI



Bartosz Maslanky
Brampton, ON



Nick Simoni
Innisfail, AB



Fernando Suarez
Batangas, Phillipines



Todd Thibeau
Yarmouth, NS



Mike Thompson
Ottawa, ON



Peter vanKampen
Calgary, AB



Gerald Whittaker
Brockville, ON



Deacon Galen Bank
Glenavon, SK



Deacon John Fletcher
Buffalo, NY



Deacon Jerry Gauvreau
Lindsay, ON



Deacon Ben St. Croix
Kenora, ON



The Companions of the Cross Priests 2000-2001

* Denotes Candidate Membership



Fr. Bob Bedard
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1955



Fr. Daren Bryk
Edmonton, AB Ord. 2000



Fr. Daniel Cross
Fruitport, MI Ord. 1999



Fr. Terry Donahue
Oakland, NJ Ord. 2000



Fr. Francis Donnelly*
Montreal, QC Ord. 1979



Fr. Francis Frankovich
Riverside, CA Ord. 1968



Fr. Dennis Hayes
Guelph, ON Ord. 1986



Fr. Pierre Ingram
Guelph, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. Rick Jaworski
Winnipeg, MB Ord. 1990



Fr. Ross Lambton
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. John Likozar
Toronto, ON Ord. 2000



Fr. Alan MacDonald*
St. Raphael's, ON Ord. 1994



Fr. Jim McGillivray*
Kingston, ON Ord. 1969



Fr. Yves Marchildon
Victoire, SK Ord. 1996



Fr. Scott McCaig
Kamloops, BC Ord. 1995



Fr. Charles Orchard
Cobourg, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. Bob Poole*
London, England Ord. 1988



Fr. Christian Riesbeck
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1996



Fr. George Sammut
London, ON Ord. 1999



Fr. Jeff Shannon
Sudbury, ON Ord. 1997



Fr. Marc Syrenne
Saskatoon, SK Ord. 1997



Fr. John Vandenakker
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1985



Fr. Roger Vandenakker
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1989



Fr. Ed Wade
Philadelphia, PA Ord. 1972



Fr. Sean Wenger
Vernon, BC Ord. 1995

Feature

By Deacon Jerry Gauvreau

On September 8th, 1999 (the Feast of Our Lady's birthday) I was on my way to Winnipeg, Manitoba. The purpose of my trip was to spend the next eight months at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish discerning my call to the priesthood in what is known as a seminarian's parish or pastoral year. This was the beginning of my fifth year with the Companions of the Cross having spent the last four taking philosophy and theology courses.

As I reflect back, I did not really want to go out to Winnipeg. But, on the other hand, I knew that I would eventually be spending some time in a parish somewhere. You see, I have always felt called to the Companions of the Cross but my year in Winnipeg was going to be at a parish that was not pastored by Companion of the Cross priests. Therefore, I was somewhat apprehensive about going out to Winnipeg in the first place. However, as I prayed about this situation, I knew in my heart that the Lord wanted me to go to Winnipeg.

The pastor at OLPH in Winnipeg was Fr. Stan Jaworski. My first weekend at the parish, Fr. Stan welcomed me and introduced me to the parishioners. Friendly Manitoba certainly lived up to its name as I found the people at the parish and throughout Manitoba to be very welcoming.

As the weeks went on I was really enjoying the parish and the ministries that I was getting involved with but at the same time I was struggling with loneliness. As time went on and I started to get to know some people around the parish, and I started to adjust to my new environment. Therefore, my loneliness began to lift and I was able

MY PARISH YEAR AT OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP IN WINNIPEG



to focus and give more of myself to the many ministries that the parish was initiating. It did not take long for my schedule to get filled up with many different ministries. After awhile, as it turned out, there was always something with which I could get involved.

Each day at the parish Mass would be celebrated and on several occasions I was given the opportunity to read, serve, distribute communion and also give reflections on the Scriptures. On the weekends, I really looked forward to the Masses because it was during this time that I was able to see and talk with many of the parishioners. I realized that each Mass had its own unique style of parishioners.

Furthermore, we were all gathered to celebrate and to give the Lord, praise, glory, honour, thanksgiving and worship.

One hour a week I taught grade five religion under the direction of Sherry Matteotti. Sherry was the parish's religion education co-ordinator. Because I have not taught before I found this ministry to be challenging. Overall, I really enjoyed teaching and I learned just as much as the children did. On a couple of occasions I spoke to the children in the other religion education classes and I also gave a couple of talks at the RCIA meetings. I also had the opportunity to speak at the weekly prayer meeting that I attended. In the past I have found public speaking to be a real challenge and as a result of giving these talks I noticed that I did gain more self-confidence in the area of public speaking.

