MANITOULIN ISLAND, ON — Rosella Kinoshameg’s (centre) Catholic faith and her Indigenous traditions go hand-in-hand as a spiritual leader to the First Nations communities on Manitoulin Island on Lake Huron, Ontario. Ms. Kinoshameg with Father Doug McCarthy at her grandson Tanner’s First Communion. Story page 7. (Rosella Kinoshameg, pre-pandemic photo)

FREDERICTON — On the evening of October 13 in Fredericton, parishioners of Our Lady of Fatima Parish processed through the streets of the neighbouring community to commemorate the miracle of the sun. Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC (centre) of the Diocese of Saint John, joined those assembled, which included children dressed as the shepherd children of Fatima, for an outdoor candlelight vigil to bless the newly-constructed grotto, made by members of the parish. Story page 3. (Kalen Grondin, K-lens photography).

Beatification of Father McGivney to take place October 31. Story page 8
Renewed for mission: diocesan priests gather for annual retreat

By NATASHAMAZEROLLE
Correspondent

ROTHESAY — On October 5-9, priests of the Diocese of Saint John gathered at the Villa Madonna Retreat Centre in Rothesay, for their annual priests retreat.

This marked the first retreat with the new bishop for the Diocese of Saint John, Christian Riesbeck, CC, who served as retreat master.

While the retreat, typically held in May but delayed this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is closed to the public, diocesan faithful were granted a unique opportunity to pray with the priests on retreat during the weekly Diocesan Rosary (via Zoom).

For the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, which fell on the Wednesday evening of the retreat, the priests joined Bishop Riesbeck to lead more than 60 households in prayer. “Tonight is very special because we’re gathering with our diocesan priests here at the Villa Madonna Retreat Centre,” Bishop Riesbeck told the faithful.

Bishop Riesbeck spoke of his joy in sharing this time with his priests, and gave an idea of some of the topics they had covered during their time together. “I have the great blessing of journeying with our beloved priests this week on retreat,” he said. “We’ve been focussing on the importance of mission in the context of today’s church, growing in our missionary identity as priests, relying on the Holy Spirit, giving God permission to work in our hearts as we develop evangelical hearts — hearts for the mission, hearts for the Gospel, hearts after the Good Shepherd’s heart.”

Many of the priests have expressed appreciation for the retreat, and the opportunity to be together in fraternity and prayer. “This year’s priestly retreat was exceptionally spirit-filled and well organized,” said Father Charles Udeh, SMMM, pastor of Saint John Paul II Parish, which encompasses churches in Lincoln, Oromocto and Gagetown. “I am spiritually energized for the mission ahead.”

Father Peter Osborne, associate pastor of St. Mary Magdelene Parish in Fredericton, was very moved by the reconciliation service they shared. “The highlight of the retreat for me was the beautiful reconciliation service led by Bishop Christian,” he said. “He remarked that it’s important for us, as priests, to seek reconciliation not only for personal forgiveness but also to make us more effective confessors. Seeing a lineup of priests seeking confession really filled my heart and called me to a deeply powerful experience of the sacrament.”

“People made the effort to come out and it was a good crowd,” said Father Michael LeBlanc, retired priest of the Diocese of Saint John. “The retreat team and the Villa Madonna staff did an excellent job and should be congratulated.”

Bishop Riesbeck said that during the week they were, “looking especially to the heart of Mary, imitating her virtues.” He asked faithful to remember, “in a particular way to pray for the renewal of our priests, for refreshment for them as they continue on their journey.”

Natasha Mazerolle is a correspondent for The New Freeman. She can be reached at natasha@maz-family.com. §
Our Lady of Fatima Parish commemorates miracle of the Sun with opening of new grotto

By NATASHA MAZEROLLE Correspondent

FREDERICTON — On the evening of October 13 in Fredericton, the rain held off just long enough for parishioners of Our Lady of Fatima Parish to commemorate the miracle of the Sun. Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC, of the Diocese of Saint John, joined those assembled for an outdoor candlelight vigil to bless the newly-constructed grotto, made by members of the parish.

The mild autumn evening lent itself perfectly to the outdoor procession honouring the woman of whom Bishop Riesbeck said, “in her flesh was [Jesus’] mother, in her person his disciple, in her love his Church.” Faithful members of the community were led by members of the clergy (including their pastor, Reverend Dr. Michael McGowan), altar servers, children dressed as the shepherd children of Fatima, and a statue of Our Lady of Fatima through the streets of the neighbouring community, before ending at the grotto to pray.

“It was beautiful to see people gathered with a common purpose of honouring our Blessed Mother,” Rebecca Procure of Fredericton said.

“We have gathered here in joy for the solemn blessing of this grotto under the title, Our Lady of Fatima,” Bishop Riesbeck said. “This image will remind us of the close ties of Mary to Christ and his Church, first of all through Christ’s mother, the mother of the visible image of the invisible man, which is also the image we model in the Church, and through this example. In Mary the Church joyously contemplates the image of all that the church itself desires and hopes wholly to be.”

Bishop Riesbeck then began the rosary by leading the first decade in English. The proceeding decades were led in languages represented within the community, including French, Spanish and Tagalog. “It was beautiful to have the rosary said in four different languages and to have such a diverse group of people represented,” Jackie Tuason of Fredericton said.

Before giving a final blessing, Bishop Riesbeck reflected on the significance of the last apparition of Fatima. “The message of Our Lady of Fatima is very much relevant for today,” he said. “The three main points of her message were that we should pray, especially the rosary for peace in the world. The second is that we are called to conversion from sin, and to also pray for the conversion of others through our own reparation, fasting, prayers, and sacrifices. And the third is consecration to Jesus through Mary, to allow her to form us into other Christs so that we can be in total union with him through Mary.”

