

Welcome Home

L'Arche Halifax opens residences

By Nicole Myshak

Even though they didn't make it home for Christmas, residents of the newly constructed L'Arche house in Halifax have finally been able to move in after a several month setback.

John O'Donnell, the Regional Coordinator for the L'Arche Atlantic Region in Canada, explains the reasons behind the delay and that it was "not for lack of trying" that residents were only able to move in now.

He recounts how "the whole process" of building a new home at the corner of Sullivan and Gottingen Streets began in late 2007. Then, in the spring of last year, L'Arche commenced talks with the province's Department of Community Services (DCS) about the operating budget of the home because L'Arche, on average, receives approximately 85 percent of its funding from the government.

Although much progress was made in the negotiations, significant disagreement surfaced.

"It became clear fairly early on that the government and L'Arche were on different pages in terms of what the expectations were around what it would cost to operate the new L'Arche home," says O'Donnell. He adds that this disagreement concerned a "staffing issue" which was made "a bit complicated" because of the nature of L'Arche's 30-year history in the province.

Why the Fuss?

O'Donnell notes that L'Arche began in NS more than three decades ago during a time when there were few regulations for agencies. As well, assistants who took up residence within L'Arche's homes never did so "out of a sense" of it being a job or an income for them. Consequently, for many years, L'Arche "operated at a much less expensive rate than a lot of agencies."

Then, as L'Arche matured, it started to look at how best to retain staff as well as to the importance of providing decent wages. This led to conversations with the DCS about "bringing L'Arche up to the same standards as other agencies in terms

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of its funding" for, in L'Arche's view, if they were required to meet government regulations they should also be entitled to the same level of financing.

Even so, these matters weren't agreed upon by the time L'Arche entered into discussions about starting a home in Halifax. Consequently O'Donnell suggests that officials within DCS pushed forward on the assumption of "begin[ing] L'Arche in Halifax according to the old standards."

"We were just not willing to accept that," he continues.

While O'Donnell emphasizes the situation was complex he summarizes that the disagreement hinged upon staffing levels. "The government proposed a number of staff that we just felt wasn't adequate to ensure the safety and security of folks and to make sure that there was the proper support there for them," he says.

The Regional Coordinator adds that once members of L'Arche's Board of Directors pressed the DCS on the rationale behind proposed staff numbers they discovered that there wasn't any recent assessment information on a majority of the individuals slated to move into the home.

This sparked countless discussions about the number of fulltime equivalent (FTE) positions appropriate for the home.

Both sides dig in

O'Donnell confirms that L'Arche didn't begin the discussions on staffing by proposing an exaggerated number of workers from which they were willing to come down. Rather, their recommendations coincided with the unique needs particular to this group of core members.

As an example he notes that L'Arche staff need to be available to tend to some of the home's residents around the clock because of sleep issues. Additionally, a number of the residents have "significant levels of dependency" with three of them being in wheelchairs.

These needs require more staff to be physically present in the mornings — to

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L'Arche Halifax's first two homes are located on land purchased from Blessed Mother Teresa Parish in Halifax's North End. (Contributed photo)



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Canada



Amherst Parish Building New Church



HOLY FAMILY PARISH in Amherst was formed when **St. Charles Parish** and **Nativity of Our Lady Parish** were joined together following the **Archdiocese of Halifax's Forward in Faith** initiative. The new parish sold **Nativity of Our Lady church** and is building a new church to replace **St. Charles church** (above). Workers are presently putting a roof on the new building. (Contributed photos)



By Nicole Myshak

Jim Nelson received all his sacraments at St. Charles Church in Amherst, NS.

Married to a Catholic, Nelson converted to Catholicism and in 1981 was baptized, confirmed and received the Eucharist, all within the walls of this historic church built in 1889. He and his wife were wedded at St. Charles and their two sons received their Sacraments of Initiation there.

Even so, Nelson is direct when asked for his feelings about the tearing down of St. Charles, which will happen once construction of a new church is complete.

"The memories are there. It's served us well," he acknowledges. "But we know that in the long term we're much better off to go the way we're going. We don't live in the past."

Nelson points beyond the physical structure of the church to what he believes is truly important. "The bottom line is, if we didn't have any building we still can cling to our faith," he asserts. "Faith is the thing. That's all you need."

In his dual capacities as chairman of both the building and review committees, Nelson recounts how the decision to build a new church came about. He explains that a group — of which he was a member — was formed as part

of the Archdiocese of Halifax's Forward in Faith process. These individuals assessed the situation within their faith community and recommended that a church be built on a new site.

As this may have seemed a dramatic proposal to some, a second Forward in Faith group was formed to undertake the same task of putting forward a suggestion about the future of the parishes of St. Charles and Nativity of Our Lady, both situated in Amherst.

"They came to the exact same conclusion," says Nelson of this second group, which was comprised of entirely different people. These individuals also suggested that a new church be built, but their proposal differed in that they hoped this could occur on the existing site.

Eventually the Nativity of Our Lady church was sold to a Wesleyan church and the faithful of both Catholic communities came to worship at St. Charles. Construction on the new church, which is to be called Holy Family, began in midsummer of last year on the location of the former rectory.

Nelson notes that this new facility will incorporate the church, which will have gathering and quiet areas, as well as a hall with a kitchen, five classrooms, space

for storage, parish offices and a boardroom. Each of these rooms is part of one building, which is on one level with no stairs.

"It's basically all in one," says Nelson. "It serves all the needs of the parishioners."

Presently the roof is being put on the hall and classroom area as well as the nave of the church. The other portions of the structure are already enclosed.

"We had hoped to be a little further ahead," admits Nelson. Despite that he's still confident that the parish will meet its goal for completion which is sometime in late May or early June, at the latest.

"It's worked out well," he adds of the construction. "We're taking big strides recently so it's coming right along."

Regarding the reasoning behind embarking on this huge project, Nelson speaks of a need for a more efficient facility. He notes that St. Charles has an extremely small hall within the basement of the church, which is accessible only by stairs. Additionally there were no classrooms so a local school was used for children's catechesis.

"Now with the new facility we eliminate a lot of those problems," notes Nelson.

He adds that the newly

constructed church will seat a comparable number of parishioners but the overall building will be "much more functional" and far less expensive to operate. This is partially on account of the old oil furnace at St. Charles which was inefficient and needed repairs on a yearly basis.

Nelson estimates that, with high fuel costs, oil drained the parish of \$35,000 annually compared to the projected cost of \$5,000-\$7,000 for the new system of gas and in floor heating within Holy Family.

Besides this factor, a new furnace would have cost \$100,000 and there was still ongoing maintenance and upkeep required on the church, including the replacement or fixing of the roof and windows.

"A lot of people knew that this was really what we had to do," he says. "We were able to bring most people on board."