Most Saturdays I would spend my time between helping out at the Winnipeg Harvest and either assisting at Mass at the nearby seniors home or assisting with a communion service. Winnipeg Harvest is a program where the parish would set up a type of a grocery depot to help out people who are in need of some assistance in supplementing their groceries.

Throughout the course of my stay in Winnipeg I was able to visit some parishioners in their homes and I also visited with some parishioners who were in the hospital for upcoming surgery or who were recovering after surgery.

One of the things that I really enjoyed was initiating youth events. Between Christmas and New Year's we had a Christmas party for the children between the ages of 8 and 12. This turned out to be a great day, so throughout the winter we got together on several occasions to play games etc. Also, during Lent the children



Feature

By Jason Gould

York University Ministry

led the Stations of the Cross on a couple of occasions. During the winter we also had NET Ministries visit the parish to put on a retreat for the high school teens. As a result of this retreat, there may be a couple of future Winnipeg Netters on the horizon!

Throughout the week my evenings would consist of meetings at the parish level along with the RCIA meetings and also the charismatic prayer meetings. We would have Mass one night a week at the parish and I would try to fit in some spiritual reading during the week as well.

The ladies, who worked in the parish office, Marvel Scott and Marcella Tremere, put me to work on a few occasions. But overall, they took it pretty easy on me and did not work me too hard. Furthermore, I learned a tremendous amount from both these ladies just by observing how they dealt with the people who came into the office each day and how they also dealt with the many phone calls that would come into the parish office.

As I reflect back on my parish year, I remember how difficult it was for me to accept going out to Winnipeg in the first place. But you know it was just as hard for me to make the decision to return back to Ottawa. I was very blessed for having spent my parish year at OLPH. It was definitely an affirmation on my calling to Holy Orders. I met some beautiful people at OLPH and as they received me into their hearts they will always remain in mine. Thanks OLPH, Winnipeg, God Bless Ya! ☺

Deacon Jerry Gauvreau was ordained to the diaconate at the end of January and plans to be ordained to the priesthood sometime this spring.

Hello Companions of the Cross supporters! What are the Companions doing at York University in Toronto, you ask? Really the question should be “what are we not doing”? The ministry at York is very diversified. We have tried many different things to make it known that the Catholic Church indeed has a presence at York. We have had social gatherings with a faith-sharing element, scripture studies, liturgical celebrations, e-mail newsletters, an apologetics/evangelization table and so on. So far, this year, we have approximately 130 new registrants and combined with registrants from previous years, there are about 300 altogether. These numbers may sound great, but when you consider the overall population of the university to be 50,000, 35% of which claim to be Catholic, the numbers just don’t add up.

Taking these facts into consideration, we see the need not only to evangelize non-Christians, but also those who consider themselves to be Catholics already! The University environment is a very exciting place to be for on-fire Christians! We know



Deacon Ben St. Croix and his father (also a deacon!) with Bishop Fred Colli.

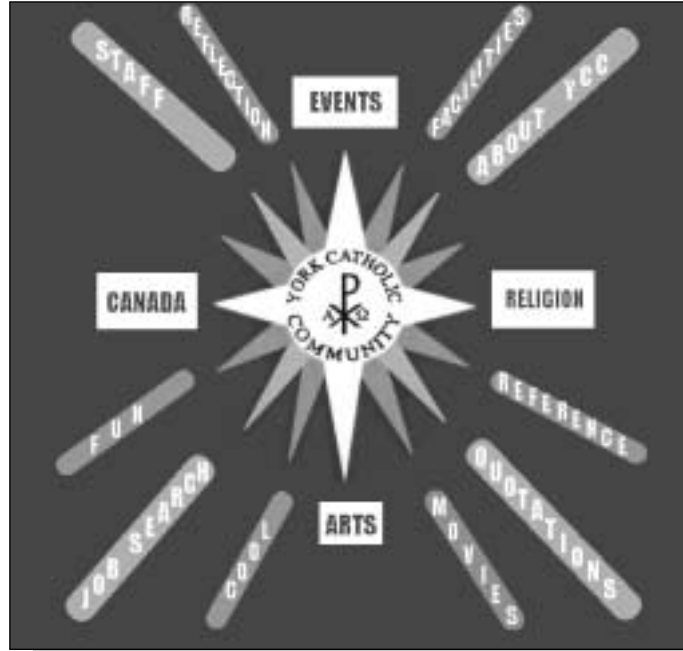
that for many of the students on campus, it may be their first time away from home. This is a time when these young adults are searching for truth, understanding, freedom and perhaps even faith. Needless to say, we have many opportunities to evangelize and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our everyday goings-on here at the chaplaincy.