Jamey Guerrero, one of the evening’s organizers, reflected on the faith of those who attended, and the impact of sharing a public devotion. “[I am] in awe of the devotion the parish has to Our Lady and to be able to publicly witness the Church to the world through devotion to Christ’s Mother,” he said. Simon Stares of Fredericton agreed. “It was nice to see the parish gathered to show their devotion to Mary.”

The newly constructed grotto resides just outside the front steps of the church, a visible reminder of the prominence of the Blessed Mother, and the faith of the children who she appeared to. It inspires the faithful to come as those little children, with eyes of faith and hearts open to the mercy of Jesus.

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

Bishops worry conversion therapy ban could be used to stifle religious freedom

By BRIAN DRYDEN

Canadian Catholic News

OTTAWA — The Catholic Church is warning the federal government that its push to ban conversion therapy for minors in Canada could have serious repercussions for religious freedom and parental rights in Canada, despite the federal government’s dismissal of those concerns that have been repeatedly raised by religious groups.

“In the Bill’s current form, a range of activities and well-intended actions, hitherto legitimate and lawful, that are also beneficial goals in support of individuals, could become subject to prosecution under the Criminal Code, despite the apparent claims to the contrary on the website of the Department of Justice,” said a statement released by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB).

The CCCB made the statement on October 7, a week after the minority Liberal government reintroduced a bill in the House of Commons on October 1 that would ban conversion therapy for minors and put limits on how adults can access such therapy if they so choose.

“It is generic in its scope and ambiguous in its language, and thus its application could be overextended and interpreted to include what are and should remain lawful activities,” the CCCB’s statement said.

“The Bill makes no provision for legitimate (continued on page 9)

Miracle of the Sun

The Miracle of the Sun, also known as the Miracle of Fátima, is reported to have occurred on 13 October 1917, attended by a large crowd who had gathered in Fátima, Portugal, in response to a prophecy made by three shepherd children, Lúcia Santos and Francisco and Jacinta Marto. The prophecy was that the Virgin Mary (referred to as Our Lady of Fátima), would appear and perform miracles on that date. Newspapers published testimony from witnesses who said that they had seen extraordinary solar activity, such as the Sun appearing to “dance” or zig-zag in the sky, careen towards the Earth, or emit multicoloured light and radiant colours. According to these reports, the event lasted approximately ten minutes.

(continued on page 9)
Help for homeless youth suffering with COVID-19

By MICHAEL SWAN
The Catholic Register

HAMILTON — When COVID-19 forced frontline workers to shift their support for homeless youth online, the result was more loneliness, more depression, more drug use, more overdoses and more thoughts of suicide, according to new research from Covenant House, Canada’s largest shelter serving young people.

“We need more boots on the ground,” lead researcher Dr. Naomi Thulien told The Catholic Register. “Virtual supports are great, but we need to think of the young people who don’t have access to these supports.”

The study — Pandemic Proof: Synthesizing Real-World Knowledge of Promising Men-

Our sacred stories:

God and us

Father JOHN JENNINGS

expressed this incarnational vision of God-with-us. We are a faith that sees God speaking and acting in the context of our human story, i.e. in the times in which we live. Our Church’s 2000 year history shows many occasions when we failed to be God’s voice in a way that could be heard by people of particular cultures and times. But it is also replete with a host of times when it reached out to the context, time and cultures in which it lived. As Church and as the presence of God’s People in our own time, this is the gift we can bring to our world.

The Second Vatican Council expressed this vision repeatedly. It spoke explicitly of this vision in the last of its great documents, The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et spes). This document takes its title from its beginning words: “The joy and the hope, the grief and the anguish of the people of our time… are the joy and the hope, the grief and the anguish of the followers of Christ as well.” (GS 1) With these words, Vatican II expressed its solidarity with the world and context of its time. It understood that our God speaks and acts in the present world in which we live. In every era, the life and faith of our Church is intended to hear and speak to the culture and people of our time.

How do we as Church listen to our time and culture? How do we reach out with the Good News?

29 Sunday of Ordinary Time

Father John Jennings, retired priest of the Diocese of Saint John, reflects on the previous Sunday readings with the intent to be a form of on-going adult faith formation. §
The prince of lies

Looking at our world today, what frightens and unsettles me more than the threat of the Covid virus, more than the growing inequality between the rich and the poor, more than the dangers of climate change, and even more than the bitter hatred that now separates us from each other, is our loss of any sense of truth, our facile denial of whatever truths we judge to be inconvenient, and our slogans of “fake news”, “alternate facts”, and phantom conspiracies. Social media, for all the good it has brought, has also created a platform for anyone to make up his or her own truth and then work at eroding the truths that bind us together and anchor our sanity. We now live in a world where two plus two often no longer equals four. This plays on our pinnings of our sanity will be gone; we'll literally be unmoored. Our personal sanity and our social sanity depend upon the truth, upon us telling the truth, and upon two plus two equaling four.

Here’s the context within which Jesus warns us about this sin: He had just cast out a demon. The religious leaders of the time believed as a dogma in their faith that only someone who came from God could cast out a demon. Jesus had just cast out a demon, but their hatred of him made this a very inconvenient truth for them to swallow. So they chose to deny what they knew to be true, to deny reality. They chose to lie, affirming (even as they knew better) that Jesus had done it by the power of Beelzebub. Initially Jesus tried to point out the illogic of their position, but they persisted. It’s then that he issued his warning about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit. At that time he’s not accusing them of committing that sin, but he’s warning them that the path they are on, if not corrected, can lead to that sin. In essence, he’s saying this: if we tell a lie long enough, eventually we will believe it and this so warps our conscience that we begin to see truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth. The sin then becomes unforgivable because we no longer want to be forgiven nor indeed will accept forgiveness. God is willing to forgive the sin but we are unwilling to accept forgiveness because we see sin as good and goodness as sin. Why would we want forgiveness?

