

THE JOURNAL

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Whither The Journal? The Editorial Board **DARE TO DREAM!**

Wishes, dreams, and visions for the future are often the things that urge us on, the wings that take us beyond our imagination. Irish poet, Patrick Kavanagh, in "Pegasus" says to his innermost self that he likens to an old horse:

I have hawked you through the world
Of Church and State and meanest trade.
But this evening, halter off,
Never again will it go on...
As I said these words he grew
Wings upon his back. Now I may ride him
Every land my imagination knew.

It is reported in The Tablet 30 October, 1999, that Cardinal Martini, the Archbishop of Milan, set before the European Bishops his dream for the Church. He made three points: a return to biblical spirituality, integration of basic faith communities into the parish, and a revision of papal primacy.

Martini says that the Bible is the book from which we are born as Christians. It helps us to cross ecumenical bridges. "We have found in the Bible a very broad terrain of understanding with the Churches of the Reformation."

The situation of Christians today reflects that of the early Christians who were a minority in society. The only power we have now is that of the Holy Spirit. We have to meet people face to face to find common ground on which to reflect.

For Martini, the parish should be the sign of communion and hope for the world, a credible alternative to a fragmented society and ethics. To do this, the parishes need the values that have been lived by the people who form the basic faith communities though this often causes friction in the parishes.

Cardinal Martini says that the absolute authority wielded by the pontiff should be rethought in the interests of ecumenism and Christian unity. He listed a series of knotty problems including the lack of ordained ministers, the position of women in society and the Church, marriage discipline, penitential practice, and relations with the Orthodox Churches. His call for "the full exercise of episcopal collegiality" was greeted with applause by the bishops.

He concluded by saying, "Hope is a gift of the Spirit which fills our hearts with the joy and optimism that comes from above. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus had lost hope. They did not regain it by being told, 'You have to have hope,' but by having the Scriptures explained to them. They came to understand that there was sense in what had happened, an opening, a calling: that what they had thought was a failure was really a victory. And that is the gift of hope: to be able to see revealed in things, the plan of God."

Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, B.C.

A New-Testament Church for the Millennium

by *Ralph Milton*

published in "Perspectives" Winter 1999, ci@vst.edu

I have made many resolutions not to predict the future, but I am not old enough or smart enough to give it up entirely. The mainline national churches, already hard-hit by spreading congregationalism, a decline in denominational loyalty among lay people, and a loss of trust in leadership and institutions, have been brought to their knees by a backlog of sexual abuse cases. I am currently writing the third edition of "This United Church of Ours," a book designed to inform newcomers about my denomination. I found it hard to find a positive message, until I looked to the congregations. There the vital signs are still strong. Not in all congregations, certainly, but in many.

As I wondered what characteristics were common to lively, vital congregations, I discovered clergy or professional leadership that was charismatic, competent, and deeply spiritual. This seemed to be so regardless of whether the theology was liberal or conservative. It seemed that all three were necessary. Charisma without competence is chaotic. Competence without charisma is arid. Without a strong, articulate, evangelical (in the best sense of the word) faith, it is at least shallow and maybe sick.

If my perceptions are near the mark, then leaders in the church of the new millennium will need the tools to survive in a congregational milieu with little or no support from presbyteries, dioceses, or conferences, and even less from the national churches which may be down to administering pension plans.

Competence can certainly be taught in theological schools. But charisma? Spirituality?

To a degree yes. Church professionals would need far more training in the practical aspects of leadership. There'd be far more emphasis on the theatrical art of preaching and speaking. Students would grow new metaphors to speak of a vibrant, personal faith.

Another reality: many congregations will be unable (or unwilling) to provide more than a token salary. There may be need for a "tent-making" ministry very similar to the early Christian Church. In such a situation, a major problem would be screening ministerial candidates. How will this happen when there is little or no power in regional or national judicatories? In many independent churches, the congregation ordains. Such churches are particularly vulnerable to those who misuse the charismatic gifts so needed by the church. Theological schools may have to step into the void. That may be their toughest task because it's no easy thing to discern a genuine vocation.