Even so, Nelson acknowledges that this is a difficult process. In terms of offering advice to other churches in a similar circumstance, Nelson insists that time be taken to provide parishioners with an "opportunity to voice their opinions" and that they be encouraged to do so.

"At the end of the day," however, he perceives that a church really must "go with what works best" no matter how painful that solution may seem at first. †

Sydney Deanery Welcomes Bishop Dunn

By Marlene MacInnes

Tuesday evening, Feb. 9, Bishop Brian Dunn, accompanied by approximately 14 priests from the Sydney Deanery, celebrated Mass at Saint Anthony Daniel Church, Sydney. The Mass was for the parishes of the Sydney Deanery.

Mary MacIsaac, Chair of the newly formed Sydney Deanery Pastoral Council, welcomed Bishop Dunn and all in attendance.

“Just meeting him for the first time tonight and he seems very pleasant,” MacIsaac said following the liturgy.

“We are looking forward to having someone like him who is willing to sit with the people and discuss things — being accessible. It sounds like he’s an individual who is open to new ideas and new things. The whole purpose of council is to really look at the issues that are bothering people. We are hoping to work with Bishop Dunn on this.”

After MacIsaac’s welcome, Walter Denny Keptin from Eskasoni performed a Smudging Ceremony, using a feather to fan the smoking sweet grass over and around the bishop, then towards the priests and the congregation.

People from around the deanery participated in the Mass. Saint Anthony Daniel parish choir provided music and the Prayers of the Faithful were read in five languages: French, Mi’kmaq, Italian, Polish and English.

In his homily, Bishop Dunn described the temple as a dwelling place of the Lord and said that it



DIOCESE OF ANTIGONISH Bishop Brian Dunn speaks with Sr. Mary Cecilia MacDonald following a Mass celebrated at St. Anthony Daniel Parish for the Sydney Deanery Feb. 9. (Raytel photo)

inspires awe and humility while giving confidence that prayer will be heard. He described the temple as a place where people grow in unity and faith.

“Jesus responds to the Pharisees and calls disciples to honour God

“I wasn’t going to come tonight, but I’m glad I did.”

— Dolores Campbell,
Sydney

from the heart and not merely on the lips — to honour from the heart demands attitudes of awe, humility, confidence and readiness to gather,” Bishop Dunn said referring to the Gospel reading.

The bishop also spoke about the sign of unity in the diocese and explained the significance of the symbols of the bishop’s office: the ring, the pectoral cross, the mitre and the crozier.

Following the Mass, Father Bedford Doucette of the diocese’s Faith Development Ministry

program said he liked the fact the bishop explained the symbols of his office and is pleased with Bishop Dunn’s effort to get to know the priests and that “it’s good for the priests to know he’s with them.”

Father Donald MacGillivray acknowledged the contributions of all the parishes in the deanery as the celebration ended. He then invited everyone to the reception that followed in the parish hall.

Saint Anthony Daniel Parish Catholic Women’s League President Patricia MacDonald said all the CWLs of the deanery worked together to organize the lunch.

At the reception the people of the deanery were impressed by Bishop Dunn’s homily and offered their thoughts on the direction of the diocese.

“I think he is a person of faith. He put emphasis on the dwelling place and that we have to find God within us,” Sister Catherine Walker said. She is a member of St. Anthony Daniel as well as the deanery pastoral council.

Dolores Campbell also of Saint

Anthony Daniel Parish appreciated Bishop Dunn thanking the priests and singling them out.

“I liked his homily and I think his Newfoundland background comes through in a humanistic way. I wasn’t going to come tonight, but I’m glad I did.”

Campbell said she “would like to see general absolution come back.”

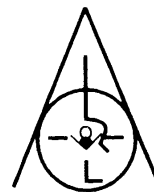
Saint Anthony Daniel parishioner Don Arseneau came to the Mass because he is “willing to see how things evolve.”

He thought the homily struck the right balance and addressed some of the other issues facing the Church.

“People can live a better life too. We’ll always be faced with situations of closing churches and out migration. That’s the history of society.”

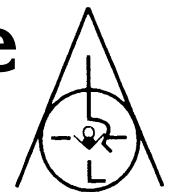
Marie and Anslem Doyle of Immaculate Heart Parish, Mira Road agreed with Arseneau about issues the new bishop will be facing. The couple would like to see more women in senior roles

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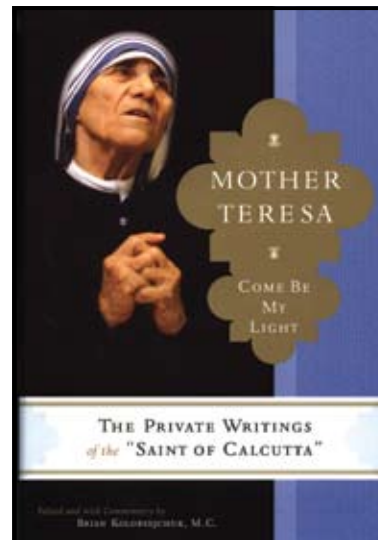


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Vince Cunningham (right) speaks with Father Joe Gillis of St. Mary’s Parish, Big Pond. (MacInnes Photo)

Staying the Course

Watching the opening ceremonies of the Vancouver Olympics, the line from St. Paul's letter to Timothy came to mind, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

The sight of so many primed athletes, prepared for the "race" of their lives, about to perform their skills to the best of their ability after years of training, sacrifice and commitment is akin to what every Christian aspires to in the spiritual life. As St. Paul pointed out, probably not long before his own martyrdom, the journey that is life can be likened to a race with a defined finish line, a goal of victory — a goal reached through unwavering faith.

Most of us will never compete in the Olympics, but most of us are attracted to at least watching the competition. We can all identify with the need to prepare, the desire to be the best, the thrill of the race. We admire the tenacity of the athletes, the many stories of overcoming obstacles

and the devotion to perfection. If we allow ourselves, we can apply the Olympic spirit to our own spiritual growth, especially as we begin the Lenten journey at the same time the athletes are making their own journey.

Perhaps the greatest parallel between the habits of an Olympic athlete and a pilgrim Christian is that both are works in progress,


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 Editorial

never completely satisfied with one's performance and always working toward the goal, whether that goal is a gold medal or eternal life. Complacency has no place in the life of any athlete, spiritual or physical. There is a necessary commitment to staying the course, confident that the goal is worth all the blood, sweat and tears necessary to get there. As the obstacles encountered

by serious athletes — injuries, personal problems, competitors, etc. — are inevitable and should not deter, the challenges of life — temptations, disappointments, failings — are a natural part of the journey and, if we allow, can help us grow closer to God.