It’s possible to end up in this state, a state wherein we judge the gifts of the Holy Spirit (charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, endurance, fidelity, mildness, and chastity) as false, as being against life, as a malevolent naïveté. And the first step in moving towards this condition is lying, refusing to acknowledge the truth. The subsequent steps also are lying, that is, the continued refusal to accept the truth so that eventually we believe our own lies and we see them as the truth and the truth as a lie. Bluntly put, that’s what constitutes hell.

Hell isn’t a place where one is sorrowful, repentant, and begging God for just one more chance to make things right. Nor is hell ever a nasty surprise waiting for an essentially honest person. If there’s anyone in hell, that person is there in arrogance, pitying people in heaven, seeing heaven as hell, darkness as light, falsehood as truth, evil as goodness, hatred as love, empathy as weakness, arrogance as strength, sanity as insanity, and God as the devil.

One of the central lessons in the gospels is this: lying is dangerous, the most dangerous of all sins. And this doesn’t just play out in terms of our relationship with God and the Holy Spirit. When we lie we’re not only playing fast and loose with God, we’re also playing fast and loose with our own sanity. Our sanity is contingent on what classical theology terms the “Oneness” of God. What this means in lay terms is that God is consistent. There are no contradictions inside of God and because of that, reality can also be trusted to be consistent. Our sanity depends on that trust. For instance, should we ever arrive at a day where two plus two no longer equals four, then the very underpinnings of our sanity will be gone; we’ll literally be unmoored. Our personal sanity and our social sanity depend upon the truth, upon us acknowledging the truth, upon us telling the truth, and upon two plus two forever equaling four.

Martin Luther once said: sin boldly! He meant a lot of things by that, but one thing he certainly did mean is that the ultimate spiritual and moral danger is to cover our weaknesses with lies because Satan is the Prince of Lies.

Homeless youth suffering

who are accessing them, there’s concern that a lot of them, just like all of us, are missing that in-person kind of connection.”

The most marginalized include Indigenous, Black and brown, gay and transgendered kids, according to the study.

“Many of the reasons why our young people are struggling with anxiety and depression is because they don’t have enough connections. By that I mean, just connections to mainstream society through employment and education.”

Even before COVID-19, homeless services weren’t having much success transitioning youth out of homelessness. Current research shows that 76 per cent of young Canadians who have been homeless report at least two failed attempts at exiting homeless.

“They leave the shelters and they come back,” said Dr. Thulien.

“Why do they come back? Often they can’t afford to live. We haven’t set them up for success.”

Covenant House and other shelters serving youth are not going to end homelessness. It will require governments to fund broader and deeper health and social service systems, said Dr. Thulien.

“We (at Covenant House) need to focus our efforts on actually working ourselves out of a job. Not making it so young people will depend on us,” she said.

Brought to Toronto in 1982 on the invitation of Toronto Archbishop Cardinal Gerald Emmett Carter, Covenant House has supported more than 100,000 homeless young people over almost four decades. Open 24/7, the agency sees more than 300 young people every day.
Vatican reports positive coronavirus case at pope's residence

By JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A resident at the Domus Sanctae Marthae, the residence where Pope Francis lives, tested positive for COVID-19, the Vatican announced.

In a statement October 17, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said the person, who is asymptomatic, was placed in isolation, as well as "those who came into contact with him," and has temporarily left the residence.

"The regulations issued by the Holy See and the Governorate of Vatican City State continue to be observed and the health of all residents of the Domus is constantly monitored," Mr. Bruni said.

The news came several days after the Swiss Guard announced that an additional seven men tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the current number of cases among the 113 guardsmen to 11.

Vatican coins illustrate Bible stories, mark anniversaries

The Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The most expensive Vatican commemorative coins for 2020 continue a numismatic series illustrating scenes from the Acts of the Apostles; the other mid-October issues mark important anniversaries and themes dear to the heart of the pope.

The 50-euro gold coin, which sells for about $1,170, features St. Paul holding a sword and a Bible. The 20-euro gold coin, which sells for about $470, features St. Paul preaching at the Areopagus.

The Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office released the coins, which are sold mainly to collectors, October 16.

On the same day, the office released a Philatelic-Numismatic Cover containing a bimetal commemorative two-euro coin and stamp with a special cancellation marking the 100th anniversary of St. John Paul II's birth.

The smiling face of St. John Paul used on the stamp was inspired by a photo taken during his 1986 trip to Australia, the office said. "The lilies that make up the ornamental elements in the background — symbolizing honesty, chastity and purity — are a clear reference to the Virgin Mary, to whom the pope was very devoted and entrusted his Petrine ministry."

The two-, five- and 10-euro commemorative coins celebrate respectively: the 500th anniversary of the death of Raphael Sanzio; the World Day of Migrants and Refugees; and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

The bimetal Raphael coin was designed by Daniela Longo, who, the Vatican said, "tried to reproduce and interpret "the nostalgia for beauty seen in Raphael's eyes in the self-portrait present in the fresco of the School of Athens and in the expressions of the two unforgettable little angels that he depicted and placed at the base of the Sistine Madonna."

The five-euro silver commemorative coin, remembering migrants and refugees, was designed by Marco Ventura and shows St. Peter, holding the keys in his outstretched arms. The Vatican description says the Prince of the Apostles "welcomes, protects and provides for all those who take refuge in the church and who call on us to be a church without borders," acting as "mother of all" and "showing the way of the Gospel of mercy for a better world."

The 10-euro coin, which also is silver, commemorates the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, which was celebrated in the spring. Designed by Luigi Oldani, it depicts "a mother carrying the earth in her womb," according to the Vatican description.

People owe the planet "care and love as if it were a daughter," the description said.