A few years ago, I held my year-old grandson, Jacob, in my arms. We were in the midst of a communion service. As I dipped the bread into the cup and placed it in my grandchild's mouth, I found in my heart a prayer I have prayed many times since: God, twenty years from now, I hope there is a church that I can point my grandson to and say, "Jake, this is a church in which you will find life in all its abundance." But God, if it is not possible, let me able to say to Jake, "You should have been there, son. My church walked into the future ready to take huge risks. And it went out in a blaze of glory! It was a wonderful thing to see!" Please God, don't let me have to tell Jake about a church that took no risks, that refused to recognize the times, that kept on doing what it had always done, and simply whimpered and slowly died.

Ralph Milton is a storyteller, and a founding partner in Wood Lake Books. He is editor of "Rumors", a free, on-line "e-zine" of humor and reflection. Send him a note at ralphm@woodlake.com

Le Manifeste

Introduction: by Jack Shea, Corpus-NCR, member of the Ottawa Statement Group

Claude Michaud is a priest from New Brunswick who teaches psychology and religion at the University of Ottawa.

A couple of years ago when Claude was home for his summer vacation he discovered that the shortage of priests was happening everywhere, even in the little town of St. Quentin (population 3500) from which he came. The local people welcomed him with open arms because the town was now without a resident priest as were the two neighbouring towns in the area. After celebrating Sunday Mass Claude was confronted by some members of the parish who poured out their feelings of anger and disbelief saying that the bishop seemed to have abandoned them and seemed not to care that they were without the Eucharist and a priest to officiate at their funerals and marriages. Claude was deeply moved by this experience, so when he returned to Ottawa he gathered together a group which included several married priests and some religious sisters to discuss the problem of the scarcity of priests everywhere in the country.

The group put together a statement called *Le Manifeste*, a kind of challenge which was addressed to the Canadian

bishops requesting that they begin to deal with this situation. The Executive Committee of the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops referred the group to the General Secretary of the Conference. Following a meeting with him it was decided by the Executive that the statement called *Le Manifeste* should be an item placed on the agenda of the next Plenary Session of the Canadian Bishops, a meeting which will take place in October of this year. The text of *Le Manifeste* follows:

BISHOPS ARE INVITED TO ARRANGE FOR A SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SHORTAGE OF PRIESTS

In October 1998 the "Ottawa Statement Group" submitted a document on behalf of many Catholics to the Canadian bishops, concerning the shortage of priests. The document first described the rearrangements currently underway in parishes to enable the laity to undertake greater pastoral responsibilities, but at the same time the authors of the document stressed that the situation concerning the lack of priests constitutes a serious problem that must be faced immediately.

At their meeting on June 16-17, 1999 the members of the Executive Board of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) took note of the statement sent to them a few months earlier and delegated the Secretary General of the Conference to meet with the group responsible for the document. This meeting took place on September 20, 1999.

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on the group's general objectives and to focus on its immediate purpose, which was to arrange for a committee of bishops to deal directly with the question of the scarcity of priests and to request that this matter be placed on the agenda of the next plenary session of the CCCB.

The group stressed the fact that from all parts of the Catholic world, voices were being heard insisting on the need to rethink the entire discipline concerning ordained ministers. The intervention of Cardinal Martini of Milan, during the deliberations of the recent Synod of Europe (Rome - October 7, 1999), on the scarcity of priests, which he described as "dramatic," serves to illustrate the great urgency of dealing with this question. A statement in the same vein was that of Bishop Reinhold Stecher of Innsbruck, Austria, who said, "The tendency to place human laws and traditions above our divine mandate is one of the most shocking of a large number of decisions by the Church at the end of this millennium." Then there is the word of Bishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee in the United States who said recently that the majority of people in his diocese do not understand why the Church is not considering the ordination of married men. At the present time the Statement Group is compiling an extensive dossier on this question.

The Secretary General noted that the bishops are deeply concerned with the question of ministry, and that it is being studied in certain sectors of the Conference. The group expressed its disappointment that this information is not being communicated to the Christian communities. Catholics want to know the views of their bishops on this matter and on the lack of eucharistic celebrations in a growing number of Christian communities. They also want to know where their bishops stand on the ordination of married men and of women. It is urgent that the bishops not delay any longer in reconsidering the discipline presently in force regarding the ordination of priests. In this matter it is not enough to appeal to Rome. Their concerns must be voiced and heard openly here.

Questions were also raised concerning the excessive centralization by the Vatican which results in the suppression of true collegiality, and consequently in the slowing down of efforts to find practical solutions for the good of Christian communities here.

At the end of the meeting the Ottawa Statement Group conveyed to the bishops, through the Secretary General, its desire to collaborate in the life of the Church so that it may remain significant for believers, especially for a rising proportion of young people who risk growing away from the Church.