Just like a body, the soul needs exercising too. We all know that for exercise to be effective it has to be regular and disciplined. For a body in training the exercise is all

***If we do not minister
 to our souls, we are
 neglecting part of
 ourselves.***

the more rigorous, and it can be the same for the soul. If we do not minister to our souls, we are neglecting part of ourselves. As whole beings, body and soul, we need prayer, the graces of the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), spiritual reading and the Word of God to keep our souls healthily nourished, primed to deal with the challenges we encounter daily and prepared

to spend eternity with our Lord.

Finally, there is no giving up. This is where the Sacrament of Reconciliation enters into the picture. When we fail to meet the goals we have set, when we slip further away instead of inching closer to Christ, there is always opportunity to start over. There is no time like the meditative time of Lent, one might say an intensive spiritual training camp, to closely examine one's failings and bring them to Christ in the confessional and be refreshed, ready to start anew.

In this age of emphasizing the importance of physical fitness, while many of us are watching the unfolding of the Olympics in our own country, let us be reminded that Lent is the Christian's opportunity to check on our spiritual fitness. Using the stellar achievements of so many athletes as our inspiration, let's never settle for anything less than gold-medal performances in our spiritual lives with our hearts set on the ultimate finish line — Jesus Christ.

God Bless. †

Letters

Better balance needed

I read the January 23 edition of the *Atlantic Catholic* with a mixture of hope and dismay. On a positive note, the interview with Sister Nuala Kenny was a balance of hope that the Church was showing some progress in addressing the issue of sexual abuse but regret that the systemic reasons why it happened, addressed by the Winter Commission, are still in need of attention.

The initiative shown by the Sisters of St. Martha in sponsoring a series of meetings for the general public (Gathering Wisdom) focusing on the crisis in the diocese was very heartening and the sisters should be commended for their efforts.

The article "From the Pew to the Altar" was also informative and provided a better understanding of the process involved in studying to become a priest.

The article by Dr. Jim Chandler was useful although he inaccurately stated that "sadly,

most pedophiles were sexually abused as children." Research by the U.S. General Accounting Office (September 1996) in reference to the cycle of sexual abuse reported that the experience of sexual abuse as a child was previously thought to be a strong risk factor, but research does not show a causal relationship, as the vast majority of sexually abused children do not grow up to be adult offenders, nor do the majority of adult offenders report childhood sexual abuse.

I found Dr. David Deane's article "Christ: The Answer to Our Crisis" very myopic. I was shocked to read that Kantian ethics, for example, with its Categorical Imperative, would be a fertile breeding ground for the development of pedophiles among the clergy. The characteristic behaviour of a pedophile would be anathema to Kant. Equally repugnant is Deane's suggestion that the Second Vatican Council was somehow to blame for almost all of the sexual abuse cases in Ireland cited in the Murphy Report. Pope John XXIII would be incensed to hear of this connection.

It is reductionist reasoning at its worst to suggest as Deane does that adherence to traditional Catholic moral teaching would have prevented some priests from acting out as pedophiles. The cause or causes of pedophilia are not known. Several researchers have reported correlations between pedophilia and certain psychological characteristics, such as low self-esteem and poor social skills.

Beginning in 2002, other researchers began reporting a series of findings linking pedophilia with brain structure and function. To suggest, as Deane does, that lack of traditional Catholic moral teaching in the formation of priests triggered pedophilia acting out is fatuous.

Deane acknowledges that he has only spoken to one priest "who committed pedophilic acts." When this priest told Deane how he understood the mission of the Church, Deane asked him "but if this is what the Church is, why didn't you become a social worker and not a priest?" Deane omits to say what the priest's vision of the mission

of the Church was. Might it have been Christ's message of love? Maybe the priest advocated for more democratic structures in the Church which Deane strongly opposes.

Not surprisingly, another article by Monica M. Miller, "Can the Church Ordain Women," repeats the specious arguments that a paternalistic Church hierarchy uses to oppose the ordination of women.

Patrick Coffin in his article "Fidelity vs the Blame Game" omits the option of married clergy entirely and atavistically argues instead that the celibate clergy state is superior to the married state.

In closing, I wish to congratulate the *Atlantic Catholic* for recognizing the need to publish an edition with "a diverse cross section of stories chronicling what the Church teaches, what those within the Church are doing to improve and how we can move forward from this time of crisis." My only regret is that the "stories" were not better balanced.

**Cameron MacDougall
 Antigonish, NS**

A crisis in identity

The purpose of this letter is to address the “answers” outlined in the bulletin of St. Mary’s Parish (East Bay) Jan. 24, 2010 concerning the settlement of abuse cases. After reading the material several times, we felt we must write and express our thoughts and feelings on this matter. We are members and supporters of the St. Mary’s Parish and, therefore, members and supporters of the diocese and the Vatican.

The diocese and the Vatican must decide if they are going to be good corporate citizens or shepherds. Primarily, with regard to abuse cases, the diocese sees themselves as a corporate entity. Legally, the diocese is the Episcopal Diocesan Corporation ... or a similar title. If this is the case, then who are the shareholders of this corporation? We, the parishioners (the financial backers) are the shareholders. As such, we should be consulted and given a vote on decisions (particularly financial ones) which affect this corporation. To my knowledge, consultation or votes have never taken place on the settlement issue or any other.

Under the question concerning parishes having to pay, it is stated that “the diocese and the bishop is liable, even if they had no knowledge of or responsibility for the crime.” (We are delighted to hear the abuse cases being called a crime for the first time in memory.)

The bishops of Canada had knowledge of the crimes; the bishops are responsible for most of the criminal incidents. Bishops knew of abuse; they repeatedly ignored these reports and placed abusers in new parishes; they did not inform the parishioners of the dangers that this new pastor posed to their children.

Bishops are liable because they did have knowledge and were responsible for the individuals (priests) they employed, supervised and reassigned. The Pope is responsible because he and his representatives also chose to ignore reports of abuse and deviant sexual behaviour in the highest echelons of the institution, even to the point of promoting and reassigning priests, bishops and cardinals.

The legal/corporate argument is now being used to spread the responsibility to those who were ignorant of the situation, to those who supported the parishes financially and spiritually, to those who had no knowledge of the crimes; to those whose children were placed in jeopardy; to those who often defended the priest

when rumours and reports of abuse were circulating.

If the diocese and the Vatican wish to use the legal/corporate rules and responsibilities for the purpose of including the innocent parishioners in paying for the crimes of sexual abuse, they must now organize themselves as a legal/corporate entity and provide public input by the shareholders as every other public corporate entity must do.

The last question posed is: What is the challenge we face? Who are the “we” referred to in this question? If it is the Church, then “addressing the wrongs of the past, incorporating Gospel values in the settlement” is coming from a spiritual perspective. It implies a responsibility to shepherd the people. Suddenly, the Church hierarchy is turning away from the legal/corporate stance and becoming a spiritual institution.