Three other citizens or residents of Vatican City State had been found to be positive with mild symptoms over the past few weeks. However, Mr. Bruni said that they have since recovered from the virus.

Authorities in Italy have been on high alert due to a spike in infections, prompting fears of a second wave of the pandemic.

The Italian Health Ministry said that 11,705 new positive cases of coronavirus were recorded October 19. The ministry also reported that 73 patients died, bringing the total number of deaths in the country to 36,616 since the start of the pandemic.

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte announced a series of new restrictions October 18, forbidding restaurants from seating more than six people at a table, imposing earlier closing hours for bars and eateries without table service and ordering high schools and universities to make plans for staggered student schedules and regular use of online instruction.

It also barred outdoor festivals and local fairs, also known as "sagre," from taking place and gave local mayors the authority to close streets and public squares to avoid large gatherings.

Mr. Conte said that the measures were meant to not only curb the rise in cases, but to also avoid another lockdown.

"We must act, deploying all measures necessary to avert a new generalized lockdown," Mr. Conte said. "The country cannot afford a new setback that would severely jeopardize the whole economy."

At his general audience October 14, Pope Francis apologized to participants for being unable to greet them up close and explained that with the new safety regulations in place, "it is better if we keep distant."

"I'm sorry that I greet you from afar, but I think that if we, as good citizens, fulfill the regulations from the authorities, this will be a help to end this pandemic," the pope said.

"The celebration of life on earth is a commitment to take care of the planet, a project to which the church intends to offer its support," it said. The church's concern for integral ecology is "a grandiose and complex work" that aims to promote international action to guarantee everyone a future "so that economic advancement may be accompanied by social development, without which there is no real progress."

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The feather and the crucifix

By WENDY-ANN CLARKE
The Catholic Register

MANITOULIN ISLAND, ON — Rosella Kinoshameg’s Catholic faith and her Indigenous traditions go hand-in-hand as a spiritual leader to the First Nations communities on Manitoulin Island on Lake Huron, Ontario.

It wasn’t always that way. As a youngster, Ms. Kinoshameg says her people were taught by the Catholic Church that their Indigenous traditions were wrong, so it was practised in secrecy. Today being able to practise the two openly, as harmonious teachings, has been an important part of the healthy development of the Indigenous Catholic community on Manitoulin Island.

In 2000 Ms. Kinoshameg was commissioned by then-Sault Ste. Marie Bishop Jean-Louis Plouffe as a member of the Diocesan Order of Service. For 20 years she has been recognized as a leader in her Indigenous Catholic community, presiding over communion services, leading prayers at funerals and wakes, and ministering to the sick.

While it may still be unusual to some in the Church to see an Indigenous woman preside over a wake and other church services, Ms. Kinoshameg says gender has never been a thought to her. She was raised in a family of people who prayed and helped the community, so for her it has always been second nature.

“I told the priest that I would like to do (wake services) and I suppose he opened the door for me and encouraged me to go ahead and do that,” she said. “I’ve never felt out of place.”

With priests and deacons stretched thin given COVID-19, Ms. Kinoshameg has been there to assist in leading services of all kinds wherever needed. She wears a shawl over her shoulders tied in the front with a small ring with a cross. Commissioned along with a handful of other women from the community, Ms. Kinoshameg says it was important to them early on to agree upon a uniform that distinguished them from priests and deacons so as not to stir reaction from the Catholic community.

Ms. Kinoshameg regularly opens services with the traditional First Nation smudging — or purification — ceremony. She also leads courses on Indigenous medicines, culture, way of life and how to incorporate sacred items such as the eagle feather into church services.

“The eagle is the bird who flies the highest and sees the farthest,” said Ms. Kinoshameg, who uses the feather in the smudging ceremony. “So when we pray, we ask that eagle, by the symbol of the feather, to take our prayers up to the Creator and then ask the Creator for cleansing.”

As a community health nurse for 52 years, Ms. Kinoshameg — who at a vibrant 75 years of age only retired from that work this past February — has built relationships with many families throughout the region. Her deep understanding of her Catholic faith and Odawa culture growing up in the Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory have been key to her effectiveness as a nurse and in the Diocesan Order of Service, she said.

“My father raised us with the seven sacred teachings, or some people call them the seven grandfather teachings,” said Ms. Kinoshameg. “That’s the way we lived all the time, so it is not foreign for me to bring my culture into whatever I’m doing.”

Ms. Kinoshameg is an elder in her community and attends the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre, which has a vision to “provide the opportunities to find the Creator within self, others and in all creation as guided and inspired by our ancestors, elders and Jesuit tradition.” There she leads services in her native Odawa language and reads prayers and sings hymns from a book of Psalms and prayers translated into Ojibwe. She was selected by the elders in the community to be the president of the parish council, a role she has faithfully served for decades.

Father Bert Foliot, a Jesuit priest who spent years working with Ms. Kinoshameg and living with the Indigenous community on Manitoulin Island, describes her as a champion for reconciliation between the Church and the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

“She brings out the riches of both traditions,” said Fr. Foliot. “In the Catholic faith, we’ve come to know a lot about God, creation, ourselves and how to live in this world. The Indigenous people have a similar wisdom and (Kinoshameg) can put the two together. She can hold the feather in one hand and the crucifix and the rosary in the other and she does it very well.”

Ms. Kinoshameg has been a member of the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council, under the leadership of Canada’s Catholic bishops, since 2000. In 2015 she received the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice “for Church and pope” medal, also known as ‘Cross of Honour Medal,’ an award conferred by the pope to the laity for distinguished service to the Church.
Prayer, crying out to God is only source of salvation, pope says
By JUNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The purpose of crying out to the Lord in prayer is not to get used to suffering, but to remember that God, and not humankind, is the only source of salvation and consolation, Pope Francis said.