Continued on page 16

Continued from page 15

The chaplaincy itself is an awesome facility. We have a large sized room for just “hanging out”, a small chapel with the Blessed Sacrament present, a small library with philosophical and theological books and three separate offices for the employees. All this right in the centre of one of the largest, most multicultural universities in the world! We have the vision and the leadership to evangelize the masses, yet we must start with the few with which we have regular contact. With the leadership of newly ordained Deacon, Ben St. Croix and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the sky is the limit as to what the Lord will do on this campus. We have a part-time staff of three, who deserve mention here. Julius Gaspar is a student at the Toronto School of Theology and a former employee of the previous chaplain here at York Catholic Community. Maja Polic is a fourth year fine arts student here at York. Tomasz Kajko is a second year Religious studies major. Both Tomasz and Maja are also leaders of a weekly, enthusiastic young adult’s prayer group called Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles.

We have adopted much of the same vision as Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO), a successful university campus ministry that has been around for about 13 years. CCO has had close links with the Companions in Ottawa, where they have a presence at Ottawa U. and Carleton U. The basic mission, or vision then, is to evangelize, equip and ultimately, multiply. This method has been around since the beginning of the Church. It is closely linked to the method of discipling that our Lord used when He was on the earth.



Over the last number of weeks, the University campus has been effectively shut down by the striking union of the TA’s, GA’s and RA’s. This has had an obvious effect on the work we are doing here. The numbers are just not here anymore. Things generally seem to be increasingly quiet. This all may sound somewhat negative, but on the contrary, it has given us the opportunity as a staff to listen and discern the Lord’s will for the Chaplaincy here at York University. In the first two months of operation, we had the opportunity to try many good things. Some of these activities were successful but others were not. We see this “quiet” time as an opportunity to really see who and what the Lord wants to bless for the remainder of the current semester and for the new year.

For the new year, we plan to host the Jubilation Program (a type of Life in the Spirit Seminar, created by Mark Alfano, a lay missionary from Toronto). We are also working along with the other Christian groups on a Christ Awareness week. This would take place in the middle of February and we hope to have a table set up specifically pertaining to Catholic

Christianity, apologetics and evangelization. There has also been some talk about having some sort of a lecture series with such topics as women in the Church, the effects of relativism on a society and the issue of abortion in Canada. At the end of November we started producing an electronic newsletter, connecting our extensive list of e-mail recipients to other Catholic sites, issues and concerns.

I would end by saying that all of these activities and programs have been Holy Spirit inspired and so we need your prayers! Please pray that the current spiritual strongholds here at York University would fall. Please pray that we would have wisdom in discernment, patience to do the Lord’s will and the fortitude to carry out what the Lord desires for His ministry here at York. Finally, and most important of all, please pray that the name of Jesus Christ would be lifted up, exalted and praised by all the staff, students of the university and the community of the Greater Toronto Area at large.

The Chaplaincy is located in Suite 453, Student Centre. Mass is celebrated on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. and Wednesday and Thursdays at 12:35 p.m. The chaplaincy can be reached at (416)736-5369; E-mail: catholic@yorku.ca or through their website at: www.yorku.ca/catholic.



Jason Gould is a former seminarian with the Companions of the Cross. Jason completed the first two years of formation with the Companions, discerned leaving the seminary and started working with Deacon Ben in September 2000, at the York Catholic Community.



Feature

By Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa

1. THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IS FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH

I would like to turn our attention to certain shadowy areas that give rise, it seems to me, to concerns about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. There are countries where the Church is strongly polarized. On the one side are those who have come to be variously defined as liberals, progressives, or innovators; on the other side are the traditionalists or conservatives. Everything is judged according to this measure.

The word “liberal” in the English-speaking world, and especially in the United States, has a meaning that is a little different from the meaning it has elsewhere. It signifies those who are more open to novelty. Among them there are some whose positions are frankly unacceptable and extreme. But there are also those who simply identify with Vatican II, which they would like to see implemented a little more courageously in the matter of pluralism, inter-cultural dialogue and the question of decentralization.

On the opposite side, in reaction to things that are seen as too innovative and secularized, a current has developed that is strongly attached to the theology and practices of the past. Here too there is a whole spectrum, ranging from well-known extremists to people who are perfectly balanced and full of zeal and love for Christ and the Church. Within reasonable limits this kind of tension is not only legitimate but necessary, since no one person, standing

Remember Those Early Days...