As we see it, the Church must decide what it wants to be ... legal/corporate or spiritual shepherd. It must address the sins committed by the abusers and those who did not address their crimes at the time they were reported.

The Church must admit that they

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did not live up to their legal/corporate responsibilities. More importantly, they ignored their spiritual responsibilities as shepherds of God’s people. In spite of these blatant, long-standing and damaging events, the diocese expects us, the parishioners, to bear the full and complete financial responsibility for these crimes. Not once have we heard a priest or a bishop state that they are contributing anything to the settlement.

We have not been told that any benefit, such as travel or holidays, is being curtailed or diminished. We have not heard one word about sacrifice on the part of those who are at the centre of, and responsible for, these shameful activities.

Do you seriously expect the parishioners of the diocese to simply hand over more money when all the investment made previously for hundreds of years is being used to pay for crimes by the very ones who used their position within the Church

to cover up despicable acts against children both here and overseas?

The extent of the corruption in the institution’s hierarchy and administration is becoming more evident with each passing week.

The challenge you face is to live up to the values of the Gospel by completely changing the hierarchy (administration) of the Church so it is legally and spiritually responsible for the actions of those holding positions of authority and leadership.

Lawrence and Barbara MacPherson
East Bay, NS

Unanswered questions

The cover of the Jan. 23 issue is incomplete. There should be a plethora of faces in addition to the lone figure represented. These of course are all the parishioners who have been victimized financially as well as emotionally. They have been neglected in this issue of the paper. They too “hunger and thirst for righteousness.” Here are some of the questions still being asked:

1. Why is there no reference to current clergy members as to their process of mental health, personality organization, self-representation, self-esteem, interpersonal style, affect integration and regulation as well as cognitive functioning?

According to Attorney Talach “There’s a well-recognized phenomenon of delayed exposure — people are not going to confront this part of their past until their 30s, 40s or 50s.” Since this is so, then there should also be police, security and background checks done now so there are no future episodes for the parishes to deal with. No one should have to wait “until a complaint is filed.” This is an unacceptable position and is already too late.

2. Initially parishioners were told that cemetery funds would not be taken. This has not proven so as cemetery funds have been taken. No explanation of this change has been forthcoming.

3. There are those who think that the

Diocese has investments/holdings which are being concealed. There is no way to allay this suspicion without transparency of financial records. This has not happened to date and no plan for doing [the] same has been announced.

4. Several have questioned the large amount of money that the Sisters of St. Martha seem to have especially when there are no (one) vocation and elderly nuns who could be provided for in a much smaller residence.

The huge residence could be sold and used for apartments, condos, nursing home beds, specialty hospital units extensions, etc. The sale of this land and buildings could be used both to provide for the sisters and to reduce the debt placed on parishes. The people are concerned that the Sisters’ account is considered outside that of the diocese so the parishes are plundered instead.

5. Why was there no appeal on the part of the parishes for the amount committed by a bishop who had his own secret life? There is concern that this may have negated the settlement. At the very least an appeal should have requested a reduced settlement amount. (All those congratulatory sentiments given press in an earlier paper were premature and did not reference the parishioners.)

6. Why was a female teenager used as the example of a victim when most of the victims were male and Roman Catholic?

7. It has been reported that the priests’ pensions were secured and provided for first. If this is true then funds were taken from the parishes but not from the clergy. The question also arises as to bequests that were recently left to priests. Were they taken toward the settlement? Many are outraged that the bequests of the deceased were taken!

Perhaps your next issue could address these and other questions that have been raised — especially if there are new cases yet to be resolved. There are hundreds of faceless victims (parishioners) who are not being heard!

In the future it is hoped that the *Atlantic Catholic* will again become an organ of teaching, spirituality and reporting that relates to the treasure that our faith truly is. Unfortunately this issue seemed more wounding than healing despite all the time and effort that was mentioned prior to its publication

This a difficult time for all of us and the new bishop will need our prayers and support. There is no longer room for concealment, transfer of priests, private cottages and the myriad of irregularities that have taken place. May God be with us all.

Elizabeth Finnigan
Cleveland, NS

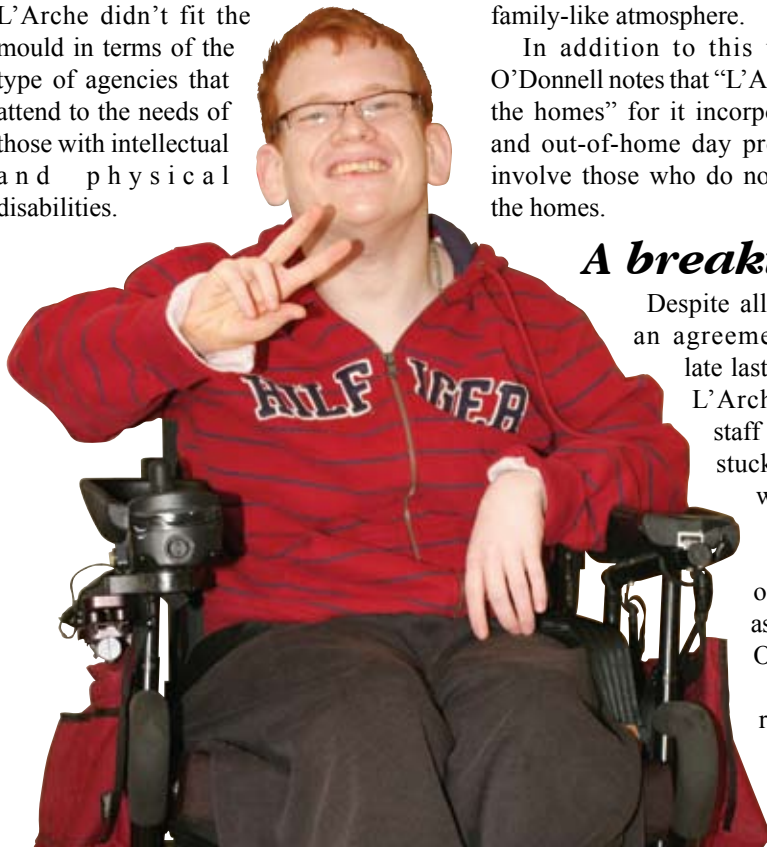
Welcome Home . . .

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prepare core members for the day — as well as at the end of the day and on weekends. However, during the day and from midnight to 6 a.m., fewer staff is needed.

Ultimately, L'Arche proposed 10 FTE staff persons and the government insisted on eight. "Both sides dug in," recalls O'Donnell.

Responsible for five L'Arche communities — of which Halifax is one — O'Donnell says that negotiations towards this agreement were further complicated because L'Arche didn't fit the mould in terms of the type of agencies that attend to the needs of those with intellectual and physical disabilities.