The Book of Psalms, with its many prayers of supplication, teaches Christians how to ask "God to intervene where all human efforts are in vain. That is why prayer, in and of itself, is the way of salvation and the beginning of salvation," the pope said October 14 during his weekly general audience at the Paul VI hall.

"The prayer of the psalms is the testimony of this cry: a multiple cry because in life, pain takes a thousand forms and takes the name of sickness, hatred, war, persecution, distrust; until the supreme 'scandal,' that of death," he said.

Prior to the pope’s arrival, participants were told that he would not be greeting them from up close and that they were to maintain proper distance from each other.

With a steady increase in COVID-19 infections prompting fears of a second wave of the pandemic, the Italian government issued a series of new decrees, including extending mandatory use of masks indoors, except in private homes, to requiring masks be worn outdoors, as well as the early closing of bars and restaurants.

Religious and civil ceremonies were also limited to no more than 30 guests. According to the Italian newspaper, La Repubblica, the Italian National Institute of Health reported that 77% of new infections occurred among family members.

Before concluding the audience, the pope apologized to those present and explained that with the new safety regulations in place, "it is better if we keep distant."

"You are sitting prudently distant as it should be," the pope said. "But it often happens that when I go down, everyone gets close and piles up. And it's a problem because there is a risk of infection."

"I'm sorry that I greet you from afar, but I think that if we, as good citizens, fulfill the regulations from the authorities, this will be a help to end this pandemic," he said.

During the audience, the pope continued his series of talks on prayer, reflecting on the Book of Psalms, which "communicates 'knowing how to pray' through the experience of dialogue with God."

"In this book, we do not encounter ethereal, abstract people, those who confuse prayer with an aesthetic or alienating experience," he explained. "The psalms are not texts created on paper, but rather they are invocations, often dramatic, that spring from lived existence."

The Book of Psalms, he continued, is where Christians can "hear the voice of men and women of prayer in flesh and blood, whose life, like that of us all, is fraught with problems, hardships and uncertainties."

In the psalms, the pain, suffering and sorrow are not "meaningless, without purpose," but instead it "becomes a relationship, a cry for help waiting to intercept a listening ear."

"Even the pains we suffer cannot be merely specific cases of a universal law: they are always 'my' tears, which no one has ever shed before me. All human pains for God are sacred," he said.

Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope said he met earlier with the parents of Father Roberto Malgesini, a priest from the Diocese of Como who was stabbed to death September 15 by a mentally ill homeless man he was helping.

"The tears of those parents are 'their' tears and each one of them knows how much they suffered to see their son who gave his life in the service of the poor," the pope said.

"When we want to console someone, we do not find the words. Why? Because we cannot get to 'their' pain, because 'their' pain is theirs, 'their' tears are theirs. The same, with us: the tears, 'my' pain is mine, the tears are 'mine' and with these tears, with this pain, I turn to the Lord," he said.

Pope Francis said that while not all problems are solved in prayer, sometimes, it is enough for one to know that "the Lord listens."

"Those who pray are not deluded," the pope said. "They know that many questions of life down here remain unresolved, with no way out; suffering will accompany us and, after one battle, others will wait us. But if we are listened to, everything becomes more bearable."

Beatification of Father McGivney October 31
By Catholic News Service

HARTFORD, Conn. — Father Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus, will be beatified during a special Mass October 31 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

On May 27, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis, who met with the board of directors of the Knights of Columbus in February, had signed the decree recognizing a miracle through the intercession of Fr. McGivney, clearing the way for his beatification. Once he is beatified, he will be given the title "Blessed."

The beatification mass will be celebrated at 12 noon (Atlantic Time) by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, attendance inside the cathedral will be limited, but the mass will be livestreamed by EWTN and on the website of the Knights of Columbus, www.kofc.org.

The miracle recognized by the Vatican for Fr. McGivney’s cause occurred in 2015 and involved an U.S. baby, still in utero, with a life-threatening condition that, under most circumstances, could have led to an abortion.

That baby, Mikey Schachle, is now 5. His parents, Dan and Michelle Schachle, of Dickson, Tennessee, prayed to Fr. McGivney to intercede with God to save their son, still in his mother’s womb, who was given no hope of surviving a life-threatening case of fetal hydrops.

Fr. McGivney (1852-1890), the son of Irish immigrants, was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, and was ordained a priest in 1877 for what is now the Archdiocese of Hartford. He founded the Knights of Columbus at St. Mary’s Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1882. (continued on page 9)
Beatification of Father McGivney October 31

(continued from page 8)

He originally started the Knights as a service organization to help widows and orphans. At the time, Fr. McGivney was an assistant pastor at St. Mary’s Parish. He is buried in New Haven.

The fraternal order for Catholic men has become the largest lay Catholic organization in the world with 2 million members and sponsors a wide range of educational, charitable and religious activities.

Fr. McGivney, who will be the first American parish priest to be beatified and has long been a hero of working-class Catholics, can be viewed as a martyr of a pandemic. When he died of pneumonia complications at age 38 in 1890, it was during an outbreak of influenza known as the Russian Flu in Thomaston, Connecticut. Some recent evidence, according to the Knights, indicates the outbreak may have been the result of a coronavirus.

"Fr. McGivney has inspired generations of Catholic men to roll up their sleeves and put their faith into action," Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said. "He was decades ahead of his time in giving the laity an important role within the church. Today, his spirit continues to shape the extraordinary charitable work of Knights as they continue to serve those on the margins of society as he served widows and orphans in the 1880s."

He added, "Fr. McGivney also remains an important role model for parish priests around the world and left us a transformative legacy of effective cooperation between the laity and clergy."

After the announcement that the priest would be beatified, Anderson told Catholic News Service in an interview: "We’ve been praying for years for this to occur, and finally this day has arrived."