The Ottawa Statement Group October 13, 1999

For more information, or to express support for this initiative, please contact Jean Trudeau, whose email address is: <jtrudeau@cyberus.ca>.

AM I ALONE HERE ?

It is almost frightening what thoughts come to me while I read, ponder, pray and meditate upon the state of the Catholic church today. The distance from my seminary thinking and where I am now is truly a paradigm shift. For example, while watching TV one day there was a native dance being shown, feathers, drums, costumes. From my teaching of Native Studies at university I knew this was a very spiritual thing. The thought came out of the blue. How come the native spirituality after hundreds of years, never ended up being institutionalized like other religions? The follow up question of course was, do we need institutionalized religion? And then a friend gave me a book to read, by Diarmuid O Murchu, called Reclaiming Spirituality. He shows a distinction between spirituality and religion. Spirituality, he says, has been around for 70,000 years, while formal religions have existed a mere 4,500 years. It makes you wonder how important is church.

As a child being taught by devout nuns, I was truly anxious about being saved from hell and earning a high place (not just any place, but I wanted a high one, like seats at a football game in my imagination). So First Fridays, rosaries, confession, Our Fathers and Hail Mary's were multiplied. Of course being a priest was even better, so I went that route too.

Now approaching seventy years, my thinking has sure changed. I am not sure anymore about sanctifying grace, actual grace, venial, mortal, indulgences, "pirogatory" (for us Polaks). Now the more I think that God created the world (universe, etc.) the more I learn about God, spirituality, myself....I'm seeing a relationship growing. And it was there all along, but I missed it (not entirely, I think).

Years ago I tried writing a thesis on the relationship between psychology and religion. It didn't work then. Now I think I can do it. I think religion is meant to be a help toward spirituality. Yet sometimes religion gets in the way of spirituality. For example, the other day I went to church for Mass. There was no priest, so it was a "lay service." I realized that I can commune with God, with my surroundings, my brothers and sisters there and elsewhere. I thought of our Regina Corpus conference and those who were there. Suddenly I had a great heart-warming feeling toward all those who came. There is something about a physical presence that is different than contact by telephone or e-mail, etc. There is a kind of ecstasy. And then the thought came so those men and women doing the "lay" service aren't ordained. At that moment I was convinced it didn't matter. The effect on me depended on what my faith did with the experience, priest or no.

So is it not the same with all experiences. It is what we do with what God puts in our path. Catholic religion tells people they can't "consecrate" do the magic. I honestly believe that the consecration goes on in me with my faith priest or not, doesn't matter.

All this thinking has tuckered me out. My heart swells when I think of you all.

Emil Kutarna, Regina, Saskatchewan

A Renewed Church in the Making

by Joanna Manning

Thanks to Jim Noonan, who prepared this summary of Joanna Manning's talk at the Corpus National Capital Region tenth anniversary celebration.

There has been great leadership in the Church at and since Vatican II by the Canadian Bishops. As early as the Synod of 1971, Canadian bishops, led by Cardinal Flahiff of Winnipeg, were the first to call for the removal of all barriers to discrimination against women in the Church, and they called for an end to the harassment of priests who exercised their right to marry. "Justice must begin at home," they said.

In 1989, Bishop Lebel called the feminist movement he actually used the "F" word "an advance in civilization," and he urged the Church to be AHEAD of society in removing discrimination against women. The Quebec Bishops' statement on violence against women in 1989 was groundbreaking in its analysis of the systemic causes of violence against women in society which included, in their opinion, the exclusion of women from the priesthood and the general culture of male dominance within the Church. They acknowledged that the sexism modelled in the sanctuary fosters attitudes that lead to women being slapped around at home.

At the same time, the Archdiocese of St. John's, Newfoundland, issued The Winter Commission Report by far the most comprehensive analysis before or since of the terrible phenomenon of clerical sexual abuse, which called for a long hard look at the effects of compulsory priestly celibacy as a factor in this horribly aberrant behaviour.

Well, we all know what has happened in the dreary and dreadful history of the past ten years. The voice of the once courageous Canadian Bishops has been muted. Today, they meekly accept declarations from Rome: the barring of women from ordination in 1995; the Winter Commission Report has been set aside; Remi De Roo, one of the few Canadian bishops to have been present at Vatican II, pathetically and humiliatingly chastised like a disobedient schoolboy with not a squeak from the CCCB. Thank God Corpus Canada redeemed the Canadian Church by speaking up about it.