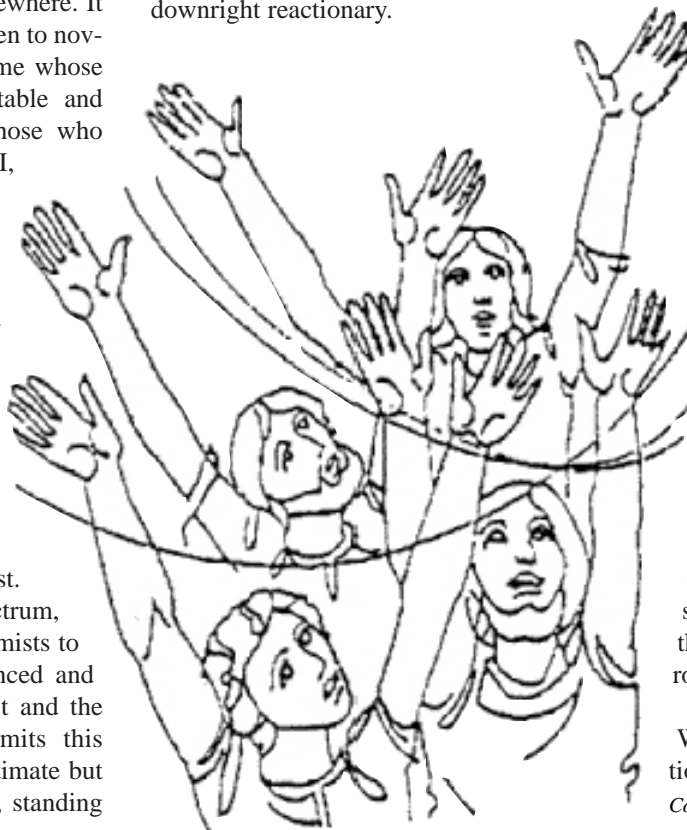
alone, can realize by himself, the demands of fidelity and of progress in equal measure.

What is the danger as far as we are concerned? That the Charismatic Renewal, which came into being for the renewal of the whole Church, should end up by becoming identified purely and simply with one segment of the Church, the more conservative one. Reading religious publications from various countries, it is clear to me that some of them see the new ecclesial movements, including the Renewal, as conservative forces, if not as downright reactionary.

This does serious harm. The Charismatic Renewal is a gift for the whole Church, not for just a particular part of it, and so it must remain. Indeed, in its early days, like every “prophetic” movement, it was seen as a great sign of newness and openness, a forward thrust on various fronts, the ecumenical outreach included. As such, it was welcomed by the Catholic Church hierarchy, and it has no need to change its appearance to make itself acceptable. Cardinal Suenens, who was for years its principal sponsor and ecclesiastical spokesman, was, during and after the Council, one of the most authoritative promoters of the need for “aggiornamento”: giving contemporary impact to the practices and beliefs of the Church.

And now, it is with infinite sadness that I see that the Charismatic Renewal has ended up confined to one part of the Church only, and regarded by the rest as something so alien that they feel fully justified in keeping well clear of it. Let me say again, the Charismatic Renewal was born to renew the whole Church and not just one part of it. When I say “the whole Church”, I mean naturally, the Church that positions itself firmly in the mainstream of orthodoxy and the magisterium; that is ready, if necessary – on one side or the other – to submit obediently to the appointed authority (the bishop or the pope, as the case may be), but not before having borne prophetic witness to the goals that are close to its heart, according to the sound dialectic that has always been the Catholic Church’s strength and the root of its capacity for self-renewal.

We need to look squarely at this situation, and do what has to be done to
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prevent it becoming even more widespread, and to correct it where it has become established. This is not a matter of taking this or that stance, but of being faithful to the Spirit who has no fear of differences and who is always able, according to Irenaeus, "to create a beautiful symphony out of any voices", as he did on the day of Pentecost.

2. THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IS FOR THE "ESSENTIALS" OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The second danger is devotionalism. Here too, we need to remember how it all began. The Charismatic Renewal was born with a powerful drive to return to the essentials of the Christian life: the Holy Spirit, the Lordship of Christ, the Word of God, the Sacraments, the charisms, prayer and evangelization. This is the secret of its explosive power. This characteristic of the Renewal is clearly shown by the fact that it has no recognized founders, nor any particular "spirituality", but that it simply accentuates what should be common and "normal" for every baptized person.

This has been my personal experience and, I am sure, it has been the same for many of you. The Bible becomes a living word, breathed by God and breathing God, as St. Ambrose used to say. I remember a definition of the Charismatic Renewal given by someone in those early days that has always struck me as the most true: "Giving back the power to God!" What convinced us was that we found ourselves clearly in the presence of God's holy action. God present and active in history! That the miracle that always filled the biblical prophets with awe and caused them to leap for joy: "*Shout for joy, you heavens, for Yahweh has been at work! Shout aloud, you earth below!*" (Is 44:23).