The initial work on his sainthood cause began in 1982 on the Knights' centenary. His cause was formally opened in Hartford in 1997, and he was given the title "servant of God." In March 2008, the Catholic Church recognized the priest heroically lived the Christian virtues, so he was given the title "venerable."

Generally, two miracles attributed to the candidate’s intercession are required for sainthood — one for beatification and the second for canonization.

Editor’s Note: The Knights have set up a new website for Fr. McGivney’s sainthood cause: https://www.fathermcgivney.org. §

Conversion therapy ban could be used to stifle religious freedom

(continued from page 3)

diversity concerning viewpoints on human sexuality arising from religious beliefs, from philosophical debate, or from scientific and medical study; nor does it make any provision for conscientious dissent related to such matters in forums of teaching or public presentations," the CCCB said.

Conversion therapy is an attempt to change an individual’s sexual orientation from homosexual or bisexual to heterosexual and has been condemned by numerous government and medical associations across North America. In 2001, the then U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher reported that “there is no valid scientific evidence that sexual orientation can be changed.” Critics of conversion therapy say that for youth who have undergone conversion therapy, the practice can be harmful and even lead to suicide. The federal government’s move to enact national conversion therapy related legislation comes after the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and P.E.I. have taken steps against conversion therapy through legislation or statements and some Canadian cities such as Saint John, Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton have banned or are in the process of banning conversion therapy within their city limits.

The Liberals have a minority in the House of Commons, so the government needs the support of some opposition MPs to pass the proposed legislation. However, both the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP were supportive of taking action against conversion therapy in last year’s federal election and federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh said last week that his party will support the government bill in the House of Commons.

New Conservative Party leader Erin O’Toole has said that he personally supports a conversion therapy ban, but has raised concerns about the wording of the proposed ban. He has also said Conservative MPs can vote their conscience on the issue.

What the government proposes is to create new criminal code offenses that would not only ban conversion therapy for minors, but also make it a crime to remove a minor from Canada to undergo conversion therapy abroad, cause a person to undergo conversion therapy against their will, profit from providing conversion therapy and advertise an offer to provide conversion therapy.

According to the federal government “conversion therapy aims to change an individual’s sexual orientation to heterosexual, to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviours, or to change an individual’s gender identity to match the sex they were assigned at birth.”

While the proposed bill specifically targets conversion therapy for minors and does nothing to stop an adult from seeking some form of conversion therapy, it would make it a crime to force someone into conversion therapy against their will regardless of age.

According to the federal Ministry of Justice “these new offences would not apply to those who provide support to persons questioning their sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity such as teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members.”

But critics say that is fine to say, but they worry that the actual wording of the bill is less clear on these issues and thus open to interpretation by the courts regardless of the what the current justice minister and ministry say.

“There is a real danger that Christian and other religious and ethical teaching with respect to human sexuality would be interpreted as criminal acts,” the CCCB said in its October 7 statement.

“The Bill could even criminalize Catholic ministries and groups, religious leaders, or pastors who encourage individuals with same-sex attraction to live chastely and in conformity with the teachings of the Gospel, the moral principles of the Catholic Church, and the dictates of their own conscience,” the CCCB said, adding “the Bill’s current wording can also be interpreted as compelling competent professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, other medical practitioners and social workers to withhold legitimate services and, as a corollary, prevent their patients or clients from accessing necessary medical treatment.”

In an interview with the Canadian Catholic News in September, CCCB president and Winnipeg Archbishop Richard Gagnon said the Catholic Church does not support forcing anyone to undergo conversion therapy, but how a proposed ban is worded is important because a “loosely worded” bill leaves open any future law to interpretation if it “doesn’t clearly spell things out.”

“Interpretation is a problem if it is not clear,” Archbishop Gagnon said. “There must be a balance that respects all Canadians’ rights, and that includes freedom of religion rights and conscience rights.”§
Sales of targeting system allegedly breaks treaty signed last year

By MICHAEL SWAN
The Catholic Register

It’s nice that Canada is going to look into how Canadian-made targeting systems are being used by the Turkish and Azerbaijani military, both engaged in active wars, before allowing any more sales or exports of the systems. But Ottawa will have to do more if it intends to live up to its signature on the international Arms Trade Treaty and international human rights law in general, according to a researcher at Project Ploughshares.

In September Project Ploughshares revealed that laser target acquisition technology manufactured by Burlington, ON’s L3Harris Wescam was likely being fitted onto Turkish drones which have been sold to Turkey’s ally Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan appears to have been using the drones to pick out schools, hospitals and other civilian targets for laser bombing runs.

“So if Canada continues to export these systems, it would be obviously in breach of its obligations under both the Arms Trade Treaty, which is international law, but also domestic law under Canada’s own domestic arms controls,” Project Ploughshares researcher Kelsey Gallagher told The Catholic Register. “Canada is legally obligated to halt further exports. It’s pretty much as simple as that.”


Project Ploughshares is an ecumenical project of the Canadian Council of Churches operating on the campus of the University of Waterloo. It is partially funded by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

When Global Affairs did announce October 5 it was suspending L3Harris Wescam’s export licenses while it investigates, Turkey’s foreign ministry accused Canada of a double standard.

“There is no explanation of blocking defence equipment exports to a NATO ally while … Canada does not see any harm in exporting arms to countries that have military involvement in the crisis in Yemen,” said the Turkish foreign ministry.

“When Turkey comes around and says this is a double standard, you block weapons to us but you are willing to continue exporting outside experts in policing arms exports.

“We should halt exports to both countries.”

The example of Saudi Arabia also raises questions about how well Global Affairs can investigate its own decision back in May to grant L3Harris Wescam export permits to Turkey, despite a 2019 arms embargo in response to Turkey’s invasion of northern Syria. Twice, in 2017 and 2018, Global Affairs investigated Canadian exports of light armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia in response to video evidence the small, mobile tanks were being used in the war in Yemen. Both times Global Affairs decided the exports were onsite.