There is also the execrable, scandalous treatment of the native victims of the residential schools. The Government of Canada apologized for its role somewhat lamely. The Canadian Church has yet to accept any responsibility. In this too, the Canadian Bishops have not been AHEAD of secular society.

The past ten years have witnessed a tightening, almost to breaking point, of harshness and arrogance in the Church. This increasing grip of absolutism and rigidity is very foreign to the Canadian soul and deeply offensive to our values, to say nothing of Gospel values. Thank God for the voices of those such as Corpus Canada, CNWE, and Catholics of Vision, who have had the courage to resist and to call for a return to a vision of hope.

There is a kind of death watch setting in. JP II can't last forever. Even as I speak, I feel the ground shifting. There is a feeling of change in the air as we wait the close of this pontificate. We are in a period of interregnum which is hazy, misty, and less defined. People at the top are jockeying for position. Cardinal Martini spoke in front of the Pope's face at the European Synod about problems facing the Church, and he called for another Council.

This is a time when boundaries are more fluid, when it is possible to push them out, or even down. But it is risky. Those on the other side are less sure and more hesitant. They are losing their centre, because it is outside of themselves, and has been vested in one man and his authority, which is now on the wane. Such people may lash out even more because they are disconcerted by the fact that despite the most vehement threats of anathemas and excommunications, we are still here. Reform is still very much alive and gaining confidence.

The Alternative European Synod of reform group held in Rome under the nose of the Vatican declared: We are not here merely with a list of demands; we are seeking a new vision of Church. Yes! A renewed Church beyond even the vision of Vatican II is in the making. The past few years have been a period of purification to use a mystical term for those of us who have remained faithful to this renewed vision of Church. We have lived through the dark night of the soul; we have remained faithful to the light and hope burning within. With Marguerite d'Youville, we have been called names, and it has taken enormous and persistent courage simply to hold on to that vision. We have hung on with our teeth at times to the call for fairness and justice within the Church. And above all, we have been willing to live with the risk of the seemingly impossible experiment to live the deepest values of the Gospel in dialogue with contemporary culture. We have muddled along in a kind of unspectacular fidelity.

For myself, I can say that there have been times when I felt like walking away from it all. I have been sustained by the fidelity of many individuals, many of whom are here today, of groups such as Corpus, and by prayer which has challenged and sustained me to live with the "not yet," to sit at the edge of the night and wait patiently for the dawn. We can predict neither the precise timing nor the nature of the dawning. But by being faithful and by staying awake

enough to read and discern the signs of the times I think of Jack Shea's analysis in the recent Corpus magazine and the Declaration of Human Rights in the Church from The Atlanta Conference in this regard we will recognize and be ready for it when it comes, as come it surely will. Let us continue, as Governor General Adrienn Clarkson put it, faithful to this path of "stumbling through darkness and racing through light." In mysticism, the darkness is also the light. The dawn is coming.

THE THEOLOGICAL SOAPBOX

SEX AND FAITH (PART III)

The Roman Catholic Church has little to say about the sexual morality of married couples, but what it does say has great import. The Church affirms the commandment against adultery found in the Bible. (While there are many other prescriptions in the Bible regarding sexual conduct, they apply to people who are not married to each other.) In addition to this the Church teaches that *it is morally obligatory that married couples not engage in genital sexual activity with each other unless (1) the activity culminates in vaginal intercourse, and (2) neither spouse is using artificial contraceptives when the activity takes place.*

This teaching is based in part on a premise derivable from both the Bible and natural law as the Church understands them (natural law is moral law apprehended by human reason apart from divine revelation). This premise is: *God has imposed on the human race the obligation to procreate.* I accept the truth of this premise.

But the teaching of the Church cannot be derived from this premise without the addition of a supporting premise. The supporting premise is as follows. *If the human race is to procreate, it is necessary that married couples not engage in genital sexual activity with each other unless (1) the activity culminates in vaginal intercourse, and (2) neither spouse is using artificial contraceptives when the activity takes place.*

This supporting premise is demonstrably false. Over the course of human history innumerable married couples have engaged in genital sexual activity that has not met the Church's criteria, and yet the human race has successfully reproduced itself. As long as sufficient numbers of couples choose to have children for the sake of having children, the moral obligation of procreation that God has imposed on the human race as a whole does not imply that every married couple has a moral obligation to abide by the Church's criteria.