"Back to basics", as they say. Let us once again offer to the Church this taste for what is essential. The basic work of the Spirit is his sanctifying activity (see 2 Th 2:13; 1 Pt 1:2), by which he transforms human beings, giving them a new heart, not the heart of a slave but the heart of a child of God's family. Next comes his charismatic activity, by which he distributes a variety of gifts for the good of the community. This is what he did at Pentecost: he transformed the apostles, making new men of them, then he had them speak in tongues and prophesy, and he gave them all the gifts they would need for their mission. In the Charismatic Renewal too, we need to respect this hierarchy: personal sanctification must come first, and only then, in second place, the experience of the charisms. The Holy Spirit does not set out merely to clean up the dress of his Bride, the Church. His first aim is above all to renew her heart.

Why do I think it necessary to mention all these things? I believe that the words of the letter to the Hebrews are addressed to us too: "*Remember the earlier days... Be as confident now...*" (Heb 10:32-35). The Charismatic Renewal, and Catholicism generally, runs the risk of again becoming overgrown and weighed down, after the Council's great effort to restore simplicity and essentiality in doctrine and practice. In many things, for example in the devotion to Mary, the Council sought to bring back to Catholic practice a sobriety that was lost in the course of the centuries, especially during the age of the Counter-reformation.

Little by little we have seen this fruit of the Council being lost. There has been a return to an excessive insistence on what is optional. The Charismatic Renewal itself has become sucked into this whirlpool, to such an extent that in some places it has become identified merely by association with certain devotions, apparitions, individuals and particular messages. Certain of these things are in themselves quite legitimate, and a sign of the richness of the Catholic Church, but they need to be kept within their proper

sphere and not imposed on all and sundry as a measure of the greater or lesser extent of their "catholicity".

This is not a question of taking position against any of these things. The point is whether the Charismatic Renewal ought to be characterized by this kind of thing, or by something else. We already have all that we need to become holy and to spread the Gospel Even in the matter of devotion to Mary, if we were to take seriously and deepen our appreciation of what Scripture and the liturgical and dogmatic tradition of the Church have to offer (for example, the title of "Mother of God"), we would be able to offer her all the honour we desire, without feeling any need to scurry about after the latest message or apparition. In this way, we would render our devotion to Mary more acceptable to other Christians, and we would be hastening the day when, instead of being an object of division, she would become a positive factor in the unity of Christians. (Would not harmony among her children be the thing a mother desires most?)

Our task as spiritual guides is to help our brothers and sisters to be open to the great mysteries of the faith and never to shut themselves up in any short-lived devotionalism, which can never serve to re-evangelize the world. To concentrate on essentials does not mean depriving the faithful of all space for free expression, or all personal preference, and reducing everything to a bland sameness. There is certainly room to cultivate one's personal devotion as well, but this needs to be kept within the ambit of what is personal We must not confuse what is demanded of everyone with things that are to be left to individual choice.

3. COURAGE AND... LET'S GET DOWN TO WORK!

I would like to end on an encouraging note. There is a perception in some places

Tax Tips for Giving Wisely

By Gail Vaz-Oxlade

After years of cutbacks in support, the federal government began feeling a little guilty about how charitable organizations were going to cope with the increase in demands placed on them as a result of these cuts. So in 1997 the Chrétien government introduced legislation to make it attractive for donors to give more to their favourite causes.

This legislation introduced a two-tier system to the charitable tax credit: The first \$200 you give to charity entitles you to a 17 percent federal tax credit. For anything you give above that \$200 threshold, you'll be entitled to a 29 percent federal tax credit.

This two-tier system offers tax-planning opportunities to the generous of wallet. By grouping your charitable donations for two years into a single year, you can maximize your credit. So if you plan to contribute \$200 to your favourite cause this year, consider making a donation of \$400 and skipping next year. That way, half your donation will be eligible for the credit at the higher tier.

If both you and your spouse donate separately, claim all your donations on a single return. You'll only have to deal with the lower tier once (as opposed to twice, if you claimed your receipts individually), leaving more money above the \$200 eligible for the higher tier tax credit. By the way, let the person with the higher income claim this credit since this can result in a bigger bang for your buck.

Gifts in kind

Not only can you give money to your favourite charity, you can also support your local cause by offering a donation of property. Referred to as "gifts in kind", this could include shares and other assets, artwork, and real estate. Upon giving the gift, you'll be deemed to have disposed the property at its fair market value, so you must recognize any capital gain or income that would arise had you sold the property.

Special rules apply when you gift shares. Up until the end of the year 2001, Revenue Canada is halving the capital gains tax from 66.66 percent to 33.33 percent for gifts of shares made to a registered charity. So, if you had intended to contribute \$25,000, you would be better off contributing existing investments rather than selling those investments and contributing cash.

By gifting shares rather than selling the shares and gifting the money you'll save in tax on your capital gain. You'll also have a tax credit that you can use against other forms of income.