"It's a community but it's also an agency," he states of L'Arche.

As a result all L'Arche communities have the "dual challenge" of being subject to government regulations and licensing requirements as well as having to meet the standards dictated by L'Arche International.

O'Donnell suggests that the struggle with the DCS concerned L'Arche's identity and what was needed to sustain this unique model which includes assistants who live in the home and who support the fostering of a family-like atmosphere.

In addition to this unique variable O'Donnell notes that "L'Arche is bigger than the homes" for it incorporates workshops and out-of-home day programs that may involve those who do not live or work in the homes.

A breakthrough

Despite all these challenges an agreement was reached late last year that entitled L'Arche to 10.01 FTE staff persons. "We just stuck to what we felt we needed and eventually the department agreed on what we were asking for," recounts O'Donnell.

Happy for this resolution the Cole



FRIENDS AND RESIDENTS of L'Arche Halifax greet one another at the Open House on Dec. 29, 2009. Eight people with disabilities have taken up residence at L'Arche Halifax since the beginning of the year.

Harbour man acknowledges that there are still outstanding issues in several of the other L'Arche communities within the province. While there are significant hurdles ahead O'Donnell is heartened that the successful negotiations at L'Arche Halifax will help forge a new way forward. †



SHAWN MOULTON (left), one of L'Arche Halifax's new residents, offers a peaceful greeting. **Andrea Southern** (middle) smiles as she gives a tour of her new home. **Mark Dowling** (above) repairs a towel. L'Arche founder **Jean Vanier** purchased the first home for the community in Trosly-Breuil, France in 1964. L'Arche has grown to an international federation of 130 communities in 30 countries on six continents.



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Priest Uses Music as Tool of Evangelization

By Nicole Myshak

A majority of Catholics in eastern Canada might be unacquainted with the musical genre of Father John Mathew Pichappilly's homeland. Further, they'll probably not speak his Malayalam language or enjoy an awareness of his immense popularity as a musician in both these contexts.

However, what will be exceedingly familiar to the faithful of Atlantic Canada is Father Mathew's friendly face and smile as depicted in the photo that dons the back cover of several CDs recorded by a well known Indian singer.

Although still sporting a beard — which was shed last year as part of a fundraiser for the teens of his parish to attend the Steubenville Atlantic youth conference — Father Mathew is easily recognizable not only for his physical characteristics but for his jovial nature and dynamism.

While these personal traits may be obvious to some, realization of Father Mathew's rich musical giftedness might not be. Consequently his contribution towards the release of these CDs could be the first hint many in the Archdiocese of Halifax have as to his unique level of artistic accomplishment.

"They find out from people," he says of how parishioners typically make the discovery.

Prior to moving to the Archdiocese two decades ago, Father Mathew resided in his native India where he served as a parish priest for 12 years. In addition to pastoral ministry the young priest was involved in the arts in a host of ways that incorporated song, drama, teaching and broadcast.

"I was a musician before I became a priest," he explains. Father Mathew was so widely known in his home country that anywhere he went people of all ages would recognize him.

However, during a 1990 music tour throughout Canada and the US, Father Mathew became reacquainted with then Halifax priest Father Thomas Thekkekara, who had been his "parish priest back home." Partially on account of this meeting, Father Mathew decided to relocate to the Archdiocese of Halifax, where he opted to focus his attention solely on parish ministry. Accordingly he left behind his former life

What you prefer to be called: Father Johni

Birth Date: March 5, 1951

Hometown: Eananalloor, Kerala, India

Position in the Family: Second of six children

Years Ordained: Nearly 32 years

Ministerial Responsibilities: Pastor of Holy Trinity Pastoral Unit comprised of St. John Vianney and St. Elizabeth Seton in Lower Sackville as well as St. Francis of Assisi in Mount Uniacke

and gifts as nets upon a shore.

"I never sang for 16 years," he marvels.

Even so, just as a new dimension of Jesus' ministry began at a wedding, so too was Father Mathew's life catapulted into new endeavors thanks to his own attendance at two separate nuptial celebrations.

At the first of these weddings, which took place in Montréal, the Pastor of Holy Trinity Pastoral Unit was coaxed to sing a song — the first since moving to Canada. The next reintroduction to his musical past occurred at his nephew's wedding in India.

Shortly thereafter he was asked to collaborate on a musical project wherein he was to write the lyrics for several compositions. The next amazing turn of events was that Dr. K.J. Yesudas was to perform these songs.

He's one of the top most singers in India, explains Father Mathew. "He's a phenomenon. To get him to sing these songs is something. There started a new era."

Following the release of this album, Yesudas suggested he and Father Mathew "put another album together." So in 2007 a second CD was released. In the following year the same thing happened such that three albums were distributed in as many years.

Now Father Mathew is anticipating the next collaborative effort. "We're getting ready for that to be released this Easter," he says.

The songwriter is amazed by Yesudas' continued involvement and suggests that to have one of his own songs — let alone dozens — performed by this artist is an incredible accomplishment

and honour. "This is an achievement for anyone," he notes.

All of these developments have been quite humbling for Father Mathew. "I am very blessed," he admits. "It comes from the Lord and it comes through friends, family and people who know you."

Acknowledging the significant role of many individuals throughout his life, Father Mathew mentions several fellow priests who helped foster and encourage his talents and vocation. He recounts how his parish priest invited him to sing in

the church choir and then, in time, invited him to join the seminary. Later, upon studying for the presbyterate, another priest encouraged

Father Mathew to sing.

"There are people who are behind the scene," he affirms, adding that without them he'd not be where he is today.

Asked about the content of his lyrics and the themes of these recordings Father Mathew recalls each one with loving attention. He describes texts that intertwine the Old and New Testaments and apply such truths of faith to diverse everyday life experiences, from the person struggling to emerge from their tomb of addiction to the necessity of allowing Jesus to be born in every heart.

Some of his lyrics even find their inspiration in quintessentially Nova Scotian encounters such as the "incomprehensible" beauty he beheld during an autumn trip to Cape Breton Island.

Looking ahead Father Mathew would like to translate his lyrics into English and set them to different music. Even so, he's adamant that such efforts will occur in his spare time, which is typically some hour well into the night when he's completed pressing parish duties.

"Ultimately I'm a priest," states Father Mathew.

The pastor of three churches adds that even if he doesn't develop or utilize all of his gifts he's still able to draw upon everything he's learned through these diverse life experiences. This helps him serve others more effectively. Whatever is accumulated in one's self is for the people, summarizes Father Mathew of his priesthood.†



Lent: Getting Ready for Renewal

By Fr. Andrew Gillies

I was recently listening to a meditation on Lent by a well known preacher. He started off by explaining that in order to have someone willing to do something, especially in our culture, it must be shown to be good for them. Our Lenten customs of prayer, fasting and sacrificing then should be engaged in because of what they really are, because of what the season of Lent really is — penance and not punishment.