That leaves us with the commandment against adultery, and the overarching commandment to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbour as oneself, as the guiding principles for the morality of sex in marriage. In this Theological Soapbox I shall outline how I think the commandment to love God and neighbour can be applied to provide clear direction to the consciences of married people in the conduct of their sexual lives.

For the purpose of this article I shall define love simply as the choice to do what one believes to be for the good of another. Christian couples begin their marriage by explicitly and publicly stating their choice to love one another. They undertake to express this love within the covenant of marriage, a covenant which obligates them to share themselves and their possessions in as full a way as a man and woman can.

If love calls for spouses to do what they believe to be for one another's good, they must learn what things are good for one another. They begin marriage already knowing that what is good for people in general will also be good for their spouse in particular. Therefore, they know from the beginning of the marriage that it will be for their spouse's good if they are truthful, kind, generous, affectionate, trustworthy, reliable and faithful.

If the couple decide to have a child, then they will agree on having vaginal intercourse and foregoing contraception. This cooperation will be an expression of love.

If the couple find pleasure in sexual activity, they will find ways to make it as pleasurable as possible. If the two people differ in the strength and frequency of the desire for sex, they will find ways to accommodate one another and compromise.

In all these matters they will be guided by knowledge of what is good for their spouse. This knowledge will come not only from their knowledge of what is good for people in general, but also from what they learn about their spouse that makes their spouse different from everybody else. Let's look at some examples.

There are several ways in which genital sexual activity can benefit a couple. I have already mentioned that sex for the purpose of procreation can benefit the couple and advance God's plan for humanity. But sex can also benefit a couple in respect of the way it schools a couple in the art of love, in the pleasure it gives, the playfulness it introduces into the couple's intimate life, and what it can heal and teach through the theatre of sex. By providing any one of these benefits to one's spouse, a person fulfills the commandment of love. It is not necessary that every sex act have procreation as one of its purposes.

The procreative aspect of sex is well understood. I will turn my attention to the other ways in which sex can benefit a married couple.

Sex as school in the art of love. Every married person is challenged to balance their needs and desires in having sex with the needs and desires of their spouse. They must be attentive to the body, emotions and spirit of their spouse. They must learn how to communicate their wishes and feelings to their spouse and pay attention to what

their spouse is communicating. They must learn how to negotiate their way to mutual satisfaction. If they can do these things in their sexual lives, they will be well equipped to do them in other aspects of their life together and in their relations with other people.

Sex as pleasure. Historically the Church has not only ignored the benefit of sexual pleasure, it has regarded it as a source of temptation. But as married couples well know, the pleasure of sex is more than a physical sensation. Satisfying sex relaxes each spouse. Their bodies shed tension and this has healthful psychological and spiritual consequences. The cares and anxieties of life seem less pressing. There is a profoundly felt sense that all is right with the world, which Christians experience as the feeling of being loved by God. For the spouses the words of Psalm 131, "But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a child quieted at its mother's breast; like a child that is quieted is my soul," apply also to the peace and serenity that follows upon sexual intimacy.

Sex as play. The companionable and free-spirited sexual activity of the spouses retains the same playfulness that children experience in play. Were it not for sex, some married couples would never play together. And as play and shared secrets bond children, so does it bond spouses. The "Why don't we try this?" and "I have an idea!" involved in sexual experimentation has a childlike simplicity and openness that exemplifies the words of Jesus, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). In sex we shed our pretensions and status symbols with our clothes. In being naked with our spouse we make ourselves equal to them and to every other human being, for without our clothes, and what they represent, all humans are equal.

Sex as theatre. In sex the spouses act out fantasies and take on roles that express aspects of themselves that they have repressed. For example, cross-dressers and those who indulge in domination and bondage are often ashamed to reveal those sides of themselves. But if their spouse is willing to take part in the theatre of sex, if only as audience, they are able to allow these aspects of themselves to surface. This makes it possible for them to gain insight into themselves and why they are the way they are. It gives hope that they will be able to achieve integration of their whole personality. Through self-expression comes self-discovery, and through self-discovery comes the possibility of healing the mind and soul.