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that the Charismatic Renewal is at a standstill, or shrinking, declining in enthusiasm and numbers. It is true, and it is normal in movements of this kind. They are not made to become institutions, but as the late Cardinal Suenens once said, to transmit an impulse, "a current of grace", and then if necessary to disappear, like an electric charge that is dispersed in a mass of matter. However, one thing remains the same today as in the early days of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and that is the power of the Holy Spirit. "The arm of the Lord is not shortened!" We see it achieve today, in those who come into contact with it for the first time, exactly the same effects as in the early days. Every time we allow him to act, every time we provide suitable occasions for his coming, where people gather as in the Cenacle with expectant faith, he does come down. I have had opportunity to see it again very recently. Every time it is a whole new world that opens up before the person who receives him.

Visible signs of the coming of the Spirit are generally the rebirth of courage, of hope and of joy. Even in the opinion of the public at large, the Charismatic Renewal is seen as a movement of joyful people, who clap or raise their hands, who seem transformed, with smiling, almost ecstatic faces. This is not a wrong perception. Joy is in fact one of the signs or fruits of the Spirit. I hope we will all cultivate the signs: courage, hope, joy; and avoid the dangers I have tried to bring to your attention (if my tone has been somewhat high-handed, please forgive me).

May the Holy Spirit help us to carry with us the flame of Pentecost, undimmed, into the new millennium, so that it may continue to transform the lives of many men and women of our time, and bring them all to Christ. ☩

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	Sell Shares/ Donate Cash	Donate Shares
Proceeds of Disposition	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
Cost of Shares	(15,000.00)	(15,000.00)
Capital Gain	10,000.00	10,000.00
Taxable Portion of Gain	@ 66.66% = 6,666.66	@33.33% = 3,333.33
Tax @ 50%	3,333.33	1,666.66
Net cost of donation + tax	\$31,666.66	\$28,333.33
Donation Tax Credit	(7,274.00)	(7,274.00)
Total out-of-pocket	\$24,392.66	\$21,059.33

Gifts of time

Some people like to give of their time and their skills. Unfortunately, when you donate your own services, whether it's bookkeeping, desktop publishing, or marketing consulting, the charity can't give you a tax receipt. However, if the charity pays you for your services, you can then donate the money back to the charity and receive a tax receipt for the donation.

Of course, you'll have to include the amount the charity pays you on your income tax return, but you could still end up ahead if the credit you get for your donation is more than the tax you'll have to pay on your additional income.

Planned Giving

Some folks like to leave a legacy by gifting money through their wills. This is referred to as planned giving and it lets you make gifts to charities through your will while you're still living. When you give through your will, the gift is treated as if it was made in the year of your demise, and the credit is claimed on your final tax return.

You can also choose to use a life insurance policy to finance your gift. If you donate a policy that you already own - you could do so by transferring the policy's ownership to the

charity and naming the charity as the policy's registered beneficiary - your donation's value will be based on the policy's cash surrender value plus any accumulated dividends and interest that are also assigned, minus any policy loan outstanding.

Watch out though, for if that value exceeds the tax cost of the policy to you, you'll have to include the excess as taxable income, as if you had cashed in the policy. Having donated a new or existing policy to a charity, any premium payments you make will be considered to be an additional charitable donation entitling you to further tax credits.

Tax breaks through retirement funds

Considering a donation of the funds in your RRSP or RRIF? These can be transferred to a charity tax-free and your estate can claim a tax credit of up to 100 percent of your income for that year. Careful though. Don't name the charity as your RRSP or RRIF beneficiary.

If you do, no tax credit will be available to offset the tax your estate will have to pay for the amount of the donation. Instead, name your estate as your beneficiary and include instructions in your will for the money to be transferred to your cause of choice. It's an extra step that will ensure your estate gets the benefit of the tax credit for your donation.

The 1998 federal budget proposed that a tax credit be given for contributions to a charity made to an RRSP/RRIF designation, however this provision has not yet been passed into law. If it is passed, it will be effective for deaths occurring after 1998.

This article has been reprinted with permission from the author. The Companions of the Cross are now listed at the website: www.charity.ca. This reprint is intended to inform our donors of the variety of options available in supporting us financially. Even though it is written from a Canadian perspective, similar provisions exist in the United States for our U.S. donors to consider. Just a reminder: We now have official charitable status in the U.S. and can issue charitable tax receipts accordingly