To explain the difference between penance and punishment, it makes sense to discuss it in the context of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. First, we need to remember that this is a sacrament of healing. This sacrament is as much about consciousness as it is about God's mercy.

After all, we have to become aware of the ways we have become disconnected before we can fully return to God's embrace — even though the arms of God are always open to embrace us. Awareness requires willingness and focus.

So what does this have to do with Lent? Like Advent, Lent is a penitential season during which we have yet another opportunity to check our "spiritual fitness." During Advent, we recall watchful waiting for the birth of Jesus. During Lent, we contemplate His sacrifice before celebrating His resurrection. Both birth and resurrection are joyous events. So how about considering all Lenten practices as ways to watch and wait with joyful hope?



THE ASHES USED on Ash Wednesday are a sign of repentance as Catholics prepare to renew themselves to reconfirm their Baptismal Promises. (MS photo)

Entering into the desert with Jesus for His 40 days of being tested and tempted, does not, at first glance, seem to be something that would offer us much joy and certainly not much hope. Yet knowing that Jesus wilfully undertook His time in the desert before beginning His public ministry is something

The season of Lent — an enormous six week retreat in which to discern and get ready to renew our Baptismal Promises.

that helps us to put it in perspective.

We can only imagine the great joy brought to countless people through Jesus' preaching and miracles once His public ministry had begun. The hope that filled the first disciples' spirits, continues to enliven us today. For all of this to take place, Jesus had to experience the desert in the first place. Just as Jesus first had to be crucified before He could rise from the dead.

The word "lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon *lencten* meaning "Spring" (season). Just as nature springs to new life with a new season after a long dead winter, the dry hopeless desert is imbued with life-giving water after the 40 days are through. And this is why Ash Wednesday is so important for us.

The ashes that we use on Ash Wednesday as a sign of repentance are actually the burned palm from Palm Sunday last year. The palm that, last year, was fresh and alive and used to hail the Lord's coming into Jerusalem (into our lives, into our world) is now, a year later, dried and dusty and dead. The cross of ashes on our forehead becomes the sign of repentance because what we are doing

is renewing ourselves from where we were last year.

What is this season we launched into with Ash Wednesday? The season of Lent — an enormous six week retreat in which to discern and get ready to renew our Baptismal Promises. We need 40 days to get ready. Six weeks to get the ashes back to palm. To make what is dead and dry and dusty into something living that can greet the presence of the risen Christ.

That is what this season of Lent is about. It is not six weeks of spiritual self improvement. What we are doing is a retreat to consider the meaning of the questions of the Baptismal Promises in our lives and our willingness to say yes to them again publicly before God on Easter.

Let us not look at our preparation for the celebration of the resurrection as punishment.

If we are going to reconfirm our Baptismal Promises, let us be certain we're ready for them.

Thank God we've got Lent. †

Fr. Gillies is pastor of Star of the Sea Parish, Canso.

THOUGHTS FROM ROME

Dutch Seminary Evokes New Years Challenge



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

By Fr. Bernard O'Connor

One of my greatest joys happens because the Vatican Congregation to which I am assigned permits me to arrange annual holidays in periodic segments. I am therefore able to teach intensive courses on the Theology of Priesthood and on Contemporary Issues in Priesthood's Spirituality for the Major Seminary of the Diocese of Haarlem-Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

A sincere commitment

The actual number of seminarians enrolled at St. Willibrord's is relatively low.

Currently, three dioceses are represented by 15 seminarians. Additionally, three others reside in parishes, while three "external"

students participate in a part-time program.

There is a further welcome to two Benedictines and to 23 members of *Redemptoris Mater*, an increasingly popular movement which strongly emphasizes personal conversion and evangelization.

My typical class is a blend of primarily Dutch residents and international candidates who otherwise live in the houses of their respective communities. And although their backgrounds are diverse, they are united by a determination to seek the Lord's will and to model themselves on His surrender to the Father and on His unconditional servanthood.

I truly love Willibrord House. It is a balanced and dynamic centre of fidelity to Catholic doctrine amidst a surrounding society which, like most of Europe, has become aggressively secular.

There is much that I admire about this seminary: students who impress me as "normal" and who combine natural humour with a yearning for sincere commitment; a faculty which is dedicated and practical in their orthodoxy and an administration which is both competent and sensitive to the struggles shaped by human frailty.

The contribution by lay personnel is likewise exemplary for its quality of input and supportiveness. These are people who have felt the steady erosion of Christian faith in their culture and who still want to share with future priests that the expectations and demands facing them are, indeed, quite daunting, but with significant evidence allowing for optimism.

The Rector, Msgr. Dr. Jan Hendryks, was appointed when Willibrord House was

(Please turn to Page 10)

A Super Way To Celebrate Family

By Francis Campbell

The Super Bowl kicked off with a political football.

CBS decided that its Super Bowl broadcast would include what was billed as an anti-abortion commercial.

Super Bowl ads have quite a history. The broadcast reaches nearly 100 million viewers, creating a market for high-priced ads. A 30-second ad during the 2010 Super Bowl was expected to cost about \$3 million. Sponsors accordingly take great pains to produce creative, funny, spectacular and gripping advertising.

The ads often create almost as much hype and anticipation as the game itself.

Mention of a politically charged anti-abortion ad generated immediate reaction. How dare CBS air such an ad? These ad spots should be reserved for politically neutral products like cars, electronics and soft drinks, opponents argued.

“An ad that uses sports to divide rather than to unite has no place in the biggest national sports event

“It would be impossible without God.”

— Pam Tebow

of the year — an event designed to bring Americans together,” said Jehmu Greene, president of the Women’s Media Center, in a pre-Super Bowl statement.

Kierra Johnson, executive director of Choice USA, told Fox News: “This un-American hate doesn’t have a place in this all-American pastime.”

So it’s un-American to want to preserve the lives of unborn babies.

Of course, this discourse preceded the ad, which isn’t available to the public until it airs and which isn’t available to Canadian viewers at all. We get to watch Canadian ads instead.

In the end, the great ad controversy proved to be much ado about nothing.

The ad opens with Pam Tebow, an attractive woman in her late 50s,

holding the picture of a baby boy, her son Tim.

“He almost didn’t make it into this world,” she says. “I can remember so many times when I almost lost him. It was so hard. He’s all grown up now but I still worry about his health. With all our family’s been through, you have to be tough.”

Suddenly, the grown-up Timmy, a Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback with the Florida Gators, tackles his mom.

“Timmy, I’m trying to tell a story here,” his mom scolds.

“Sorry about that Mom,” replies 22-year-old Timmy, already one of the most talked-about university football players in history as he approaches the 2010 NFL draft. “You still worried about me, mom?”