Acting out repressed fantasies --- the willingness to make oneself so vulnerable --- is based on trust in one's spouse, and when it meets with love and acceptance, the result is even greater trust and a willingness to explore even deeper within oneself. Physical orgasm is a powerful symbol that brings together many things, both conscious and unconscious, in the psychic and spiritual life of a person. In the theatre of sex orgasm may be incorporated as an element through which important aspects of oneself are brought to light. In its symbolic use, orgasm need not be tied exclusively to vaginal intercourse.

In developing a sound moral theology of sex in marriage, the contribution of couples who have experienced sex as schooling in the art of love, pleasure, play, and theatre, must carry as much, if not more, weight as the views of celibate theologians. In the previous millennium this has not been the case in the Roman Catholic Church.

Married couples cannot sin by any sexual act they freely engage in with one another. They may sin by selfishly withholding themselves from their spouse or by adultery, but they cannot sin by having sex with each other in whatever way they mutually agree on.

In my next Theological Soapbox I will address the moral questions raised by unmarried people living together and by homosexuality.

Arthur Menu, Sidney, B.C.

News From The National Capital Region

Corpus-NCR had two gatherings recently. The first, on November 20, was graciously hosted by two new members, Dennis and Mary Beth Nolan. The second, on January 8, was the annual Christmas New Years party held at its usual location ndash the lounge of long-t ime members Maurice and Claudia Sullivans condominium. About 60 people, including friends of Corpus members, attended this joyous potluck dinner and dance. At the party participants made a generous free-will cash donation for a married priest, his wife an d four children in Peru, whom Corpus-NCR has assisted in the past.

Jim Noonan, Stittsville, Ontario

News From Saskatchewan

Local News:

- Felix and Jane (Beyke) Kryzanowski of Regina celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary during the past Christmas holiday. They had a come-and-go afternoon visiting at their home.

- Grant Crosswell and Colleen Lissamer left Saskatoon to establish their new home in Victoria near his mother who is alone since Grant's Father passed away last Fall. They sold their resume and job finding business and hope to start anew on the Island.

- Ron and Verna Bircham of Prince Albert are preparing to go to Africa with a missionary group.

- Bishop Mallon ordained two married Deacons in Regina last Fall. They are posted to look after parishes that had a resident priest at one time. In January there was one ordination to the "transitional" deaconate, meaning on the way to priesthood. Felix and Jane were "insulted" when near the end of the ceremony the bishop said that the deacon is to go now and serve the Lord with "undivided heart". They wondered if that implied that all married people are doomed to serve the Lord with "divided heart".

Corpus-related information:

- I received a letter from the International Federation of Married Catholic Priests, signed by Julio Pinillos, President, and Lambert van Gelder, Secretary. They asked for comments on the proposed new Statutes for the Federation. The statutes have to be re-written in proper legal language to qualify for non-governmental organization status in Belgium. This would mean that the Federation "may call upon the material support of the UNO".

The document is too long to include here, but is available by Fax if anyone wants it from me. I replied by e-mail that I saw no problems and had no further comment as far as this member of Corpus Canada could see, but would let the membership know of the letter and relate any comments.

- Another letter came from Fr. Bob Kiffman who is doing a thesis at St. Paul University Seminary in Ottawa. His thesis title is "The Implementation of Canon Law in Ontario Regarding the Decent Support for Retired Diocesan Clergy".

He writes: "Since your membership continues to be presbyters, I am considering some inclusion in the thesis of the retirement status of inactive presbyters".

He would like information (may be anonymous) concerning what pension or settlements were or were not received, and what the present financial status is of the "inactive presbyter".

Anyone interested can contact me for further information.

Emil Kutarna, Regina, Saskatchewan

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

by Dr. Marie Macdonald

Excerpts from "Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia," a speech by Dr. Marie Macdonald, Coordinator of a research project report "Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus." For fuller text see website: <http://www.catholic.org.au/media/99aug18mm.htm>

There were those who wish to maintain the current position of women in the Church, or even return to the position of the pre-Vatican II Church, and there were those who seek an expanded role for women.

Women were seen as integral and central to the very nature and life of the Church. Their participation was presented as diverse and myriad; they were described as "the backbone of the local Church." The future of the Church and the participation of women were closely linked. In general, greater participation was sought for women in the Catholic Church in Australia in the areas of decision-making, Church administration and leadership.