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Community News & notes

By Fr. John Vandenakker

Walking with the Spirit

This past Oct. 27-28, a mini-conference entitled "Walking with the Spirit" was held in Ottawa. This event was co-sponsored by the Companions of the Cross and Lutheran Renewal Canada. The featured speaker was Fr. George Montague, who is a noted Catholic Scripture scholar based in San Antonio, Texas. The aim of this conference was to bring about some pastoral and theological reflection on what the grace called "baptism in the Holy Spirit" means for the Church. Many of our priests and seminarians attended. Fr. Montague shared with us many important insights. Among them was his finding that the early Church clearly had an expectation that anyone "receiving" the Holy Spirit at Baptism, or in any other context, would normally have "experienced" something quite definite. The reception of accompanying fruits and/or gifts of the Holy Spirit would have been the norm. The believer would have felt a real "empowerment" for Christian living. This element seems to be sadly missing from a large section of the Church today. In a similar presentation that Fr. Montague made to a committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic bishops a few years ago, Cardinal Law of Boston lamented this very fact. The grace of the Renewal, epitomized in the experience known as baptism in the Holy Spirit, is not some kind of optional spirituality. It is normative wisdom for how God intends us to live out the Gospel. Thus, we need to be bolder in our efforts to pastor this grace in our parishes, but without interpreting it in too narrow a sense. Finally,



Fr. George Montague

Fr. Montague reminded us that receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit is no guarantee of continued fidelity to the Lord. We can always let this grace lapse in our lives. This is why St. Paul, although warning the Corinthians not to excessively focus on the charismatic gifts, to the neglect of unity and charity (cf. 1 Cor 12-13), also took to task those believers who had received the Lord in power, but had then lapsed back into formalism and

legalism in matters of the faith: "*You foolish Galatians! Who put a spell on you? ...did you receive God's Spirit by doing what the Law requires or by hearing the Gospel and believing? How can you be so foolish? You began by God's Spirit; do you now want to finish it by your own power? Did all you experience mean nothing at all? Surely it meant something! Does God give you the Spirit and work*
Continued on page 22

miracles among you because you do what the Law requires or because you hear the Gospel and believe it? (Ga 3:1-5). Those interested in learning more about Fr. Montague's research can order a book he co-authored with Killian McDonnell entitled: *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries* (A Michael Glazier book published by the Liturgical Press, 1994).

Welcome Fr. Alan MacDonald

The Companions of the Cross are pleased to welcome Fr. Alan MacDonald as a new "priest applicant" to the community (as of January 15th). Fr. Alan has been a long

time "associate member" of the CCs. He was most recently pastor of Blessed Sacrament parish in Cornwall, Ont. Bishop Eugene LaRoque was gracious enough to grant Fr. Alan a "leave of absence" from the diocese of Alexandria-Cornwall so that he could come and spend some time discerning a possible call to join us on a more permanent basis. Fr. Alan is spending the winter at Assumption Farm in Combermere where he is participating in our formation program. His parishioners sadly miss him! Fr. Alan was instrumental in helping to organize several major Youth Conferences in Cornwall, the most recent being this past July's very successful "Journey to the Father." Welcome aboard Fr. Alan!

Diaconate Ordinations

On Dec. 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, CC seminarian John Fletcher was ordained to the diaconate at St. Thomas the Apostle parish in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Deacon John had spent the previous year doing his "pastoral internship" in this parish. So it was nice to have the ordination celebration there, among parishioners whom John had grown to know and love. His family from Buffalo and other friends and community members from all over joined him. Many thanks to Fr. James Chelick, pastor of the parish, for helping to host such a blessed event. Deacon John has a deep devotion to Our Blessed Mother, so having his diaconate on this date was particularly special. Deacon John is finishing off his studies this winter (taking various "Practicum" courses) and exercising his diaconate at St. Maurice parish in Nepean. On January 26th, the feast of Sts. Timothy and Titus, CC seminarians Galen Bank and Jerry Gauvreau were also ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop Marcel Gervais at St. Maurice parish in Nepean. It was a very moving and joyous ceremony, with a wonderful reception afterwards. Deacon Galen is from Glenavon, Saskatchewan, while Deacon Jerry hails from Lindsay, Ontario. It was very apropos to have their diaconate together on this feast day of two bishops of the early Church. Perhaps this is a sign of things to come! Both will be exercising their diaconate in various Ottawa area parishes while they join Deacon John in finishing their studies. The Companions are very proud of these men (and of Deacon Ben St. Croix ordained earlier last fall). Please keep them in your prayers. All four hope to be ordained to the priesthood this spring. We will keep you posted!



Fr. Alan MacDonald

Fr. Bob's book on
Evangelization now
in Slovenian!

If you ever wondered what to give that good Slovenian friend of yours as a gift for a birthday or special occasion, we may have the answer. Fr. Bob's book *Evangelization: A Challenge for the Catholic Church* has been recently translated into Slovenian by D. Siter: *Evangelizacija: Izziv Za Katolisko Cerkev*. This book, along with last year's ordination of Fr. John Likozar, who comes from solid Slovenian stock, seems to signal a certain trend. Could the Lord be calling the Companions to focus more evangelistic efforts upon Slovenian Catholics? Should we open a new foundation in Slovenia? Stranger things have happened. Stay tuned for future developments!