“Well yeah, you’re not nearly as tough as I am.”

The ad ends with the words, For the Full Tebow Story, go to focusonthefamily.com, Celebrate Family, Celebrate Life.

Not a mention of abortion. Nary a sign of anti-American hate. A Super-subtle ad that said very little.

The Women’s Media Center president, poised to vilify the ad immediately after it aired, was left to grasp at the flimsiest of straws, commenting that the tackle suggested an undercurrent of violence against women.

“I think they’re attempting to use humour as another tactic of hiding their message and fooling the American people,” Greene said.

Most Americans probably didn’t take much from the ad, except that it featured Tim Tebow.

On the Focus on the Family site, for those who might have followed the lead, the Tebows, Pam and husband Bob, an evangelist preacher, tell their story. Bob tells of preaching in the mountains of the Philippines in the summer of 1986, weeping over the loss of millions of babies in America who were never given a chance. Abortion is again implied but not outwardly spoken.

Pam chimes in that the family already had four healthy children and that at age 37, she would be considered a high-risk pregnancy.



A FOCUS ON THE FAMILY television commercial aired during a Super Bowl timeout has resulted in much debate amongst pro-life and abortion rights groups. (MS photo)

And they lived in an area in the Philippines that did not have great medical care.

Suspecting she was pregnant, Pam was told by a doctor that it was merely a tumour and that she should abort immediately to save her own life. Ignoring that advice, Pam turned to God and even though she thought she would lose him “so many times,” Timmy was eventually

delivered in a Manila hospital. A few years later, the family moved back to Florida.

“A God story,” Pam Tebow says. “It would be impossible without God.”

No doubt a God story, but a story that didn’t make much of an impact as a 30-second clip. Abortion is a modern-day scourge that ends the lives of nearly a million

innocent babies every year in North America. While any advertisement that might lead viewers on a long and winding road to a discussion about abortion seems worthwhile, it appears Focus on the Family didn’t get much bang for their three million bucks with that innocuous Super Bowl spot.

Focus on the Family and CBS apparently were in agreement. Blameless babies continue to die needlessly but let’s take every precaution against offending the pro-abortion parties. Let’s not talk about the lost lives. And with special deference to pro-abortion president Barack Obama, let’s not mention that dirty A-word.

A more compelling anti-abortion ad is the one that never aired. A black screen features an image of a fetus amid intensifying violin music. The words: This child’s future is a broken home. He will be abandoned by his father. His single mother will struggle to raise him. Despite the hardships he will be forced to endure, this child will become the first African American president.

The fetus image gives way to an image of Obama and the words: Imagine the Potential.

NBC rejected that ad, pitched as a previous Super Bowl commercial.

For mainstream television and for a majority of mainstream North Americans, the topic of abortion clearly remains out of bounds.†

Campbell writes from Enfield.

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Dutch Seminary . . .

(Continued from Page 8)

founded in 1997. His leadership is definitely a gift, for here is a man who might best be described as a “priest’s priest.” I deem it an honour to be associated with him and to learn from him how the seminary has successfully overcome obstacles and opposition.

Credit must also be given to Bishop Joseph Punt. While Auxiliary Bishop, he was charged to implement the vision for the seminary of Haarlem’s Ordinary, Msgr. H. M. Bomers. He did so with all the zeal which comes with courage of conviction.

Now heading the diocese himself, Bishop Punt remains ever vigilant and pastoral. He promotes a view of priesthood which is wholly immersed in Christ and which dares to take the risk to proclaim the Gospel despite the uncertainty of its reception.

On every occasion when I have visited St. Willibrord’s, I have seen Bishop Punt preside for Eucharist, dine with seminarians and engage them in conversation geared to encourage them to express their experience of spiritual journey. He is always accessible. And his down-to-earth manner is edifying.

Reversing the negative

Readers may wonder why I have chosen to speak about a Dutch seminary during these early days of 2010. The reason is partly in keeping with the Holy Father’s designation of the Year for Priests, and partly as a reminder that the media’s relentless attacks against the Church and her clergy are countered in settings such as St. Willibrord’s — humble yet real. And there is another reason.

All Dutch seminaries were closed in 1967. The idea of that era was that seminarians had to study in the city, so to speak, and where they would interact with non-theologians as peers. Not surprisingly, the number of vocations nationwide dwindled to near zero.

Clearly, this was a decision which failed. But what would be required to admit such defect in the hierarchy’s then prevalent outlook, so as to reverse the negative

consequences? There was need for prophetic figures who could insist upon re-evaluation and the integrity to embark upon corrective action.

This New Year, similar to the once new venture of the Haarlem diocese, invites us to critique our relationship to the Church and to her structures and policies. 2009’s legacy is a question: In 2010 shall believers assume responsibility to identify and to respond to areas of change which may bring us closer to fulfilling the mission entrusted by Christ to us?

During recent weeks, Pope Benedict has reinforced the importance of rethinking and of recalibrating our basic approach to Christian witness. He does not hesitate to adjust ecclesial attitude and to adopt concrete initiative. We observe this in the Apostolic Constitution originating with an appeal from Anglicans; in efforts to reconcile the Society of St. Pius X (Lefebvrite) and in the official Visitations instituted for the Legionaries of Christ and for American female Religious.

None of these examples signal unhealthy compromise or capitulation. Nor do they suggest that the Holy See’s is an “inquisitorial” mindset. Rather, they are motivated by a resolve to examine what potentially divides and to bolster what potentially unites.

Peace and the environment

Consider, too, what the Pope proposes in his Message for World Peace Day (Jan. 1). Its 14 Articles ask us to ponder how peace is cultivated through the measures we adopt to protect the environment.

As with the preceding examples, evaluation means re-evaluation, including on the personal and institutional levels. For instance, “neglect” of the earth and its resources often equates with their “downright misuse,” to the extent that they become unable to “mirror the creative love of God” (no. 2).

Unless we are aware of the “menace” posed by “pollution and refuse, new illness” and by indifference to our own “destructive capacity,” tomorrow’s environment may well degenerate into a state of

being “intolerable.” The problem is “wide-ranging social,” but it also touches upon the impact exerted by individual choices (no. 3).

Believers cannot “remain impassive” when we purchase products from commercial enterprises which deliberately effect “the loss of biodiversity” and which place the profit motive above concern about the “deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions.” Such essential “human rights” as “the right to life, food, health and development” denote a solidarity from which none of us is exempt (no. 4).

Each of these categories involves “moral crises, and all of them are interrelated.” Moreover, “they require us to rethink the path which we are travelling together.” Our lifestyle must become “marked by sobriety” and moderation, and by a determination to embrace “strategies that actually work, while decisively rejecting those that have failed.” It is “only in this way” that present dilemmas may provide “an opportunity for discernment and new strategic planning” (no. 5).