The results of the Catholic Church Life Survey revealed that church attenders have a considerably older profile than the catholic population in general. Women outnumber men about three to two, and more than half of all attenders are not involved in any regular way in other parish activities, although women are more likely to be involved than men. Young people and separated or divorced are under-represented. The great majority of attenders feel that the parish adequately meets their spiritual needs. They felt that the best ways to increase women's participation were through prayer, increasing women's involvement in decision-making and administration, and reforming beliefs and practices that do not promote the equality of men and women. Three quarters said they have never experienced nor observed barriers to women's participation in the Church, but more than one quarter said they did not accept the Church's teaching on the ordination of women.

On the other hand, written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups revealed a strong sense of pain and alienation resulting from the Church's stance on women. A dichotomous relationship with the Church, characterised by such feeling as love and commitment yet anguish and alienation, was experienced by both individuals and groups.

Pain, alienation, and often anger resulted from a strong sense of women's marginalisation, powerlessness, and a lack of acknowledgment within the Church. The frustration yet persistence of both women and men in trying to stay in the Church despite their dissatisfaction with the Church's perceived treatment of women was evident.

The frankness and sadness of those who had left the practice of the faith, and of those who have considered leaving as a result of the Church's treatment of women were obvious. It was clear that many people have hope, but in many cases it is faint.

There was a heightened sense of frustration at the blockage of the much-needed gift of women from service to the Church. The sense of alienation and anguish resulting from the issues concerning women and the Church was shown by all categories of individuals and groups such as the young and elderly, women and men, lay and religious, and was not characteristic of any particular group.

The fundamental barrier concerned so-called patriarchal traditions and attitudes which were seen to be inconsistent with the person and message of Jesus Christ and especially his relationship with women. It was felt that such attitudes had been reinforced partly by Pope John Paul II and the Vatican bureaucracy in recent times to the detriment of the teachings and spirit of the Second Vatican Council. The structures of the Church were experienced as male-dominated, hierarchical, and authoritarian.

One of the greatest challenges to arise from the research is the need to create a range of opportunities in the Church for respectful listening and dialogue concerning the experiences, needs, and aspirations of women.

JOURNAL APPEAL BRINGS IN \$1270

The November-December issue of The Journal contained an insert making our annual appeal for donations to support the ministry of The Journal. The Journal is published by Xristos Community Society, a registered religious charity incorporated in British Columbia. Publishing The Journal is the main ministry of Xristos, and it is supported entirely by donations. The Journal is sent free of charge to anyone who requests it. All the work of Xristos and The Journal is done by volunteers. No member of Xristos or The Journal staff receives a salary.

Each issue of The Journal in its present format, which is the most economical we know of, costs about \$500 for supplies and postage. We publish six times per year so we need to receive at least \$3,000 in donations every year to keep going.

This year our donations are coming in two ways. Some donors send a donation directly to Xristos. Corpus Canada also donates \$25 of the membership fees it gets, which are \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families. The Corpus Canada treasurer, Jake Kutarna, send us these \$25 donations in the name of the people paying their Corpus Canada membership, and we send them official receipts for tax-deduction purposes, as we do for people who send us donations directly.

Since the beginning of 2000, we have received a total of \$1070 in donations from our 246 Canadian Journal readers, and \$200.44 (Canadian dollars) from our 113 American readers.

On behalf of Xristos and those who put out The Journal I wish to thank all of you who have contributed so far. The \$1270 we have received amounts to 42% of our requirement for the year.

If you think The Journal performs a worthwhile service, and have not yet made a donation, please consider doing so.

**Alanna Menu, Secretary-Treasurer,
Xristos Community Society**

WHITHER THE JOURNAL?

For the past three years The Journal has been published by a dedicated group of people on Vancouver Island. At the Corpus Canada annual general meeting in September 1999, the present editorial board of The Journal gave notice that it would be resigning at the end of 2000. We have enjoyed doing this ministry, but the time has come for others, with fresh energy and new perspectives to take it on.

This presents a challenge to small faith communities across Canada whose members value The Journal. Some of you will have to come forward and serve as a new editorial board if The Journal is to continue beyond this year.

The editorial board has responsibility for finding or writing articles for The Journal, and then doing the layout on a computer. When all the pages of an edition of The Journal have been created, they are saved on a computer file, ready for printing.

The Vancouver Island group is prepared to receive this computer file, print the pages, photocopy them, assemble them, and label and mail The Journal to subscribers. Of course, if a new editorial board wanted to take on those responsibilities too, they would be welcome to.

So all you readers out there, please think and pray about this.

The Journal Editorial Board