“It’s quite clear that these weapons pose a substantial risk of being misused, being diverted, killing civilians — quite clearly,” Mr. Gallagher said. “Other investigations have ended with Global Affairs essentially saying, ‘Our hands are clean; the substantial risk is not evident to us and we will continue selling billions and billions and billions of dollars worth of armoured vehicles to one of the most autocratic regimes on the face of the Earth…. Global Affairs’ track record of coming to a positive conclusion in these investigations in the last few years doesn’t exist.”

“It seems to me about the most fundamental principle of morality is that you can’t murder people. By murder, I mean killing innocent people,” said Regis College moral theology professor John Berkman. “For Canada to sell the weapons to a nation which intends to kill innocent people, then you are an accomplice to murder.”

Pope Francis has often excoriated the international arms trade and what he calls “the merchants of death.”

“It’s an absurd contradiction to speak of peace, to negotiate peace, and at the same time, to promote or allow the arms trade,” Pope Francis said in a 2017 video.

He again lashed out at arms dealers in his most recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti. “We see outbreaks of tension and a buildup of arms and ammunition in a global context dominated by uncertainty, disillusionment, fear of the future and controlled by narrow economic interests,” he wrote.

Mr. Gallagher would urge Global Affairs to seek the help of outside experts in policing arms exports.

“More interplay with civil society does have better outcomes when it comes to things like arms control. Civil society can, in a certain way, serve as a kind of second, sober thought,” he said.§

Sunday’s Liturgy

October 25, 2020
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Exodus 22.21-27
If you abuse any widow or orphan, my wrath will burn you.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 18.1-2, 3+6b, 46+50ab (R.1)
R. I love you, O Lord, my strength

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1.5c-10
You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son.

Gospel: Matthew 22.34-40
You shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbour as yourself.
OBITUARIES

DEMPSEY, DAVID BURTON JOSEPH SR. — It is with heavy hearts that the family of David Dempsey Sr. announces his unexpected passing on Friday, October 2, 2020 at the Saint John Regional Hospital. Born in Garnet Settlement, NB on June 17, 1960, he was a son of the late Arthur and Florence (Dwyer) Dempsey. David will be missed by his children: Kizzy Hamilton (Jeff), David Dempsey Jr. (Amanda) and Lila Dempsey (as well as her mother, Charlene Mosher); grandchildren, Jacob Cromwell (Jaclyn Miller) and their daughter Serenity Cromwell, Ethan Dempsey, Austin McCluskey and Ryan McCluskey; siblings, Margaret Dempsey and Raymond Thompson; as well as many nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, and many friends. In addition to his parents, David was predeceased by his siblings: James, Ronald, Donald, Mary Rose and Gloria Dempsey, Jean Oudbier and grandson Michael Cromwell.

He rested at Brenan’s Funeral Home, Saint John. A Funeral Liturgy was held from Brenan’s Funeral Home Chapel. Interment at St. Joseph’s Cemetery, Saint John.

DONOVAN KEVIN — It is with broken hearts that the family of Kevin Donovan announces his unexpected passing on October 12, 2020. Born in Saint John on July 19, 1959, he was a son of the late Joseph and Evelyn (Walsh) Donovan. Kevin will be missed by his daughter Angela Jones (Jeremy Snodgrass); and grandchildren: Harmony, Hunter, and Harper; as well as his special friend Lynn. Besides his parents, he was predeceased by his brothers: Peter, Maurice, and Stephen Donovan.

He rested at Brenan’s Funeral Home, Saint John. A Funeral Liturgy was held from Brenan’s Funeral Home Chapel. Interment at St. Joseph’s Cemetery, Saint John.

JOYCE, WILLIAM E. — It is with profound sadness that the family of William E Joyce announces his passing, Wednesday October 14, 2020, at Shannex, Tucker Hall, Saint John. Bill Joyce was born in Saint John, on October 28, 1934. He was the son of the late Raymond M. Joyce and Leotta (Campbell) Joyce. He leaves behind his loving wife of 48 years, Mary Lou (O’Brien) Joyce, his brother Harold G Joyce and two special cousins, Paul Boone (Barb) and Pamela Yearwood (Paul), as well as many other cousins, relatives and friends.

He rested at Brenan’s Funeral Home, Saint John. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated from Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Saint John. Interment took place at Holy Cross Cemetery, Saint John.

Doctors sign statement opposing expanded euthanasia

The B.C. Catholic

This is a rewrite of a press release from the Physicians’ Alliance Against Euthanasia: https://maid2mad.ca/#DeclarationEnglish

Hundreds of Canadian doctors signed an open letter that says Canada will become “the world leader in administering death” if the federal government pushes ahead with Bill C-7 to expand euthanasia to “virtually everyone who is sick and suffering in Canada.”

The October 19 statement from the Physicians’ Alliance Against Euthanasia expresses “dismay” at the “reckless removal” of safeguards previously considered essential, adding the lives of “desperately vulnerable patients” are at stake.

The document, which notes the irony of governments protecting vulnerable Canadians from COVID-19 with restrictions on personal liberties, while placing the sick, suffering, and elderly “directly in harm’s way” by expanding assisted suicide.

Curtailing freedoms to protect citizens from the spread of disease is regarded as “normal and necessary,” says the statement, and shows “the lengths to which public authorities can and should go to prevent death and to protect the common good.”

Yet, the doctors say, many Canadians aren’t even aware of Bill C-7, which was re-tabled in Parliament October 5.

“This bill, expanding ‘medical assistance in dying’ to virtually everyone who is sick and suffering in Canada, will, if passed in its current form, make our country the world leader in administering death.”