Pope Benedict’s stance is strongly parallel to the rationale of the far-sighted Bishop Punt, Msgr. Hendryks and those advocating renewal of the Netherlands’ seminary formation.

Catholic social doctrine has long insisted that, while “private property” is a matter of intrinsic value, what is “mine” should never be interpreted as preferential to the common good of society (no. 8).

We must be willing to voice critique of the policies of companies where we are employed and of those in which our savings are invested. Do we permit them to behave with disregard for planetary well-being? And do we silently justify legislation by our governments when these exalt national interests beyond universal ones?

Pope Benedict concludes by emphasizing that “there exists a reciprocity: as we care for creation, we realize that God, through creation, cares for us” (no. 13). Our openness to that Providential care validates the certainty that we have . . . cause for hope.” †

Author’s Note: Remarks pertaining to Willibrord House directly cite my essay published in the January edition of Inside the Vatican.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE



Share Lent Campaign Underway

By Deborah Gyaopong

OTTAWA (CCN) — As the Share Lent campaign nears its Ash Wednesday launch, Michael Casey is upbeat about the future of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP).

A highly successful campaign to bring relief to Haiti after the devastating earthquake has raised the profile of CCODP across the country, Casey said. More than \$4 million has been raised so far, and he expected it to rise to \$5 million by the Feb. 12 government deadline for matching funds.

An ad hoc committee of bishops set up to provide oversight has met for the first time and the agency is in the midst of developing a new five-year plan that has energized membership, CCODP’s executive director said in a Feb. 9 interview from the organization’s Montréal headquarters.

The agency hopes to raise \$10 million in this year’s campaign. Though last year’s Share Lent was marred by online reports accusing CCODP of working with “pro-abortion” overseas partners, the collection levels were not hurt by the negative stories. The Toronto Archbishop and several others, however, temporarily withheld their collections until they had guarantees that funding only went to projects approved by the bishops’ conferences in the host countries.

Casey said he does not know whether this year’s campaign will also see a spate of negative reports. But he is pleased with the relationship CCODP has with the Canadian bishops, who founded the agency more than 40 years ago as their overseas development arm.

“Over the past year, we’ve been working very closely with the bishops,” he said. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) set up an ad hoc committee to “accompany us and examine some of the issues.”

That committee, which is chaired by Toronto Auxiliary Bishop John Boissonneau and includes Calgary Bishop Fred Henry, Sherbrooke Archbishop André Gaumond, Rimouski Bishop Pierre-André Fournier, held its first meeting Feb. 8 in Ottawa.

“We’re off to a very positive and good start with them,” said Casey, who reported a “very amicable discussion.”

CCODP is not necessarily dropping the partners who were targeted as “pro-abortion” in the news reports. “Our partnerships are generally long-term,” Casey said. “It’s not like we’re frequently adding new partners to our list.”

“In light of our approaching five-year plan, we’ve been reviewing our partnerships and reviewing countries,” he said. “Most of the partners that we’re working with, we’ve been engaged with for years.”

He said CCODP has discussed ways to find a common understanding with the groups involved. “There has to be a very concrete awareness of our Catholic identity,” he said. “Catholic principles have to be central to the relationship.”

The weekend of Feb. 5-8, CCODP gathered members of its two major programming teams — one for overseas development, the other for an in-Canada educational campaign — to brainstorm about the agency’s five year plan from 2011-2016. Casey said that Canadian International Development Agency’s present grant ends in a year and a half, so the plan is synchronized with an expected renewal from the government development agency.

Digging Deep For Haiti

Archbishop Martin Currie, Archbishop of St. John's and Bishop of the Diocese of Grand Falls, NL said parishioners from Roman Catholic parishes in the province have been generous in their response to a special collection taken up for victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

Roman Catholic churches across Canada on the weekend of Jan. 23 and 24 held a special collection to benefit the relief efforts in Haiti.

A total of \$171,000 was raised thus far in the Archdiocese of St. John's. A number of parishes have yet to report.

In the Diocese of Grand Falls \$60,000 has been raised, and the Diocese of Corner Brook-Labrador \$56,000 has been realised with only half of the parishes reporting.

Archbishop Currie formally presented a cheque from the monies raised in the Archdiocese of St. John's from the special collection to Pat Hogan, President of the Canadian Catholic Organization Development and Peace.

The organization has already sent \$50,000 to Caritas Haiti, which runs 200 medical clinics in the country but is in dire need of financial resources to respond to the growing humanitarian needs of this population in crisis.

Development and Peace has been involved in Haiti for almost 30 years.

Last year, Development and Peace spent a total of \$600,000 on four separate relief efforts in Haiti and has been involved in several community development projects led by seven local partners, most of which are in the worst affected parts of the country.

As a member of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Currie has served on the National Council for Development and Peace, founded



ARCHBISHOP MARTIN CURRIE presents Canadian Catholic Organization Development and Peace President Pat Hogan with a cheque of the funds raised for Haiti in the Archdiocese of St. John's. (Submitted photo)

by the Bishops of Canada 40 years ago as their agency for international development and solidarity.

Archbishop Currie said each dollar raised in the parishes before Feb. 12 will be matched by the federal government.

The amount of \$294,000 raised from the special parish collection with the matching funds from the

federal government represents \$588,000.

Archbishop Currie also commended all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians for their generosity in organizing and supporting the many organizations that held events throughout the province over the past two weeks in support of Haiti.

Sydney Deanery . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

in the Church, general absolution, consolidation of churches in the Sydney area and more lay people involved in the decision-making process in the Church.

"Bishop Dunn seems very outgoing," Marie said. "I think he will make a difference. He'll have to or there will be no Church left."

Claire Wall of St. Theresa Parish agreed.

"I think [Bishop Dunn] is a very humble, engaging person and under his leadership, we are going to hopefully have a lot of healing and move on from there with the laity more involved."

Sacred Heart, Sydney parishioner Vince Cunningham offered his own advice to Bishop Dunn.

"I'd like him to make changes. I'd like to see each parish responsible for their own activities, finances, and liabilities. I don't think it's right what's going on now.

"We the parishioners did not create this mess. It's the hierarchy that did it. I think that should be changed. I don't see why we don't just sell a painting in Rome, to be honest."

When asked if he thought the bishop would be open to making changes like that, Cunningham responded, "I have no idea. He seems to be a personable man who is willing to listen to people."

"He has a lot of work ahead of him," Joan Campbell of Our Lady of Fatima Parish said. "We need to give him time though." †

The Crossword and readings will return in future editions.



The Image of The Divine Mercy

The Feast of Divine Mercy is celebrated on the second Sunday of Easter, commemorating the appearance of the Risen Christ in the upper room.

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