Newsletter
Feedback Sought

We are inviting you our readers to give us your input about our Newsletter. What do you like about it? What would you change or add? Your comments, critiques, and suggestions would be appreciated. From time to time we also reprint certain articles from elsewhere, especially those having a "prophetic" quality about them. If you have come across any such article that has struck you as being very anointed, why not send it in to us for our consideration? You would be doing us a favour! Likewise, if you have any reflections of your own, personal witness stories, other testimonies and the like, why not send them in to us too? We would especially love to hear more from our lay associates and other parishioners who minister with our priests. We cannot guarantee that they will be used, but we will definitely give them careful consideration. We seek to glorify God in this humble publication by relating the ongoing story of what He has been doing with this particular community in this corner of His

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BOB BEDARD

vineyard. E-mail your comments to me at frjohnv@home.com. Or else fax or mail them to our office (see inside cover for details). You may even call me if you prefer at (613) 729-4273.

Farewell

We want to take this opportunity to say farewell and "godspeed" to several of our

seminarians that left us before the Christmas holidays. They are: Doug Brooks, Jim McKay, and Ty Smith. You guys will be missed! Even though it is natural for some seminarians to "move on" from our ranks, the process of leaving is never easy. But that's what discernment is all about. We do know that the Lord will continue to direct them in His pathways. We are thankful for the gift of

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knowing them. They will always have friends in the community. Let us all keep these men very much in our thoughts and prayers! In the case of Jim McKay, he will continue his studies for the priesthood, but for his home diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.

Fr. Marc Syrenne tries to get closer to God

[Submitted by St. Timothy's parishioner Rae G. Hopkins.] For a man who claims to be afraid of heights, Fr. Marc Syrenne really hit the high spots when he was hoisted aloft by Toronto Fire Services to bless a brand new roof on St. Timothy's Parish where he's been pastor for the last year. The occasion? The annual parish barbecue. But this time there was an added feature - blessing of the new roof, which attracted more than 700 of St. Timothy's faithful. (Even a Muslim family stopped by to see what was going on. We welcomed them with open arms.) Fr. Marc thrilled the crowd as he spread holy water from high above the new green shingles, calling for God's blessing upon the \$100,000 plus project, every cent of which was raised through various parish activities. And perhaps St. Timothy's best kept secret for quite some time was that a huge aerial ladder truck, complete with cherry-picker, would pull into the parish parking lot right in the middle of our youth group's barbecue chefs flipping burgers and wieners to feed the masses. (And yes, the charcoal cooker was smoking at the time). No one can say enough to praise the Toronto Fire-fighters' efforts to make our event a resounding success. Not only did Capt. John Blake and Fire-fighters Sean Coles and Robert Dies hoist Fr. Marc high above the roof (right up to the top of the cross adorning it), they really thrilled our parish children by showing them how fire-fighting apparatus works and boosting them up into the fire engine's cab to take a turn at the wheel.



Fr. Marc Syrenne going up to bless the new roof at St. Timothy's

That our parish was able to raise the monies needed to replace the 30-year-old plus roof came as no surprise to Fr. Marc. There was scarcely a parish group that did not in some way contribute to the fundraising efforts. A major contributor to all our activities was our Youth Group, established by Fr. Marc shortly after his arrival and nurtured for the past year by Seminarian Galen Bank (who has since returned to Ottawa to complete his studies for the priesthood). Indeed Fr. Marc told CityTV interviewer Bill Mantas - yes Fr. Marc's feat was seen on the 11 p.m. local TV news - that he never doubted for a minute that St. Timothy's parishioners would rise to the occasion to raise a new roof. Nor does he question whether our faithful will fail to meet any future challenges, which will present themselves over time. After all a leaky roof does necessitate further repairs inside the church. Fr. George Sammut, our former

associate pastor and Fr. John Likozar, our current associate (whose photographic prowess is responsible for the accompanying photo) would certainly agree with Fr. Marc's assessment. So would this writer because helping out with St. Timothy's Parish projects isn't a chore - it's a pleasure and in some small way helps demonstrate our love of God and how very much we as parishioners are indebted to the Companions of the Cross for sending such wonderful men to lead us. And oh yes - Fr. Marc's knees have now stopped knocking and the bruises on the insides of them have all but disappeared! ☺

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Fr. John Vandenakker teaches theology and serves as Academic Director for the Companions of the Cross. He also oversees the community's fundraising and public relations efforts.



Companions of the Cross

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*“Certainly the Lord has heard;
he has given heed to the voice of my
prayer. Blessed be God who has not
turned away my prayer, nor his
loving kindness from me”
(Psalm 66:19-20).*