The doctors say most of the safeguards that were deemed essential to protect wrongful death when euthanasia was introduced in 2016 are being removed.

Bill C-7 would allow someone who is not dying to receive a lethal injection from a doctor or nurse practitioner,” while someone whose natural death is considered to be “reasonably foreseeable” could be “diagnosed, assessed and euthanized all in one day,” said the doctors.

“We are very concerned that removing the 10-day reflection period and other safeguards will lead to an increase in coerced or tragically unconsidered deaths.”

The doctors note that the wait time to see a psychiatrist in some parts of Canada is “four to eight times longer than the 90-day waiting period proposed in the bill for those whose natural death is not considered ‘reasonably foreseeable.’”

Meanwhile, “70 per cent of citizens nearing the end of life still have no access to basic palliative care services. Yet MAiD has been deemed an essential service under the Canada Health Act and palliative care has not. This bill creates the conditions for cheap and easy death through euthanasia or assisted suicide.”

The statement says politicians “who have little lived experience of the realities of medicine” are transforming the profession “into a technical occupation that allows physicians to deliberately end the lives of their suffering patients.”

It also notes that some regulatory colleges are requiring participation in arranging and facilitating euthanasia.

“We watch in utter dismay and horror at how the nature of our medical profession has been so quickly destroyed by the creation of misguided laws. We, the undersigned, declare that the passage of Bill C-7, if left unchecked, will contribute to the destruction of much more than our medical profession, but fundamentally, of a Canadian society that genuinely values and cares for its most vulnerable members. Canadians deserve better.”

Among the signatories of the statement, which is being shared as an open letter to MPs and senators, are Sister Nuala Kenny, a Sister of Charity of Halifax, professor emeritus of bioethics at Dalhousie University, and former ethics and health policy adviser to the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada and Dr. Will Johnston, a Vancouver physician and head of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition of B.C.
Commemorating lives lost to miscarriage and stillbirth

By NATASHA MAZEROLLE
Correspondent

“My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.” (Psalm 139:15-16)

Miscarriage and infant loss is something that affects many people. While the Mayo Clinic (with headquarters in Rochester, Minnesota) estimates that between 10 and 20% of known pregnancies end in miscarriage, in reality “the actual number is likely higher because many miscarriages occur so early in pregnancy that a woman doesn’t realize she’s pregnant.”1 As Catholics who understand that, “human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end,” (Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph 2258), it is important for us to acknowledge this loss of life, and to accompany those who experience it.

Having experienced the loss of pregnancy to miscarriage, Helen LeBlanc of the New Brunswick Right to Life (Saint John Chapter) knows intimately the suffering that comes with this, and the need for healing. “Even though I lost my child a long time ago, I grieve the loss of that child just like I grieve the loss of my husband and my parents,” she said. “It’s amazing the number of people who have actually had miscarriages. It’s estimated that one in 20 pregnancies miscarry, sometimes when people don’t know they’re pregnant.”

Wanting to afford families who share in this silent suffering the opportunity to grieve as a community and commend the souls of their children to the mercy of God, Ms. LeBlanc approached Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC, of the Diocese of Saint John, to ask for a special Mass of Remembrance to be celebrated. With his enthusiastic support, the date of November 3, 2020 was chosen. Ms. LeBlanc shared that, “we chose November because it’s the month of remembrance.”

An early November mass also allowed this event to be celebrated close to ‘Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day,’ which is observed on October 15, 2020. This worldwide day of remembrance began through the lobby of a Saint John resident. “Through the lobby effort of Terra-Lynn Coggan, a Saint John resident with the assistance of former Saint John-Champlain MLA Roly MacIntyre, New Brunswick minister of Health and Wellness, Elvy Robichaud, then the minister of Health for the province, declared October 15, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day across the province, October 12, 2005, citing ,’Miscarriage and infant death are a source of grief, often silent, for mothers, fathers, siblings and grandparents’.”2 As such New Brunswick became the first province in the world to officially observe this day with a declaration in both official languages.

While pregnancy and infant loss affects families in a particular way, it is an issue of great importance to people in all walks of life, even the young. Originally planned as a noon mass, Ms. LeBlanc shared that through the inspiration of some high school students, the timing was changed to accommodate students in school. “We had a showing of the movie Unplanned at the Diocesan Centre one evening, and there were some young people who attended,” Ms. LeBlanc shared. “And they said, I’m in school and I really like to go to that Mass. So the date got changed to Tuesday night.”

Calling on all to reflect on the heart of the Good Samaritan, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith said in its recent letter, Samaritanus Bonus, “human life is a highest good, and society is called to acknowledge this. Life is a sacred and inviolable gift and every human person, created by God, has a transcendent vocation to a unique relationship with the One who gives life.” This mass is a beautiful opportunity to uphold the dignity of life at all stages, and acknowledge the presence of ones who reside in eternity with Christ, where one day the hope is to be united with them.

“To support and educate awareness for the grieving parents who have lost children during pregnancy and shortly after birth is so important,” Ms. LeBlanc said. “I think it will be a very holy spiritual mass, I really do.”

The Mass for Remembrance for the Loss of Life due to Miscarriage and Stillbirth will take place on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, at 7 pm. Please email cic@nb.aibn.com to register for this mass, and wear face coverings in accordance with provincial guidelines. For more information about this event and ongoing efforts to promote the right to life in Saint John, please contact sjrighttolife@gmail.com.


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

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Mass of Remembrance for the Loss of Life due to Miscarriage and Stillbirth

celebrated by
Bishop Christian Riesbeck, CC
Diocese of Saint John

Tuesday, November 3, 2020
7:00 pm
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

To register please email cic@nb.aibn.com. In accordance with provincial guidelines, face coverings are required.

Photo by Kalen Grondin, K- lens Photography